

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received _____
date entered _____

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Ebner-Free House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 120 Locust N/A not for publication

city, town Vincennes N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Knox code 083

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Fraternity House

4. Owner of Property

name Vincennes Preservation Corporation, c/o Dr. Isaac K. Beckes

street & number Vincennes University

city, town Vincennes N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47591

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Knox County Recorder's Office

street & number 7th and Busseron Streets

city, town Vincennes state Indiana 47591

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Indiana Historic Sites (See continuation sheet)
title and Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date Late Fall, 1982

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in a residential area several blocks from Vincennes University, the Ebner-Free House is a two and one-half story frame structure characterized by Eastlake ornamentation. The structure has a variety of roofs, gables, and projecting bays, and a concrete block foundation with a recently added basement.

Facing southwest, the three-bay wide main facade consists mainly of a large projecting gable and has a shed roofed porch sheltering the main level of the exterior. The ground level has the main entry in the recessed easternmost bay, and two windows in the gabled area. The main entry has double wood paneled doors with molding below and lights above. A rectangular transom surmounts the door. The ground floor windows are double-hung sash with one-over-one lights and wood surrounds; louvered wood shutters have recently been removed from the windows. Most of the structure's windows are of this design. Beneath the first level windows, a wide course of vertical boards extends across the front facade continuing around the side exteriors.

Accessed by several wood steps, the wood porch is highly ornate and has chamfered square wood posts supporting the roof (Photo #5). The posts are joined at the bottom by panels of diagonal boards and circle cut-outs, and at the top by criss-crossed wood panels with fan-like brackets. A gable surmounts the main entry area of the porch and has much jig-sawn scrollwork, including a truss and fan-like brackets (see Photo #4). A metal finial tops the gable peak and metal cresting surmounts the roof ridge of the gable. Vertical boarding, similar to that above the foundation, extends across the main and side facades, separating the first and second level windows.

The second level of the main facade has paired windows centered on the projecting gabled area, and a single window above the entry door. The windows are surmounted by ornate wood entablatures, as are most windows on the house. The gabled area in the attic level is covered with imbricated shingles. Paired openings with wood louvers and surrounds are in the attic level, directly above the second level paired windows. A wood truss with scrollsawn decoration and pendants is located at the gable peak.

Each side facade has a projecting gable near the center of the facade. The projecting bay on the southeast exterior (Photo #3) is five-sided and has a center exterior brick chimney with decorative brickwork, flanked by windows in the angled, cut-away corners. Curved wood brackets are located under the eaves above the second level corner windows (Photo #7). A small, triangular-shaped window flanks each side of the chimney in the attic level of the gable. South of the projecting bay, towards the front of the house, there is a small leaded glass window on the first level and a double-hung window on the second level (Photo #6). A small porch located north of the projecting bay shelters a wood door with a single light above (Photo #8). There is a recently added door to the basement hidden from view under the porch. A window is positioned at the north end of the facade. On the second level there are two windows aligned with the door and window on the ground floor.

The projecting bay on the northwest facade (Photo #'s 11, 12) is rectangular and has three windows on the first level, two windows on the second level, and an attic window in the gable area, which is covered with imbricated wood shingles. The area south of the projecting gable has a window on each level and an exterior chimney with decorative brickwork. A shed roofed, one-story latticed porch is located to the rear of the projecting bay. It has a door and window, with lattice work paneling covering much of the remaining area. Two windows are located on the second level above the shed roof.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1887

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ebner-Free House is historically significant as perhaps the best example of Eastlake architecture in Vincennes. The structure has been virtually unaltered. It was built by John Ebner, Jr., a prosperous Vincennes businessman and was the home of several important Vincennes residents, including Charles Omer Free, a leading businessman and member of the Indiana House of Representatives and the State Senate.

The Ebner-Free House manifests the decorative ornamentation of the Eastlake style, including the fanlike brackets, scroll-sawn ornamentation, perforations, heavy posts, and tall chimneys with decorative brickwork. A variety of roof designs, gables, dormers, porches and projecting bays gives a complexity to the structure. All of the ornamentation and detailing has remained virtually intact on the building.

The house was built by John Ebner, Jr., for his bride, Carrie Hackman. John was born May 12, 1859, and attended St. Meinrad College in Spencer County and St. Joseph College in Teutopolis, Illinois. He was the bookkeeper and junior partner in the Eagle Brewing Company, which was established in 1859 by his father, John Ebner, Sr., who owned it in partnership with Eugene Hack and Anton Simon.

On February 27, 1886, John Ebner, Jr., bought lot #14 in Chatard's Subdivision from the Bishop of Vincennes for \$1,500.00. The lot had been part of the Old Seminary Lot where the original Vincennes University Building had once stood. On June 28, 1887, construction of the building was begun. John never resided in the home due to the death of his bride on August 22 or 23, 1887. He took a prolonged trip through the east and then resided at his father's house in Vincennes until his death on November 9, 1890.

After its completion, the house was occupied by William Glover, of Grayville, Illinois, who was a partner with his brother, George, in the Glover Stove Factory in Vincennes. Upon the death of John Ebner, Jr., the house was sold by his mother to Frank Bloom for \$3,250.00. Bloom was a close friend of John Ebner, Jr., and an employee of the Eagle Brewing Company. After Bloom's death, his widow sold the house on August 6, 1920, to Charles Omer Free for \$8,000.00.

Charles Omer Free was born December 21, 1876, in Brownsburg, Indiana. He moved to Vincennes around 1916 and was an engineer for the Vincennes Bridge Company for many years. He was also a director of the Blackford Glass Company and a large land owner. In 1938, he was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives, and in 1942, he was elected as joint State Senator from Knox and Daviess Counties; he was elected to a second Senate term in 1946. Free died in his home on June 17, 1948.

In the summer of 1980, the house was auctioned by the estate of the late Clara Haynes Free, widow of Omer Free. Roger George purchased the house for \$40,000. In 1981, George sold the house with some improvements to the Vincennes Housing and Urban Development Authority, who were interested in building a 24 space parking lot for the Prankshaw

9. Major Bibliographical References

History of Knox and Daviess Counties. Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1886.
Vincennes Weekly Western Sun, October 8, 1886; June 29, 1887; August 23, 1887; August 26, 1887; September 2, 1887; May 24, 1889
Vincennes Sun-Commercial, June 18, 1948; June 6, 1982.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Vincennes, IN-IL

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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4	2	8	1	9	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

46 feet off the southeast side of the southwest half of Lot Number One (1) in Burnett's Addition to the City of Vincennes, Indiana.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title August Schultheis, Secretary

organization Vincennes Preservation Corporation date January 22, 1984

street & number c/o Vincennes University telephone 812/885-4364

city or town Vincennes state Indiana 47591

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 2-6-85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Ebner-Free House

Item number 6 and 7

Page 1

The Ebner-Free House was formerly located within the Vincennes Historic District, and was the subject of an agreement among the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the State Historic Preservation Office, whereby the relocation of the house was determined to have "no adverse impact." (See attached letter.)

Item number 7

The rear facade (Photo #'s 9, 10) is plain and has a paired window and a single window on the first level, and two windows on the second level, all with plain surrounds. The paired windows were raised at some time in order to fit a sink under them in the kitchen.

The house has a variety of roof designs, which are covered with asphalt shingles. There are two hipped roofs which are intersected by a number of gables. Exposed rafter ends are located under the overhanging eaves. A gabled dormer with a louvered opening surmounts each hipped roof on the southeast exterior (Photo #'s 3, 8). There are three brick chimneys: an exterior chimney is located on each side facade extending well above the roofline, and an interior chimney is located at the rear of the structure.

The interior of the house has undergone little alteration from its original construction. Around 1920 hardwood floors were installed in the house, the fireplace in the dining room was removed, and the dining room windows were moved to balance the room.

In the fall of 1982, the house stood facing west on a corner lot in a residential area of two-story homes. All of the other homes on the block were removed to build a senior citizens apartment complex, isolating the Free House. The house was scheduled for demolition to make way for more parking, but was saved by moving it to an area of small rental houses, which will eventually be torn down in order to expand Vincennes University. When the structure was moved, the top four feet of the roof and the eaves on the sides of the house were removed. The exterior chimney on the east facade fell apart during the move and was rebuilt with the same design. A full basement was constructed for the house at its new location. The iron fence and stone base, which surrounded the original property, have been transported to the new location and will be placed on the present site. (See Photo #'s 13-15.)

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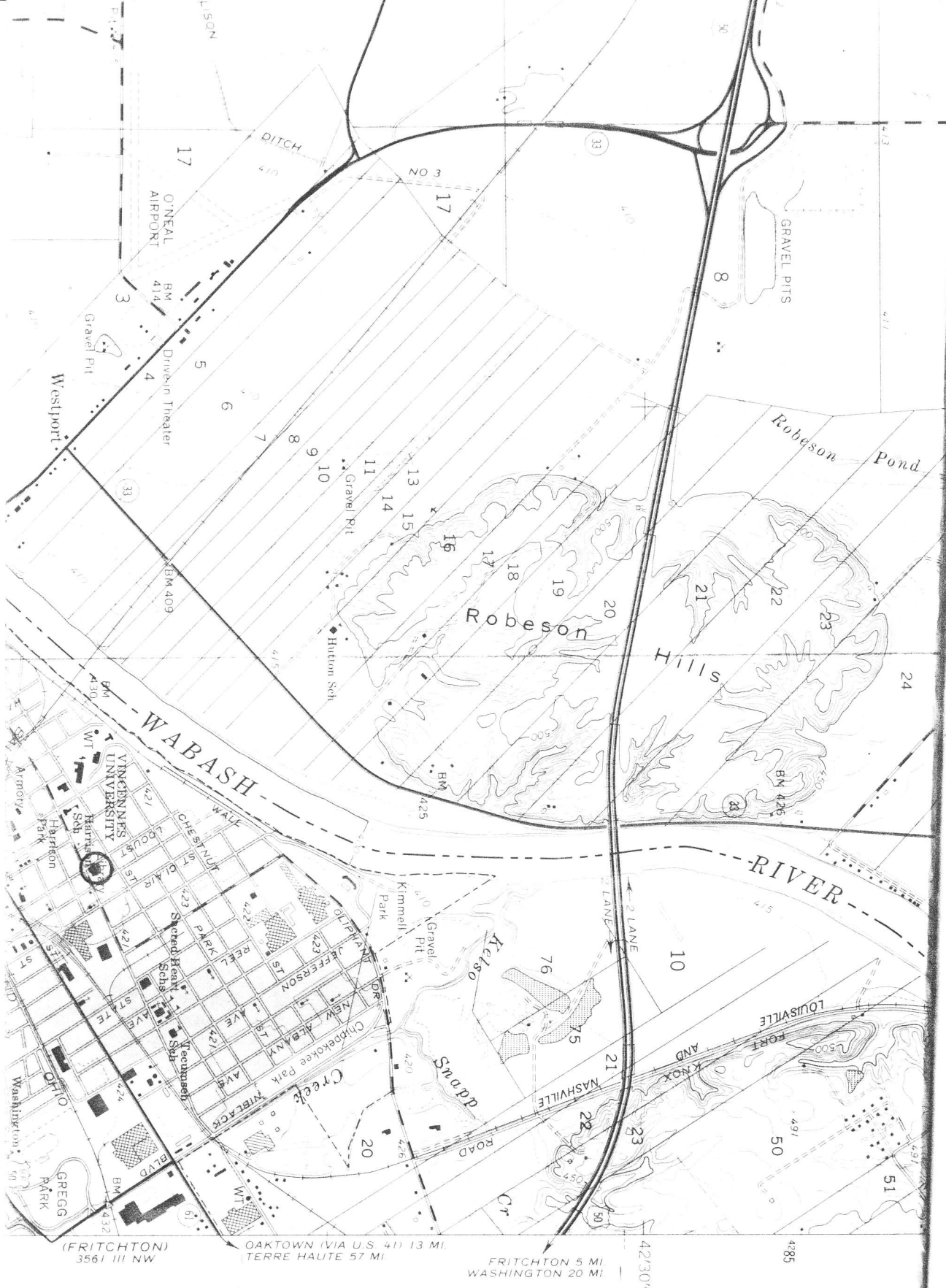
Continuation sheet Ebner-Free House

Item number 8

Page 2

Apartments. The house was bought by the Vincennes Preservation Corporation from the housing authority for \$300.00 with the provision that it be moved to a new location. On December 2, 1982, the house was moved to Locust Street between First and Second Streets and was bought by Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity of Vincennes University with historic protective covenants attached.

Despite the move, the Ebner-Free House has retained its architectural significance as a fine example of Eastlake architecture. It is possibly the finest Eastlake structure in Vincennes. The many Eastlake features, including the fanlike brackets, heavy posts, scroll-sawn ornamentation, and tall chimneys, are intact and virtually unaltered. The structure looks much the same as it did at its original location, and the original wrought iron fence will soon surround the new location. The original surrounding area of the building, although located within the Vincennes Historic District, was greatly altered when the other homes on the block were removed to build a senior citizen complex. The house was scheduled for demolition to provide additional parking space, but has survived due to its move to an area of small rental houses, which will eventually be replaced by University structures.



(FRITCHTON)
 3561 III NW
 OAKTOWN (VIA U.S. 41) 13 MI.
 TERRE HAUTE 57 MI.
 FRITCHTON 5 MI.
 WASHINGTON 20 MI.

Ebner-Free House
 Vincennes, Indiana
 UTM Reference: 16/454920/4281940