Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts
COUNTY: Plymouth
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Daniel Webster Law Office

AND/OR HISTORIC: Daniel Webster Law Office and Library

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Careswell and Webster Sts.

CITY OR TOWN: Marshfield | CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: Massachusetts | CODE | COUNTY: Plymouth | CODE

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☐ Occupied ☒ Unoccupied ☒ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☒ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Marshfield Historical Commission, Robert McCracken, President

STREET AND NUMBER: 275 Parsonage Street

CITY OR TOWN: Marshfield | STATE: Massachusetts | CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Plymouth County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: Court Street

CITY OR TOWN: Plymouth | STATE Massachusetts | CODE

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: none

DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☐ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☒ Moved	☐ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This one-room, yellow clapboard law office structure is original, with old foundation, floorboards, windows and fireplace evident. However, the walls were badly deteriorated and have received a fresh coat of plaster and paint. The door is at one end of the building and there is a twelve-over-twelve window on each wall. At the oppoiste end two tall windows of triple hung sash, with twelve panes each, frame a center fireplace.

The office was an outbuilding on Webster's large estate, "Green Harbor," in Marshfield. The house burned down in 1878 and this office is the only structure left of the estate. In order to save it from land developers, the Historical Commission moved the office, in 1966, from its original site one-half mile away on Webster Street, restored it and opened it to the public. The land where the office stands today is part of the original Webster property.

Today the building houses a collection of Webster memorabilia and several pieces of furniture from his home. However, all the papers and books, including a large set of volumes bought from naturalist John J. Audubon, who visited here, are gone. Many were given to the Dartmouth College collection.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [x] 18th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1832-1852

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [x] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [x] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Daniel Webster used this one-room, clapboard building as his natural history library and law office on his estate, "Green Harbor," at Marshfield, Massachusetts. "Green Harbor" was Webster's real home, his place of places." [1] to which he would escape from Washington as much as possible. He bought the 160-acre Thomas estate in 1832 and accumulated an additional 1200 acres before his death in 1852. This was an outbuilding which survived the fire that destroyed the main house in 1878. The Marshfield Historical Commission saved the office from deterioration, moved it, restored it and opened it to the public in 1966.

Arthur C. Cole has said of Daniel Webster that "perhaps no Northerner left so strong an impress upon the political life of [the] great 'middle period' or made a more substantial contribution to the preservation of the Union in the supreme test of the sixties.[2] Champion of the American Union, he sacrificed a popular following with his effective advocacy of the new industrial order. His oratory was a persuasive blend of logic and eloquence, and on many occasions he was able to turn the tide with his addresses. No students of American history can forget Webster's reply to Hayne who spoke for Calhoun's doctrine of nullification. Arguing that nullification could lead only to violence and war, Webster proclaimed he was for "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

Webster's brilliant working of the data and presenting of the Dartmouth College case before the Supreme Court established his reputation among many as the foremost lawyer of his day.

He went on to appear for the Bank of the United States in its successful litigation in the landmark case of McCulloch v. Maryland and participated in the crucial cases of Gibbons v. Ogden, Osborn v. Bank of the United States, and Odgen v. Saunders.

1. Quote from Daniel Webster, June 1847, in Claude M. Fuess, Daniel Wesbster, Vol. II (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1963),p.33(
2. "Daniel Webster," entry in Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1943), p. 592.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. Significance (1) Daniel Webster Law Office, Marshfield, Mass.

Biography

Daniel Webster, American statesman, lawyer and orator, was born near Salisbury, New Hampshire in 1782. A year later the family moved to a farm near Franklin, New Hampshire, where Daniel grew to manhood. A frail child, he was spared the heavier tasks of the farm in favor of the advantage of knowledge. His father enrolled him at Phillips Exeter Academy but the boy failed to complete the course and returned to the farm. He attended Dartmouth College where he developed a reputation as a speaker. Following graduation he studied law, was clerk to Christopher Gore and admitted to the Boston bar in 1805. In later years he was fond of returning to the farm between court sessions or after the adjourment of Congress.

In 1807 he moved to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where he remained for 9 years. He established an office which housed his profitable law practice and launched his political career from here. A strong advocate of the Federalist philosophy and devoted to the Union, Webster attacked Jeffersonian democracy through Fourth of July speeches and occasional political pamphlets. He championed New England shipping interests and vigorously condemned Jefferson for the war with Britain. By 1813 Webster was highly recognized among the Portsmouth Federalists and they elected him to Congress. In 1816, midway through his second term, he moved to Boston and established an even more lucrative law practice.

He won fame as a lawyer defending his alma mater in the Dartmouth College Case 1819) and appeared before the Supreme Court for the Bank of the United States in McCulloch v. Maryland. Boston sent him to Congress in 1823 but, he continued his busy law practice before the Supreme Court and other courts of the country.

As the dominant interests of his constituency changed from shipping to industry, Webster abandoned his earlier free-trade views in favor of protection. In 1830 he met Calhoun's doctrine of nullification with strong oratory in favor of the Union and voted against the Compromise Tariff of 1833. With Clay, he became one of the leaders of the new Whig party and vigorously opposed Jackson's war on the Bank of the United States. In 1836 he was nominated by the Massachusetts legislature as their Presidential candidate. However, with other Whig candidates in the field he received only the electoral votes of Massachusetts. His desire for the White House did not diminish with this defeat but he never got this close again.

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8. Significance: (2) Daniel Webster Law Office, Marshfield, Mass.

In 1841 Webster entered Harrison's cabinet as Secretary of State and stayed on with Tyler after Harrison's death. He successfully completed the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, which settled most of the international boundary betweeen Canada and the United States. He resigned his office in 1843 and, burdened with debt, returned to Boston to replenish his exchequer. In 1845, though, he was back in the Senate, opposing the acquisition of Texas with the resulting extension of slavery and condemning the war with Mexico. Webster had long been a critic of slavery, though he felt the problem should be solved by the South. He believed slavery to be an evil--but not so great an evil as disunion. He served again as Secretary of State under Fillmore and died in 1852.

Webster was anything but satisfied during his 40-year political career. As champion of the Union and the special industrial interests he sacrified the support of the masses. The Presidency eluded him and even his personal fortunes failed to bring the security that eases frustration. Yet he left a great imprint on the political life of this period and made a substantial contribution to the preservation of the Union.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cole, Arthur C., "Daniel Webster," Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. 19 (1943), pp. 585-592.

Fuess, Claude Moore, Daniel Webster, 2 Vols., (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1963).

Garvin, James L., et al, Strawbery-Banke in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (Farmington, Maine: The Knowlton and McLeary Company, 1971).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"

OR

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
42 °	04 '	18 "	70 °	40 '	26 "

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Blanche Higgins, Research Assistant, and Benjamin Levy, Senior Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys, National Park Service

DATE: 10-29-73

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street NW

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: District of Columbia

CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

_____
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS