

NR 5-6-76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Vinson House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2123 Broadway

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Little Rock

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Arkansas

VICINITY OF

CODE

05

COUNTY

Pulaski

CODE

119

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr & Mrs Richard Nicholson

STREET & NUMBER

2123 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Little Rock

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arkansas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Circuit Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Pulaski County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Little Rock

STATE

Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Mr. and Mrs. Baldy Vinson built the one-and-one-half-storey, frame "cottage" at 2123 Broadway, Little Rock, in 1905. Mr. Vinson, an attorney, had moved from Augusta, Arkansas, to the capital city. The architect hired to construct the residence was Charles L. Thompson, a noted architect in Little Rock for over fifty years until he retired in 1936.

The Vinson House consists basically of neo-classical lines. A columned veranda extends across most of the facade (which faces west), around the south-west corner, and across much of the south elevation. Smooth, Ionic columns support the porch and temple-bay entrance, which resembles a pedimented portico. Wide steps with handrails and white balusters lead up to the front entrance, and the same type balusters extend the length of the porch. A rectangular transom and sidelights frame the paneled, front-entry door. Double-hung, single-pane windows add to the simple appearance of the house, as does the uniform size of the windows. Sidelights are featured on the window directly below the northwest gable.

Having basically a hipped roof, the house also has gables on the northwest, south, and east elevations. The decorated gables are corniced and have returns. Half-round fanlights and air vents decorate the west, south, and north gables, suggesting Jeffersonian-classical influence. Hip-roofed dormers project from the front and rear roof slopes. Classical dentils and modillions around the cornices of the roofline and gables add to the beauty and support of the house.

Although the house consists primarily of neo-classical lines, it does depart from the style in some areas. The overall shape is not the simple design common to neo-classical structures. Instead it contains several projections and an uneven roofline. Symmetrical balance is absent. Double columns, uncharacteristic of the neo-classical style, support the temple-bay entrance. Green shutters on all the windows also represent a departure from neo-classicism. The complexity of lines and angles indicates a hint of Queen Anne influence.

The interior of the house reflects the classical simplicity exhibited on the exterior. The actual living space is less than appears from an exterior view, because of the illusion of added spaciousness lent by the veranda.

The irregular floorplan, one of the few departures from classicism on the interior, has as its focal point the reception hall. The transomed front-entry door flanked by sidelights dominates the reception hall. From the hall, entrances lead to a parlor (the original library), the dining room, and two bedrooms on the north elevation. Other rooms include the bathroom, kitchen, and two rooms made from the enclosure of the back porch.

Classical detailing of the doors and windows provide the most outstanding features of the interior. Molded architraves above the windows and doors are not ornate, but are of exceptional and classical quality. Windows not only have architraves, but also detailed woodwork below the sills to the floor.

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The upper sections of the windows in the old sitting room (now the front bedroom on the north elevation) and the sidelights in the entry hall are leaded. The dining room has a chair rail around the walls.

A double-room fireplace serving both the old sitting room and the north bedroom also is of particular interest. The fireplace in the old sitting room features a cherrywood mantel with molded cornice, plain frieze, and pilasters. The hearth and the area between the architraves and hearth opening are marble. The hearth opening has a metalwork cover depicting a classical scene. The mantel of the double-fireplace in the adjacent bedroom is similarly constructed, but the woodwork has been painted and the hearth opening does not have a cover.

Chandeliers in the front four rooms are equipped for both electricity and gas and are original to the house. The chandeliers have brass features and frosted gables, and both the brass and crystal are in excellent condition.

Only minor alterations have changed the house in its seventy-year existence. Walls, once plastered, have been sheetrocked and papered in various designs. Twelve-foot ceilings also have been papered. A modernization process, began in the 1920's, changed the bathroom and kitchen fixtures. French doors replaced wooden doors, to separate the original library from the reception hall and the dining room. A fireplace was also added to the former library, now the parlor. The back porch, formerly latticed, has been enclosed and made into two rooms. The ~~back porch~~^{apartment} on the south wing represents the only addition onto the original structure. The ~~back porch~~^{apartment} contains the old south bedroom, which was adjacent to the old library and the dining room, and an addition built onto the bedroom. The stable and servant's quarters, located behind and separate from the house, now serve as a garage and storage area.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1905

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Charles L. Thompson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Vinson House was built by Charles L. Thompson, who was the founder of what is believed to be the longest established architectural firm west of the Mississippi River, now known as Cromwell, Neyland, Truemper, Levy, and Gatchell, Inc. During his half-century of service to Little Rock and Arkansas, Thompson designed many fine homes and public buildings.

Thompson moved to Little Rock in 1886 and continued his work until 1936. Among the structures designed by him are the Arkansas Democrat building, the old Union National Bank, Pulaski Heights Junior High School, elementary and high schools in El Dorado, St. Edwards Catholic Church, and courthouses at Malvern, Clarendon, Fayetteville, and Forrest City. Thompson also constructed many of the homes in the Quapaw Quarter district of Little Rock, including the Hotze House, the Keith House, and the Vinson House.

Constructed in 1905, the Vinson House expresses classical simplicity, in contrast to many Thompson-designed buildings. Of neo-classical extraction, the house belies its design only by the multiple angles and projections of its elevations and roofline. The unbalanced, asymmetrical structuring presents a noticeable departure from the otherwise simple style.

A large, white veranda, extending across most of the facade and down the south elevation, first captures one's attention. Wide steps lead up to a temple-bay entry, supported by white, unfluted, Ionic columns. Such columns are also spaced along the length of the veranda, dividing the railing and balusters into sections. Classical dentils and modillions form a border around the entire roofline of the veranda and house.

Enhanced by a portico-like bay, the front entry adds to the aura of classical elegance. White, fluted pilasters and architraves frame the transomed panel door, which is flanked by sidelights. This feature is rich in ornamental detailing. Double-hung windows along the facade also have architraves and detailed casements. Green shutters adorn each window.

The basically hipped roof has gabled projections on the northwest, west, and south elevations. Corniced, with half-returns, the gables feature semicircular air vents and fanlights. Dormers project from the front and rear slopes.

Rich detailing of interior woodwork is found throughout the house. Classically molded, the door and window casements help to give the house its individuality.

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The quality of workmanship and material used by Thompson is best evidenced by the excellent, virtually unaltered condition of the house. Except for the addition on the southeast corner, the floorplan has remained unchanged, and only the furnishings have changed the character of the rooms. Wall and ceilings have been papered, but retain their original dimensions. Transformation of the south wing into an ^{apartment} ~~duplex~~ has accounted for the only addition onto the original structure. The ^{apartment} ~~duplex~~, which includes one of the original bedrooms and the addition, extended the south wing of the house.

Located in a district filled with historic homes and buildings, the Vinson House stands as a stately example of neo-classical architecture of the turn of the century. Unlike many of the houses surrounding it, the Vinson House is smaller, less ornate, and simpler in design. Yet the house possesses a classic elegance which makes it a significant contribution to the architectural history of Little Rock.

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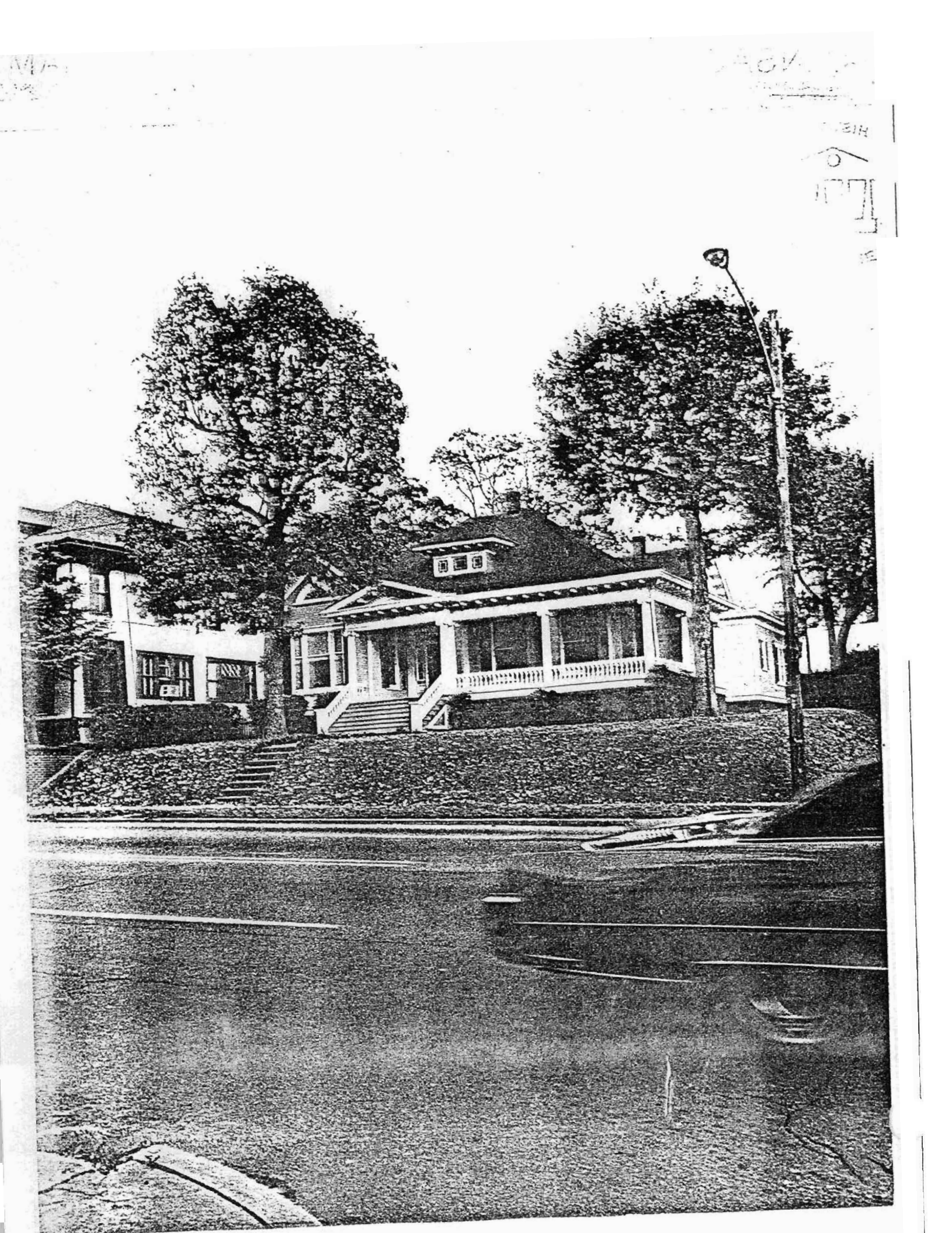
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Nicholson, Mr. Richard. Personal interview at Elizabeth Mitchell Children,s Center,
Little Rock, Arkansas, November 5, 1975.
Vinson, Jr., Mrs. Baldy. Interview, Little Rock, Arkansas, November 6, 1975.



NOV. 1934



ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM



"THE OLD STATE HOUSE" 300 WEST MARKHAM

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201
TELEPHONE - 501 371-1639

PROPERTY OWNER'S APPROVAL

I, Richard Nicholson, am the legal
owner of the Vinson House
located at 2123 Broadway

I hereby acknowledge that I have been fully informed and
understand the significance of having the aforementioned
property placed on the National Register of Historic
Places.

I hereby approve the inclusion of the aforementioned
property on the National Register of Historic Places.

Richard Nicholson
Owner

11-4-75
Date