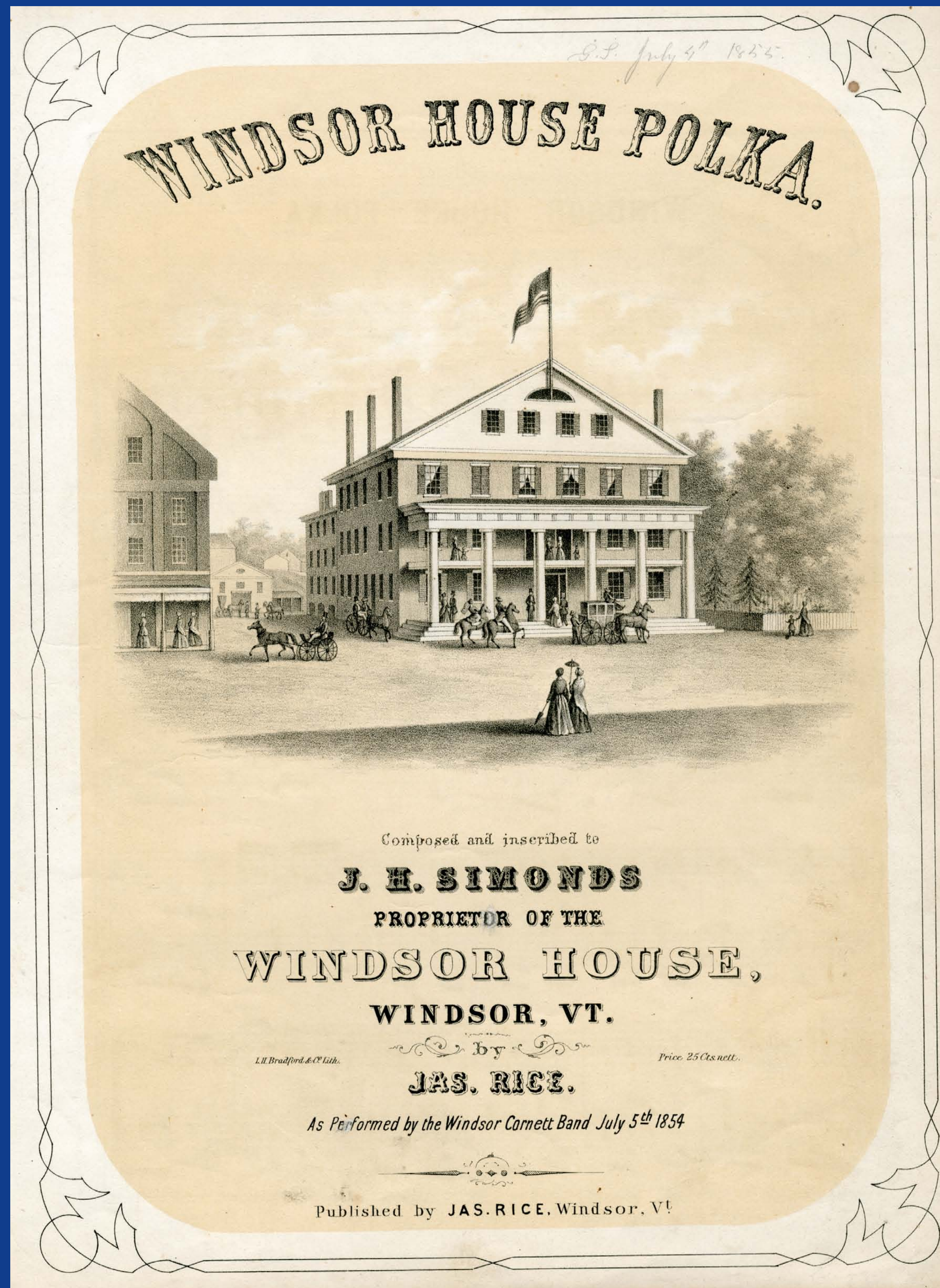


WINDSOR VERMONT

Windsor House

This has been Windsor's premier site for hospitality since the early 1800s. Captain Joseph Pettes built a coffee house here in 1801 on the Connecticut River Turnpike, a toll road that ran from Bellows Falls to Thetford, Vermont. He hosted Windsor residents, travelers, and such notables as President James Monroe in 1817 and the Marquis de Lafayette in 1825, until an 1836 fire destroyed the building. In 1838 a group of businessmen rebuilt the modest inn as Windsor House, a fine hotel that rivaled its urban counterparts in service, accommodations, and cuisine. Its imposing Greek Revival style reflected the town's ambition to be a regional center of commerce and politics. The arrival of the railroad in 1849 cemented its importance as lodging for travelers and businessmen.

The hotel's fortunes have mirrored those of Windsor. It has welcomed thousands, including opera singer Jenny Lind and President Theodore Roosevelt. When President Woodrow Wilson spent the summers of 1913 to 1915 in Cornish, New Hampshire, his Secret Service staff roomed in Windsor House. In 1913 the Windsor Machine Company purchased the aging hotel and updat-



"Windsor House Polka" sheet music composed for a July 5, 1854, performance by the Windsor Cornett Band

Courtesy Vermont Historical Society

ed it as the company hotel and restaurant, with boarding rooms in the rear section for its workers. The hotel continued to provide space for business meetings, private and public balls, dance lessons, and other social activities.

By 1971 Windsor House ceased operation as a hotel and faced demolition. A group of citizens formed Historic Windsor, Inc., to save the building. The nonprofit eventually rehabilitated it and listed it on the National Register of Historic Places. Now privately owned, Windsor House remains a Main Street landmark.



Windsor House festooned with bunting for Theodore Roosevelt's 1911 visit
Courtesy Historic Windsor, Inc.

