

Piatt's Landing - Winnfield Cottage
Upper East Bend Bottoms
Burlington Vicinity
Boone County
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-138

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KY,
8-BURL.V,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

PIATT'S LANDING - WINNFIELD COTTAGE

HABS
KY
B-E-138 V
1A

Location: Upper East Bend Bottoms
Burlington Vicinity
Boone County, Kentucky

Latitude: No. 38° 54' 05.47"
Longitude: W. 84° 51' 33.47"

Present Owner: The Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company.

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: House was built ca. 1814 by Robert Piatt, the grandfather of Bvt. Major General Edward Richard Sprigg Canby, and is an interesting example of an Ohio River house.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: ca. 1814.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is the office of the County Clerk, Boone County Court House, Burlington, Kentucky.
 - 1814 Deed March 19, 1814, recorded in Deed Book "C" page 173 wherein James Coleman acting for himself and as administrator for Thomas Carneal deceased conveys interest in 200 acres of the original 700 acre tract to Robert Piatt.
 - 1814 Deed June 18, 1814, recorded in Deed Book "D" page 31 James D. Breckenridge to Robert Piatt.
 - 1817 Deed March 5, 1817, recorded in Deed Book "D" page 60 Thomas Carneal to Robert Piatt.
 - 1844 Deed January 17, 1844, recorded in Deed Book "O" page 104, Robert Piatt to Benjamin F. Crutchfield. 157 acres.
 - 1863 Deed September 12, 1863, recorded in Deed Book "22" page 160, B.F. Crutchfield to H. Goss and C. Yeiser.
 - 1863 Deed October 9, 1863, recorded in Deed Book "22" page 161, H. Goss and C. Yeiser to R.H. Parry.

- 1866 Deed January 9, 1866, recorded in Deed Book "23" page 115, R.H. Parry to J.R. Harris.
- 1875 Deed April 14, 1875, recorded in Deed Book "28" page 429, J.R. Harris to O.J. Harris.
- 1915 Deed July 17, 1915, recorded in Deed Book "57" page 4, O.J. Harris to B.E. Harris.
- 1964 Deed February 28, 1964, recorded to Deed Book "161" page 405, O.E. Harris to J.E. Mullins.
- 1977 Deed October 19, 1977, recorded in Deed Book "237" page 317, J.E. Mullins to the Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company.

4. Alterations and additions: There is physical evidence which indicates that the house was built in three major stages, with other minor alterations. The original structure is the central area. It is a one-and-a-half story structure containing seven rooms. Four are on the ground floor with a central hall running from front to back dividing the rooms into two areas. The second floor or attic story contains three rooms, each room having a dormer front and back. It has a gambrel roof originally covered with cedar shakes. There is evidence that the end walls were at least two-stepped parapet walls that were partially removed during the construction of the second addition which contained the portico and the east and west wing rooms. During this addition the dormers were closed off and converted to closets.

The third stage was the addition of the northeast structure. This addition is a brick single story structure with a sheet metal roof containing two rooms on the ground floor over a full cellar. This unit differs from the other two units in that the exterior brick wall extends from the cellar floor to the roof, whereas the other units have a squared field stone foundation. It is here where one can determine that unit three was added to unit one. The brick line of unit three, at the connection to unit one, follows the contours of unit one's stone foundation. The stone foundation of unit two butts against the stone foundation of unit one.

Other alterations can be noted in both the cellar in unit one and in unit three. The window areas, in both of these cellars, were much larger than the metal casement windows that presently exist. The opening that once existed indicates that the finished grade then must have been at least two to three feet lower than at present. The original door in the cellar of unit one was blocked up and relocated to its present side. The original location was directly below the back door of the main structure.

There is evidence that the major additions were completed before 1856, and that in 1832, the house was undergoing some repairs.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Robert Piatt was the father of Elizabeth Piatt who became the wife of Dr. Israel T. Canby and the mother of Edward Richard Sprigg Canby, a Bvt. Major General in the United States Army. He was killed by Captain Jack, the leader of the Modocs Tribe, on April 11, 1873, in Siskiyou County, California.

E.R.S. Canby, even after his parents moved to Madison, Indiana, in 1819, often visited and stayed at his grandparents' home in Boone County. An article appearing in the Indianapolis Sentinel in May of 1873, shortly after the death of General Canby, entitled "Canby in Indiana", makes mention, among other things, to a particular visit that E.R.S. Canby made to his grandparents' home in 1832. This article written by John James Piatt, the Poet, also refers to a log cabin where General Canby was born.

C. Sources of Information

1. Bibliography:

Hawkins, John P., Hawkins Family and Connections,
Indianapolis, 1913, p. 54-64.

Heyman, Max. Jr., Prudent Soldier, A Biography of Major General
E.R.S. Canby, Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark., 1959.

Indianapolis Sentinel, May 20, 1873, p. 1, c.5.

Piatt, Elizabeth and Caroline, Memorial Biography of Benjamin H. Piatt
and Elizabeth, His Wife, Gray & Clarkson Printers, 1887.

2. Deeds:

Boone County Court House, Burlington, Kentucky.

Deed Book "C" page 432, October 10, 1816, 1000 acres J.J. Marshall
to I.T. Canby.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house is an interesting example of an Ohio River type that utilizes broad and deep recessed porches to catch the river breezes and form virtually an extra room facing the river view.
2. Condition of house: Interior and exterior is in extremely poor condition due to the elements, neglect and severe vandalism.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The main structure or central area measures 50 feet across the front by 36 feet deep. With the addition of the portico and east and west wing rooms the front measurement increased to 86 feet in width with an addition of 10 feet-8 inches to its depth. The northeast addition is 17 feet-9 inches wide by 39 feet-6 inches long and it abutts the central unit.
2. Foundations: The foundations of the central area and second unit are squared field stone. Brick is used for the foundation of the northeast wing.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Rust color bricks are coated with an ash color wash that is worn. Brick coursing is common header bond (bond course every 6th row).
4. Structural system: Solid brick walls 12 inches thick.
5. Porches: There is a portico at the front of the house. It has wood plank flooring supported by wood beams. At the front of the portico there are four Tuscan style columns of stucco-covered brick. The porch is closed at the sides by the east and west wing rooms making the columns appear to be "in antis".

Note: The dimensions of the columns conform to the proportions for Tuscan style columns.

6. Chimneys: There are four chimneys on the central area, one each for the east and west wing rooms and two for the northeast addition.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: All major doorways into this structure are full-length openings, with the exceptions of the doorways that lead to the courtyard from the east wing room and the northeast addition. All these major doorways have four-light transoms.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Wooden full-length double-hung windows on the ground floor of the central area on the south elevations have four over four-light sash. It should be noted that the bottom section of the shutters for these windows has adjustable slats. These same type windows and shutters are present on the north elevation off the dining room. All other windows are wooden double-hung having six over six-light sash. These are all of a standard type. All shutters for these windows have fixed slats.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The central area has a shingle covered gambrel roof, originally covered with cedar shakes. The northeast addition has a sheet metal hipped roof.

- b. Dormers: There were three dormers each on the south and north faces which were closed off during the addition of the portico and the east and west wing rooms.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. Basement: There is a cellar under the north half of the central area. The west area of this cellar has a face brick herringbone pattern floor. A large field stone cooking fireplace is situated at the end wall. The other section has a dirt floor. Also there is a cellar under the northeast structure. This cellar also has a dirt floor. A blocked-up fireplace is evident only at the south end.
- b. First floor: The entrance opens to a hall that extends the full depth of the central area. There are two rooms to the left of the hall and two rooms to the right. It appears that the rooms to the left were for formal use, the front room being the parlor and the back room the dining room. Between these two rooms there is a huge 9 foot opening that had a pair of 4 foot-6 inch wide doors opening into the dining room. An opening through the floor in the dining room appears to have been for service from the basement area that housed the large cooking fireplace. The two rooms to the right appear to have been a parlor in the front and a kitchen in the back. An entrance to the enclosed stairwell to the second floor is through this latter room as well as an entrance from the hall. All four rooms have their own fireplace with the most noticeable one being in the parlor on the left. This one has a curved brick firebox.
- c. Second floor: The second floor or attic story as referred to in the newspaper article of 1873 consists of three rooms. The main interest would be in the central room which has the stairwell, and the pull-down stair that leads to an opening through the roof.

2. Stairway: The main stair is an enclosed stairway with a door located on the sixth tread. There is evidence that railing once existed.

3. Flooring: Flooring in the central area consists of 5 inch, T&G hardwood planks. Each plank was hand tooled on the bottom to fit the supporting beams below.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Eight inch interior brick walls have approximately 3/4 inch thick plaster applied directly. Plaster is applied to wood lath on the ceiling. All rooms have a wallpaper covering.
5. Doorways and doors: All interior doors are missing.
6. Trim: All baseboards and door trim are painted. Baseboards in the main block are 9 3/8 inches high. All mantels and woodwork are of a simple wood design but yet have a discreetly Grecian effect.
7. Hardware: All of the basic hardware is missing.
8. Lighting: All lighting fixtures are missing.
9. Heating: All ground floor rooms have their own fireplace.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is situated on the Ohio River on a tract of land known as the Upper East Bend Bottoms, just downriver a few miles from the community of Rabbit Hash, Kentucky, which is approximately 37 miles downriver from Cincinnati, Ohio. It overlooks the Ohio River which lies to the south approximately 150 yards. Piatt's Landing which is associated with this house is located on the river downstream approximately 7/8 of a mile. This information is found on Chart #143 of the Ohio River survey made by the Ohio River Board of Engineers, Louisville, Ky., dated 1911-14, revised 1929. It should be noted that the name Piatt, which is the correct spelling, is spelled Pyatt on the Chart.
2. Outbuildings: Many outbuildings were associated with this house. In 1856, the house was offered for sale, and a listing was made in the Cincinnati Gazette describing the farm. It reads:

'Winnfield Cottage' For Sale

THE FARM OF THE LATE BENJAMIN F. CRUTCHFIELD, on the Ohio River, in Boone County, Kentucky, (known as 'Winnfield Cottage'), is offered for sale. The Farm contains 154 acres - one hundred in cultivation, the remainder well timbered. The improvements are a large, Brick Cottage, with eleven rooms, good cellars, bath room and store room, kitchen, wash house, servants' room, ice house, carriage, and smoke house; a well of excellent water and large cistern. The yard is ornamented with fine Trees and choice Shrubbery. On the place are 400 Apple Trees and other select Fruits, a fine Barn with good Stables, Corn Cribs, a good Horse Mill, Corn and Cob Crusher with Threshing Machine attached. Also, Wood Shed and Cow House, and an abundant supply of never failing stockwater. In short, it is one of the best improved Farms in the State."

Most of these buildings are destroyed or on the ground.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Project was undertaken by The Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company under a memorandum of agreement executed by the Louisville District Corps of Engineers, Kentucky State Historic Preservation Officer and the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in accordance with Executive Order 11593 prior to the disposition of the house for the East Bend Power Plant Project.

The data was obtained under the direction of James F. Shaffer, Chief Draftsman, General Engineering Department, The Cincinnati Gas and Electric Company, and by Jerome R. Siemer, Drafting Supervisor, and by Donald E. Velten, Designer, in November 1977.

The records were edited by HABS historian Patricia L. Rowse and were prepared for transmittal to the Library of Congress by HABS architect John A. Burns, AIA.