

The Weddell House  
Cleveland, Ohio

Cuyahoga Co

HABS No. 0-23

HABS

OHIO

18-CLEV

4-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District No. 0-2

Historic American Buildings Survey  
William A. Bohnard, District Officer  
9815 Newton Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

Weddell House  
Cleveland, Ohio

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OH10  
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Owner (or Custodian) WEDDELL HOTEL

Date of Erection Built about 1847

Architect

Builder Peter Weddell

Present Condition In good condition. Addition was  
built in 1859.

Number of Stories Four stories

Materials of Construction Solid brick construction.  
Frame floor construction  
and partition. Tar and  
gravel roof.

Other Existing Records: One photograph  
Two pages of history

Additional Data: Many famous people, including President  
Lincoln have stopped at this hotel.

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Back in '47...when Cleveland was scarcely more than a village...before a single railway or telegraph line entered the town...back in the days of travel by stage coach, sailboat and canal barge...a visionary built a great hotel just off the Public Square.

The Weddell House...built by Peter Weddell in 1847 on the corner of Superior and West 6th Street (then Bank Street) boasted 250 rooms. It was four stories high, of brick and sandstone, and the crowning feature was an octagonal cupola from whose promenade could be had the finest view of the city.. the Terminal Tower of 1847!

Twelve years later, the finest hostelry west of the Alleghenies, had to build a 73 room addition on West 6th street...and later, even this proved inadequate. Public hacks lined the streets nearby waiting for customers. "The Astor House of the Lakes", as it was called by Thurlow Weed, Journalist and president-maker, was the city's leading hotel...and held that honor until the late 70's. The erection of the Rockefeller Building in 1903 necessitated razing part of this fine old hotel. This section had by far, more architectural merit than the buildings now existing.

Here was a genuine bit of the glamorous early history of Ohio, almost forgotten in our midst. The real estate was valuable. There was talk of tearing down what was left of the Weddell House...but instead, the present management decided to remodel it, to bring it up to date...without losing that charm that only years can bring to a place where people have lived.

Today, as yesterday, the Weddell House is in the heart of Cleveland...a convenient downtown location, near to all of the main activities of the city. Now...repainted, re-carpeted, repaired, refurnished...modernized...its doors are

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again open offering hospitable shelter to its guests and preserving one of the city's most interesting landmark.

From 1847 until 1872-3, practically every celebrity who visited Cleveland stopped at the famous Weddell House as a matter of course. Even as late as the turn of the century, when newer hotels had dimmed the glory of "The Astor House of the Lakes" many prominent national figures chose the Weddell House when they came to Cleveland.

Lincoln stopped here on his way to the Inaugural in 1861 and spoke from the balcony of the Weddell House to the crowds gathered below. Horace Greeley, whose flaming editorials were instrumental in stirring up the fires of Civil War, was a guest at the Weddell House and spoke of it on his return to the east as "magnificent".

Jenny Lind, whose lovely voice and equally lovely personality are still remembered, was another and more frequent guest on her tours in the "provinces".

Salmon P. Chase, who as Secretary of the Treasury under Lincoln, put the currency of the country on a sound basis and abolished "wild cat" printing of money by private banks..and for whom the great Chase National Bank was named..was also a guest here.

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