

123 BRECKENRIDGE STREET REAR REAR (HOUSE)
Gettysburg
Adams County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5632

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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123 Breckenridge Street Rear Rear (House)

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Location: Borough of Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania

Significance: Located within the federal Gettysburg Battlefield Historic District and adjacent to the boundary of the borough's Historic District, this dwelling (which contributes to the streetscape) is one of four low-cost, vernacular urban structures built by a Jamaican immigrant during Gettysburg's Historic Context Period, Between the Wars: 1919-1940, in a 154 year-old "blue-collar" neighborhood.

Description: This two-story, side-gabled, frame I-house that currently fronts to the east, stands on the southwest corner of Warner and United alleys about 142 feet north of Breckenridge Street. The dwelling's floor plans are basically two rooms separated by a stairwell, and a one-story shed-roofed, bathroom addition, attached at the structure's southwest corner. A shed-roofed, full facade porch is attached to the south gable facade. Currently the exterior siding, added during the late 1950s, is composed of white asbestos shingles, and all exterior wood trim, gutters and downspouts are painted a rust-maroon color. Windows are two-over-two with double-hung sash.

History: By 18 September 1920 Philip Hoffman had sold to Joseph C. Johns, a 30-by-141.5 foot lot on the north side of Breckenridge Street, bounded on the east and north by Warner and United alleys, and an adjacent lot to the west fronting 60 feet on the street, but extending back only 67.5 feet (site of subject dwelling). Joseph Charles "Chef" Johns, born in Jamaica in 1879, immigrated to the United States at the age of nine, and later worked as a cook at various eateries including the Hotel Gettysburg. By comparing deed, tax and building permit records, and Sanborne Fire Insurance Maps, we can identify the construction date of the subject dwelling as the summer 1923. We speculate that the subject building initially may have served as Johns' residence until the construction of #123 Breckenridge in 1927, and subsequently as an income property.

Source: A History of the Scattered Sites Rehabilitation Project Area in the Second Block of Breckenridge Street, Borough of Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylvania.

Historian: Elwood W. Christ
Historical Consultant
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