

629 DIVISION AVENUE (Double house)
Jeannette
Westmoreland County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6109

HABS
PA
65-JEAN,
42-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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ADDENDUM TO:
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

629 DIVISION AVENUE (DOUBLE HOUSE)

HABS No. PA-6109

LOCATION: 629 Division Avenue, Jeannette, Westmoreland County,
Pennsylvania

SIGNIFICANCE: A high concentration of window, tableware, bottle and specialty glass plants distinguished Jeannette as "The Glass City" early in its history. Significant housing stock consists of company-built row and detached double houses, and several privately constructed dwellings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

By 1890, H. Sellers McKee had built five of this minimal type of double house in the study area. As originally built, each half would have had two rooms per floor: the room toward the street and a small back ell. This particular house stayed under McKee's ownership until 1899 when he divested himself of most of his holdings in Jeannette to the National Glass Company. After National Glass' bankruptcy and reorganization as the McKee Glass Company, company president A.J. Smith owned this and other residential property in the neighborhood. In 1910, during the interim period after National Glass went into receivership but before Smith acquired the property, tenants connected with the glass works rented both sides. Charles Drach, a blacksmith probably employed by the flint works, his wife Anna and their two teenage children lived in No. 629. On the other side was the Lovell family. Charles was a presser in the flint works and he and his wife Anna had eight children, four of whom also worked as decorators and carry-in boys for the glass company. The oldest daughter, Jeannette, was the first baby born in the city in December 1888.

In 1920, Smith sold this and another double house on Division to the Catholic Bishop of Pittsburgh for the Ascension Catholic Church (see HABS No. PA-6092). The church evidently decided they did not need the property for their expansion and sold it to the DeAugustines in 1945. James DeAugustine was a rubber worker and lived here with his wife Rosella and six of their eight children. The building was already a single house when they moved in and more alterations have been done since. The DeAugustine's son John and his wife Jean now own the house. John was a contractor and also worked for the Elliot Company; his wife Jean works for Sacred Heart School. The DeAugustines have three children.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

This house, though substantially altered, is the best surviving example of one type of the early double house built in the neighborhood. This type is smaller than the others, with the side gable portion of the house parallel to the street being only one room deep in plan. Two-story ells appear on the earliest maps and one-story projections to either side of those were added by 1910. The second-floor additions to the rear and the full-width front porch were added after 1950. Other changes include the window openings on the ground floor and the porches on either side. The building is now a single house.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Insurance Maps of Jeannette, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1891, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910, 1916, 1925, 1950.

Deed Books. Recorder of Deeds, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania, 291/14, 468/386, 481/461, 554/454, 555/153, 691/206, 1208/402, 1904/1016, 1970/983.

Tax Assessment Books. Westmoreland County Tax Assessment Office, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1910 census manuscripts on microfilm.

Interview, John DeAugustine, resident, 629 Division Avenue, August 9, 1990.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

In February 1987, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) began a multi-year historical and architectural documentation project in southwestern Pennsylvania. Carried out in conjunction with America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), HABS and HAER undertook a comprehensive documentation of Jeannette, documenting industries, housing and cultural institutions.