

Ashtabula (Lewis Ladson Gibbes House)
0.1 mile northwest of State Route 88,
approximately 1.25 miles northeast
of town limit
Pendleton vicinity
Anderson County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-328

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ASHTABULA
(Lewis Ladson Gibbes House)

HABS No. SC-328

Location: 0.1 mile northwest of State Route 88,
approximately 1.25 miles northeast of town
limit.

Significance: An interesting example of the Greek Revival style
as developed in "up-country" South Carolina.
Ashtabula was home to a succession of prominent
agriculturalists and community leaders.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1828. Under the porch there is a cornerstone inscribed "1828 CDG. NBG." (the initials are presumed to be those of two of sons of the original owners, namely Charles Drayton Gibbes and Nathaniel Bowen Gibbes.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The original owner was Lewis Ladson Gibbes. Gibbes died in 1828, but the house remained in the Gibbes family until 1837, when it was purchased by Dr. O.R. Broyles. In 1851, James Latta purchased the house, and it remained in his possession until 1863, when Robert Adger bought the house for his daughter, Mrs. O.A. Bowen. Later, in 1867, another of Adger's son-in-laws, William Dalton Warren, purchased the house. Thirteen years later, the property was purchased by Francis Pelzner. Circa 1962, the Mead Corporation purchased the plantation with the intention of creating a timber farm. The house was deeded by the corporation to the Foundation for Historic Restoration in the Pendleton Area.
4. Alterations and additions: It is believed that during the 1850's, the house was doubled in size by additions to the rear, and that the roof balustrade and porches were added. On the interior, the stair in the central hall was relocated to the rear after the house's enlargement. Partially restored in 1962.

B. Historical Context: The early owners of Ashtabula were all noted agricultural figures and were prominent members of their community. The original owner, Lewis Ladson Gibbes, was a successful farmer. His wife, Maria Drayton, was a niece of Arthur Middleton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a member of the prominent Drayton family of Charleston. Their son, Lewis R. Gibbes, became a noted botanist. The next owner of the house, Dr. O.R. Broyles, was also interested in agricultural study and experimentation, and he

invented and advocated advanced agricultural techniques and implements. Other prominent agriculturalists who owned the home are James Latta, who was instrumental in introducing new breeds of cattle to the area, and Francis Pelzner, cotton mill magnate.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: An early 19th century plantation house with interesting Greek Revival style details and features, representative of "Up-Country" practice.
2. Condition of fabric: Fairly good, undergoing limited restoration.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Two stories; four bays by five bays; about 40' x 50', excluding porches; rectangular with attached outbuilding.
2. Foundations: About three feet high, stone piers with modern infilling of cinder blocks.
3. Walls: Wood frame with clapboards; flush siding under porch. Presently painted white.
4. Porches: A one-story porch extends across the south, east and north facades. It has a shed roof, wooden floor and simple railing. Columns are square paneled, and have anta-type capitals; there are responding pilasters at the ends. Portions of the porch on the north facade have been enclosed.
5. Chimneys: There is a symmetrical pair of interior brick chimneys.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is centered on the south front. A single door with two vertical moulded panels is flanked by sidelights above paneling, and has a glazed transom above; the whole forms a rectangular motif with plain trim containing plain corner blocks. The door retains an original bronze knocker (shaped like half a lyre).

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- b. Windows and shutters: Openings are rectangular and framed by rather wide architrave trim. Sash are double hung, six lights over six lights. All windows are equipped with louvered shutters. Some windows opening to the porch have hinged panels below the sill. Most of the glazing is original.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof is hipped, of low pitch, and has a deck enclosed by a simple railing. The sloping surfaces are shingled; the deck is covered with standing seam tin.
- b. Cornice: There is a single box cornice, now equipped with sheet-metal hanging gutters and conductors.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: First Floor: There is a central hall with partitions between front and rear rooms. The hall opens to front and rear porches. The second floor is similar except for the lack of porches. (Note: Originally there was one room on each side of the central hall, on each floor; the rear rooms are additions.) First floor rooms are 20' x 7 1/2" x 20'2" (two), 20'-5" x 14'-10 1/2", 20'-2" x 12'-2 1/2".
2. Stairways: The open-well stair, now at the rear end of the hall, is original but it was moved when rear rooms were added.
3. Flooring: Original boards, five to six inches wide.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls are lined with wide horizontal boarding. In some places there are remains of old wall paper, apparently dating from the early 19th century. Ceilings are plastered.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Doors are thin, with six moulded panels.
6. Decorative features and trim: Openings have architrave trim. Fireplace mantels are wood; except for one of cast iron which is a replacement. Major rooms have wooden cornices.
7. Notable hardware: Doors have original cast-iron butt hinges; some of them are of the lift-type.

8. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating: Heating originally was with fireplaces in all major rooms. A warm-air system has been installed in recent times.
- b. Lighting: No original fixtures remain.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and generally setting: The house is in a rural area of gently rolling land. It faces southward.
2. Outbuildings: A brick two-story kitchen is connected by a short one-story passageway to the northwest corner of the house. It is rectangular in plan and has two rooms on each story, separated by a chimney and a small winding stair in a square compartment. At the second floor this stair has a stile, which was necessary to leave headroom below. This building has a hip roof and is four bays long. There is also a detached dairy, of brick, one story, with a gable roof. No indication of any formal landscaping.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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