

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 20 1986

date entered APR 17 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Valentine Schneikert House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1234 Lexington Road na not for publication

city, town Louisville na vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ben Tyler and Charles Williams

street & number 419 Pine Street

city, town Louisville na vicinity of state Kentucky 40206

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Court House

street & number 6th and Jefferson Streets

city, town Louisville state Kentucky 40202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1979 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state KY

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<u>na</u> excellent	<u>na</u> deteriorated	<u>na</u> unaltered	<u>X</u> original site
<u>na</u> good	<u>na</u> ruins	<u>X</u> altered	<u>na</u> moved date _____
<u>X</u> fair	<u>na</u> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Valentine Schneikert House (Photo #1) is located on the northwestern perimeter of the neighborhood known as Irish Hill. Its hill top site affords a view of the pork packing houses and the Butchertown neighborhood (National Register, 1976) beyond.

The Valentine Schneikert House (Photo #2) is an astylar, two story brick house with a symmetrically arranged five bayed facade. The centered entrance (Photo #9) has a hooded, bracketed surround with linear bas relief enhancing the implied pilasters on either side of the front door. Behind, a small vestibule leads to a four light, fully arched door and surround. Flanking the building's entrance are two four-over-four windows which bear the shadows of dog-eared, cast iron hood moldings. The absence of these hood moldings gives a certain austerity to the building's facade but allows the gently arched windows and voussoirs to be visible. The second floor is dominated by a wall dormer (Photo #8) that is reminiscent of the square roof tower so common in Tuscan Villa style Italianate houses. Its window is also a segmentally arched Italianate style window. The two sets of flanking windows have a six-over-six light configuration but have no hoods because their top most horizontal member interrupts the building's strongly Italianate, bracketed, denticulated cornice. A low pitched, hipped roof tops the building.

The interior of the main block of the Valentine Schneikert House is based on a double pile floor plan with a central hall passage (Map #1). Several steps lead to a small vestibule and the central hallway beyond. A curved stairway dominates the hall. The four rooms that flank the central passage each have high ceilings, dog eared window and door surrounds and a continuous picture molding as well as fireplaces in every room. (Photos #10, 11 and 12).

The second floor of this main block (Map #2) is more modest than the ground floor. The only portion to receive full ceiling height is the hallway where the stair terminates. The flanking rooms have coved ceilings that are reflective of the pyramidal roof above. There are no chimneys on the second floor.

A shotgun floor plan was employed in the building's rear projection. On the ground floor, each doorway is axially aligned and is connected to the primary building block by a single parlor doorway. Two of the three rooms in this section have fireplaces (Photo #13 & 14) while the third room has a chimney through which a cooking stove was vented. Running four-fifths the length of the rear portion is a porch of tongue and groove construction (Photo #3). Adjacent to the side porch, a single room dominated by an added stairwell completes this portion's rectangular shape. There have been additions to the rear projection. One enclosed a portion of the side porch and another was a shed roofed porch that was added to the rear (Photo #4) and spans almost the entire length of this secondary facade.

The second floor of the rear section is even more modest than the second floor of the main block. A central hall passage serves flanking rooms and a low ceiling gives this space a cramped feeling. There are no significant architectural details in this portion.

The Valentine Schneikert House has a long and complex evolution. The main block of the house dates from circa 1868. The rear portion of the house, in all probability, is a later addition. Some physical indicators of this are that the rear portion is off set from the

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<u>na</u> prehistoric	<u>na</u> archeology-prehistoric	<u>na</u> community planning	<u>na</u> landscape architecture	<u>na</u> religion
<u>na</u> 1400-1499	<u>na</u> archeology-historic	<u>na</u> conservation	<u>na</u> law	<u>na</u> science
<u>na</u> 1500-1599	<u>na</u> agriculture	<u>na</u> economics	<u>na</u> literature	<u>na</u> sculpture
<u>na</u> 1600-1699	<u>x</u> architecture	<u>na</u> education	<u>na</u> military	<u>na</u> social/
<u>na</u> 1700-1799	<u>na</u> art	<u>na</u> engineering	<u>na</u> music	<u>na</u> humanitarian
<u>x</u> 1800-1899	<u>na</u> commerce	<u>na</u> exploration/settlement	<u>na</u> philosophy	<u>na</u> theater
<u>na</u> 1900-	<u>na</u> communications	<u>x</u> industry	<u>na</u> politics/government	<u>na</u> transportation
		<u>na</u> invention		<u>na</u> other (specify)

Specific dates c.1868 **Builder/Architect** Valentine Schneikert (owner-builder)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Valentine Schneikert House is an early example of Italianate style architecture in the Irish Hill neighborhood. It was built circa 1868 by Valentine Schneikert, a prominent figure in Louisville's brick making industry, and is one of the earliest extant brick houses constructed in this eastern portion of the city. It is an excellent example of its style and makes a positive contribution to the area's built environment.

The Irish Hill neighborhood, as it would later be named, was largely rural in character in the 1860s. During the third quarter of the nineteenth century the eastern perimeter of the city extended only to the Phoenix Hill and Butchertown neighborhoods. Both were populated primarily by German and Irish working class immigrants who worked at nearby breweries or meat packing houses. The architecture in these areas reflected the ethnic and social origins of its early inhabitants.

Both the Butchertown and Phoenix Hill neighborhoods were geographically flat while the site where the Valentine Schneikert House now stands was where the first perceptible change in land elevation occurred. The steep grade of the hill on which Schneikert would build his house would provide outstanding views and was quite conducive to hilltop development.

The area to the east of the City of Louisville was pastoral in character. (Map #3) Just in front of where the Schneikert House would eventually be built was Beargrass Creek. It served as a natural demarcation between Irish Hill and the Butchertown and Phoenix Hill neighborhoods beyond and was also a popular spot for family picnics. Billy Goat Hill was located to the northeast of the Irish Hill neighborhood and earned its name for the hundreds of goats that grazed its pasture land. The city workhouse, where law breakers labored quarrying stone was right next to the goat farm. Cave Hill and Eastern Cemeteries shared a common boundry and were just southeast of Irish Hill. Cave Hill cemetery in particular was landscaped to take advantage of naturally occurring hills, valleys and streams.

The eventual development of these previously rural areas can be attributed to the diminishing availability of land in the center city, and increase in the number of immigrants arriving to Louisville and improvements in transportation, including mule drawn street cars, that made the outlying areas more accessible.

Building at the perimeter of the eastwardly expanding city was quite a logical choice for Valentine Schneikert. Not only would the hilltop site be a spectacular location upon which to build a house but he and his family would be close to other Germans with which he shared an ethic heritage. In addition, his brickmaking skills would be a sought after commodity as the city expanded and more and more homes and businesses were being built in the surrounding areas.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Louisville East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	1	1	3	5	0	4	2	3	4	0	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state na code county code

state na code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joanne Weeter, Researcher

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission

date March 6, 1986

street & number 727 W. Main Street

telephone (502) 587-3501

city or town Louisville

state Kentucky 40202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



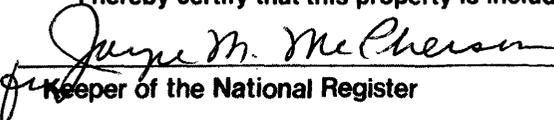
title State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 17, 1986

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register



date 4/17/86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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main building block, the base board has a different profile and, the windows (although they have the same light configuration) are located closer to the ground level. The mantels in the rear section are stylistically reflective of a later time period. One is Craftsman (Photo #13) and was probably manufactured in Zanesville, Ohio while the other is late Victorian. (Photo 14) Both are quite different from the classical cast iron fireplaces (Photo 11) found in the main building block. Despite these indicators and stylistic differences there are no visible change in the texture or pattern of the exterior brick (Photos #5 & 6) to indicate two periods of construction and similarly the cornice is continuous throughout the house forming an unusually smooth visual transition between sections.

It is difficult to discern the year in which the rear addition was constructed. There are no maps or transactions of ownership that would indicate the year in which the change occurred. In all likelihood, judging from the mantels, windows, and moldings, the addition was constructed between 1880 and 1900. Since the transition between sections is so smooth, it may be that the same person who was responsible for the planning and execution of the construction of the main building block erected the rear addition as well. In any case, extreme care and sensitivity was taken to insure that each section of the building harmonized with the other.

To the southeast of the Valentine Schneikert House is a small out building.(Map #5). It has been altered to such a degree by the removal of the significant architectural details and by the application of synthetic veneer to the building's exterior that the original building's style and function are imperceptible. It, in no way contributes to the sense of time and place of the property being nominated and, therefore, is not being submitted along with the Valentine Schneikert House for National Register listing.

Overall the Valentine Schneikert House has suffered from neglect and disuse. Some of the primary and secondary exterior facade details have been removed. The interior has suffered mostly from plaster deterioration but most of its original details are intact. Despite its present condition, the house is structurally sound. The present owners of the house are young and energetic and welcome the challenge to make this home a successful tax act project. The surrounding Irish Hill neighborhood is in its infancy in terms of rehabilitation but enough investment activity and interest in historic properties has occurred in this and surrounding neighborhoods to assure the present owners that this area is a prime area for rehabilitation.

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The first development to occur in the Irish Hill neighborhood was in 1859 when Benjamin J. Adams and John C. Hull purchased a parcel of land bound by Lexington and Payne Streets. Almost simultaneously, Valentine Schneikert was acquiring, lot by lot, land in the area. In 1867, Schneikert purchased a plot from William B. Hamilton known as "The Adam and Hull Pork House Property" that is a significant feature of the 1873 City map. Already a prominent figure in the city's brick making industry, Schneikert paid \$3000 of the \$9000 purchase price for the land in brick.

By 1870, Valentine Schneikert was living on the south side of Workhouse Road with his brickyard listed between Cooper and Pine Streets. Sometime around 1876, Valentine Schneikert died leaving a widow named Julia. Eight years later, William and Julia Schneikert and George and Anna Schule, heirs to the Valentine Schneikert estate, resubdivided the portion of Adams and Hull's addition bound by Cooper, Hull, Pine and Lexington. Thereafter known as Schneikert's Subdivision, (Map #4) the portion of land to the southwest of the Valentine Schneikert House is dotted with modest, single story, vernacular shotgun type houses that, because of their close proximity to one another on an unpaved, dead-end street have an alley-like character. (Photo #7)

Just as the Adams and Hull's Port House property was a tribute to the area's meat packing industry, so the Schneikert Brickyard was a tribute to Louisville's growth as a City. According to the Louisville City Guide and Business Directory of 1869-1870, the City's population was 150,000; an increase of 25,000 in only three years. With such a rise in population it was no wonder there would be a resultant building boom. In the same year the Board of Trade reported thirty-five brickmaking establishments manned by six-hundred operators. Schneikert's Brickyard was the third such operation in the city and prospered while providing building materials to the many houses being built in the eastern portion of the city.

The Valentine Schneikert House is a fine example of the Italianate style architecture. Built with Tuscan villa style box-like massing, a symmetrical facade arrangement (Photo #2) and a central roof projection reminiscent of a square roof tower, it is a reflection of the Romantic mood of the day. The Italianate style in American architecture was a re-interpretation of the English Italian Style inspired by the Italian Renaissance. The Picturesque movement in American landscape and architecture was largely a product of pattern book writers of the 1800s like Andrew Jackson Downing. Downing's writings encouraged common builders and trained architects alike to assess the naturally occurring terrain and to build an appropriately picturesque house upon the site so that the house and landscape compliment one another.

In keeping with Romantic Architectural trends, it was fashionable to build individual houses that were set far apart from their neighbors and to build houses that took advantage of the naturally occurring terrain. Unfortunately, not many intact examples of this picturesque movement exist in the City of Louisville today. The Peterson-Dumesnil House (Natural Register, 1975), for instance, is located in nearby Crescent Hill and has a site with characteristics similar to the Valentine Schneikert House. However, this Italianate style house, with its central roof tower, has its primary entrance facing flatlands and

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seemingly turns its back on the gently sloping hill behind it. Repton (National Register, 1982) better addresses its hilltop site and is an elegant example of the Classical Revival style. Sadly, it has suffered from encroching urbanization. It has been enveloped by 1950s style fourplex apartments that has seriously diminished the site integrity of this once rural home. Rose Hill (National Register, 1981), located in the Highlands neighborhood, has been fortunate enough to have retained its picturesque setting and rural character. Although this Italianate house is now located in a densely populated portion of the city, the surrounding neighborhood was developed in a manner harmonious with the original house to the area. The Cornelia Bush House (National Register, 1982) is located in southcentral Louisville and was designed in the Colonial Revival style. Situated upon a hilltop site at the foot of Kenwood Hill it is surrounded by woodlands and retains its rural character. It, along with the Valentine Schneikert House, is one of the only surviving nineteenth century houses built on a rural hilltop site that still retains its site integrity.

The Valentine Schneikert House is the largest brick residence in the Irish Hill neighborhood. Its closest substantial brick neighbor that dates from the 1870s is the Nicholas Finzer House (National Register, 1979). It too is oriented in a northwesterly direction and is a fine example of the Renaissance Revival style.

The Schneikert's chose a rural site high upon a hill with a northwesterly (Photo #1 & 7) orientation upon which to build their Italianate cottage residence. The panoramic view the family must have enjoyed is certainly in keeping with the Picturesque movement of the era. The use of brick as a building material was advocated by Downing because of its "...solidity and permanence appropriate for a country house..." Similarly the country house was to express its purpose through the building's language. Here the facade arrangement suggests a close knit family structure that is securely affluent. The long, tall Italianate windows on the first floor are indicative of spacious airy room inside as Downing suggested was appropriate for a cottage residence. The second floor windows, however, present serious aesthetic problems. Downing writes "However satisfactory such dwellings might otherwise be, the expression of low and confined chambers, conveyed by the cramped windows, destroys all pleasure in contemplating their exteriors." Further aesthetic questions develop when one considers that these second story windows merge with and interrupt the rhythm of the buildings heavily bracketed, denticulated cornice (Photo #2). Another unique aspect of this building is the centrally located wall dormer that was the builder's interpretation of Tuscan villa style squared roof tower as seen in pattern books of the 1800s. (Photo #8) Such a feature as classically conceived would afford the home owner with an excellent view of the surrounding countryside. As executed, it was not so much a window to look out of as a means by which more head room was made for the low ceilinged second floor.

The Valentine Schneikert House is important in its representation of Louisville's rural building stock. It is a significant reminder of Valentine Schneikert's prominence in Louisville's brick making industry and his role in the development of the Irish Hill neighborhood. The Schneikert House is an outstanding example of the Italianate style as interpreted in the 1860s.

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The building being nominated occupies a portion of City of Louisville Block 68E Lot 49. (Map #6). Only the building and an area extending ten feet from the exterior walls of the building are being submitted for possible National Register listing. This is because the lot is large and may be the site of future development that may endanger future National Register eligibility.