

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

MAY 31 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Braxtan, Thomas, Newby, House other names/site number Braxtan Hotel

2. Location

street & number 210 North Gospel Street city, town Paoli state IN code IN county Orange code 117 zip code 47454

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [X] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal. Category of Property: [X] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0 buildings, 0 sites, 0 structures, 0 objects, 0 Total). Name of related multiple property listing: N/A. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: John T. Costello, Date: 5-4-89, State or Federal agency and bureau: Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____ State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: [X] entered in the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined not eligible for the National Register. [] removed from the National Register. [] other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper: Andrew Byrum, Date of Action: 6/29/89

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwellingDOMESTIC: hotel

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotelDOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Queen AnneNeo-Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Sandstonewalls WOOD: WeatherboardBRICKroof ASPHALTother GLASS

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Braxtan House is a large, Queen Anne style, two and one-half-story, frame building which stands just one block north of Paoli Courthouse Square. The 1893 residence was built on a lot which is terraced above Gospel Street. The site itself is on a high elevation, giving a panoramic view of the Courthouse Square from this Nineteenth Century residential area.

Irregular massing and a variety of wooden ornamentation indicate the Queen Anne style of the Braxtan House. Belt coursing of fishscale shingles, fan-shaped corner braces, and the turned posts of the rear porch make the Braxtan House a good example of Queen Anne detailing.

The main elevation of the house faces west (photo 1). A foundation of coursed, roughly finished sandstone supports this clapboarded frame house. Two elements dominate the west elevation: the flanking one story porches, and an off-center two and one-half story semi-octagonal gabled projection. The projection has one-over-one double-hung sash windows in the corner bays on both stories. This window type typical on most of the exterior. To the front of the projection, are wide double-hung windows with stained glass upper sash. Simple boards running from sill to header frame these windows.

A hood skirt or beltcourse of fishscale shingles divides the first and second stories of the projection, and is used on all sides of the entire house. Fan-shaped ornaments with sawtooth edges shade the second floor corner windows of the projection. An entablature is found on all sides of the house. It has a scalloped frieze of half-circles and triangles below a paneled area, with modillion-like brackets between the panels.

A steep gable roof covers the projection. It has a pent roof, so that the wall area is recessed. A small fixed window is centered in the gable end. The window has an entablature header molding. Fishscale shingles surround the window, and fan ornaments fill the corners. A semi-circular arched decorative truss crowns the gable. Two shed roofed dormers were added to the sides of the gable roof during the 1920s.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1893 - 1939

Significant Dates

1893

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

McVey, Ben

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Braxtan House, the best remaining example of Queen Anne architecture in Paoli, has figured prominently in the business and social life of Paoli for decades. Mr. Braxtan was one of Paoli's leading businessmen for six decades and the family was active in social, civic and religious groups of the community.

Paoli, the seat of Orange County, was founded in 1816. The town has several examples of Greek Revival and Italianate architecture, but a series of five fires in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have eliminated a major portion of the town's historic architecture. Only three buildings which retain some measure of integrity remain to represent the Queen Anne style, and the Braxtan House is the finest and most intact example in the city.

Thomas Newby Braxtan (1824-1907) was born in Paoli, where his parents migrated around 1810 with other settlers who came here from North Carolina. His father, Hiram Braxtan, a Quaker, left the south because he so despised slavery. His feelings were so strong, he changed the spelling of the family name, changing the o to an a to distinguish himself from southern relatives. Hiram was the first president of Paoli Town Board.

In 1848, T. N. Braxtan began a mercantile business on the Paoli square, Braxtan Brothers Store. He operated the store with a brother through the 1860s when he began devoting more time to additional interests and began to deal in livestock, purchase land and operate quarries. His quarries, located in the northwest part of Orange County, produced whetstones which were milled and shipped, as many as 4000 cases at a time, to destinations in Europe and South America. One quarry remains in operation today. Mr. Braxtan owned several large tracts of land. Lumber for his home is said to have come from his timberland. One tract of 600 acres bordered the west edge of Paoli. Another large tract, which he farmed, was along White River near Haysville in an adjacent county.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Dillard, Arthur R. Orange County Heritage. Paoli, IN; Arthur Dillard, 1971.

History of Lawrence, Orange, and Washington Counties, Indiana. Chicago: Goodspeed Brothers, 1884.

The Paoli Republican. Files on T. N. Braxtan, Braxtan Hotel, and Ruth Braxtan, and Samuel H. Braxtan.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

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 Zone Easting Northing

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 51 in the Town of Paoli. The lot is 75' wide and 150' deep.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the historic property boundary.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brenda Cornwell
 organization _____ date 7/29/87
 street & number 214 West Main Street telephone 812/723-2485
 city or town Paoli state IN zip code 47454

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Two porches flank the projection. These porches originally had Queen Anne style turned posts and other ornamentation, but were rebuilt in the 1920s in a Neo-Classical Revival style. Both porches now feature brick plinths, wood Tuscan order columns, turned balusters, and a plain frieze, all supporting a shallow pitched hip roof. There is a small corner porch to the north and an L-shaped wrap-around porch to the south (Photo 2). The south porch entrance has a cut-away corner.

There is one transomed entrance under the north porch, with one window centered above this door. Underneath the south porch, there are two windows on the west wall. The first floor window is similar to those on the front of the projecting bays. A typical window is centered over this window on the second floor. Above the south porch, a cross gable of similar design to the front gable covers the south half of the main roof. A steep hip roof dominates the main portion of the house. Asphalt shingles now cover the roof.

Following the wrap-around porch to the south elevation, one finds a gabled projection to the east and a recessed section, which is covered by the porch (Photo 2). Under the porch on the south wall is a transomed entrance and typical window. A window with a "Queen Anne" upper sash (small square panes bordering a large central pane) and an entablature header. A 1920s shed dormer was added to the south side of the main hip roof.

The gabled projection has windows on its sides and two windows on each story of its south wall. Above the bracketed entablature is a pent-roofed gable similar in design to the front gable. The window in this gable end has a semi-circular tympanum with a sunburst design.

The north elevation has a gabled area with an offset window between the first and second floors and one centered window on the second floor. The shingle beltcourse, entablature, and gable detailing are similar to the front gable projection.

The rear or east elevation lacks the complex massing of other elevations on the house (Photo 3). This is probably because the rear of the house was originally part of an 1850s house which

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previously stood on the site. The house was three bays wide and two stories tall. In building the 1893 residence, the structural shell of the older house was salvaged and moved 180 degrees to face east rather than west. No stylistic elements remain, on the exterior or interior, of the older house. Only a change in ceiling height indicates the reuse of the 1850s house.

A shed roofed porch covers the first story of the rear elevation (Photo 3). The porch has turned posts, scroll brackets and a frieze with cut out oval and diamond shapes. Latticework covers the north bay of the porch. The south bay of the porch was enclosed to create a bathroom at a later date. Under the porch, there are two transomed doors and two typical windows in the arrangement of a double-pen house (from the left, door/window/door/window).

This placement of openings may be a remnant from the older house, but the sash and doors are more recent in date. There are two windows on the second floor, one is roughly centered, the other window is placed to the north. A wide shed dormer with three pairs of double-hung windows was added to the east roof during the 1920s.

The interior of the Braxtan House features good examples of Queen Anne and Eastlake style woodwork. The main entrance is from a small porch on the northwest front.

The front door is very ornate with an eight-sided glass panel in the upper half. All doors on the first and second floors have transoms. Many of the doors are grained oak over pine.

The vestibule features an open oak, spindled staircase which leads east to a landing and turns south to reach the second floor (Photo 4). To the south of the vestibule are double parlors, separated by pocket doors (Photo 5). Behind the bay parlor is a small hall, accessible from the vestibule, with doors opening from it to the kitchen, dining room and the south parlor. From the south parlor, on either side of a fireplace, are pocket doors opening into the dining room and a southeast bedroom (Photo 6).

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There are fireplaces, for stoves, in the bay and south parlors and the bedrooms above the south parlor (Photo 7). There is evidence of fireplaces in the bay bedroom and the southeast bedroom on the second floor. They have been plastered over and closed.

On the second floor are seven rooms opening from a complex center hall where a north-south hall is bisected by an east-west hall. Over the vestibule is a nursery, connected to the hall and the bay bedroom. It is now a bath. One other bedroom has been converted into a bath.

On the third floor, a narrow north-south hall runs in front of four small rooms. An east-west hall Ts into that hall. At the end of the wider, east-west hall is a larger room in the front gable and smaller dormer rooms on either side of the hall.

The bay rooms on the first and second floors have stained glass upper sash (Photos 8 and 9). The south parlor and bedroom above it have small stained glass panes encircling a clear, large pane (Queen Anne sash). The stairway landing window has a stained glass upper sash and there is a stained glass transom above the front door.

Floors in the front of the first floor are narrow oak. The back of the first floor has chestnut flooring in wide planks. The second floor is all poplar wide plank flooring. The third floor is pine over the original attic floor.

Woodwork in the bay parlor, bay bedroom and an east second floor bedroom is cherry. The south parlor, dining room, stairway and second floor hall have oak woodwork, much of it quarter sawn. One room on the second floor has maple woodwork. Another second floor room has an unidentified native wood, possibly apple. All third floor rooms have painted pine woodwork. The dining room and kitchen have wainscoting on three walls.

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When that farm sold just months before his death in 1907, the auction gross of \$10,000 was called one of the largest farm sales ever in Southern Indiana. As a stock trader, Braxtan became widely known in this part of the state. For decades he made several trips each year with large numbers of horses, cattle, and mules to New Orleans and other southern markets. His death report in the Paoli Republican claims he probably bought and sold more stock than any man in the state. He was credited with greatly improving the quality of local stock.

Mr. Braxtan was fond of horses and maintained a stable on a lot behind his Gospel Street home. Each summer his horses were on the county fair harness racing circuit.

In 1893, he served on the World's Fair Auxiliary and was a member of the Council on Farm Culture and Cereal Industry. He was instrumental in an effort to bring the railroad to Paoli and in 1871 was elected president of the Orange County Railroad Society, formed to extend the tracks from Orleans to Paoli. A railroad siding on the west edge of Paoli continues to be known as Braxtan's Switch.

Braxtan was a Whig, who became active in Republican politics. He was a candidate for state representative and later for Congress, defeated by narrow margins in both instances. He was president for two terms of the County Council.

A birthright Quaker, T. N. Braxtan became active in Paoli Presbyterian Church in 1854 with his second wife, Emily. He and his third wife, Ruth Adeline Vance Braxtan, continued to be very active in the congregation. A stained, leaded glass window in the church bears their names and another is dedicated to the memory of Emily.

In January 1893, Thomas Newby Braxtan purchased property on North Gospel Street from Judge Arthur Simpson's widow, Mary. Judge Simpson's home, three units wide and two tall, was situated on the property.

The Braxtans salvaged the shell of the Simpson house, turned it 180 degrees on the lot to face the east or back of the lot and

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constructed the three story Victorian front incorporating the Simpson house into the new structure. Accounts in the 1893 issues of the Paoli Republican follow the construction of the house from the stone foundation to the completion. The newspaper credits Mrs. Braxtan with design of the house working with local carpenter Ben McVey and his crew of carpenters.

Mr. Braxtan died in 1907. His wife, Ruth, died in 1915. The home passed to the possession of a son, Samuel Hiram Braxtan, who with his wife, Dora, and their four children, had already been residing in the home with the elder Mrs. Braxtan. The house continued to be a social gathering place in the community. Mrs. Braxtan opened her home to ladies club meetings, serving refreshments to the clubs and Paoli High School junior-senior receptions, the forerunner to the modern day prom, were staged at the Braxtan's commodious double parlors. Samuel Braxtan, later joined by his brother, Frank, assumed operation of the family business, Braxtan Brothers Store on the town square. Sam had earlier worked with his uncle in the business. In 1897, Sam and Frank constructed a two story brick building on the Paoli Courthouse Square to house the mercantile business. That building continues to stand but in an altered condition, housing office space below and apartments on the second floor. Sam and his family resided in a portion of the store building until he moved his family 'home' after his father's death to reside with and care for his mother until her death. Sam remained in business at Braxtan Brothers Store for 35 years. In other business dealings, he became one of the first oil inspectors for the state of Indiana. He served two terms on Paoli School Board and was active in Republican politics, although he never held a post higher than that of precinct committeeman. When Samuel H. Braxtan died in 1950, he was considered Paoli's oldest businessman and the Paoli Republican reporting his ties with Braxtan Brothers Store, spoke of the important part it played in the "commercial life of the town."

It was in 1924 that the home first began to serve as a hotel-boarding house. The first patrons were female school teachers, new businessmen in town and clerical staff for local industry, many who spent the week and returned to homes and family elsewhere on weekends, holidays and vacations. Mrs. Braxtan served her guests meals. The home passed to Samuel and Dora's heirs and

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while owned by a son, and two daughters, at various times through the '40s through the '70s, it continued to be operated as a hotel. The house left the Braxtan family in 1978 when Sam Braxtan, Jr., who resides on an island he owns in the Bahamas, sold it. However, the new owner continued to operate as a hotel, residing there, as the Braxtan family had. The house sold in March of 1987 to current owners, Terry and Brenda Cornwell, who have continued to operate the hotel. After rehabilitation, the Braxtan House has re-opened as a bed and breakfast inn.