

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **JUL 27 1983**

date entered

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

1. Name

historic GHENT HISTORIC DISTRICT

and/or common

2. Location

street & number US 42, Fishing, Ann, Main Cross, Ferry, <sup>water, union, and L. ber,</sup> not for publication

city, town Ghent vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Carroll code 041

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Carroll County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Carrollton state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date September 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Ghent, a small Ohio River community of approximately 450, is located in the northeastern corner of Carroll County, Kentucky, directly opposite Vevay, Indiana. The village is equidistant from Louisville and Cincinnati and eight miles upriver from Carrollton, the largest town and seat of government in Carroll County. Ghent was originally located in Gallatin County, but became a part of Carroll County when the latter was established by the legislature in 1838. Overshadowed by its neighboring county seat towns, Ghent grew slowly during most of the nineteenth century, and expanded little after 1910. The nominated properties are, therefore, almost exclusively vestiges of the nineteenth century period.

The proposed Ghent Historic District contains approximately 100 structures, of which over 80 contribute to the historic character of the district and 8 are intrusions. Ten of the contributing buildings are commercial in nature, while eight structures were built as churches and institutional buildings. The vast majority of the district is comprised of single family residential buildings, which give the village a quiet, less-hurried ambiance. Except for a small section of new homes located west of Fishing Street, the area outside of the original plat has remained essentially unchanged and agricultural in character.

Ghent (pronounced Jent) was platted in 1814 on a symmetrical grid plan of nine squares. Each square is fronted by a wide street and divided into twelve rectangular lots measuring 66' x 165'. The original plat also included a system of alleys, a street along the Ohio River (Water Street), and provision for a public square on the south side of Main Street. Both Water Street and the alleys have since been abandoned, and the Public Square currently serves as the location of Ghent's fire station and municipal building (photo 30).

Unlike some of its larger contemporaries, such as Carrollton and Vevay, Indiana, Ghent's historical development was predominately residential. Only a modest core of commercial buildings facing Main Cross Street bespeaks the town's commercial heritage. In general, the town's earliest and most stylistic examples of historic architecture are residential structures situated on the main axial streets, Main Cross and Highway 42. The side streets, although possessing an occasional larger scale building, are characterized by more restrained examples of frame vernacular dwellings. The concentration of buildings shown on Water Street in 1882 no longer exists because of repeated flooding along this low section of riverbank.

The architectural style of the buildings included in the proposed district are primarily of the early vernacular period with low scale, three and five bay frame houses covered with weatherboard siding. Although examples of the more pretentious, two-story center passage houses are found, it is the unusual concentration of small scale, hall parlor structures that give Ghent its distinctive architectural character. Several of these houses are located on Highway 42 and Union Streets (photos 8, 36, 41). Other examples still exist throughout the district but have been covered with aluminum siding and other indignities.

# 8. Significance

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Ghent, so named in 1813 by the Kentucky Statesman Henry Clay, is a well-preserved Ohio River village, containing representative examples of historic architecture dating from the early and mid-nineteenth centuries. Along with such Kentucky towns as Augusta, Petersburg, and Warsaw, Ghent maintains a strong sense of its early riverine heritage that has generally been lost in the large river towns. The early settlement and platting of Ghent (1814) occurred by virtue of its location on the Ohio River and as a response to the town promotion mania sweeping the Ohio Valley during the first two decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Although few of the original buildings remain, the district nominated does contain a wide range of historic resources which reflect Ghent's original platting and nineteenth century development.

Settled in the late eighteenth century by one Neil McCoull [McCool], the area around present day Ghent did not formally develop until 1805, when Samuel Sanders surveyed the tract for his father John Sanders. Earlier, in 1800, Lewis Sanders had accompanied Jean Jacque Dufour and a group of Swiss wine makers from Lexington to the wide meadow above the Ohio River known as McCool's Bottom.<sup>2</sup> This Swiss settlement at McCool's Bottom was abbreviated, however, when Dufour discovered the nearby Indiana hillsides, with their southern exposure, were better suited to grape cultivation. In 1802 Dufour and his fellow Swiss vintners left Kentucky and founded the community of Vevay on the opposite bank of the Ohio River.

Despite this early setback, trade between McCool's Bottom and Vevay was assured with the establishment of a ferry in 1807. By 1814, one year after Vevay had been officially platted, Henry Clay visited McCool's Bottom and named the infant village Ghent, in honor of the Flemish city where he had successfully negotiated the treaty which ended the War of 1812. Lewis Sanders then proceeded to lay out his incipient town of Ghent and promote its location on the "large and beautiful bottom. . . ." along the Ohio.<sup>3</sup>

With the establishment of a ferry and public landing, Ghent emerged as an important point of transshipment for agricultural commodities produced in the immediate hinterland. Steamboat transportation had been inaugurated along the Ohio during this same period, linking Ghent with Louisville and other downriver markets. By 1824 Ghent had been incorporated and efforts were made to link the village by roads to Louisville and Lexington.

The creation of Carroll County in 1838 and selection of Port William (Carrollton) as the county seat gave that town a new prestige which eclipsed Ghent. Without county seat status Ghent would never reach the magnitude of Vevay, Carrollton, and Warsaw, its chief rivals during the antebellum period. As a result, Ghent's population in 1860 stood at 366, significantly less than Carrollton's growing number of 1,500.<sup>4</sup>

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

An Atlas of Carroll and Gallatin Counties, Kentucky. Philadelphia: D.J. Lake & Co., 1883.  
 Banta, R. E., The Ohio. New York: Rinehard & Company, 1949.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 63 acres

Quadrangle name Vevay South

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

**UTM References**

A 

1	6	6	6	8	8	0	0	4	2	8	9	6	6	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B 

1	6	6	6	9	3	0	0	4	2	8	8	9	2	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

C 

1	6	6	6	8	7	6	0	4	2	8	8	5	8	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

D 

1	6	6	6	8	2	8	0	4	2	8	9	3	1	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

E 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

(please see continuation sheet)

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jayne C. Henderson/Steve C. Gordon

Carroll County

organization Development Corp./KY Heritage Council date March, 1983

street & number Carroll County Courthouse telephone  

city or town Carrollton state Kentucky

# 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 *Moni George Appel*

title *State Historic Preservation Officer* date *July 14, 1983*

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

*located in the*  


date *8/25/83*

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Interspersed with the vernacular structures is a significant collection of early Federal and Greek Revival buildings. Three structures, the Tompkins House (photo 3), the Harris House (photo 18), and the Taylor House (photo 19) are the most stylistic expressions of the early antebellum period. The Mahoney House (photo 21), built c.1820, exhibits an outstanding fanlighted architrave and early frame ell. Equally distinctive is the reeded entrance that accentuates the facade of the five bay Froman House (photo 4). The Greek Revival style is handsomely represented in the designs of the James Tandy House (photo 25) and the Montgomery Hotel, a three-bay side passage brick house with wooden portico (photo 24). A distinctive version of the Greek style can be found on the Tandy Ellis House, a pilastrated five-bay brick house built circa 1860. The Keene House, also built during the late antebellum period, is an important remnant of the Water Street-Riverboat Landing building complex (photos 13 & 14).

Few houses in the district exhibit influences associated with the Gothic Revival style, and in contrast to the center gabled forms found in Augusta and Warsaw, the Ghent Houses have simple gable ended facades and scalloped bargeboards. The Wigginton and Crawford Houses (photos 52 & 53) exemplify the restrained character of the Gothic period in Ghent. Slightly more common is the Italianate, of which the village has fewer than ten examples. The Lindsay, Gaines, and Davis Houses, with their T plan configurations and bracketed cornices, are among the most stylistic instances of the Italianate (photos 54, 50 & 57). Except for the frame Queen Anne house on Highway 42 (photo 7), the turn-of-the-century styles are noticeably absent from the district.

Ghent is fortunate to have such a diverse collection of religious and institutional buildings. The Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall, built in 1867 and 1916 respectively, are integral components of the historic fabric on Main Cross Street (photos 22 & 16). Immediately behind the three story Masonic Hall is located Ghent's original public school (photo 56), a single story, 3-bay brick building now occupied as a residence. The school is one of several structures in Ghent that have undergone residential conversion. The Ennis House (photo 12), situated on Lot 40, was constructed in 1836 as a Christian Church. Similarly, the Griffith House, a single story Federal dwelling located near the south end of the district, is believed to have been built in 1814 as a Baptist Church (photo 27). It was replaced in 1844 with the construction of the present Baptist Church, a handsome Greek Revival structure with prostyle front. Two of Ghent's remaining three churches, the Christian and the Independent Baptist (photo 26 & 51) are individually distinctive examples of the post-bellum period.

Although Ghent's historic building stock is overwhelmingly residential, remnants of its commercial and industrial heritage do exist. Ghent Grocery, a two-story brick corner building built c.1860, is the best preserved example of commercial architecture in Ghent (photo 20). To the north on Main Cross Street are vestiges of a commercial district which was severely damaged by fire in 1915. Across the street is Platz's Garage, a reinforced concrete structure built c.1925 (photo 17). Two blocks south on the same side of Main Cross Street is the community Post Office. This single story, cast-iron fronted building was built by the Ghent Deposit Bank in 1887 (photo 23).

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Much of Ghent's late nineteenth and early twentieth century development can be attributed to the local tobacco economy. Three of the frame structures included in the district were built as tobacco prizing warehouses during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Stucy Warehouse, located on Highway 42 behind the Baptist Church, is the largest barn type warehouse extant in northeastern Carroll County (photo 59). One of the oldest tobacco warehouses was that built by John Montgomery opposite the cemetery sometime before 1882 (photo 61). Collectively these rapidly disappearing structures stand as evidence to Ghent's former position in the marketing and curing of tobacco.

The boundaries of the Historic District correspond very closely with the areas of Ghent which were built up in 1883 (Fig. 1). Those lots excluded from the proposed district were never developed or have non-contributing structures. Other structures, such as those on Water and Liberty Streets, have been demolished or altered beyond recognition. The majority of the intrustions date from the post-World War II period and are primarily confined to the Highway 42 corridor. Additional boundary justifications are presented in section 10 of this form.

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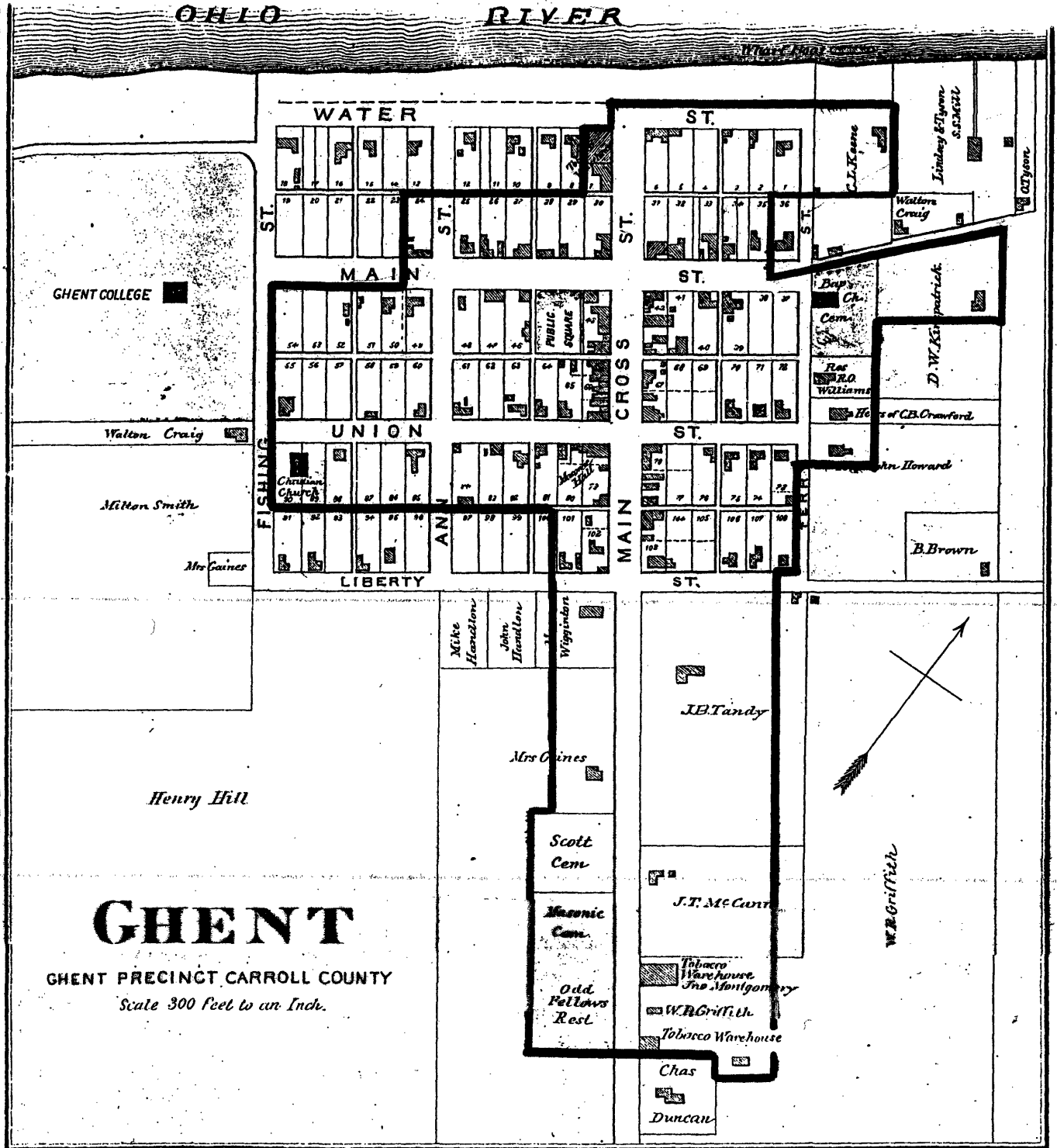


Fig. 1. Ghent in 1883.  
(An Atlas of Carroll and Gallatin Counties, Ky., 1883.)

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GHENT HISTORIC DISTRICT

- 1 Christian Church
- 2 Davis House
- 3 Dufour House
- 4 Froman House
- 5 J. T. Ellis House
- 6 Vernacular Cottages
- 7 Greek Revival House
- 8 Queen Anne House
- 9 Hall-parlor House
- 10 Luigi's (intrusion)
- 11 Tobacco Prizing Warehouse
- 12 Sanders Tavern
- 13 Ghent-Vevay Ferry Landing
- 14 Greek Revival House
- 15 Keene House
- 16 Kirkpatrick House
- 17 Stacy Tobacco Warehouse *demol.*
- 18 Ghent Baptist Church
- 19 Crawford House
- 20 Federal Vernacular House
- 21 Ennis House
- 22 Platz Garage
- 23 Harris House
- 24 Taylor House
- 25 Gas Station (intrusion)
- 26 Fire Station (intrusion)
- 27 Odd Fellows Lodge
- 28 Ghent Grocery
- 29 Ghent Public School
- 30 Masonic Hall
- 31 Mahoney House
- 32 Ghent Post Office
- 33 Montgomery Hotel
- 34 Wigginton House
- 35 J. B. Tandy House
- 36 Italianate House and Independent Baptist Church
- 37 McCann House
- 38 Cemetery
- 39 Montgomery Tobacco Warehouse
- 40 W. R. Griffith House

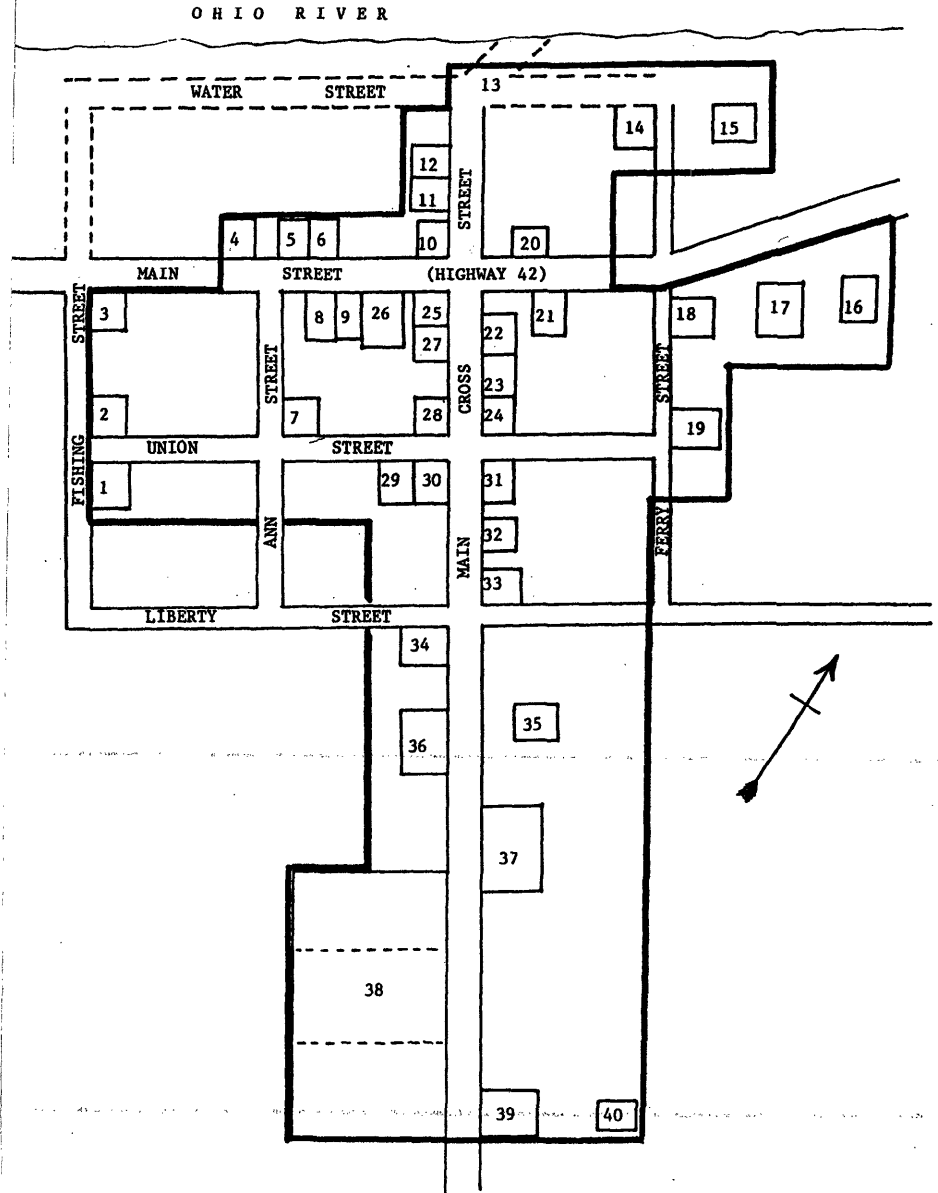


Figure 2,



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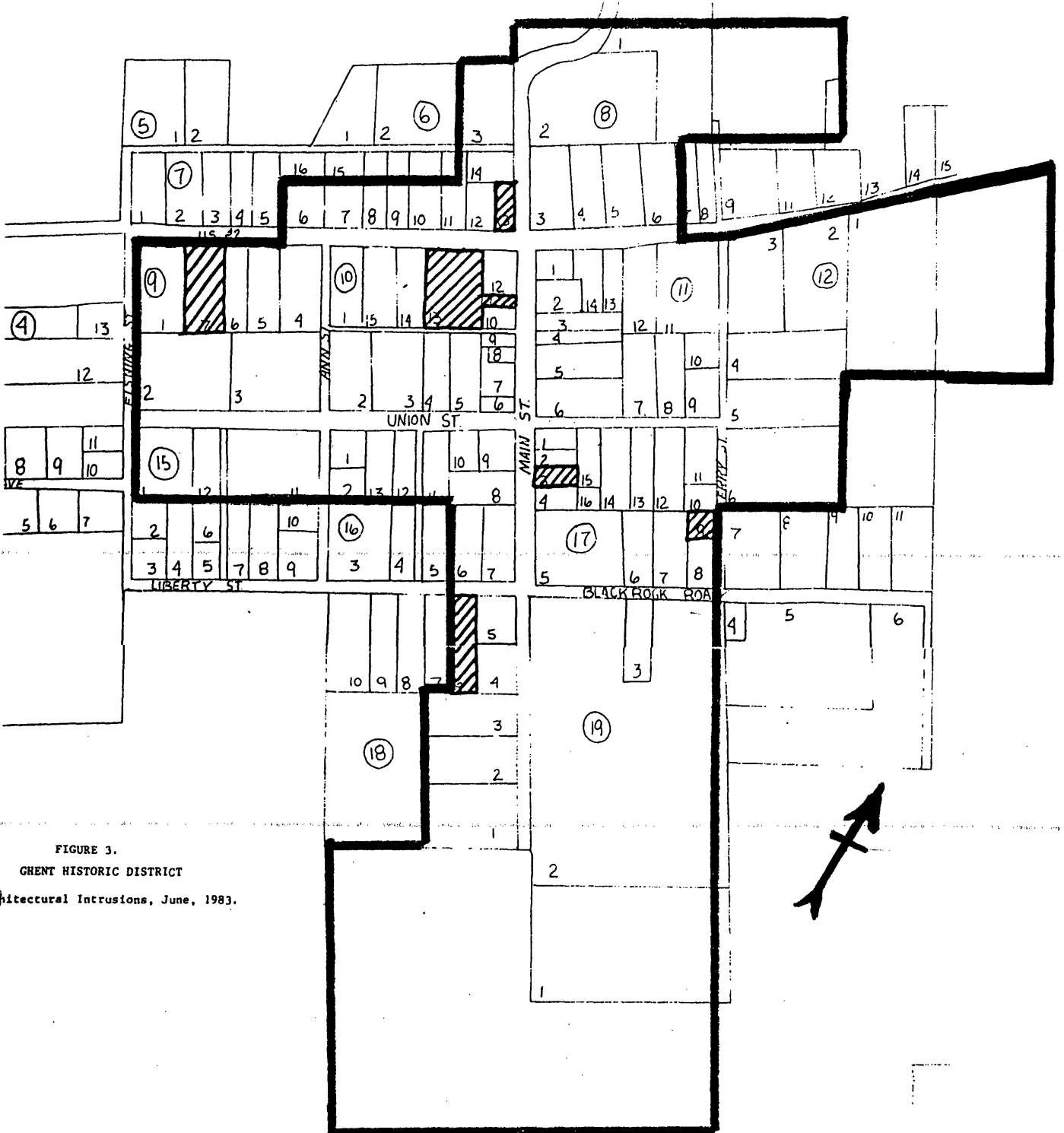


FIGURE 3.  
GHENT HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Architectural Intrusions, June, 1983.

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The majority of properties included in the district are physical reflections of Ghent's small town status. Among the earliest and best known structures is Sanders Tavern (Building 12), a stone and brick structure dating to the first decade of the nineteenth century. This building is also notable for its historical association with the river-boat landing and river travellers. The Harris House (Building 23), with its Flemish bond masonry and jack arch lintels, is another significant vestige of Ghent's early settlement. Other properties dating to the early antebellum period include the Taylor House (Building 24), built c.1835, the Kring House (Building 20), with its unusual brick and frame construction, and the Mahoney Building (#31), built on Main Cross Street during the 1820's.

Because Ghent never developed far beyond the mid-nineteenth century stage, the townscape has essentially remained antebellum in appearance. Yet unlike the prototypical Inner Bluegrass town, which is often distinguished by axial streets of high-styled buildings, Ghent's antebellum character is decidedly less pretentious. Instead, it is the vernacular tradition which dominates the architectural history of this small river village.

Nevertheless, Ghent does exhibit several interesting versions of high-styled architecture. Two of the village's most conspicuous examples, the Froman House (Building 4) and the Tandy Ellis House (Building 5) are important for their period detailing and overall integrity. The J.B. Tandy House (Building 35) with its five bay, porticoed facade, the Montgomery Hotel (Building 33), with its original Greek portico, and the Kirkpatrick House (Building 16) are important expressions of the Greek Revival style. Stepped gables, a salient feature employed on many antebellum Ohio River vernacular dwellings, is handsomely employed on the gable ends of the Keene House (Building 15).

Ghent's religious and fraternal heritage is also manifested throughout the district. The Baptist Church, built in 1844 by William Eblin and Daniel Holdcraft, is a rare example of prostyle church architecture in Kentucky (Building 18). Equally impressive by virtue of their scale and design are the Masonic Hall (Building 30), built in 1867, and the Odd Fellows Lodge (Building 27), constructed on Main Cross Street in 1916. The early importance of the Odd Fellows and Masonic Order is also represented in the village cemetery with its wrought iron gates (Site No. 38). The village's most impressive example of institutional architecture, Ghent College, burned in 1941. The college had operated from 1868 to 1890, after which time it was absorbed into the county school system.

Along with river trade, of which few structures have survived, tobacco processing occupied an important position in Ghent's historic commercial economy. The Stucy Warehouse (Building 17) was built circa 1876 by Frederick Stucy, a Swiss immigrant. At its height Stucy's establishment had over 100 employees and shipped 100 million pounds of tobacco from its Ghent operations.<sup>5</sup> No longer standing are the Lindsay Saw Mill and the C. S. Duncan Flour Mill, both of which were formerly located immediately above the Ohio River.

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The advent of railroad transportation and corresponding decline in local river trade impaired Ghent's chances of attaining a more prominent status. The Louisville and Nashville Short Line Railroad had bypassed the village in the late 1860s, and as a result, Ghent's population experienced only the most marginal increase--reaching a peak of 600 in 1896.<sup>6</sup> The relative, if limited vitality of Ghent during the antebellum period appears even more pronounced when contrasted to its twentieth century existence. Between 1920 and 1980 Ghent essentially was a static community, while Warsaw and Carrollton continued to expand in population. For the most part, Ghent's decline was largely due to the shifts in basic functions to the larger neighboring towns. Tobacco processing, banking, and professional services became more centralized at Carrollton, and Madison, Indiana. By the 1970s a new interstate highway diverted traffic that had formerly traveled Route 42. A final blow to the village came in 1977 when the Ghent-Vevay Ferry was closed following the opening of a new bridge upriver. Today Ghent is a quiet, apparently unchanging community, proud of its Ohio River heritage.

<sup>1</sup>Richard C. Wade, The Urban Frontier, pp. 30-31.

<sup>2</sup>"Hulme's Journal, 1818-1819," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, X, 42.

<sup>3</sup>Stuart Sprague, "Town Making in the Era of Good Feelings: Kentucky 1814-1820." RKHS (October 1974): 339.

<sup>4</sup>Richard Collins, History of Kentucky, p.263.

<sup>5</sup>Information provided by Sandra Thomas and Johnny Davis, Spring 1983.

<sup>6</sup>R. L. Polk & Co., Kentucky State Gazetteer, 1896, p.302.

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Parker, Anna Virginia. The Sanders Family of Grass Hills. Madison, Indiana: Coleman Printing Company, 1966.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Short History of Carroll County." Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, 57 (1959): 35-47.

Polk, R. L. & Co., Kentucky State Gazetteers. 1880; 1883; 1896.

Sprague, Stuart Seely. "Town Making in the Era of Good Feelings: Kentucky 1814-1820." Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, 72 (October 1974): 337-341.

Vevay Historic District. National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form.

Wade, Richard C., The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington, Louisville, and St. Louis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959.

Information provided by Katheryn Salyers, February 1983; Sandra Thomas, March 1983; and Mayor Johnny Davis, May 1983.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the southeastern corner of Highway 42 and Fishing Street, proceed northeast 1155', then crossing Route 42 proceed north 800' to the alley. Then proceed northeast 1400' along the north side of said alley, turning north 660'. Then proceed northeast 400' to the edge of Main Cross Street, turning north 450' to a point near the bank of the Ohio River. Then proceed northeast 2640' paralleling the river to the eastern edge of the Keene House lot. Then proceed south 500', turning southwest 1320'. Then proceed south 1155', crossing Highway 42 to a point along said highway. Then proceed northeast approximately 2000' along the south side of Route 42 to the edge of the Kilpatrick House lot, turning south 1100'. Then proceed southwest 750', turning south for 1400' along the rear property line of the C. B. Crawford House lot. Then proceed southwest approximately 1000' crossing Ferry Street. Then proceed south 725' crossing Blackrock Road to a point on the J. B. Tandy House grounds. Then proceed southwest approximately 200', turning south for approximately 5500'. Then proceed southwest 990', turning north approximately 300', excluding from the district a recently built house. Then proceed southwest 500', crossing Main Cross Street, then turning south for 300'. Then proceed southwest 1500' along the south property line of the Masonic Cemetery. Then proceed north 3630' along the rear of said cemetery, turning northeast for 1000'. Then proceed north 2805', crossing Liberty Street to a point on the abandoned alley. Then proceed southwest 2640' to a point at the intersection of Fishing Street and the Christian Church property. Then proceed north 1980' along the east side of Fishing Street to the point of origin.

The boundaries of the Ghent Historic District were drawn so as to include all of the town's historic core. Several buildings depicted on the U.S.G.S. map are not contained within the district because of alterations, new construction, or recent demolition. This accounts for the rather gerrymandered boundary drawn along the north side of Highway 42.