

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0679020

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 12 1979

DATE ENTERED APR 20 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Farnsley-Moremén House; (House of Refuge)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *W of Louisville at*
10908 Lower River Road

CITY, TOWN

Louisville *vic.* VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 & 4

STATE

Kentucky

CODE
021

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

111

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Moremén R. and Helen D. Collett

STREET & NUMBER

1420 N. E. 28th Place

CITY, TOWN

Fort Lauderdale VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Kentucky Historical Resources Inventory

DATE

1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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

The Moremen House, built ca. 1837-38, is located about twelve miles from Louisville in southwestern Jefferson County. The site is remote and surrounded by a grove of trees. The house faces the Ohio River and stands about 100 yards from the riverbank. (Photo 1)

The brick structure, in a typical nineteenth-century transitional style, is composed of a two-story main block with a two-story ell at the rear. The main block plan is the central-passage type with two rooms on each story. The end walls are windowless and there are interior chimneys at each end and in the rear wall of the ell. Sometime during the nineteenth century the house was painted gray and later painted with red oxide.

There are brick jack arches above the six-over-six pane windows on the first story, and the old wood shutters with strap hinges remain. The outer walls are 18 inches thick, of three rows of bricks. There is a corbelled brick cornice. (Photos 2, 3, 4)

The central feature of the five-bay facade is a galleried portico of wood which has been removed temporarily for restoration. The pedimented gable has a semielliptical lunette which once contained a carved sunburst ornament. Beneath the portico, on each story, is a wide door flanked by pilasters and sidelights. The first floor doorway has six rectangular lights in a transom which spans the door and sidelights. (Photos 2, 3, 4)

The interior woodwork is plain with wide baseboards and doors with two vertical panels. The original wood mantels are very plain with large shelves having curved ends. The deep-set windows have canted reveals. The woodwork on the interior of the front entrance is more elaborate than in the other parts of the house. The door is flanked by reeded pilasters and woodwork with plain corner blocks. The glass in the transom and sidelights was once frosted and etched and traces of the frosting remain. (Photos 5, 6)

The front door has the original massive lock and an iron knocker which may also be original. The second-story doorway, opening onto the portico gallery, repeats the first floor entrance arrangement but with plain pilasters and woodwork. All traces of the frosting on these sidelights are gone. The inside of this door and the surrounds were painted and grained sometime around the turn of the century.

The stairway is simple, but graceful, with a balcony landing. The rounded cherry banister curves to join the unusual chamfered newel posts. (Photo 7) A back stairway in the ell has been blocked off by a twentieth-century addition.

There is a brick-floored cellar under the main block. A frame addition on the south end is a modern construction housing a kitchen and bath.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1837-38

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Moremen House, an example of transitional Federal architecture built about 1837-38, is one of the few surviving early nineteenth-century residences in the southwestern part of Jefferson County.

The Moremen House has been owned by the Moremen family since 1862. It was built prior to that date but the exact year of construction cannot be definitely documented. According to varying oral traditions, the house was built either in 1793 or about 1832. However, using available records, which include the tax assessments, deeds, and lawsuits, and considering the structure's architectural details, a more plausible construction date would seem to be about 1837-38 during the ownership of Gabriel Farnsley.

The site of the Moremen House was part of a 6533 acre tract surveyed and patented in the name of John May. In 1815 May's heirs in Dinwiddie County, Virginia sold 2615 acres on the Ohio River to Thomas D. Carneal and James D. Breckinridge, both living away from Jefferson County. This tract included the site of the present Moremen House. Whether or not any structure was erected on the site during the seven years it was owned by Carneal and Breckinridge cannot be determined.

In 1822 they sold a 200 acre tract out of the larger tract to Ebenezer Christopher for \$2,000. This included the site of the present house and Christopher owned it for six years. At the time of the purchase of the tract he mortgaged it for payment of a note to the Bank of the United States. Christopher died apparently in late 1826 or early 1827, leaving no will. An appraisal of his estate was made on 24 January 1827 "at the late residence of Ebenezer Christopher." The usual accoutrements of a working farm were included; stock, tools, crops, nine slaves, and a modest amount of furniture - for a total value of \$2,985. The Bank of the United States, meanwhile, foreclosed the mortgage and the 200 acre tract was sold at public auction on 26 February 1828 to Joseph Reed for \$1600. Neither the public notice of the sale nor the description of the property sold mentioned a house. The mortgage deed made by Christopher in 1822 described the property as being the "same whereon said Christopher now lives." From these references one may assume that Christopher was living on the 200 acre tract of land, but no records have been found which indicate that his residence was the same structure as the present Moremen House.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bullitt, Neville C. "Old Houses of Louisville and Jefferson County." 2 Vols. Unpublished manuscript, The Filson Club, 118 West Breckinridge St., Louisville, Kentucky.

History of the Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties, Vol. I.
 Cleveland: L. A. Williams and Co., 1882, pp. 67-68.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 5 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Kosmosdale Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 59, 66, 60 421, 70, 2, 0

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

5th County District - *NOTE ACCOMPANYING PLAT MAPS*
 Block 1052 Lot 693

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 Mary Jean Kinsman
Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION Jefferson County Office of Historic Preservation DATE 18 October 1978

STREET & NUMBER 417 Old Louisville Trust Bldg. TELEPHONE 581-5761

CITY OR TOWN Louisville 40202 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 Donna C. Hopkins

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer DATE 3-5-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER <u>Charles A. ...</u>	DATE <u>4-20-79</u>
ATTEST: <u>...</u> CHIEF OF REGISTRATION	DATE <u>4/19/79</u>

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 12 1979
DATE ENTERED MAR 20 1979

Farnsley/
The/Moremen House

CONTINUATION SHEET DESCRIPTION ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

A wood porch wraps around two sides of the ell and it too is a later addition, replacing an older porch which extended across the back of the main block. The original kitchen was a brick building a few feet to the rear of the ell and joined to it by a pantry. This kitchen and several frame out buildings no longer exist. (Photos 8, 9, 10)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 20 1979

Farnsley/
The Moremen House

CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Christopher's tax assessments for 1823-1826 showed only modest increases in the value of his taxable property from \$3600 to \$4520 - hardly enough to indicate the building of a structure like the Moremen House.

Joseph Reed owned the property only several months before selling it to Gabriel Farnsley and Ebenezer Williams. In 1831 Farnsley bought Williams' share of the property and in 1835 he bought 100 acres adjoining on the north.

Almost nothing is known about Gabriel Farnsley. His father, James Farnsley, came to Jefferson County from Pennsylvania about 1782 and settled in the Cane Run Road area southwest of the city. James Farnsley had a large family and there are descendents today in Jefferson County, including former Louisville Mayor Charles P. Farnsley.

Gabriel was the fifth son of James Farnsley. He has been described by a descendent as a wealthy bachelor, a fox hunter and "high liver." According to local legend, Farnsley was a disappointed suitor and committed suicide. It has been said that his ghost sometimes appeared about the Moremen House property.

Farnsley died about 1849, perhaps suddenly, for he left no will. A suit was filed by some of his heirs to settle his estate and in 1850 the 200 acre tract and the 100 acre tract were sold. The 200 acre tract was described in the Report of Sale as "the same upon which Gabriel Farnsley, deceased, lived, known as the old Christopher tract, having upon it an excellent Brick House and other good improvements."

Farnsley's tax assessments indicate sizeable increases in the value of his taxable property in several years. In 1829, the year after he acquired the tract, the total value of his property, including seven slaves and two horses, was \$3580. In 1835, after purchasing the adjoining 100 acres, the total value was \$6100. In 1837 the total value was \$8380, including ten slaves, seven horses and 17 head of cattle. In 1838 the total value increased to \$9350 with a change only in the number of horses. In 1839 there was a dramatic increase in the value of taxable property to \$18,300. The value of slaves, horses and cattle showed either no increase or only a slight increase. Thus it can be assumed that substantial property improvements would account for such a significant increase in the value of the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	MAR 12 1979
RECEIVED	APR 20 1979
DATE ENTERED	

Farnsley/
The/Moremen House

CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Architecturally the Moremen House is similar to other Jefferson County residences which were built in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is a transitional style with elements of both Federal and Greek Revival architecture. Such houses were built throughout Kentucky from the early 1800's to 1850 with variations in window sizes, entrances, and interior design elements.

The Moremen House appears to fit into the later period of transition from the Federal to Greek Revival. This is evident in the rather heavy, reeded woodwork surrounding the wide, double-panelled front door and the large transom and sidelights. The galleried portico is also evidence of either a later period of construction or an addition to the house. Although it is possible that the house may have been built by Ebenezer Christopher in the 1820s and altered in the 1830s by Gabriel Farnsley, the evidence in tax assessments and lawsuit papers, combined with a consideration of the structure's architectural details would rather bear out the 1837-38 construction date. In addition there is an oral tradition in the Moremen family which attributes construction of the house to Gabriel Farnsley.

After Farnsley's death in 1849 and the sale of the property in 1850, the property passed through several owners until 1862 when the farm was sold to D'Alanson Moremen. It has remained in the Moremen family since that time.

Alanson Moremen, a later shortened form of his name, was the son of D. Moorman and was born in Albemarle County, Virginia in 1803. (Different spellings of the Moremen name have prevailed in different branches and generations of the family. The name has appeared as Moorman, Moremen, and Moreman.) Alanson Moremen's father brought his family to Kentucky about 1807 and settled on the Ohio River in what is now Meade County.

Alanson Moremen married Rachel Stith in 1827 and is believed to have come to Jefferson County about 1860 or 1861. In 1862 he purchased the 200 acre farm and brick house previously owned by Gabriel Farnsley. In subsequent years he bought more land in the area until his farm holdings amounted to some 2200 acres.

A steamboat landing was at the foot of the yard in front of the house. It was known as "Soap Landing" and was a regular stop for boats en route to and from New Orleans. Over the years the Moremen House has been known as "House of Refuge" during the Civil War when Alanson Moremen said he would not turn away any member of the family needing a home, and later it was referred to as "Moremen's Villa."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 20 1979

The ~~Moremen~~ ^{Farnsley/}House

CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

The Moremen family has long been active in the life of the Valley Station area. The land for the Bethany Methodist Church was donated by Willis Moremen, and the family was active in the congregation of that church.

In 1886 Israel Putnam Moreman, a son of Alanson Moremen, was deeded the house and farm by his parents. It later passed to a daughter and most recently was acquired by her son, Alanson Moremen's great-grandson.

The Moremen House is a distinctive example of the transitional Federal houses frequently erected during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Although in need of restoration, it retains most of the original fabric and handsome details. In addition it is a rare surviving early nineteenth-century structure in this remote corner of Jefferson County.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1979
DATE ENTERED	APR 20 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Farnsley/
The Moremen House

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Jefferson County (Ky.) Deed Book 4947, p. 380 (1977); Book 4770, p. 471 (1977); Book 1923, p. 544 (1932); Book 392, p. 521 (1886); Book 114, p. 653 (1862); Book 113, p. 147 (1860); Book 110, p. 13 (1860); Book 104, p. 89 (1859); Book 88, p. 435 (1850); Book 76, p. 588 (1850); Book FF, p. 142 (1831); Book BB, pp. 234, 513 (1828-29); Book U, p. 481-82 (1822); Book I, p. 458 (1815); Book H, p. 237 (1814).

Jefferson County Ky.) Inventory and Settlement Book 6, p. 457 (1827); Book 13, p. 324 (1849).

Kiser, Walter, "Neighborhood Sketches," The Louisville Times, 11 May 1937.

Old Chancery Court, Jefferson County, Case 6546, Farnsley vs. Mary Tate et al, 1850; Case 2122, Bank of the United States vs. Ebenezer Christopher, 1827.

Smith, Mrs. Marjorie M. Interview and written information, 1978.

Tax Assessment Records, Jefferson County, Ebenezer Christopher, 1823-1826; Gabriel Farnsley, 1829-1842.

