

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICEPH 0694452
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JAN 8 1979

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

MAR 19 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

William H. Knapp House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 7101 Canal Road

CITY, TOWN

Valley View

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

23

STATE

Ohio

CODE

039

COUNTY

Cuyahoga

CODE

035

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
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Thomas D. Moriarity ✓

STREET & NUMBER

861 E. 232nd Street

CITY, TOWN

Euclid

VICINITY OF

STATE

Ohio

44123

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cuyahoga County Administration Building

STREET & NUMBER

1219 Ontario

CITY, TOWN

Cleveland

STATE

Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Ohio Historic Inventory

DATE

4/76

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Ohio Historical Center

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Ohio

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William H. Knapp House is a modest, one-and-one-half-story wood frame house in the Greek Revival style. The house consists of the original main block and a one-story ell added later. A "carport" and wood frame garage have been added to the ell at the rear.

The main block is rectangular, three bays wide by five bays long, and is situated with its gable end facing the road. The house has an ashlar sandstone foundation and there is a basement. The front entrance is on the left side and is reached by a flight of three ashlar steps. There is a door of the same size and style in the center of the north wall. The latter entrance is flanked by two pairs of windows, although one of the windows has been covered by the ell. Both doors feature a rudimentary entablature and pilasters. The main block features a wide, plain frieze and gable returns. There is a central chimney.

The original clapboard siding of the house has been obscured by later coverings: wide-width aluminum siding on the west (front) and north elevations, asphalt shingles on the east and south elevations. The double-hung windows have been altered from six- to single-pane sashes. House trim is painted black. An interior inspection was not permitted by the tenant, although the tenant did indicate that the house has been substantially altered inside. The house is suffering severe damage due to neglect. Damage by water is a major problem, since the roof is in bad condition and there are no gutters.

The Knapp House is situated on a hillside and commands an excellent view of the Ohio and Erie Canal, still in a remarkable state of preservation at this point. (This portion of the canal is a National Historic Landmark.) Across Canal Road is the reputed "Lock Tender's House and Inn," a canal-era structure also in the Greek Revival style. A huge willow tree frames the front of the Knapp House.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	__MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1836 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This modest frame house in the Greek Revival style was built in 1836 for William H. and Deborah Wightman Knapp, early settlers in Independence township. Knapp was a civil engineer who worked on the construction of the Ohio and Erie Canal near Coshocton, Ohio, and on the Milan Canal in Erie County before settling in Independence in 1833. Knapp held numerous public offices, including those of township clerk, assessor, and postmaster. He taught school in the township for about five years. Between 1839 and 1845, he served as Surveyor for Cuyahoga County. His wife, Deborah, earned a local reputation for generously sharing her home with anyone in need of shelter. Thus the house is closely associated with the early history of Independence. Stylistically, the Knapp House is representative of the kind of houses built by early settlers in the Cuyahoga Valley.

History

In 1811, at the age of three, Deborah Ledyard Wightman (1808-1880) emigrated with her parents from Groton, Connecticut, to Cleveland. The family settled on ten acres of land on Broadway near Woodland Hills Road where her father, John J. Wightman, built and operated a tavern until his death in 1837.¹

Correspondence in the manuscript files of the Western Reserve Historical Society indicates that William Herman Knapp (1801-1888) had relatives in Oneida, Madison, and Chenango Counties, New York, but it is not known when Knapp emigrated to Ohio. He married Deborah Wightman May 4, 1828, at Newburgh, Ohio. A letter to his brother-in-law, John G. Wightman, dated December 21, 1828, indicates that Knapp then was working on fifteen miles of the Ohio and Erie Canal opposite the river from Coshocton, Ohio. Knapp, his wife Deborah, and Deborah's sister Harriet (then just three years old) boarded in the home of one "Judge Brown." Knapp next may have moved to Milan, Ohio, for in a draft of a letter written about 1860

¹Gertrude Van Rensselaer Wickham, The Pioneer Families of Cleveland, 1796-1840, 2 vols. (n.p.: Evangelical Publishing House, 1914), 2: 136.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cleveland, Ohio. Western Reserve Historical Society. William Herman Knapp Papers.

Johnson, Crisfield. History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Cleveland: D. W. Ensign & Co., 1879.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Northfield

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 | 448840 | 451801060

B | |

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property consists of a rectangular lot approximately 60 by 80 meters in size, described as follows: Beginning at a point on the eastern edge of Canal Road 10 meters north of the intersection of Hillside

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

Carol Poh Miller, Historic Preservation Consultant

ORGANIZATION

under contract with the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Ohio Historical Society

DATE

8 May 1978

STREET & NUMBER

1260 Granger Avenue

TELEPHONE

216/226-8236

CITY OR TOWN

Cleveland

STATE

Ohio

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

DATE 12/8/98

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3/19/79

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

2/21/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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William H. Knapp House, Valley View, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

he recalls: "I was Chief Engineer and superintendent ^t of the construction of the Milan Canal on the Huron River and I believe ^I performed very satisfactorily to the directors of the company
. . . .²

Construction of the Milan Canal began in 1832 and was completed in 1839. Thus Knapp must have left the project after only a short time, for in 1833 he and his wife settled in Independence township, south of Cleveland. In 1834, William Knapp was elected township clerk, the first of many public offices he would hold. He also served as one of the first postmasters of Independence, keeping office in his home as was the custom until a permanent office could be established. In 1839, Knapp was elected to the post of Surveyor of Cuyahoga County; he served a three-year term and, in 1842, was re-elected to another term.³ In 1849, he was appointed assessor of personal property for Independence township.

But William H. Knapp is perhaps best remembered as an early--possibly the first--school teacher in Independence. Among the Knapp papers is a certificate dated 1835 qualifying Knapp as an "instructor of Common Schools." A petition dated December 14, 183(5?) states:

We the Undersigned in consideration of a School to be taught by Wm. H. Knapp do hereby promise and agree to pay . . . the sum of two 25/100 dollars and furnish a half a cord of wood per Quarter for each and every schollar ^{sic} affixed to our names or in that proportion for the time that said school shall keep.

The petition bore the names of twenty-six "schollars." An attendance roster shows that by 1839 this number had grown to forty-two. Among the pupils were the Knapp children, Herman and Cornelia; the Gleeson children, William, Sardis, and Charles; and John, Oliver, and Mahitable Frazee--all children of early and prominent settlers in Independence. Knapp apparently taught school in his own home for a time, for among his papers is a receipt, dated March 16, 1836, from "School District No. 2" to "Wm. H. Knapp":

²William Herman Knapp Papers, Container 11, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

³Crisfield Johnson, History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio (Cleveland: D. W. Ensigh & Co., 1879), pp. 213, 461, 462, 464.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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for 3 month service as teacher of said
school at 18 dollars pr month 54.00

for use of room 6 weeks @ 4/(illegible) 3.00⁴

After 1840, William Knapp returned to his original profession of civil engineer and conducted land surveys throughout the county. The large volume of survey maps among the Knapp papers gives credence to the claim of one local history that the majority of early land surveys east of the Cuyahoga River were made by Rial McArthur and William Knapp.⁵ The Knapp papers further show that he was frequently subpoenaed as an expert witness in the resolution of property disputes. The Independence Business Directory in the 1874 Cuyahoga County atlas lists "Wm. H. Knapp, Civil Engineer. Surveying of every description done promptly."⁶

A genealogy of the Wightman family suggests that Deborah Knapp may have enjoyed a local reputation in her own right:

When Deborah Wightman Knapp died, the text chosen for her funeral was, "And they shall be given a new name." The clergy who officiated said that her celestial name might aptly be "Burden-Bearer," for, in over forty years of his acquaintance with her, he had not known a time when some otherwise homeless creature was not having a home with "Aunty Knapp."⁷

Tax records show that the Knapp House was built in 1836. The Knapp name appears in the tax duplicate for the first time this year, with the notation "1 House." The Knapps resided here for the rest of their lives; Deborah died in 1880, William in 1888. Although the house has undergone numerous alterations, it retains its essential

⁴Knapp Papers, Container 11.

⁵Independence Historical Society Committee, A Brief History of Independence, Ohio (n.p., 1960), p. 11.

⁶D. J. Lake, Atlas of Cuyahoga County, Ohio (Philadelphia: Titus, Simmons & Titus, 1874; reprint ed., Evansville, Ind.: Unigraphic, Inc., 1976), p. 189.

⁷Wickham, Pioneer Families of Cleveland, 2:137.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Greek Revival features, and is important as one of the oldest frame houses in the Cuyahoga Valley. The "barn & shed" mentioned in an early insurance policy (1849) no longer exist.

Item Number 9 -- continued

Wickham, Gertrude Van Rensselaer. The Pioneer Families of Cleveland, 1796-1840. 2 vols. n.p.: Evangelical Publishing House, 1914.

Item Number 10 -- continued

Road and Canal Road, proceed southeast on a line parallel with Hillside Road for 80 meters; then proceed southwest on a line parallel with Canal Road for 60 meters; then proceed northwest on a line parallel with Hillside Road to the eastern edge of Canal Road; then proceed north along the eastern edge of Canal Road to the point of origin.