

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 12 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 12 1975

**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

Moffett-Ralston House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Bixler Road (1 1/2 miles north east of Patricksburg)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Patricksburg

VICINITY OF

7th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Indiana

18

Owen

119

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Fletcher S. and Allyn L. McCracken

STREET & NUMBER

Bixler Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Patricksburg

VICINITY OF

Indiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Owen County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

City Square

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Spencer

Indiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This house was originally a one story, gable roofed, clapboard, five room structure built in 1864 with stone and yellow poplar taken from the farm. It had little decoration, six over six windows and a simple front porch. Following his first wife's death in 1870 Mr. Moffett remarried and added a second story and a summer kitchen to the rear. This second story addition was unique in that it was entered from a small outside stairway. Its floor plan of four rooms with large central hall and local tradition indicate that it was used as a dormitory of sorts for the hired hands on the large farm.

The addition of a second story changed the appearance of the house dramatically although when photographs are compared, the window and door locations indicate that it is the same structure. The second floor had a hip roof, carved and paired brackets placed above the windows and an ornate porch with a balustrade were added. The old six over six windows were placed at the rear of the house and two over two windows were put in the front. Shutters and lintels were added to all windows. The result was a change from a very simple vernacular structure with a slight Greek Revival feeling to a modest Italian Villa. A metal roof was placed over the split oak shingles in the 1930's. There is also a barn from the same period as the house nearby with paintings of horses done by a local person, probably in the 1930's.

The interior is finished on the first floor with back to back cast iron fireplaces, possibly imported, oak wainscoting and woodwork in the two main front rooms. The rest of the house has yellow poplar woodwork that has been hand grained to resemble oak.

In the last two years the house has undergone considerable renovation. After having stood vacant for a number of years it had surface deterioration but was structurally sound. The Fletcher McCrackens installed insulation, wiring, a new furnace, bathrooms, and a modern kitchen. They also added an inside stairway to make the second floor accessible. Care was taken to see that the integrity of the structure was preserved. The oak wainscoting was cleaned of many coats of paint, the first layer of wallpaper was duplicated as closely as possible & the hand grained wood was cleaned and repaired. The front porch was rebuilt to duplicate the one added in 1870 and the original poplar siding was cleaned and painted. The house is now a comfortable, liveable structure with an appearance that is very similar to that of the 1870's.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1864-1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Moffett-Ralston House is significant as an example of 19th century rural Indiana architecture and for its association with Samuel Moffett Ralston. Silas Moffett was a prosperous farmer in Owen County, Indiana owning more than 1000 acres on which he raised sheep, cattle, and fine saddle and draft horses. He was also interested in politics, a hard working perfectionist, and demanded the same from those associated with him. The Moffett-Ralston House is an expression of his changing ideas and needs for a home. His first simple house built in 1864 to serve the modest needs of a new farmer was remodeled into a modest Italian Villa in 1870 to reflect his new marriage, the increased size of his farm, and his status in the community.

It was at this house that Samuel M. Ralston, Governor of and Senator from Indiana spent some of his formative years. Born in 1857, Ralston moved to his uncle's farm after the depression of 1873 along with his brothers. Moffett sent them to the Patricksburg Normal School for an education while they worked on the farm. Ralston graduated from the Danville Normal School in 1884 and entered the bar in 1886. It was not until then that he moved away from Owen County.

It was the opportunity for education presented by this uncle and perhaps his rigorous discipline that geared Ralston to become an attorney, Governor, Senator and enabled him to be introduced as a possible candidate for president in the 1924 Democratic convention. The major reform legislation of Ralston's term as Governor include an inheritance tax law, a vocational training law, a workmen's compensation act, and a primary election law. He also established the public service commission, began Indiana's state parks system and initiated a renewed interest in Indiana history by establishing a historical commission in 1915 in view of the coming centennial for the state.

Samuel Moffett Ralston is one of Indiana's important governors and the house in which he spent his boyhood years is an architectural and social statement about a man who guided part of Ralston's life.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Counties of Clay and Owen, Indiana - Blanchard, Charles Ed.; FA Battey, Chicago
1884 Pages 603, 854

The Clay City Democrat, Thursday December 27, 1962

The Spencer Evening World, Spencer Ind. Tuesday February 5, 1963.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3

UTM REFERENCES

A | 16 | 510,615,60 | 4,315,215,8,0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | |

*Wm Cr
00*

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Mrs. Fletcher S. McCracken
ORGANIZATION

January 21, 1975
DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Bixler Road
CITY OR TOWN

TELEPHONE

812-859-6661

STATE

Patrickburg

Indiana

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Joseph D. Cloud

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE February 3, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 5/13/75

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/9/75

*Ernest A. ...
Rosalind M. ...*

actg