

753 Main Street Alfred Caldwell House

The building at this address was probably built by Alfred Caldwell around 1874, after he purchased the property from the heirs of Thomas Hughes. The 1853 map of Wheeling indicates that there was an earlier structure on the same site, so Caldwell may have removed that building to build the current one, or he may have added to an existing building. The 1874-75 Wheeling City Directory lists attorney Alfred Caldwell as living at Main and 8th Streets, and the 1877 Directory shows his residence as the northwest corner of Main and 8th (which is the current 753 Main Street). By the time of the 1888 Directory, he had two local residences – one at 753 Main and the other, his “summer residence” in Pleasant Valley, probably on Bae Mar Place.



Caldwell’s father, also named Alfred, served several terms as the mayor of Wheeling and was one of three Ohio County delegates to the 1860 National Convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln for President. After Lincoln’s election, Alfred Caldwell, Sr., was appointed as the U.S. Consul to Hawaii, serving there during the Civil War. Alfred Caldwell, Jr. would have been a teenager at the time and apparently traveled to Hawaii with his family.

An 1890 biography¹ of Alfred Caldwell, Jr., states, “Alfred Caldwell, Jr., attorney general of West Virginia, and one of the leading lawyers of the region, was born July 14, 1847. He received his education partly at Prof. Harding's academy, and at West Liberty, and took a regular course at Oahu college, Honolulu. In 1864 he entered Yale college, and was graduated as bachelor of philosophy in 1867. He then returned to Wheeling and began the study of law with his father. In the summer of 1868 he was admitted to the bar, passing examination before the supreme court, and has since practiced his profession, attaining high distinction as an advocate. He was a member of the state senate in 1875-7, clerk of the first branch of the council, 1869 to 1875, resigned when elected to state senate, and subsequently served as member of the council in 1879-1880, and was city solicitor in 1881-2; in first branch of council again in 1884-5-6. In 1884, he was elected attorney general of West Virginia, and was re-elected in 1888 for four years. Mr. Caldwell was married September 14, 1871, to Laura E²., daughter of William S. Goshorn, of Wheeling, and eight children have been born to them.

¹ From *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, Vol. I, pages 239-240. Brant & Fuller, 1890.

² Note: Laura Goshorn was the daughter of William Goshorn, who was a slaveholder and Southern supporter during the Civil War. William owned a slave named (Sarah) Lucy Bagby, who was given to William by his father, John Goshorn. When Lucy escaped to Cleveland, OH, just before the war, William traveled to Cleveland and, despite offers from Cleveland abolitionists to buy Lucy’s freedom, brought her back to Wheeling under the Fugitive Slave Law.

Alfred Caldwell, Jr., lived at 753 Main Street until his death in 1925. The property was sold in 1939 by Charles P. Mead, trustee for William Goshorn Caldwell, a son of Alfred Caldwell, Jr., and Laura Goshorn Caldwell.

River-Side Development purchased the property in 2002, followed by Victorian Wheeling Landmarks Foundation and then The Vandalia Heritage Foundation in 2008. For years, Uncle Pete's Restaurant occupied the site. Brenda Alvarado purchased the property in early 2017, and Big Shot Bob's became the tenant. During the Covid epidemic, business dropped off, and the restaurant closed.

Jeramie Alvarado then completed extensive renovations, opening Carlito's Restaurant in October 2022.

Prepared by Jeanne Finstein, Friends of Wheeling, May 2018, updated October 2022

Sources:

- *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, 1890
- National Register Nomination, 1988
- North Wheeling Maps – 1853, 1889, 1890
- Ohio County Deed Records
- Wheeling City Directories, various years
- WV Vital Records (death certificates)

Photo by Joanne Sullivan