

2235 Chapline Street “Neill House”

The National Register nomination for the Centre Wheeling Historic District describes this house as a Greek Revival style building with an estimated construction date of 1870s. The description continues with the notation of such “fine details” as crested window crowns, honeysuckle leaf design in eave brackets, clustered Ionic fluted columns, and a second story bay window.

Although these details are typical of a house built in the 1870s, deed and city directory records show that a building stood on this site – Lot 158, Chapline & Eoff Addition – much earlier. Thomas Neill (c. 1813-1870) acquired two parts of Lot 158, where the house now stands, for \$1500 in 1867 from William B. Quarrier and Beverly M. Eoff. Quarrier and Eoff appear to have been real estate speculators since their names appear in many deed records in the 1840s, 50s and 60s, and Quarrier had acquired the lot in 1847.

An 1853 map of Wheeling (to the right) shows no structure on Lot 158.



An 1871 map (left) is labeled Mrs. Neill at this location, and the building looks to be substantial.

The Sanborn Insurance Map from 1884 doesn't include this part of Chapline Street. But the 1890 map (right) clearly shows a substantial building, including the street address of 2235 Chapline. The pink color indicates a brick building with a detached brick outbuilding to the rear, yellow indicates a frame section on the side of the main building and another frame outbuilding at the rear. “D” indicates a dwelling, and “2” shows that it was two-stories.





Little was found on Thomas Neill, other than Wheeling City Directory listings from the mid 1860s that show that he lived on Chapline Street, between Second (now 23rd Street) and Third (now 22nd Street) in Centre Wheeling, along with his son James. The son, James Clarke Neill (1840-1910), is shown in a sketch that accompanied his obituary. Mid to late 1860s city directories indicate that he boarded on “Chapline Street, opposite the Fifth Ward School, Centre Wheeling.” He had enlisted in the U.S. Army at the beginning of the Civil War and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Company I of the 6th West Virginia Infantry. He served until the end of the war and was then brevetted a Captain for “gallant and meritorious service.”

After the war, James Neill entered the wholesale grocery business in a firm called Reid & Neill. Later, he partnered with William Ellingham in a similar firm that carried their names. Upon retirement, he and his family moved to Texas.

In 1877, the property was sold to James Neill’s sister, Maria Neill Barton (1850-1917), and her husband John for \$5000. John Barton (1844-1910) was listed as a “merchant” in city directories.

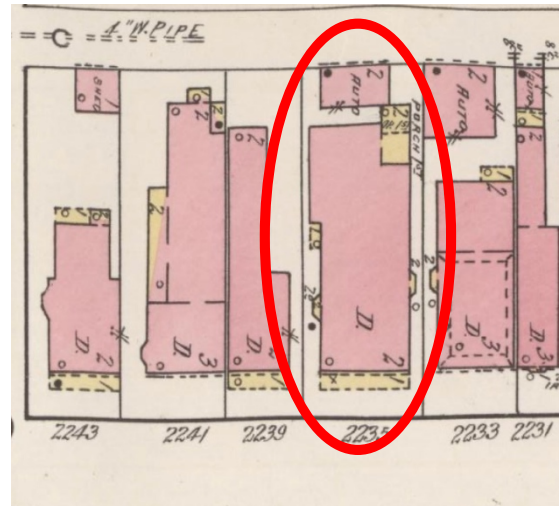
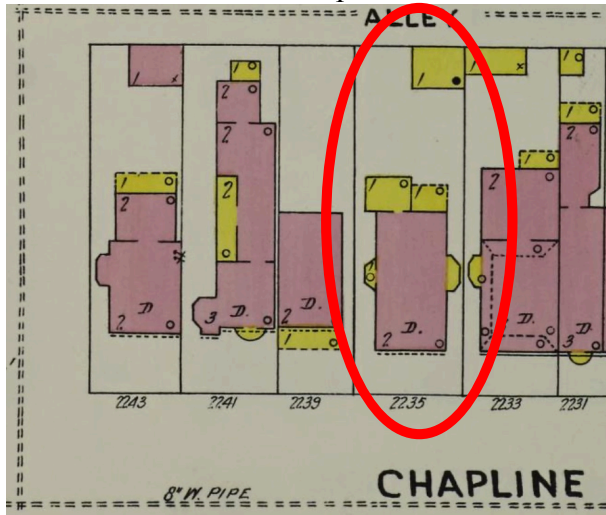
Sarah and James H. Giesey purchased the property for \$5500 in the fall of 1888. They only owned it for just over two years and apparently lived in Houston, Texas, at the time. It should be noted that James Giesey (1861-1938) was a younger brother of Millard F. Giesey, a well-known Wheeling architect who partnered with architect Frederick Faris. If the exterior of an older house was remodeled to its current design, perhaps that work was done during the James Giesey ownership.

Augustus and Katie Gasmire purchased the property for \$6750 in late 1890, two years after they had eloped, reportedly due to opposition from Katie’s parents. Gasmire (1857-1915) was a dentist whose offices at 1313 Market Street were described as “elegant.” According to an 1879 account, “A notable feature in Dr. A. F. Gasmire's practice is the fact of his being the first dentist to have conceived the charming idea of filling decayed frontal teeth with real diamonds. He has been singularly successful in thus setting several magnificent diamonds as firmly in their ivory bed as though a solid gold filling had been applied, and the increased attractiveness thereby imparted to the features will be more readily imagined than described.”

The next owners were German immigrants Melovena and Christian Vieweg, Sr, who purchased the property in the fall of 1904. Vieweg (1824-1913) came to the United States at the age of 17. He had worked as a miner in Pennsylvania and Missouri before moving the Wheeling in 1849, where he ran the successful Farmer’s Home tavern in South Wheeling.

In 1912, the property passed to the Viewegs’ son, Dr. George Vieweg, Sr. (1881-1939). Vieweg was on the staff of the Ohio Valley General Hospital and served for a time as the medical director of the Ohio County Tuberculosis Sanitarium. During World War I, he was a captain in the medical corps at the base hospital in Montgomery, Alabama.

It appears that the building's length was extended during the ownership of either Dr. Gasmire or the Viewegs. The 1902 Sanborn Insurance Map (on the left, when Dr. Gasmire was the owner) still shows a shorter building depth with two frame additions on the rear, while the 1921 map (on the right, when Dr. Vieweg was the owner) shows that the brick structure had been extended to about double its earlier depth.



Following Dr. George Vieweg's death at 2235 Chapline, his wife Ruth (nee Kreiter, 1884-1952) remained in the home until selling it in late 1948 to William B. and Bessie Gorby. William Gorby (1887-1973) worked as a watchman at Blaw Knox.

In 1963, Charles and Helen Dueker purchased the property for \$14,000. Charles Dueker (1898-1965) was a World War I veteran who worked as a plumber and pipefitter. He committed suicide at the property – according to his death certificate he “lay to rear of auto and inhaled carbon monoxide.”

Widow Helen Dueker remained in the home until the spring of 1984, when it was purchased by the law firm of Goodwin, Shanley, Green, and Quinn. That firm dissolved in 1985, with the property ownership going to Thomas Goodwin and Suzanne Quinn the following year. In 1999, Sue Anne Howard purchased the property, and in 2024 the current owner became architect Gus Kayafas.

Prepared by Jeanne Finstein, March 2, 2024
Friends of Wheeling

Sources:

- FindaGrave.com
- Ohio County Assessor's Records
- Ohio County Deed Records
- Sanborn Insurance Maps
- Wheeling City Directories
- WV Vital Records