

Old Tavern
DuPage County
Fullersburg, Illinois

HABS No. Ill.170

HABS
Ill.
22: Fulls,

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. Ill.1.

Historic American Buildings Survey
Earl H. Reed, District Officer
435 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago

HABS
ILL,
22-FULB,

OLD TAVERN
Fullersburg, DuPage County, Illinois.

Date of Erection - Circa 1835.

Builder - Orient Grant

Present Owner - Mrs. Mary Berning

Present Condition - Poor

Number of Stories - Main portion, two stories

Materials of Construction - Pine clapboards on rough sawn, random width sheathing; foundations, rubble stone.

Additional Data - This early tavern, situated on the old Chicago-Aurora stage road at a toll gate point, has been variously known as Crystal Inn, Castle Inn, Lincoln Inn, Fuller's Tavern and Fullersburg Tavern. It is the birth-place of Loie Fuller, world renowned dancer, originator of unusual lighting and costume effects and friend and confident of European royalty. She accompanied Queen Marie of Roumania on her American tour. It is said that Lincoln was an occasional guest and that Stephen A. Douglas delivered a speech here.

The Tavern is situated on Ogden Avenue, uncomfortably close to and below the level of the modern concrete pavement. Nearby, on Salt Creek, is the brick Graue Mill, also measured by the Northern District. These were elements of importance in old Brush Hill, as the tiny settlement was called in pioneer days. Brush Hill became Fullersburg and later part of modern Hinsdale, Chicago's attractive suburb.

The Southwest Plank Road followed Ogden Avenue and was completed as far as the tavern by 1850. Previous to that innumerable travellers on the rutted old Chicago-Aurora road passed its doors bound for the Lead Mines and the head waters of the Illinois.

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Across the road and slightly west is located the old toll-house, now forming the rear wing of a dwelling. This tiny structure formerly stood in the center of the highway and was built previous to the plank road by Barto Van Velzer, the toll-master. Described by his daughter, now in her 86th year, as a "jockey sort", he divided his time between working on his nearby farm, toll collecting and horse trading, successfully conducted from his vantage point.

The Tavern was kept by Ben Fuller at the time Reuben Fuller and his wife, parents of Loie, were staying there. They were two of the thirteen children of Jacob Fuller, the original settler and founder of Fullersburg.

Fullersburg Tavern is one of the very few remaining stage coach inns of early days in Illinois and deserves greater protection than it has received. Only recently, portions of its porch and west wing were partially demolished by a colliding cattle truck.

References - Statements of Mrs. Mary Berning. Paper on Fullersburg by Federal Writers' Project. Chicago Highways Old and New, M. M. Quaife. Statement by Mrs. S. Heineman, daughter of Mary Fuller.

By



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