

Mary Cecil Cantrill #3 House  
121 North Mulberry Street  
Georgetown  
Scott County  
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-223

HABS  
KY,  
105-GEOTO,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Southeast Region  
Department of the Interior  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HABS  
KY  
105-GEO  
1-

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY**

**MARY CECIL CANTRILL #3 HOUSE**

**HABS No. KY-223**

**Location:** 121 North Mulberry Street  
Georgetown, Kentucky  
Scott county, Kentucky

U.S.G.S. topographic quadrangle: Georgetown (7.5)  
Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates:  
16.712800.4231620

**Present Owner:** Georgetown Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency

**Present Occupant:** vacant

**Present Use:** none (scheduled for demolition)

**Statement of Significance:** The Cantrill #3 house is an example of a turn-of-the-century residence built for African-American citizens in a small southern city. Its shotgun plan is typical of houses built on narrow urban lots by or for working-class families, often of African-American ethnicity. Its owner, a white woman with considerable rental property, was largely responsible for the development of the small neighborhood in which this house is located as a small African-American community occupied largely by renters. Thus, this site is an example of a specific ethnic and urban settlement pattern for the late 19th-early 20th century.

**PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

**A. Physical History**

1. **Date of erection:** circa 1897-1901 (Cantrill purchased the lot in 1897 but deed was not filed until 1902; house is shown on the 1901 Sanborn insurance map).

2. **Architect/Builder:** unknown; house construction probably authorized by Mary Cecil Cantrill. An earlier house belonging to Betsey Robinson was probably demolished and replaced by the present structure.

3. **Original and subsequent owners:**

1842 deed, recorded in Volume R, p. 401, Particular Baptist Church to George L. Vallandingham. This deed refers to subsequent sale of property to Robert Garlick, and then to Mark Kershaw.

1859 deed, recorded in Volume 4, p. 535, Mark and Elizabeth Kershaw to Betsey Robinson, "a free woman of color".

1896 will of Betsey Robinson, produced June, 1896, recorded in Will Volume T, p. 21.

1898 court case, recorded in Scott Circuit Court Case files #338, Betsey Robinson Administrator vs. Willie and Henry May, Claiborne Robinson and Willie Robinson (ordered lots to be sold to settle estate; Mary C. Cantrill purchased all lots)

1903 deed, January 1, 1903, recorded in Volume 35, p. 340, James E. and Mary C. Cantrill to George V. Payne, Trustee of Mary C. Cantrill.

1925 deed, November 16, 1925, recorded in Volume 54, p. 597, W. R. Hall et al. to Trustees, Wesley Chapel M. E. Church.

1929 deed, December 28, 1929, recorded in Volume 58, p. 131, Trustees, Wesley Chapel M.E. Church to E. B. and Bettie W. Davis.

1946 deed, August 17, 1946, recorded in Volume 72, p. 351, Betty W. Davis et al. to Cecil and Mamie Scott.

1990 deed, August 31, 1990, recorded in Volume 186, p. 222, Cecil Scott to Georgetown Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency.

4. **Alterations and additions:** The front porch and rear room were added between 1901 and 1907, according to Sanborn insurance maps.

**B. Historical Context:** The Cantrill #3 house was built by Mary Cecil Cantrill, a white businesswoman who owned many rental properties in Georgetown. She built this shotgun house on what was originally the house lot of Betsey Robinson, a "free woman of color", who purchased and moved onto her land in 1859. Robinson's will split her land tract into four lots, and divided her house in half between two of the lots, the dividing line being a east-west running partition that separated two equal-sized apartments. The

Robinson house was located on the west side of what later became two lots. It was apparently demolished before the Cantrill #3 house was built. Cantrill rented the house to African-American tenants as did later owners. Its single shotgun plan is typical of late 19th-early 20th century housing for African-American working-class families. The shed roof is less common than a gabled roof but this roof type is repeated on most of the neighboring rental houses on North Mulberry and Oregon Streets and Post Office Alley.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

**A. General Statement:** This house is a small two-bay, one story, vernacular frame shotgun residence with clapboard siding, a gabled roof fronted by a square parapet with a slightly projecting, molded cornice and a shed porch on replacement cast iron posts. It is unique in its neighborhood by the presence of a gabled roof combined with a parapet on the front of the building. It was apparently designed for single occupancy.

**1. Architectural character:** This structure merits recording because it represents the type of housing typical of late 19th-early 20th century African-American housing in urban settings. Specific architectural features such as the parapet on the street front and a gabled roof distinguish it from other shotgun houses in the immediate neighborhood.

**2. Condition of fabric:** poor

### **B. Description of Exterior:**

**1. Overall dimensions:** 11' 6" by 48' 5", excluding front porch.

**2. Foundations:** stone piers.

**3. Walls:** sawn wood frame, dimensional lumber.

**4. Structural system, framing:** assumed to be balloon framing.

**5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** The front porch measures 12' 6" by 5' 3", extending the full width of the house. An parapet is attached to the front wall, but is attached to a gabled roof rather than the shed roof featured on all of the neighboring houses with parapets. The porch has a shed roof supported by cast iron supports.

**6. Chimneys:** single central brick chimney between two front rooms.

**7. Openings: (By elevations)**

The front (east) facade is divided into two bays (door-window) with a 6/6 sash window and wood louvered vent centered in the front parapet frieze.

The south side wall is divided into four bays with paired 6/6 sash, two single 6/6 sash and a four-panel entry with shed overdoor on angled wood brackets.

The rear (west) facade features a single, off-centered, six light casement window.

The north side wall has a single 6/6 sash window.

**8. Roof: gabled type, unknown covering.**

**C. Description of Interior:**

**1. Floor plans:** The building is three rooms deep with a bathroom occupying the northwest corner of the middle room. The front room measures 11' 6" by 17' 7"; the middle is the same width but only 11' 7" long on the north wall where it meets the bathroom wall. The south wall of the middle room is 19' 1" in length. The bathroom measures 7' 6" by 5' 7". The rearmost room is 9' 3" by 10'.

**D. Site**

**1. General setting and orientation:** The house is located on the west side of North Mulberry Street, and fronts east.

**2. Historic landscape design: none**

**3. Outbuildings: none**

**PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

**A. Original architectural drawings: none**

**B. Early views: none**

**C. Interviews: none**

**D. Bibliography**

**1. Primary and unpublished sources:** Scott county deed books and circuit court records (see Section I.3); Ann Bolton Bevins, 1989, INVOLVEMENT OF BLACKS IN SCOTT COUNTY COMMERCE DURING

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THE POSTBELLUM PERIOD (1865-1918). Manuscript on file, Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

2. Secondary and published sources: none known

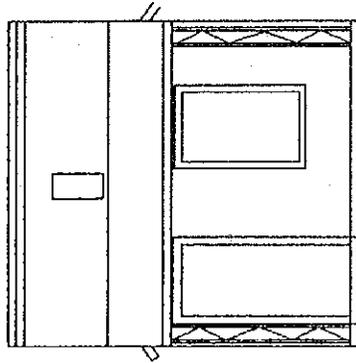
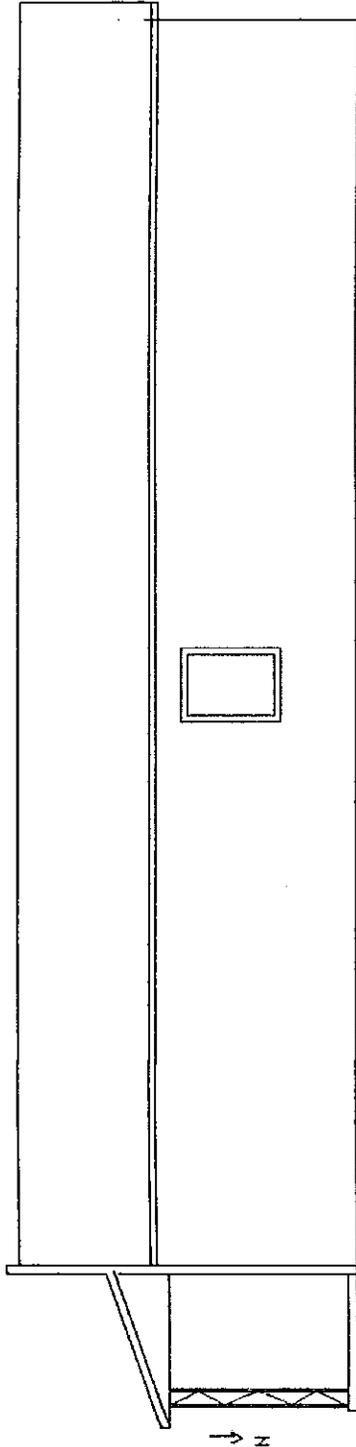
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The HABS documentation of this and other buildings is being performed to comply with the requirements of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City of Georgetown and the Kentucky Heritage Council. The City of Georgetown received a CDBG grant to acquire these buildings in order to demolish them, owing to their poor condition and because they are unsuitable for rehabilitation and reuse. The MOA required that the structures be documented according to HABS criteria and accepted by HABS prior to demolition.

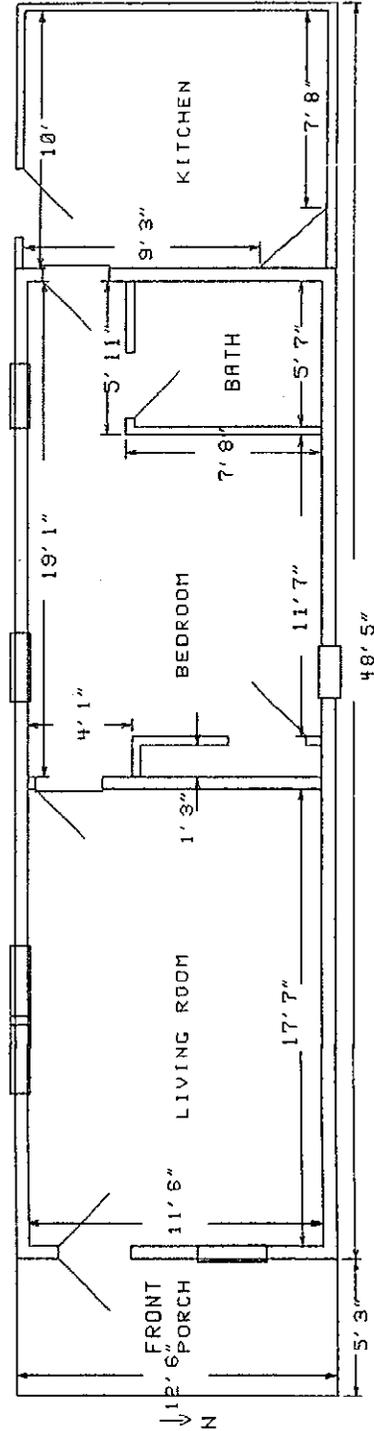
The following people and firms contributed to the documentation effort:

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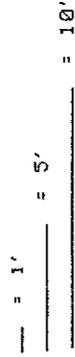
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121 N. MULBERRY GEORGETOWN, KY JUNE 24, 1991



SCALE



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