

Joyce Estate, Main Cabin (Main Lodge)  
Chippewa National Forest Road 2144, ←  
3 miles north of County Road 335  
Grand Rapids vicinity  
Itasca County  
Minnesota

HABS No. MN-146-A

HABS  
MINN  
31-GDRAP.V,  
3A-

---

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

---

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOYCE ESTATE,  
MAIN CABIN (Main Lodge)

HABS No. MN-146-A

HABS  
MINN  
31-GRAP.V,  
3A-

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. **Date of Erection** 1917.
2. **Original and Subsequent Owners** In 1916, David Gage Joyce secured the site of the Main Cabin and surrounding buildings through the services of Simeon D. Patrick, who purchased the land as an intermediary. In 1917, Joyce acquired title in his own name. After Joyce's death in 1937, the property passed to his wife Beatrice Rudolph and daughter Beatrice Clotilde. In 1946, two years before her death, Beatrice Rudolph conveyed full title to Beatrice Clotilde, who retained ownership until her own death in 1972. In 1973, the Nature Conservancy purchased the property and resold it at cost the following year to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service for incorporation into the Chippewa National Forest.<sup>1</sup>
3. **Builders, Contractors, Suppliers** According to former caretaker Joseph Waleski, Jr., the Main Cabin was built of native pine logs by local carpenters during the estate's first season in 1917. F.L. Norman served as construction foreman, overseeing "Pete Richland, along with Mr. Rupert and Mr. Holm." Overall project supervision was the responsibility of Simeon D. Patrick, a Grand Rapids resident who had formerly worked as a timber cruiser for the Joyce Family's Itasca Lumber Company.<sup>2</sup>
4. **Alterations and Additions** A small toilet room was added to the northwestern corner of the porch at an unknown date; the sink and toilet have subsequently been removed. Screens, some window frames, and most shutters and doors have been taken off the porch and central log section since 1986. Sliding sash was added to the porch at an unknown date; these windows have also been removed.

---

<sup>1</sup> S.D. Patrick, Deed to David G. Joyce, 9 May 1917, Deed Book 35, 103; "In the Matter of the Estate of David Gage Joyce, Final Decree of Distribution," 30 June 1938, Book of Deeds 144, 401-406; Beatrice Rudolph Joyce, Deed to Beatrice Clotilde Joyce, 3 July 1946, Deed Book 167, 249 (all the foregoing in the Itasca County Recorder's Office, Itasca County Courthouse, Grand Rapids, MN); "Former Joyce Estate Is Dedicated to Public," Grand Rapids Herald Review, 14 October 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Author's Interview with Joseph Waleski, Jr., Grand Rapids, MN, 27 January 1987; "Will Build Home on 'Big Trout,'" Grand Rapids Herald Review, 14 March 1917.

A gable-roof monitor was added to the rear roof slope between 1945 and 1950.<sup>3</sup>

- B. Historical Context:** According to former Joyce Estate caretaker Joseph Waleski, Jr., the Main Cabin was constructed during the estate's first season in 1917 to serve as a central dining and socializing area for Joyce Family members and their guests. Food preparation occurred in kitchen facilities at the building's rear (west), and meals were customarily served on the screened, wrap-around front (east) porch. The building's main interior space was an undivided "living room," with a stone fireplace on the north wall. The building continued in its original use until the estate passed from Joyce Family ownership in 1972. It has been vacant since that time.<sup>4</sup> For further information, see the historical overview of the Joyce Estate in HABS No. MN-146.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character** The dark-stained wood and green trim of this rustic building harmonize with the surrounding forest.
2. **Condition of Fabric** Fair.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall Dimensions** The central log structure measures approximately 37'2" by 35'0". A once-screened porch, about 9'8" wide, wraps around the building's north, east, and south sides, giving the building overall dimensions of approximately 56'6" by 44'8".
2. **Foundations** Concrete and stone.
3. **Walls** The main section consists of saddle-notched peeled logs. Shingles cover enclosed rooms on the northwest and southwest corners of the porch. Shingles also sheath the gable ends and the lower part of the porch.

---

<sup>3</sup> Stuart MacDonald and Jeffrey A. Hess, HABS\HAER Inventory Card for Main Cabin, 1986, in MacDonald and Mack Partnership and Jeffrey A. Hess, "Cultural Resource Overview, Joyce Estate," prepared for Chippewa National Forest, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Author's interview with Waleski, 1987.

4. **Structural System, Framing** The building's main section is made of horizontal, saddle-notched, peeled logs. The porch is framed with dimension-cut lumber.
5. **Porches, Stoops** Doorways are approached by concrete and cobblestone stoops. Peeled logs support the roof of the porch, which wraps around the north, east, and west sides of the log section. Screens and horizontal sliding-sash windows once enclosed the porch; these have been removed since 1986.
6. **Chimneys** A substantial stone chimney projects above the porch roof, climbing the exterior of the log section's north wall. The chimney, which tapers from bottom to top, is fashioned from cobblestones set in concrete, edged with crudely squared fieldstone "quoins". A square sheet-metal flue extends from the top.
7. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways and Doors** No door to the porch survives on the principal entry to the east; a wood-frame screen door leads into the porch from the north. A pair of doors once opened from the east porch into the central cabin room; these have been removed, as had a single door accessing the same room from the south. Swinging, oak panel doors lead from the porch into the small rooms in the building's northwestern and southwestern corner. Only one wood-panel door survives on the four doorways on the rear (west side). Interior and exterior doorway trim consists of plain, flat boards.
  - b. **Windows and Shutters** A band of horizontally sliding casement windows once ringed the perimeter of the porch; none survive. A large picture window is situated in the front (east) wall on each side of the central door. The northern and southern walls each hold three one-over-one, double-hung sash windows. The rear (west) wall features, from south to north, a pair of double-hung sash windows, a single double-hung sash window, and a single fixed-pane window. All glazing, and some parts of the sash, have been removed from these openings. A picture window in the southern gable end has been covered with boards. Accordion-fold wood shutters once protected windows looking into the porch on the north, east and south sides of the log section. Sections of shutter remain on one window on the north wall, and on the northernmost front picture window. Metal wheels attached to the top of the shutters run on metal tracks over the windows. All of the tracks are still in place. Windows are trimmed with plain, flat boards.

**8. Roof**

- a. **Shape, Covering** The main part of the log section has a gable roof with a metal ridge roll; a shed roof extends to the rear. A hipped roof covers the porch. Composition shingles sheath the entire roof.
- b. **Cornice, Eaves** Exposed, peeled-log rafter tails are visible beneath porch eaves. Dimension-cut lumber rafter tails extend from the rear (west) wall. Eaves terminate in a simple wood fascia board, which is partially deteriorated.
- c. **Dormers, Cupolas, Towers** A gable-roofed monitor, which rises above the shed roof over the kitchen, was added between 1945 and 1950. This monitor replaced the original skylights, which leaked.

**C. Description of Interior:**

**1. Floor Plans**

- a. **Describe Floors** David Gage Joyce's probate file, dated 1938, itemizes the following spaces in the Main Cabin: "Porch", "Kitchen -- Cook's Pantry & Butler's Pantry," "Library & Den," and "Living Room." While some of these labels are relatively easy to assign to rooms in the building, others are more problematic. The following discussion uses these terms when positive identification seems likely.

The building comprises a single story. A porch edges the main section to the north, east, and south. Small service rooms are partitioned off at the northwest and southwest ends of the porch. A small toilet room was installed on the porch immediately to the east of the northwestern room. The majority of the building's main log section is the living room, a large rectangular space with a stone fireplace in the northern wall. A doorway into a small, interior room is near the center of the living room's western wall. Doorways to the north and south of the central doorway enter service rooms to the west. The northern room may have been the library and den; other doors from this room open to the north and west. The southern room was the kitchen, with a doorway in each wall. The northern door leads into a small vestibule, which has a doorway to the outside on the west.

2. **Flooring** Most of the building has wood floor boards; resilient tile covers floors

in the kitchen, southwest corner room, and toilet room.

3. **Wall and Ceiling Finishes** Log rafters are exposed in the main room and porch. Perimeter walls, and all walls in the main room, are of naturally finished peeled logs. Partition walls in the rear section are vertical, bevel-edged, pine panelling. The toilet room is lined with aqua and black glazed tile.
4. **Openings**
  - a. **Doorways and Doors** Recessed panel, swinging, oak doors separate the southwest and northwest corner rooms from the porch. A wood-panel door divides the main room from the kitchen to the west. Otherwise, the interior doors have been removed. Unadorned, flat boards trim doorways.
  - b. **Windows** Unadorned, flat boards surround window openings; sills project slightly.
5. **Decorative Features and Trim** A fireplace on the northern wall of the main room is constructed of squared stone and fieldstone set in concrete. The wood mantel has been removed. Built-in wood cupboards flank the door leading from the porch into the southwest corner room; shelving, drawers, and doors are no longer in place.
6. **Mechanical Equipment**
  - a. **Lighting** Light fixtures have been removed, but some exposed electrical conduit remains. A fuse box is located in the small central room west of the main room. The building no longer has electric service.
  - b. **Plumbing** The toilet in the small room on the porch has been removed. A sink remains in the southwest corner room. Water is no longer supplied to the building.

**D. Site:**

1. **General Setting and Orientation** Claiming a choice location near the tip of Larson's Point, the Main Cabin commands a panoramic view of Trout Lake to the south, east, and north. The building is in close proximity to the estate's main sleeping cabins, which occupy an area of level ground immediately to the north, as well as the crest of a slight hill to the west. Below the hill, immediately behind the Main Cabin, are two service structures: the Root Cellar (HABS No.

MN-146-H) and the Main Pump House (HABS No. MN-146-I).

2. **Historic Landscape Design** When the estate was in active use, the Main Cabin's front (east) grounds was a grassy lawn dotted with irregularly shaped beds of flowers and ornamental plantings, banked by rocks and gravel. A gravel-covered path led, in a more or less straight line, from the Main Cabin's front door to the tip of Larson's Point, about 250 feet to the east. These landscape features were not maintained after the U.S. Forest Service acquired the property in 1973, and the Main Cabin's front area is now overgrown. Originally, the hillside behind the Main Cabin was covered by native hardwoods, especially birch. From the rear (west) of the Main Cabin, a path with stone borders and steps wound up the hillside, branching midway into separate paths to BC Cabin (HABS No. MN-146-Q) and Mary Louise Cabin (HABS No. MN-146-P). The Main Cabin's rear area still resembles its historic appearance. For additional information on the layout of the Joyce Estate, see HABS No. MN-146.

### **PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

#### **A. Early Views:**

Photograph of front (east) and south side, captioned "David G. Joyce's Camp Lodge, Trout Lake," in A Zone of Plenty (Grand Rapids, MN: Grand Rapids Herald Review, 1922), 17. This view documents original construction.

Photograph of front (east) grounds, ca. 1930, in Joseph Waleski, Jr., Photograph Album, in Chippewa National Forest Headquarters Building, Cass Lake, MN. This provides the earliest known view of landscaping at the Main Cabin.

Photograph of interior, living room area, captioned "the Main Lodge of the Joyce Estate in 1945," in Joseph Waleski, Jr. and Donald L. Boese, "The Joyce Estate," Grand Rapids Companion, ed. Donald L. Boese (Grand Rapids, MN: Grand Rapids Centennial Committee and others, 1991), 201. This photograph provides the earliest known view of the Main Cabin's interior space and furnishings.

#### **B. Interviews:**

See HABS No. MN-146.

**C. Bibliography:**

**1. Primary and Unpublished Sources**

See HABS No. MN-146.

**2. Secondary and Published Sources**

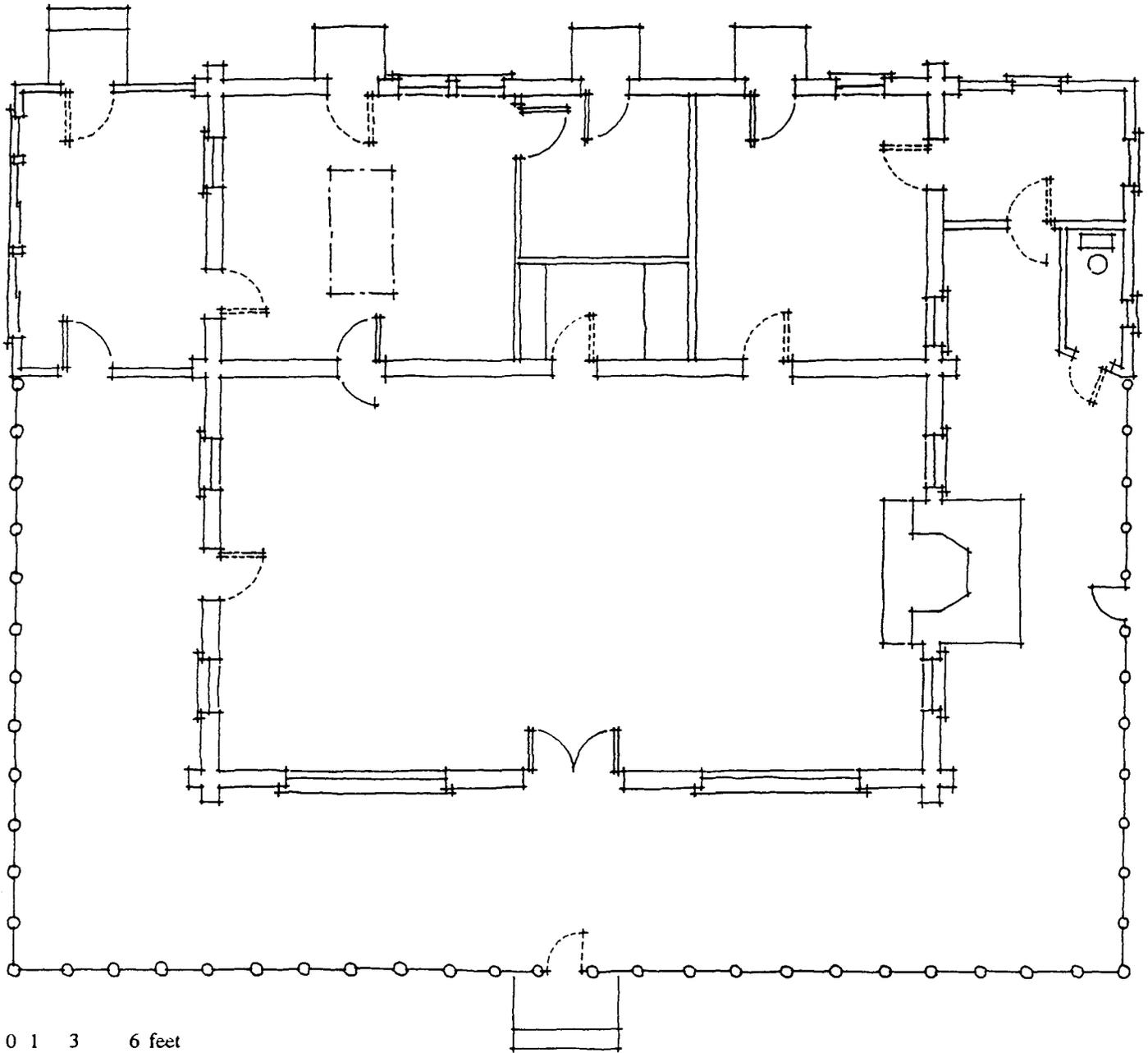
See HABS No. MN-146.

**D. Likely Sources not yet Investigated:**

See HABS No. MN-146.

**PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION**

See HABS No. MN-146.



0 1 3 6 feet

0 1 2 meters

north 

SKETCH PLAN: MAIN CABIN