

Byrd-Haar House
614 West Main Street
Jefferson City
Cole County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1277

HABS
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PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Rocky Mountain Region National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Denver, Colorado 80225

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BYRD-HAAR HOUSE

Location: 614 West Main Street, In lot 43,
Jefferson City, Missouri

Present Owner: City of Jefferson, Housing Authority

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance: The structure is an example of mid-19th century German Vernacular architecture in Jefferson City. This appears to be the remaining example of this specific form/style in the Jefferson City area. Significance is derived from this "last example" status domestic dwelling in a setting that once exhibited a large number of somewhat similar structures.

Date of Erection: The Byrd-Haar House appears to have been constructed by Herman Haar between 1857 and 1865. Haar purchased the land on which the house is situated from Jim Coonce on January 6, 1857 for \$300. Haar sold the property to Mary and Stephen Bergman in 1865 for \$2000. Herman Haar was a builder of houses in Jefferson City during this time period as reported in the local newspaper.

Architect: It is assumed that Herman Haar acted as architect although this has not been established.

Original and Subsequent Owners

The references to the chain of title to the land upon which the structure stands are in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Cole County Courthouse, Jefferson City, Missouri.

1824	Deed from the State of Missouri to John Coonce November 25, 1824
1857	Deed from John Coonce to Herman Haar January 6, 1857
1865	Deed from Herman Haar to Stephen Bergman October 2, 1865
1900	Estate. Deed to Mary Franz August 3, 1900
1944	Estate. Deed to Edger V. Hoelscher May 17, 1944
1945	Deed from Edger V. Hoelscher to Clara Byrd March 30, 1945
1978	Deed from Clara Byrd to Jefferson City October 24, 1978

Historical Narrative

This small brick structure/house was constructed presumably by Herman Haar, a local builder, during the time period 1857 to 1865. There is no indication of structures on the property prior to the present brick house. The 1 and one-half story structure has been utilized as a single family and two family dwelling for the past 100 + years.

Architectural Information

The house contains six rooms and is one and one-half stories in height. It rests on a limestone foundation. The east-west gable roof has metal boxing at the eaves. The brick walls are laid in common bond with each header course matching five stretcher courses. A beam extends from the west to the east wall near the roof line on the north. The Sanborn maps identify this structure as a duplex, and the building appears to have been constructed with this in mind as the east half is almost a mirror image of the west. Two front doors, 6.5 feet high, face south near the center of that wall. Each door has eight rectangular lights. Two over two windows are at both ends beside the doors. Lintels and lug sills trim the windows. An open porch built from vertical planks is on the rear of the house. Both the porch and the hood over the front doors have pent roofs.

The front rooms are identical on both sides. Each measures 15 and 2/3 by 16 and 1/12 feet, and each has a closet in the corner near the window. A four panel door connects the two rooms. The back rooms may have been repartitioned with the west room losing space to the bath. Doors lead from both of these rooms to the back porch as well as to the narrow three feet wide enclosed staircase centered at the back of the house. The back doors each have a single light and two panels.

Upstairs, two rooms are placed on either side of a 5.5 feet wide hallway. The smaller room is on the west and measures 12.25 by 12.5 feet. Wide hardwood boards cover the floor of this room with the widest and most irregular boards near the center, presumably to be covered by a rug. Flat headed cut nails were used to install the floor. The east room may have been finished at a different time. Its dimensions are 14.25 by 14.5 feet, and its floors are constructed

from pine. A single casement window is placed in each room. Connections for the stoves from the back rooms on the first floor are evident in the upper rooms. The brick chimneys extend into the interior of the room and curve up to meet the single chimney tops visible from the outside. This type of chimney construction is noted as characteristic of German architecture (Van Ravensway 1971).

Various features of the house point to a late 1850's construction date. Common bond brick was attaining popularity in Missouri by this time. The five to one ratio of stretchers courses to headers was the preferred style of the Hermann Masons (Van Ravensway 1971:227). Modern wire nails were not available until after the 1850's. Further, the window and door trim, which consists of wide boards cut into segmental arches, is similar to that used in various buildings in Hermann from 1853 through 1869 (Van Ravensway 1971). Also, the square lights used in the doors are indicative of the pre-1860's period (Van Ravensway 1971).

Compilation of the existing physical and historical data appear to point to construction by Herman Haar sometime prior to the Civil War.

Project Information

The Byrd-Haar House is currently scheduled for relocation to an area approximately 120 feet to the north and west of its present location at a future date. The Memorandum of Agreement between the Advisory Council and HUD allow for this relocation. The historical documentation and architectural description were carried out by Environmental Research Center of Missouri, Inc. during during 1982 and 1986. The land on which the house is located is to be sold to the State of Missouri. The area is part of a HUD Urban Renewal project.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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