

Peter Neff Cottage
Wiggin Street, on north edge of
Kenyon College Campus
Gambier
Knox County
Ohio

HABS No. 0-49

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PETER NEFF COTTAGE

Location: Wiggin Street, on north edge of Kenyon College Campus.

Present Owner: Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio.

Present Occupant: Kenyon College.

Present Use: Residence for Professors or administrators of Kenyon College.

Brief Statement of Significance: Possibly designed by Architect William Tinsley, this building was erected about 1860 for Peter Neff, the inventor of the tintype, and may be the finest example of Gothic Revival cottage style and wood detail in Ohio.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Peter Neff 1860-1888; Robert Wilson 1888-1920; PSI Upsilon Fraternity 1920-1935; Kenyon College 1935-to present, used as a professor's house.
2. Date of erection: Presumed 1860.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Architect possibly William Tinsley, who had just completed Ascension Hall (1857) on Kenyon College Campus. Details of woodwork suggest this (See Victorian Architect by J. D. Forbes). Builder, suppliers, etc. - not known.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: None.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: During Fraternity ownership, rear wing of house was altered to a Banquet Hall.

When Kenyon College bought the property, a small office used by Peter Neff was moved from this site to the Kenyon College playing fields to store equipment. This office was of similar style to the house.

All data from November 1950 issue of Museum Echoes published by the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society

6. Important old views and references:
Views: Following page 466 of The Ohio Guide.
References: Victorian Architect by J. D. Forbes
Museum Echoes, published by the Ohio State
Archaeological and Historical Society, November 1950.
The Kenyon Book, edited by W. B. Bodine 1891,
p. 297.
Past and Present of Knox County, Ohio, Albert B.
Williams, editor, 1912, Vol. 1, page 38.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Peter Neff was the inventor (with Professor Hamilton Smith of Kenyon) of the tintype - collodian positives on thin plates of black enamelled iron. He graduated from Kenyon College in 1849, from Kenyon Theological Seminary in 1854, and gave generously to the college. He aided liberally in the erection of Ascension Hall (Wm. Tinsley, Architect) according to p. 297 The Kenyon Book, edited by W. B. Bodine, 1891.

He organized oil explorations in Knox County, Ohio, and invented machinery for making lamp black and diamond black from natural gas.

Source of information: Vol. 1, page 38, Past and Present of Knox County, Ohio, Albert B. Williams, editor, 1912/.

- C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None known.

Prepared by Prof. Perry E. Borchers
June 1959

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: Gothic Revival cottage - all filigree and bargeboards are hand-finished; distinctly not usual Victorian handling of details.
2. Condition of Fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ stories; entirely wood frame with horizontal siding; 40 ft. across front, 130 ft. in depth.

2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Entirely wood frame, horizontal clapboard.
4. Chimneys: Brick - prominent flues continued beyond brick.
5. Porches: Extremely thin and intricately formed wood columns support porch over main entrance.
6. Openings
 - a. Doorways and doors: Doors of wood and plate glass. Gothic Revival detail.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Wood double-hung windows - four large lights. Wood shutters.
7. Roof
 - a. Shape, covering: Pitched and steep.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Deep bargeboards of lacelike patterns.
 - c. Dormers: Dormers with elaborate wood filigree and carved bargeboards.

C. Technical Description of Interiors

1. Floor Plans: Informal Gothic Revival plan.
2. Stairways: Wood.
3. Flooring: Wood.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Panelling in part; plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: Wood and plate glass. Gothic details.
6. Trim: Wood. Interior trim duplicates some unusual details in two literary society halls in Ascension Hall, Kenyon College, by William Tinsley, Architect, 1857.
7. Hardware: Iron.
8. Lighting: Electricity.
9. Heating: New central plant. Originally fireplaces.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Set in large open lawn enclosed on two sides by low stone retaining wall, this structure fronts south on Northeast corner of Kenyon College campus.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: Original office of Peter Neff has been moved to college playing fields for equipment storage.
4. Walks: Stone and concrete.
5. Landscaping: Natural.

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ALBUM
FOLLOWS

Addendum To
Kenyon College, Peter Neff Cottage
Wiggin Street
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Ohio

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Washington, DC 20013-7127

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Data pages 1 through 4 were previously transmitted to the Library of Congress. This is data page 5.

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One survey control contact print per plate; survey control information for each plate.

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	Left and right overlap: 85%

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