

KEASBEY & MATTISON CO., THREE-STORY DOUBLE

HABS NO. PA-6048-AC

HOUSE, HIP-ON-GABLE ROOF TYPE

332-334 Randolph Avenue

Ambler

Montgomery County

Pennsylvania

HABS  
PA  
46-AMB,  
10AC-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

KEASBEY & MATTISON CO., THREE-STORY DOUBLE HOUSE,  
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PA  
46-AMB,  
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Location: 332-334 Randolph Avenue, Ambler, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

Significance: This house and the others on Randolph Avenue were built in the mid-1920s as part of the company town of the Keasbey & Mattison Company and were some of the last units built by the company. These houses were intended for upper-level factory workers and lower-level foremen.

Description: The main block of the building is three stories high, six bays across ( three per unit) and five bays deep with a two-story rear section measuring two bays by two bays. The foundations and walls are of locally quarried, rough-cut stone set in irregular courses. The duplex has a full porch on the south or front elevation. This porch serves both units and is supported by four stone pillars. On the north side of the building are two side porches, one for each unit. These porches occupy the space between the main block and the smaller two-story ell. Originally these porches were composed of a wood deck and roof set on four stone pillars slightly taller than those supporting the front porch to compensate for the sloping topography. The rear porch on the northwest corner of the house has been enclosed.

The building has three brick chimneys, all with a brick beltcourse, a detail typical of two and three story level Keasbey & Mattison houses.

The main entry doors of the duplex are set close together and are covered by the front porch. Each is topped by a one-light transom. Side doors are found in each unit on the side walls of the two-story rear ell, and enter onto the side porches. Steps lead down to the sunken basement doorway. The basement entry on the west unit is surrounded by a stucco-covered enclosure. The side porch on the west unit has been enclosed with vinyl siding.

The windows are a mix of one-over-one double hung sash replacement windows and older, possibly original, two-over-two windows. Variations are limited to the rear of the third floor and the basement. The windows on the third floor rear consist of a pairs of two-over-two windows for each unit. There are two basement windows on each face of the building. These are a mix of replacement and three-pane awning windows. The hip-on-gable roof is interrupted by four hip-on-gable dormers, two each above the side and rear walls.

The floor plan is typical of Keasbey & Mattison duplexes.

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The front door enters into a long hall with stairs along the common wall between units. Partition walls, which have been removed in most units, created two small rooms, a front parlor with a kitchen to the rear.

History: The various styles of three-story double houses on Randolph Street were constructed during the housing campaign of the 1920s and were designed by Philadelphia architect John Bothwell. This house is evidence of both continuity in plan and innovation in architectural detail of the company houses of Keasbey & Mattison. The three-story hip-on-gable duplex was used on Church and Douglas streets in an earlier period. Design innovations for this later period include dormers on the third story, front and side walls. This and other innovations may be a result of the involvement of a trained architect in designing the later company houses. The houses on this street were intended for factory employees, though, not necessarily for those working in the manufacturing sections of the plant. In 1928 for example, the unit at 334 was the home of P.J Connely, who worked as a Shipping Clerk, and his wife Helen. The rent for these houses would be slightly higher than those just behind on Lower Church Street, but would have indoor plumbing and garage stalls in a common garage on the rear alley.

Sources: Sanborn Insurance Maps. Map of Ambler, 1909, 1916.

Newton Howard, interview by author, Summer 1994.

Field Survey, Summer 1994.

Historian: Thomas Heard, HABS, Summer 1994.