

266 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET (House)
Jeannette
Westmoreland County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6141

HABS
PA
65-JEAN,
23-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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ADDENDUM TO:
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

266 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET (HOUSE)

HABS No. PA-6141

- LOCATION: 266 South Eighth Street, Jeannette, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania
- SIGNIFICANCE: A high concentration of window, tableware, bottle and specialty glass plants distinguished Jeannette as “The Glass City” early in its history. Significant housing stock consists of company-built row and detached double houses, and several privately constructed dwellings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

When developers Charles W. Gearing and Charles Beiersdorfer, partners in a hotel in nearby Claridge, built a row of houses along South Eighth Street they squeezed five buildings onto what were originally three lots facing Bullitt Avenue. McKee first sold the lots in 1889 for \$460 each, but after three intervening owners, Gearing and Beiersdorfer purchased three lots together for \$1000 in 1907. The houses went up shortly thereafter and some of the early tenants of number 266 were the Oldham family, who lived here in 1910. William Oldham was 21 years old and worked as a cutter in a glass factory. He was married and had a baby son, and the family shared the house with two male boarders who were also working as cutters in the glass works.

Beiersdorfer and Gearing dissolved their partnership in about 1914, and Beiersdorfer subsequently bought the McKee Hotel in Jeannette. Gearing bought Beiersdorfer's share of houses in 1917, and Gearing and a subsequent owner kept the buildings as rental property into the 1920s. Felice and Rosina Centi purchased the house in 1923. Their surname is spelled differently in the 1928 city directory, but it appears that Felice was a laborer and that the couple did live in the house. The Centis moved to New York State and sold the house to Edward and Anna Fisher in 1940. The Fishers also lived here, and Mrs. Fisher owned the house into the early 1960s.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Constructed ca. 1908-09, this straightforward and unadorned gable front house was part of a matching row of five houses that stood along Eighth Street. It is a good example of this area's standard rental housing. No additions were ever built to the house, although

the exterior finish is now vinyl or aluminum siding and it has asphalt shingles. The original small rear porch has recently been removed.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Insurance Maps of Jeannette, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1910, 1916, 1925.

Deed Books. Recorder of Deeds, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania. 189/561, 235/1, 250/385, 396/361, 431/516, 443/16, 597/330, 737/190, 743/399, 1069/100, 1830/127, 2302/707.

City Directories, 1897, 1913, 1923, 1928, 1948, 1960.

Tax Assessment Books. Westmoreland County Tax Assessment Office, Westmoreland County Courthouse, Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1910 census manuscripts on microfilm.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

In February 1987, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) began a multi-year historical and architectural documentation project in southwestern Pennsylvania. Carried out in conjunction with America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), HABS and HAER undertook a comprehensive documentation of Jeannette, documenting industries, housing and cultural institutions.