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HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Historic Structures Report for the Clinton County Historical Society/Rombach Place

Prepared for:

Clinton County
Historical Society
149 East Locust St.

Wilmington, Ohio, 45177

ClintonCountyHistory.org

Prepared by:

Gray & Pape, Inc
340 Reading Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

24-100901.001

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Project No. 24-100901

Historic Structures Report
Clinton County Historical Society/Rombach Place

Contract/PID #: 24-100901

Prepared for: The Clinton County Historical Society
Rombach Place, 149 East Locust Street
Wilmington, Ohio 45177

Prepared by: Cooper Shields, MS, Brandon McCuin, MHP
Wes Cunningham, MA, and
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Principal in Charge
April 11, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Rombach Place is a substantial stucco-clad, brick house located at 149 East Locust Street, near the northeast corner of the original sixteen-block plat of Wilmington, Ohio, a three-block walk from the courthouse at the intersection of Main and South streets (Figure 2-4 On the Map of Clinton County Ohio (HF Walling 1859), the property was labeled as the home of "M. Rombuck" and was the only property within the town limits that occupied two full lots. In the Illustrated Historical Atlas of Clinton County Ohio (Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson, 1876), it was one of the largest houses in Wilmington. The house was built on two lots in the 1850s by local builder, Robert Wickersham. The property value increased from 1851 to 1856. In 1856, the property sold for $4,600 to Matthew and Catherine Rombach.

The increase in value of the property so close in time to the purchase of the land by Rombach seems to indicate that the house was built at Wickersham's cost and direction, rather than as a speculative real estate endeavor. The latter option, a speculative real estate endeavor, seems less likely given the scale and character of the house. Speculation, in the real estate world, is an approach where land is developed or built upon in prediction of changes in local market conditions. A speculative build would be built in anticipation of an increase in the local real estate market.[1]

The house takes the form known to historians as the double-pile, central-passage plan, in which a long central passage runs from front to back on each floor flanked by two rooms of the same size to each side. The exterior of the house is characterized by a five-bays facade with a central entry. The side walls incorporate pairs of interior chimneys that originally served the two rooms to each side of the central passage. The chimney in the northwest room was removed below the attic floor before ca.1880, as documented in a historic photograph, but the stack still rises above the floor of the third floor (Figure 2-1). The building was

[1] Narrative Research and CCHS Interpretive information indicates that Wickersham may have lived in the house with his family for a few years until he sold the property to Matthew Rombach, but no definitive sources were found to substantiate this information.

comprehensively altered in 1919, on both the interior and exterior, and in 2001, a large rear addition was added to the building by the Clinton County Historical Society.

This Historic Structures Report (HSR) outlines the history and evolution of the building, its inhabitants over time, its existing conditions, and recommendations for ongoing maintenance and repairs. All work performed for this project was conducted by individuals meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Architectural History or Architecture, as outlined in 36 CFR Part 61and the National Park Service (NPS) Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports (2004).

1.2 Acknowledgements

This HSR was undertaken to support the continued development of the property and its mission as the home of the Clinton County Historical Society and to provide guidance for the interpretation, restoration, preservation, and rehabilitation of the building. This HSR will serve as a guide for a better understanding of Rombach Place's physical character and development over the last 170 years. Currently, the property is owned by the Clinton County Historical Society, whose five-year strategic plan will utilize the recommendations and history from this HSR to address future fundraising efforts and address existing maintenance concerns.

Gray & Pape Inc. (Gray & Pape), with assistance from Glave & Holmes' Historic Architects, completed all field investigations and prepared this HSR. Brandon L. McCuin served as Principal in Charge, Cooper Shields served as lead Architectural Historian, and Gibson Worsham was the Historic Architect on record. Special thanks are given to the Clinton County Historical Society staff and volunteers, who spent considerable time researching the background of the home and its occupants which included using city and county tax records and deeds. In addition, thanks are given to Shelby Boatman, Director of the Clinton County Historical Society and the Society's Board of Directors for their countless hours ensuring this building is preserved for future generations. Finally, special thanks to the Clinton County Commissioners and the Jeffris Foundation, whose funding and oversite made this project possible.

This HSR places all the past interventions and any future work in context with the building's history and significance to assist in short- and long-term decision-making involving

master-planning, restoration, and repairs. This document provides a records base for proposed work and includes details of past alterations, repairs, architectural drawings of the building, and photographs documenting existing conditions, with emphasis placed on specific maintenance issues and concerns. Recommendations for addressing future maintenance, repairs and interpretation are outlined in Section 6 which concludes this report.

1.3 Executive Summary

A well-crafted HSR provides the stewards of a building with both technical guidance and long-term planning tools for current and future management decisions regarding the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or reconstruction treatments of the Facility. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1979, Rombach Place's history spans multiple generations. The Period of Significance for the building spans from 1856-1953 and is organized into three phases: The First Period (1856-c1870), the Second Period (c1870-1890), and the Third Period (1919-1955). An additional fourth period is added for context but does not contribute to the buildings Period of Significance. The Fourth Period spans from 1956 to present, accounting for the Clinton County Historical Society's ownership of the building.

The establishment of Treatment Zones, such as Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards allows for areas of a building to receive different select treatments depending on the significance of the space or feature. A mixture of Restoration and Rehabilitation may be appropriate for Rombach Place. Significant building elements and spaces should be part of the Restoration Zone where retention of the existing spaces and features should be prioritized and restored. In the Restoration zone, additions or alterations should be reversible without causing damage to the historic fabric or significance. Original features that have been removed or considered highly significant if still in place should be incorporated or interpreted in a compatible manner but distinguishable from the original design. Secondary areas or elements should be classified under the Rehabilitation Zone where their historic fabric may be treated sensitively, but alterations for the space's new use may be allowed. Demolition or reconstruction of walls and other structural components built after 1953, such as porch enclosures

and elements of the rear addition, may be permitted as they do not contribute to the period of significance of the building.

Findings and Recommendations:

Areas of most significance are: Rombach place retains a significant number of its original doors and windows, as well as original interior finishes and features. These aspects should be prioritized and maintained or restored as needed. The building's use as a house museum allows for minimal impact on these character-defining features.

The Clinton County Historical Society has owned and maintained Rombach Place since 1955. Changes and alterations during this period have included a replacement roof, a North addition in 2001, East and West porch enclosures, front porch alteration (columns removed), superficially applied wainscot in the first- and second-floor passages possibly added in 1969 during a museum renovation.

Evaluation of the building and consultation with the Clinton County Historical Society (CCHS) revealed that addressing existing structural concerns, particularly those associated with moisture damage, is imperative to the longevity of the building. Because the Historical Society is primarily concerned with preserving the house and future interpretation, repairing the historic fabric and establishing a clear ongoing maintenance plan are top priorities.

Recommendations for preservation or repair are outlined in Section 6.2; a summary of recommended actions is presented below. The recommended actions below are listed in order of priority.

1. High Interior Humidity
    a. The abnormally high humidity in Rombach Place is likely due to the incompatibility of the c. 1850 building with a whole-house modern HVAC system. Correcting this problem by working with an MEP engineer experienced with historic buildings is imperative for the longevity of the building and condition of its artifacts.
2. Interior Moisture Ingress
    a. Some of the interior moisture issues are likely related to the humidity issue (1). However, a series of areas on the exterior of the building show cracks in the stucco and signs of rot on windowsills or frames. This can lead to water ingress. The repair of these stucco cracks and the repair/replacement of

broken window frame pieces will help fix this ingress.

3. Interior Repairs: Plaster and Floors
   a. Plaster damage is seen in several areas of the building, most notably in the NW corner of Room 1-9. Once the moisture ingress is corrected, the damaged plaster can be cleared away and repaired in-kind.
   b. Areas of flooring show failure of the protective top layer, like in Room 1-2. Other areas, like Room 2-5, have areas of missing or failed joints in the tongue-and-groove flooring. The damaged protective layer can be gently sanded away and replaced with a new coat. The damaged flooring can be replaced in-kind with sacrificial pieces from inconspicuous areas within the same room.
4. Exterior Repairs: Door, Window, and Stucco Repairs
   a. The building's exterior doors are overall in good condition; however, the finish and hardware should be refurbished.
   b. The windows on the building are also in generally good condition due to the triple-track storm windows. When desired, the windows can all be stripped of their paint and sanded, then have new glazing putty added with new appropriate paint. Where needed, replacement pieces of wood or structural epoxy can be used for repairs.
5. Mechanical Updates: Electrical wiring
   a. While not inherently dangerous, the current knob-and-tube wiring has a series of potential problems that come alongside natural modifications and alterations usually present in historic buildings. Additionally, the fabric clad wiring is more easily damaged, leading to the potential for exposed live wires.

Costs and Funding Sources

A summary of estimated costs for recommended repairs is outlined in section 6.4. Sources for funding for Rombach Place include private donations, grants, and potential funding through the Ohio History Fund. A "Brick & Mortar" Grant through the Ohio History Fund can pay 60% of a project's total cost (Up to $20,000) for the rehabilitation, restoration, protection, or acquisition

of a property listed on the NRHP. The grant requires a preservation agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office (Ohio History Connection 2025)

Historic Research

Historic Research is a key element when preparing an HSR. Research for this report was conducted primarily at Rombach Place, using the archival materials supplied by the Clinton County Historical Society. Specifically, the "Family Histories – Clinton County A-Z," "Clinton County Deeds; Books A-Z," and the Early Tax Records collections were heavily used for historic research. These records were used to gain more information and a better understanding of the occupants and the buildings' chronology. In addition to this in-person research, digital research provided a historic context of the building. Research materials included newspaper articles, local history books, photographs, maps, United States Federal Census records, National Park Service archives, and burial information. All sources and research materials referenced for this report are listed in Section 8, the Bibliography.

Site Investigation

Identification of Character-Defining Features

In August and September of 2024 and January and February of 2025, Gray & Pape's Secretary of the Interior (SOI) qualified Architectural Historians conducted on-site investigations and photo documentation of Rombach Place. During the site investigation, Gray & Pape recorded and identified character-defining features of the interior and exterior of the building. Character-defining features include original building materials, decorative features, and interior layout of the building.

Investigation of Existing Conditions

In September 2024 and January 2025, Gray & Pape completed a visual inspection of the existing conditions of Rombach Place. The conditions were documented through digital photographs with notes taken regarding identified visible alterations to the building's historic fabric. The results of these investigations are outlined in Section 4.0: Architectural Evaluation and Condition Assessment in this report. Within this document, photographs of the current conditions were taken during the August and September site visits by staff Architectural Historian, Cooper Shields, and are dated 2024 within the captions. Photographs dated 2025 within their captions were taken during the January and February 2025 site visits by Cooper Shields, and the January site visit included Historic Architect, Gibson Worsham.

The current conditions photographs were taken either with a high-resolution DSLR camera or a flexible borescope to aid in accessing hard-to-reach areas. In addition, Cooper Shields, an FAA Part 106 licensed Small Unmanned Aerial Systems pilot, took aerial images with a high-resolution drone camera to assist in the investigations.

2.0 CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Rombach Place has a rich and detailed history, that spans multiple generations. The following section provides a historic overview of the City of Wilmington's development, creating a context to place the history of Rombach Place and provides a narrative and historic summary of Rombach Place's residents. The story of Rombach Place is organized into Four Periods of Construction History, The First Period (1856-ca.1870): Matthew and Catherine (Katherine) Rombach (residents from 1856-1903), the Second Period (ca.1870-1890): General James William Denver and Louise (Louisa) Rombach Denver (residents from 1856-1914), the Third Period (1919): James William Denver Williams and Dorothy Sinnett Williams (residents from 1901-1953), and the Fourth Period (1955): The Clinton County Historical Society (1955-present).

Census research provided detailed information on each resident of Rombach Place, including servants; a comprehensive timeline of the residents of Rombach Place can be seen in Figure 2-7. A Rombach Family tree is presented in Figure 2-16.

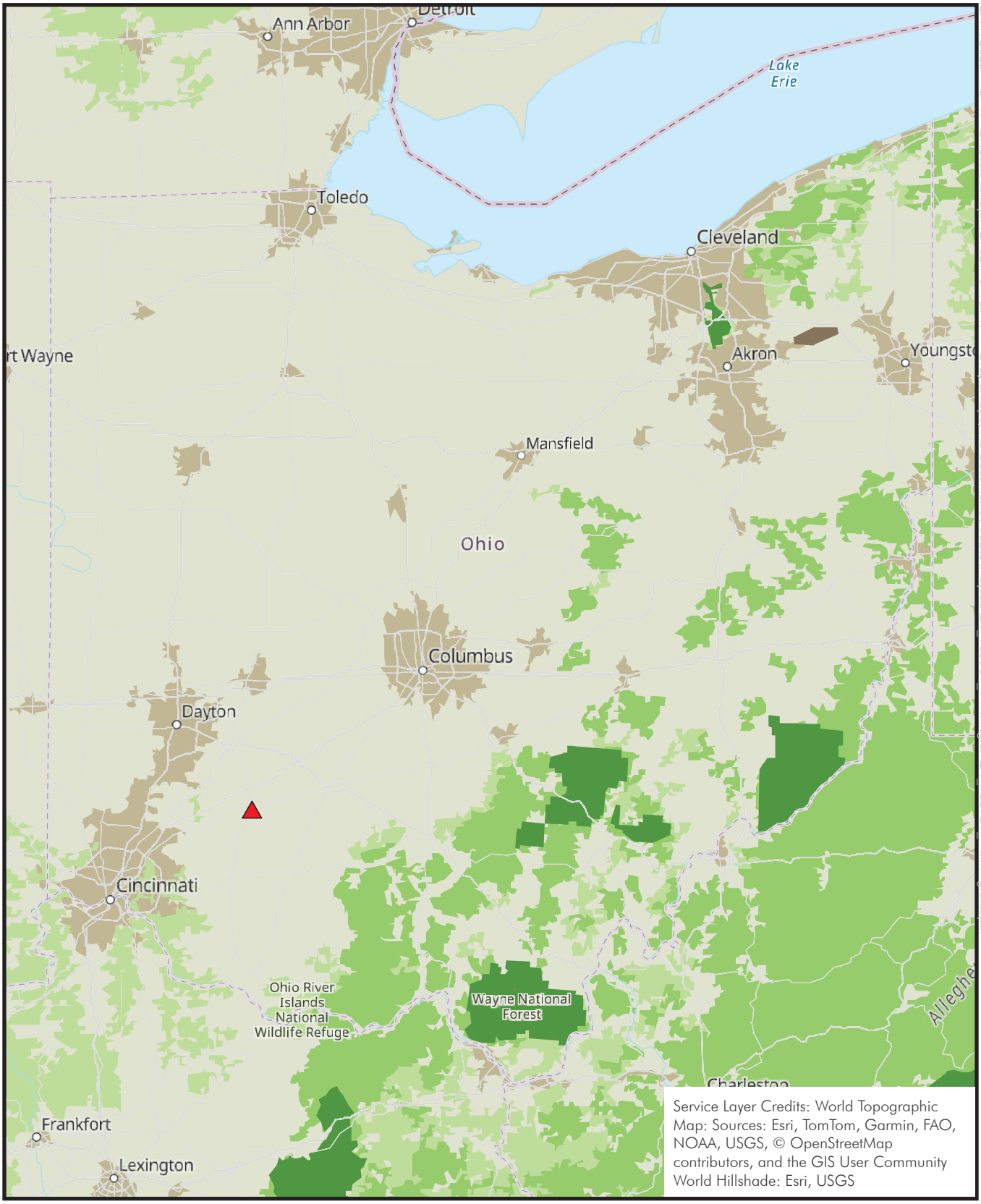
Figure 2-1. Rombach Place ca. 1880, General Denver and his wife are visible on the entry porch, facing northeast (Wilmington News-Journal 1976).

2.1 City of Wilmington

Located in southwestern Ohio, the City of Wilmington is the county seat of Clinton County. Clinton County and Wilmington were both established in 1810, with the latter being plotted and laid out between 1810 and 1812 (Clinton County Historical Society 2024). Clinton County was named for U.S. Vice President George Clinton, and Wilmington was named after Wilmington Delaware and North Carolina. The town shared the name of cities in those states because early residents had roots in the other Wilmington's (City of Wilmington 2024). These early settlers were mostly attracted to the region as part of the Virginia Military District, where the US Government gave Revolutionary War veterans land in payment for their military service. The

new residents were mostly newcomers from Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and the Carolinas.

Clinton County sits in what was a combination of Highland and Warren counties, with a historically high concentration of Quaker residents. Quakers, as a whole, held the belief that all human beings are equal and worthy of respect. They holistically banned the ownership of slaves by any of their members in 1776. Throughout the US and the United Kingdom, Quakers were instrumental in the abolitionist movement, with many assisting in the Underground Railroad. As such, the Clinton County Quaker population helped give the area its reputation as a haven for runaway slaves traversing the Underground Railroad in the early-to-mid nineteenth century. Wilmington College, established in the 1870s, was founded by this group of residents (City of Wilmington 2024).



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0 10 20 Miles

0 20 40 Kilometers

Figure 2-2. Location of Wilmington, Ohio.

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Legend

▲ Wilmington, OH

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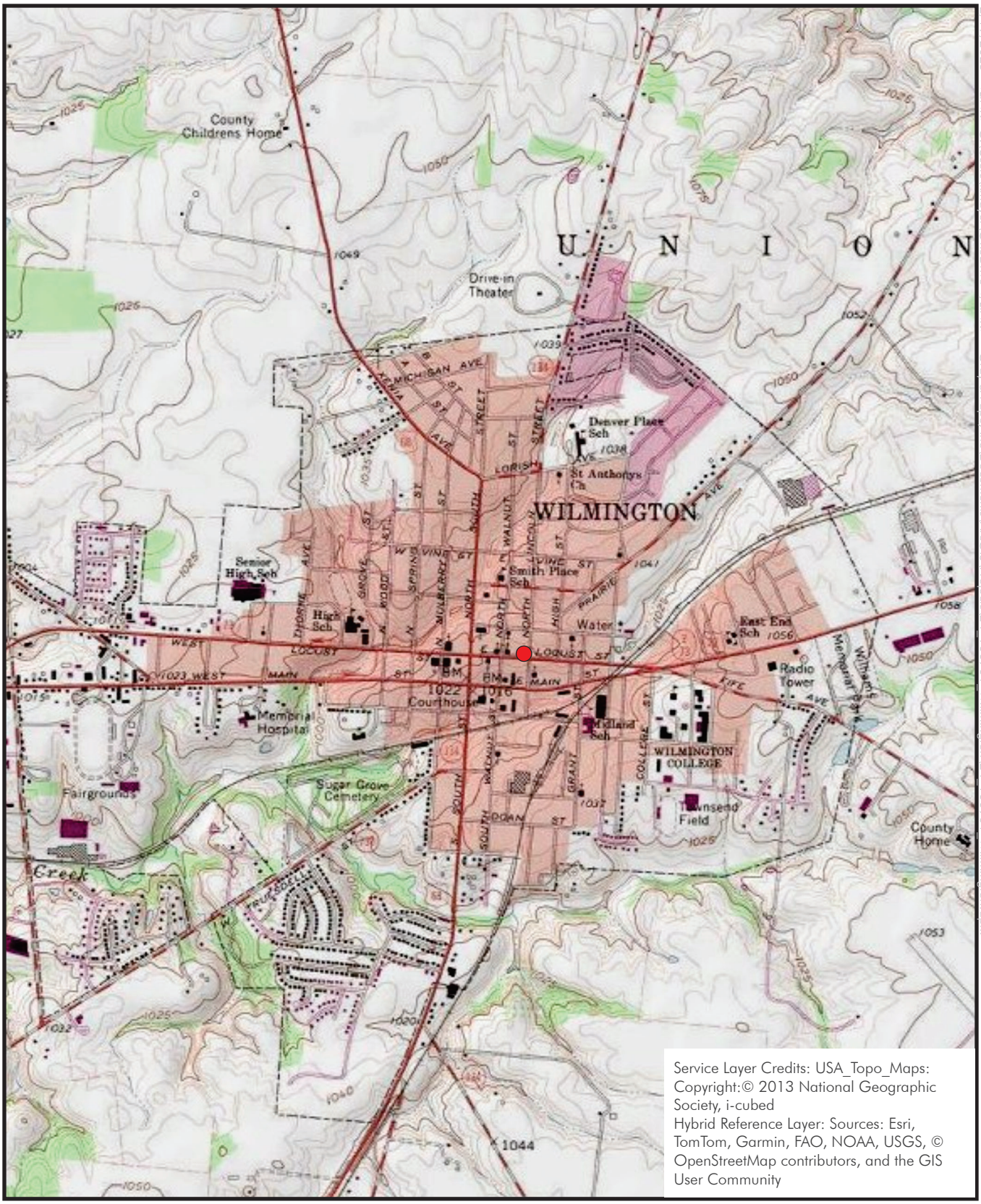

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Hybrid Reference Layer: Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

N

0 900 1,800 Feet

0 250 500 Meters

Figure 2-3. Location of Rombach Place, Wilmington, Ohio.

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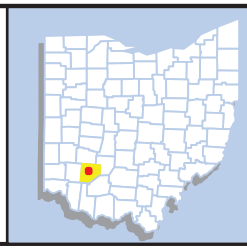
Legend

Clinton County Historical Society/Rombach



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Historically, the county's economy relied heavily on agriculture. Corn, wheat, hogs, and cattle were and are a highly lucrative part of the county, along with several larger companies, like the Champion Bridge Company, a 150-year-old wood and steel bridge manufacturing company still located in the county seat of Wilmington (City of Wilmington 2024).

Evidenced by the large Quaker population in its early history, Wilmington and Clinton County have historically had a large reliance on religion. Clinton County has over fifty churches with a wide variety of denominations represented (Clinton County Historical Society 2024). The Wilmington Methodist Episcopal Church is largely credited with being the earliest established church in Wilmington, starting in 1813, with the purchase of its first building five years later (Clinton County Historical Society 2024).

Figure 2-4. Rombach Place ca. 1900, facing northeast (Clinton County Historical Society ca. 1900).

2.2 Rombach Place Construction

While an exact construction date is unknown, research from local tax records and deed transfers indicate that Rombach Place was constructed ca. 1850[2] by local builder Robert Wickersham. Robert Mills Wickersham (1809-1896) was born in York County, Pennsylvania in 1809 (Census 1850). He married Jane Clearly (1818–1867) in 1836, and by 1840, Robert and Jane settled in Wilmington, Ohio (Census 1840). The couple would have five children: Ewing Wickersham, William H.

[2] There is a discrepancy with the date of construction. Sources such as newspaper articles, websites, and the NRHP nomination form provide varying dates including 1831, 1835, 1849, and 1855. The date of ca. 1850 was chosen since that is the most consistent reference.
NRHP Nomination for Rombach Place dates the building to 1831. No source provided in the nomination bibliography.
"History of Williams Residence Traced; Open House Plans Set," Wilmington News-Journal, June 18, 1954, pg. 14. – Article states that David R. Williams traced the history of the property; "Wickersham built the original part of the house in 1849 on a stone foundation with a fireplace in every room."
Robert Mills Wickersham's page on FindaGrave does not give a date of construction; however, it states that Wickersham live in the residence for many years before selling the property to Matthew Rombach.

Wickersham, Robert M. Wickersham, Catherine (Kate) March, and Jennie (Jane) Stimson. Robert was employed in the trades as a carpenter and local builder. Later in life, he was a dry goods merchant (Census 1870). Wickersham posted advertisements for his store in the Republican newspaper in the 1860s. An address was not listed in the advertisements; however, the ads said the store was located "At the Sign of Big 8." An ad posted in the Republication on September 16, 1869 (Figure 2-5), announced the "Grand Closing Sales of Spring & Summer Goods at Cost," signifying Wickersham, at sixty years of age, was perhaps moving toward retirement. However, the 1880 federal census listed "carpenter" as his occupation. At that time, Robert lived with his daughter Catherine (Kate) March, son-in-law Thomas Q. March, and granddaughter Jane W. March. Their address was listed in the 1880 Census as "South Stret (West Side)." Jane Wickersham died in 1867 at the age of forty-nine. Robert lived in Wilmington until his death in 1896; both are buried at Sugar Grove Cemetery in Wilmington. His sons were employed in the trades as a painter, carpenter, and clerk likely at his store (Census 1860).

Research indicates that Robert Wickersham built Rombach Place ca. 1850 and then sold the double-lot property to Matthew Rombach, his wife Catherine (Katherine), and daughter Louise (Louisa) in 1856 for $4600 (Clinton County Recorder of Deeds 1856).

GRAND CLOSING SALES

—OF—

Spring & Summer Goods at Cost!

—AT—

R. M. Wickersham's.

At the Sign of Big 8.

IN order to reduce my stock and make room for Fall Goods, I will sell the following goods at cost.

Ladies' Dress Goods,
Ladies' Silk Lace Points & Shawls,
Ladies', Gents' & Boys' Straw Hats,

And many other articles too numerous to mention. This offer will be open for thirty days.

I am still selling best brands of prints at 12½ cents. Also best brands heavy brown muslin at 18 cents. A full line of

STAPLE COTTON GOODS

will be found at all times, and at

THE LOWEST CASH PRICES!

A Complete Stock of Queensware.

Latest Styles Mens' and Boys' Wool and Fur Hats.

Ladies will please remember that with us it is a pleasure to show goods and I cordially invite all to call and look through

MY STOCK OF DRESS GOODS!

Feeling confident they will appreciate the bargains I offer. R. M. WICKERSHAM.

August 12, 1869.-1m.

Figure 2-5. Robert Wickersham's store closing advertisement (Clinton Republication 1869).

First Period (1856-ca.1870): Matthew and Katherine Rombach (residents from 1856-1903)

Matthew Rombach (1811-1903; Figure 2-6) was born in Baden-Württemberg, Germany in 1811. He was the youngest of four sons to parents Carl and Francesca Rombach (Wilmington News-Journal 1903). Matthew studied the clock making trade in his teens, then traveled to the U.S. on his own for greater opportunities. In June 1830, at age 19, he arrived in New York City on the Hibernia (New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists 1820-1957). Matthew initially settled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, then traveled west to Ohio. He married Catherine (Katherine) Kautz (1809-1885), also a native of Baden-Württemberg, Germany, in Cincinnati in 1832. They traveled to Brown County before calling Wilmington home. Census records for Matthew Rombach list occupations ranging from farmer to stock dealer, back to farmer, and lastly banking and farmer. Though it's not confirmed that Matthew Rombach farmed the land, he was one of the largest landowners in Wilmington (Wilmington News-Journal 1903).

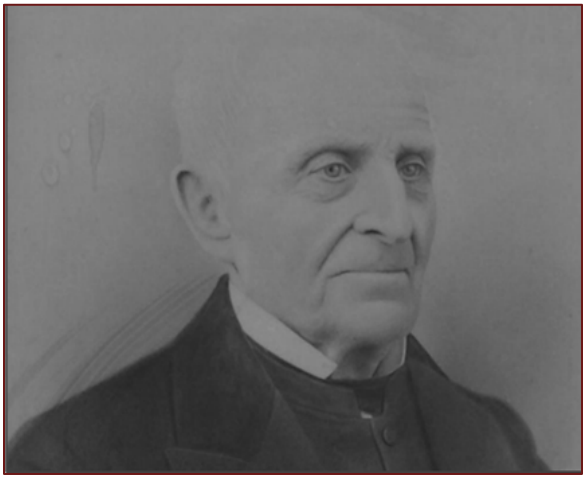


Figure 2-6. Matthew Rombach, Denver Collection, (Clinton County Historical Society

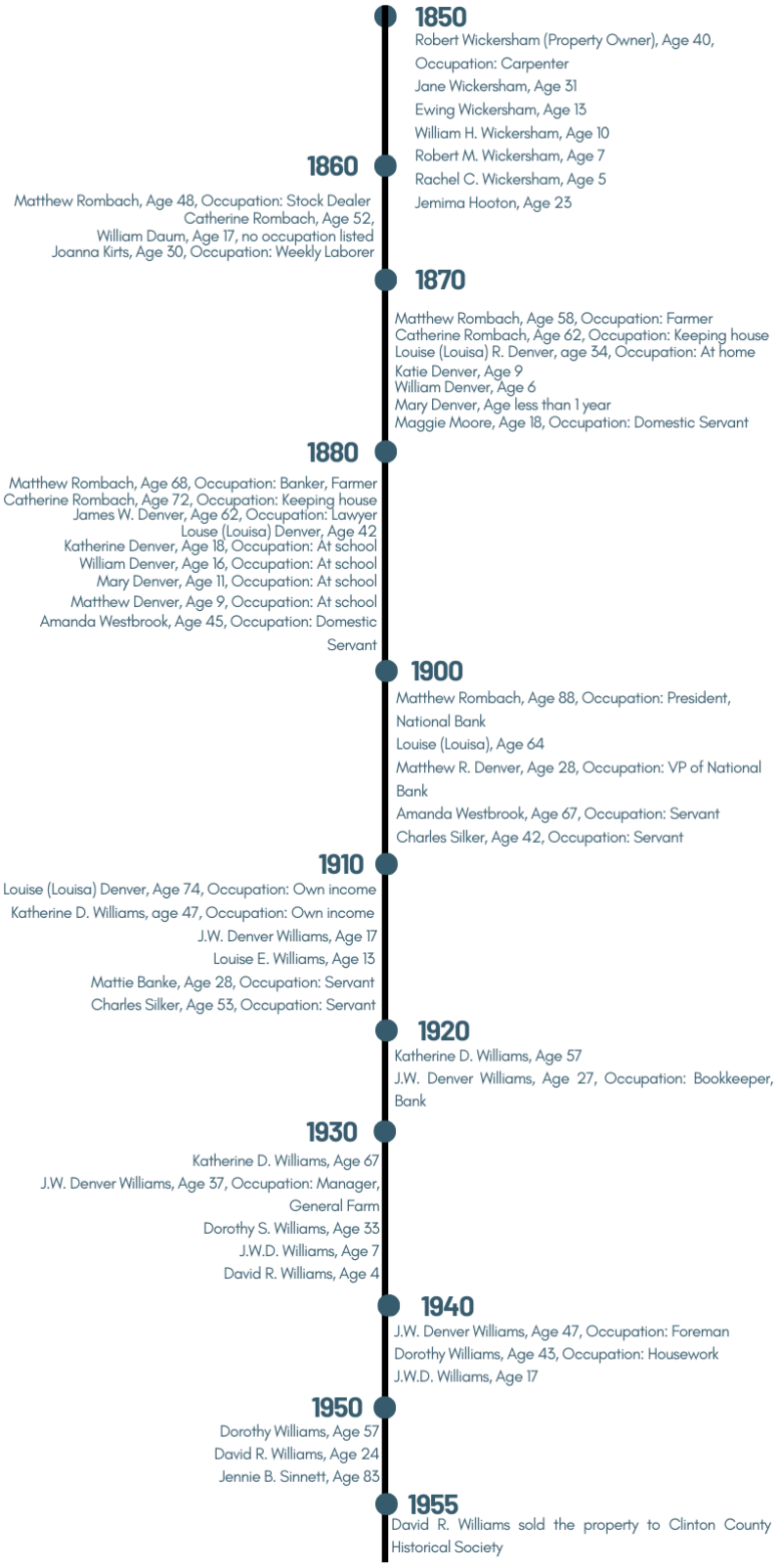


Figure 2-7. Rombach Place Ownership and Resident Timeline (US Census 1856-1950).

1 The vast majority of the records from the 1890 US census were destroyed in a fire at the Commerce Department building in 1921, leaving only fragments of the general population schedules.

Around 1874, Rombach became Vice President of the local Clinton County National Bank (later the National Bank and Trust Co.; Clinton Republican 1874). In 1889, Rombach became the President of the bank, a position he held until his death at the age of 91 in 1903 (Wilmington News-Journal 1997). His wife Catherine (Katherine), who preceded Matthew in death, died in 1885 at the age of 76. Both are buried in the family plot at Sugar Grove Cemetery in Wilmington. Rombach and his wife were both heavily involved in the Clinton County Agricultural Fair throughout the 1850s, with Matthew serving as treasurer and Catherine (Katherine) sitting on awarding committees.

The impressive house undoubtedly cemented Rombach's prominence in the community. It also provided a home for their daughter and her husband after their marriage. The two-story double-pile, center passage-plan building was a popular building type for the most successful urban and rural householders. It permitted double parlors on the first floor, a dining room, and a full complement of bed chambers for large or expanding families. The earliest photographs show that the house had four chimneys, one for each of the four rooms on the two main floors. The chimney in Room 1-7 was removed before the earliest photograph was taken ca.1880 (Figure 2-1x). It seems likely that the two windows originally on the north wall were moved to the west when the ell was added just before or after the Civil War. Given the move of the windows to the west wall, it appears that the current inner portion of the ell, a one-room deep, two-story, brick section, was added during construction or soon after the house was built. The earliest map illustrating the shape of houses in Wilmington shows detached outbuildings on some lots but not at Rombach Place (Figure 2-8; Lake, Griffing and Co., 1859). The map shows a short ell or service wing to the rear. The current longer brick ell, located to the north beyond the current dining room, was first shown in detail on the earliest Sanborn map, made in 1900, and in the photographs of the house ca.1880 and ca.1900.

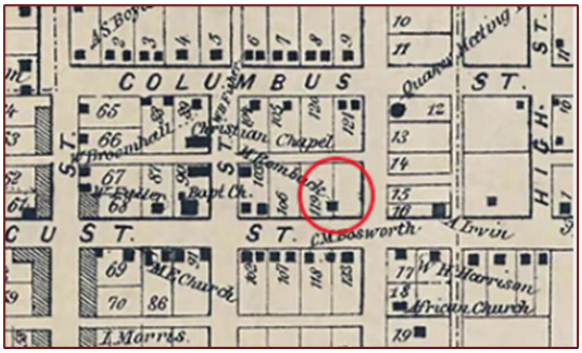


Figure 2-8. Detail of Wilmington Ohio, from H K Walling, Map of Clinton County, Ohio,1859. Rombach Place is circled. Unlikely, an original ell would have been shown had it existed, but it might explain the need to move the windows from the northern side of Rooms 2-5.

The house was built of brick. The brick wall at the rear of the original service wing is exposed on the second floor of the ell and is composed of irregular twelve-course American bond brick. The ca.1880 historic photograph seems to show wood lintels over the windows, a popular choice in Ohio in the 1850s. The original six-over-six sash windows are intact. It is not known whether the house had a front porch in its first period, but a seemingly early porch is shown on the west side of the ell ca.1880. No documentary evidence has been discovered of a front porch as part of the original construction.

The dining room may have been located in the northwest room (Room 1-7) before the installation of the current dining room in the ell in 1919. Room 1-1, Matthew Rombach's son-in-law James Denver's Office, is located to the west side of the passage. It could have originally served as a bedroom or an office. Master bedrooms were often located on the first floor in the antebellum period. General Denver would probably not have needed an office at the time of his marriage, when he was still engaged in the American West and the Civil War.

The second floor housed four nearly identical bedrooms. Two of the rooms retain original built-in presses in position beside the chimneys (Rooms 2-1 and 2-3). The original press in the northwest chamber (Room 2-5) was moved to the internal partition when the windows were installed in the place of the chimney. The fireplaces in those three rooms are offset to allow the flues from the first floor to pass to the top of the house. Those fireplaces are provided with first-period, Greek Revival mantels. The passage contains a wide stair that leads to the second floor and continues to the third. The second floor of the service wing may have been used to house servants during this period, and census records show that Rombach's and Denver's had domestic servants, primarily women, residing at Rombach Place from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Joanna Kirts, a white female, age 30, born in Ireland was listed in the 1860 federal census. Maggie Moore, a white female, age 18, born in Ohio was listed in the 1870 census. Amanda Westbrook, a white female, born 1832 in Ohio was listed in both the 1880 and 1900 federal census; she was 67 in 1900. Charles Sliker, a white male, born in New Jersey in 1857, was listed in both the 1900 and 1910 federal census. He died in 1918, and his obituary described him as the caretaker of Rombach Place for many years. In the 1910 federal census Mattie Banke,

age 28, from Ohio, was listed as a widower. Census research revealed that Mattie was the only Black servant living in the house at the time of the 1910 census.

Second Period (ca.1870-1890): General James William Denver and Louise (Louisa) Rombach Denver (residents from 1856-1914)

In 1856, Matthew Rombach's daughter, Louise (Louisa), married General James W. Denver, whose position in American history, as the Governor of the Kansas Territory, led to his namesake, the City of Denver, Colorado (Figure x2-9, Figure 2-10). By 1870, they made Rombach Place their home with their four children and her parents, Matthew and Catherine (Census 1870). While listed in the 1880 federal census as living at Rombach Place, General Denver was often away due to his duties as a lawyer and various government-appointed positions. Little is known about Louise (Louisa), her obituary in 1914 states that her "greatest interest was in her home" and mainly undertook activities relating to her home life. Additionally, it stated she was also well versed in matters pertaining to the "public welfare and was a keen and discriminating student of modern political life" (Clinton County Democrat 1914).

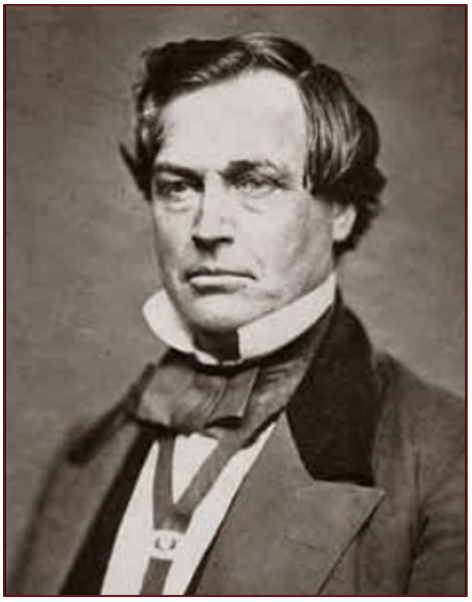


Figure 2-9. James W Denver, Second Period occupant, (Clinton County Historical Society).

Figure 2-10. Louise Catherine Rombach Denver, Second Period occupant, (Clinton County Historical Society).

General Denver was born in 1817 near Winchester, Virginia to Irish and English parents, Patrick and Jane Denver. He had ten brothers and sisters. In 1830, he came with his family to Wilmington, before settling on a farm on the outskirts (Brown

1915). Eventually, Denver left Wilmington for Cincinnati, where in 1844, he graduated from the Cincinnati Law School, now a part of the University of Cincinnati. Following his graduation, he moved to the nearby town of Xenia and established a law practice. In 1845, after relocating to Platte City, Missouri, he joined the American war in Mexico, where he served as captain of the Twelfth Regiment, U.S. Infantry (DeJong 2021). Following the end of that war and with news of the Gold Rush, he went further westward seeking riches (Brown 1915).

Eventually, Denver became a trader and an elected official holding a series of offices, beginning with the California State Senate in 1851. While serving in the Senate, the Governor of California selected Denver to lead a relief expedition to rescue a wagon train heading west that was stranded in the Sierra Nevada Mountains (Trembath 2019). The co-founder and senior editor of the Alta California, Edward Gilbert criticized the rescue efforts led by Denver, referring to it as "a political stunt," (Trembath 2019). Gilbert and Denver exchanged insults that eventually led to Gilbert formally challenging Denver to a duel. They met in Oak Grove, California the morning of August 2, 1852. The two men, with rifles in hand, walked forty paces. Gilbert shot first but missed. Then, Denver fired his rifle straight up into the air, which was "a relatively common practice that allowed both men to walk off the field with their honor and bodies intact," (Trembath 2019). Gilbert dismissed the gesture and wanted an immediate rematch. This angered Denver, and after they walked forty paces for a second time, Denver shot and killed Gilbert.

Later, Denver was elected Secretary of State of California (1853-1855), US Congressman (1855-1857), and Commissioner of Indian Affairs (1857), followed almost immediately by his appointment to Secretary of the Kansas Territory and eventually Territorial Governor. During Denver's tenure as Territorial Governor, land speculator William Larimer Jr. established the townsite of "Denver City," in present-day Colorado hoping to win the attention of the governor, so he might choose the town as the county seat (American Name Society 2021).

At the start of the Civil War, Denver was appointed the rank of Brigadier General of volunteers and placed in command of all Federal troops in Kansas by President Lincoln. He was transferred to the command of the Third Brigade of Sherman's Division, in the Army of the Tennessee until

1863, when he resigned from the military (Brown 1915).

After his departure from the military, Denver split his time between Wilmington and Washington DC, where he practiced law. When he returned to Wilmington, he lived at Rombach Place where his wife and four children: Katharine, James William Jr., Mary Louise, and Matthew Rombach Denver, permanently resided. Denver integrated himself into other endeavors in the City of Wilmington. Eventually he became the first president of the Irwin Auger Bit Company in 1884 (Wilmington News-Journal 1950). At one point, the company was the world's largest manufacturer of wood boring tools.

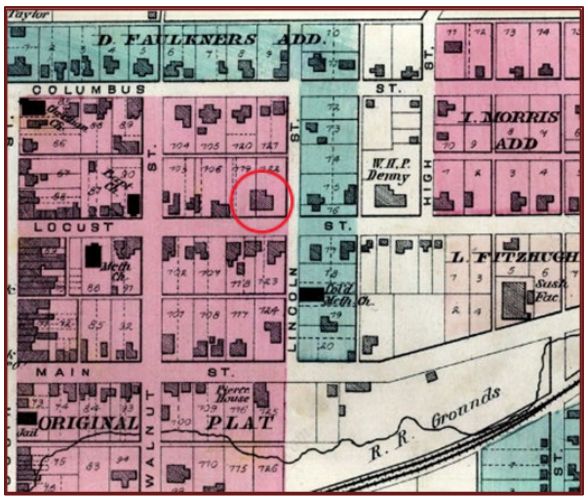


Figure 2-11. Detail from Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson, Clinton County Ohio, 1876. During Rombach Place's Second Period. Rombach Place is circled. This image shows a shallow, one-room-long ell.

Denver died in Washington DC, in 1892, at the age of 74. For the last 10 years of James William Jr's life, he worked for the Clinton County National Bank, elected to cashier, from assistant cashier, in January of 1889. James William Denver Jr was also connected with the State Banker's association and had large interests in the local agricultural and industrial areas (Clinton County Democrat 1898). Mary Louise married Charles Lindley, a successful attorney in both Cincinnati, and later New York. Little can be found about her life, but several newspaper articles noted her notoriety in social circles (The Journal Republican 1897).

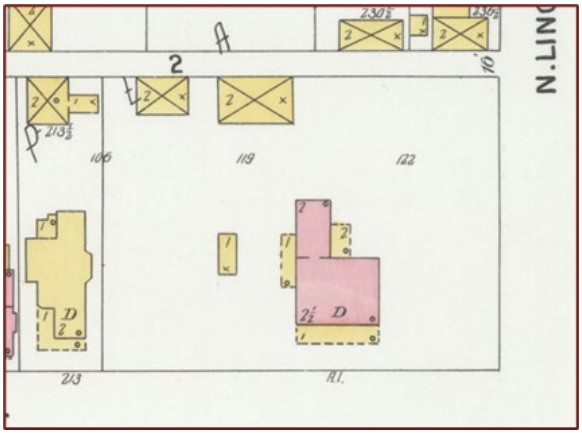


Figure 2-12. Sanborn Map, 1900, (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1900).

Figure 2-13. Historic photo of Rombach Place, ca. 1900, during the Third Period (Clinton County Historical Society).

The house was altered in the post-Civil War era during the Denvers' sharing of the house with Louise's (Louisa's) father and mother, Matthew and Catherine Rombach. A wide, one-story, Italianate porch was added, covering the center three bays of the primary facade. The shallow brick ell seen on the map of 1876 was soon enlarged to the north with an additional room on each floor, visible in the photograph of ca.1880 (Figure 2-1). This addition was also of brick, but its east wall was placed about four feet to the east of the east wall of the original ell, apparently resulting in a rebuilding of the roof. This rebuilding seems to have caused a shift of the roof ridge toward the east, so the chimneys were no longer aligned with the ridge.

The original section of the ell was equipped in the ca.1880 photograph with a one-story, one-bay porch in the inner bay on the west side. By 1900 this porch had been replaced with a wider, hip-roofed, two-bay porch with elegant, paired columns (Figure 2-13). Another porch located on the east side of the inner ell room can be seen on Sanborn maps (Figure 2-12).

The woodwork in most of the interior shows little sign of change from the first period, but the room to the left of the entry (Room 1-1) was furnished as an office for General Denver, in the second period. The office woodwork was grained to resemble oak. An elegant wood-finished glazed breakfront bookcase with a raised center bay and a prominent Italianate cornice was placed on the wall between it and the adjacent dining room. The bookcase predates the border of the 1919 parquet floor, noticeable by its Italianate style and the way it fits around the bookcase. A built-in bookcase with matching Italianate details is located on the right side of the mantel. A wood-finished Italianate crown molding seems to have been added in the office at the same time. Traces of a dark green wall covering may date from this period.

Denver/Rombach Family

The children of General Denver and his wife went on to become contributing members of Wilmington. Matthew Rombach Denver eventually succeeded his grandfather as President of National Bank and Trust Co. and then succeeded his father as

the President of the Irwin Auger Bit Company (Wilmington News Journal 1997). Matthew was associated with, and the head of, the local Commerce Club, who as an attempt to promote tourism, decided to build a hotel in Downtown Wilmington. The hotel held a naming competition and opened in 1928 as the General Denver Hotel (News Journal 2020). Matthew was also active in the local Democratic Party. Matthew was also an accomplished Congressman for the State of Ohio from 1907-1913. General Denver's Daughter Katherine married James C Williams with whom she had two children: James Williams (JW) Denver Williams and Louise (Louisa). Katherine and her husband moved to Natchez, Mississippi, but Katherine returned to Rombach Place following her husband's death in1901(Wilmington News-Journal 1976). She and her son, JW, lived there and were eventually joined by his wife and two sons. JW Denver Williams Sr. married Dorothy Sinnett in 1921, during Rombach Place's Third Period (Figure 2-14 and Figure 2-15). JW would go on to serve as Director of the Irwin Auger Bit Company, the Clinton County National Bank and Trust, and the Wilmington Hotel Company. J.W. Sr's sons were CPL James William Denver, "J.W." Williams Jr., and David Rombach Williams. JW Williams Jr. was killed in action in 1945 during WWII (Wilmington News-Journal 1945).

Third Period (1919): James William Denver Williams and Dorothy Sinnett Williams (residents from 1901-1953)

James William Denver Williams Sr. (1892-1949) lived at Rombach Place following his return in 1901, with his mother Katherine. Williams married his wife Dorothy (1896-1953) in 1921. After his marriage, he and his family continued to live in Rombach Place for the rest of their lives.

Figure 2-14. James William Denver Williams (Clinton County Historical Society).

Figure 2-15. Dorothy Sinnett Williams (Clinton County Historical Society).

Rombach Place was comprehensively altered in 1919, probably under the direction of James William Denver and Dorothy Sinnett Williams to cement his position as an industrial and community leader in Wilmington (Wilmington News Journal 1919). The exterior was updated to an early twentieth-century Colonial Revival appearance by the addition of a rough stucco coating with quoins over the brick. Matching classical porches were added on the front and the ends in a form that resembled suburban Colonial Revival houses of the early twentieth century. Both were floored with quarry tiles and featured full classical entablature supported on paired columns. The Italianate front porch was removed and replaced with a one-bay Tuscan portico. The portico featured a pediment and an Ionic cornice with a three-part architrave and dentil course. The paneled soffit was originally supported on unfluted, square Doric columns at the corners paired with now-missing round columns. The sandstone front porch steps with curved bulkheads on each side appear to have been added in the second period to match the Italianate porch.

The side porches included an open porch at the east end (now enclosed) and were reached from the twin parlors by glazed doors added between the chimneys. The side porches were supported on square corner columns paired with round columns against the house. The west porch had similar columns but was originally enclosed with wide windows to form a sunroom or "Florida room." This west porch was fully enclosed later. All three porches were floored with quarry tiles on a concrete slab base.

The interior was updated by the installation of a number of decorative elements in multiple rooms, these details include elaborate parquet floors (Rooms 1-1 and 1-2) and electroliers and sconces, some with crystal pendants (Rooms 1-3 and 1-6). The house was heated by a central boiler in the basement of the northwest room which supplied hot water to decorative radiators in each room, many of which remain in place, but are solely decorative.

Although this heating system could have been added earlier, it was likely added during the c. 1919 renovations. Room 1-7 has changed very little through the years with original features. A shallow chimney breast with a coal fireplace surrounded by cream-colored bullnose-corner tiles was added on the north wall. It is served by a small flue on the floor above.

A stylish new dining room (Room 1-9) was created within and extending west from the former service wing in c. 1882. The room's interior was carefully detailed in a Colonial Revival manner with ¾ flush-paneled wainscot topped by a plate rail extending around the room, a set of wide French windows looking west with French doors opening onto a new one-story sunroom with glazed walls between columns. There is no fireplace in the dining room, although a shallow projection in the center of the north wall may represent the chimney that served the original kitchen. A small powder room was inserted in the closet under the first-floor stairs.

The bedroom above the new dining room (Room 2-6) was given access to a sleeping porch over the projecting portion of the dining room. The kitchen occupied the north end of the service wing with the house's only bathroom, opening out of the room over the new dining room on the second floor (Room 2-8). The mantel in the SW bed chamber (Room 2-1) was replaced with a Colonial Revival surround and a mirrored overmantel.

Fourth Period (2001): The Clinton County Historical Society (1955-present)

David R. Williams resided at Rombach Place until selling the property to the Clinton County Historical Society in 1955 (Figure 2-16 and 2-17). As part of the sale of Rombach Place, David R. Williams left the library of General James W. Denver, the great-grandfather of Williams (Wilmington News-Journal 1955). At the time, the Historical Society was in search of a permanent home for its collections of fine art, records, and historical artifacts. The location of Rombach Place was seen as an ideal home for the Historical Society, given the building's large rooms, spacious grounds, distinguished history, and rent potential for various group meetings and events (Wilmington News-Journal 1954). Williams and his family remained in Wilmington, moving to a residence that he remodeled on a family farm on Rombach Avenue (Wilmington News-Journal 1955). Williams died in 1988 at the age of 62.

Rombach Place was furnished as the home of the Denver and Williams families and as the museum of the Society with pieces from all periods of the building. The facility was maintained as it was found. Changes were made as needed. Electrical wiring and lighting units were maintained, except where some intrusive surface-mounted wiring was added. The windows on the western porch were removed, and the whole porch was clad in stucco during an extensive renovation in 1969. Also in 1969, the east porch was enclosed with stucco to serve as a research center with a fireproof vault for document storage at the north end and an adjacent research room to the south (Wilmington News Journal 1969).

—Allen Studio Photo

The deed to Rombach Place made to the Clinton County Historical Society to be used as a museum, is signed by David Rombach-Williams, seated second from left, in the General Denver room of the Clinton County National Bank & Trust Co. The room, which is the directors' room at the bank founded by Matthew Rombach, is named for the great-grandfather of Williams. The portrait on the wall is of Gen. Denver. Seated left to right are: D. K. Hempstead, trust officer of the bank; Williams, Emmett H. Bailey, president of the Historical Society; Mrs. Mabel Leslie, secretary, and Mrs. Harry Hague II, treasurer. Standing left to right are Frederick J. Buckley and George L. Schilling Jr., representing Schilling & Buckley, legal counsel for Williams; Joseph von Klinger legal counsel for the Historical Society, and Maynard H. Davids, executive vice president of the bank

Figure 2-16. David R Williams and the Clinton County Historical Society signing the deed for Rombach Place (Wilmington News-Journal 1955).

The research room was provided with two modern double-hung sash windows, one to the south and one to the east. The vault was given an exit door to the exterior on the north end.

Figure 2-17. Rombach Place ca. 1955 prior to renovations, view facing northeast. (Clinton County Historical Society ca. 1955).

In 2001, a major two-story addition to the rear of the building provided modern offices, display areas, and a research room. A small, early twentieth-century rear addition was removed for this new wing. Like the main house, the addition's masonry walls were stuccoed. Connections between the new and existing sections were made through existing openings. New toilets and a new forced-air HVAC system were added in the new section. New air handling units at the east end of the house provide HVAC to the twin parlors through grilles over the doors in the east walls. The western room's HVAC came from the new wing through ducts in the crawl space and the third floor. The second-floor bathroom fixtures were removed from the historic third-period bathroom in the

ell's second floor. The first-floor powder room fixtures in the closet under the front stairs were removed. The exact date of the powder room installation is unknown but was likely installed during the 1919 renovations.

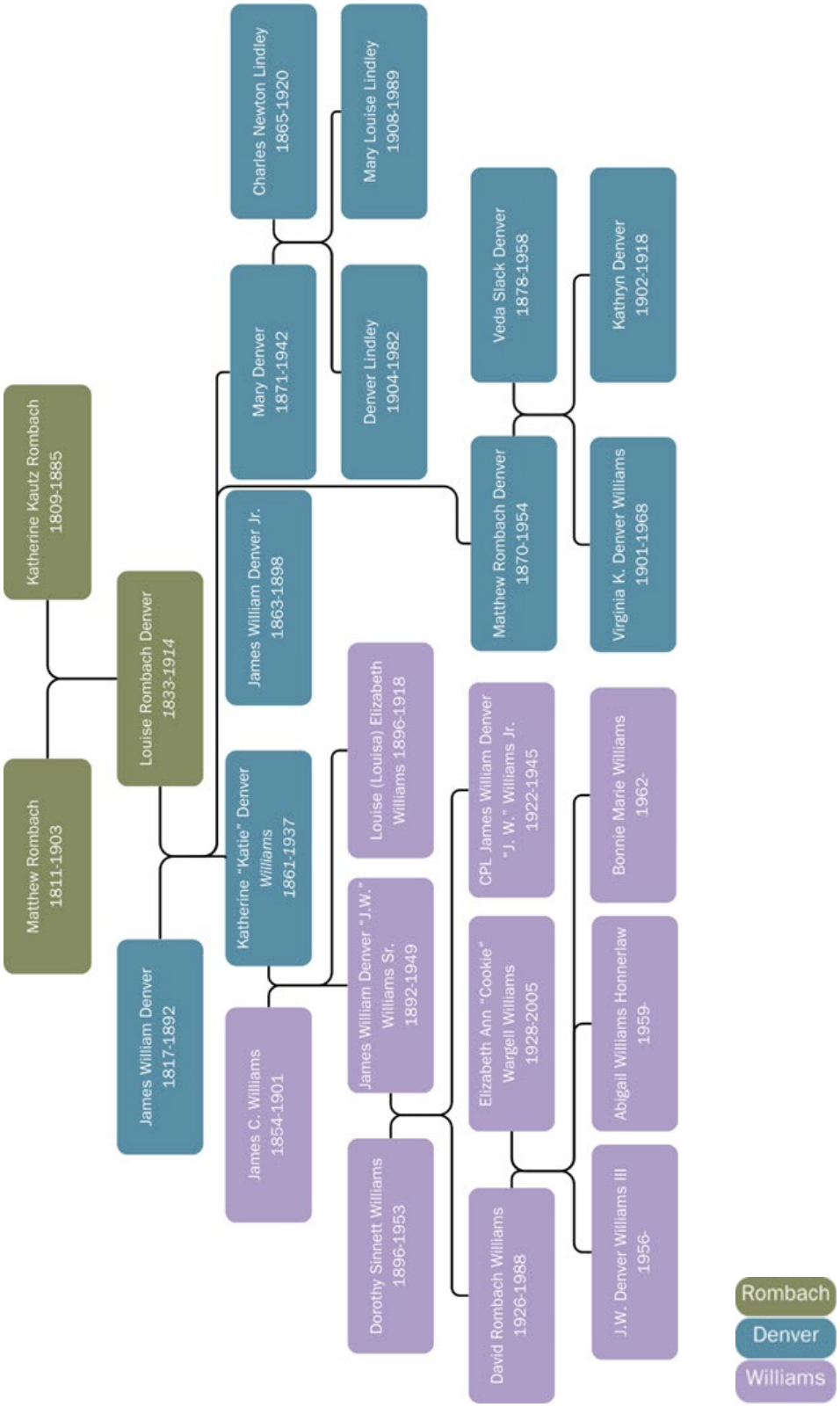


Figure 2-18. Rombach Family Tree.

3.0 CHRONOLOGY OF BUILDING USE AND PHYSICAL HISTORY

The following chronology of building use for Rombach Place is based on a review of available historical materials including drawings, photographs, maps, and interviews. In addition to written and photographic documentation, careful in-person investigations were completed on the built environment of Rombach Place outlining the evolution of additions, alterations, and changes that have taken place throughout the building's near-170-year history.

The following building chronology relies heavily on a comparison and analysis of the existing conditions of Rombach Place. Illustrations and architectural drawings are provided in Section 7, and historic maps are provided in Appendix B.

3.1 Summary of Building Physical History

Rombach Place was constructed ca. 1850 and features a series of alterations, additions, and changes followed by changes in ownership including the mid-twentieth century transition from a residence to a local historical society. A timeline of physical building alterations is presented on the next page.

Figure 3-1. West and primary (south) facade of Rombach Place, facing northeast, 2024.

3.2 Rombach Place Outbuildings

In addition to the extant Carriage House that sits just northwest of Rombach Place, historic maps show two additional outbuildings that have been on the property. As shown on the Sanborn Maps in Appendix B, the extant Carriage House had an additional smaller stable/automobile garage to the west. This smaller garage stayed on the property until c. 1955, likely removed when the Clinton County Historical Society took possession of the property. An additional, smaller, structure is noted just west of the main house on the 1900 and 1907 Sanborn Maps, the exact use of the structure is unknown but it can be assumed from the time period of the home, that it was a summer kitchen. Summer kitchens were small buildings detached from a

main house, meant to keep food preparation and cooking separate from the house to keep the house cooler and reduce the risk of fire.

ca.1850	Construction of House
ca. 1876	The building's original entry portico was replaced with am Italianate porch that covers the center three bays of the main façade. (Clinton County Historical Society ca. 1980).
ca. 1882	The dining room, above 2nd floor bedroom, and a basement were added (Clinton County Historical Society ca. 1980). • The chimney extending through rooms 7 and 15 was removed to accommodate ell addition.
1900	Rear addition on building's ell shown as wood (Sanborn 1900).
1907	Rear addition on building's ell shown as brick (Sanborn 1907).
1919	Building clad in stucco (Wilmington News Journal 1919).
1921	The Western porch was enclosed, adding multi-light windows, and the Dining room expanded.
1969	Corresponding with the past decade's acquisition of Rombach Place by the Clinton County Historical Society, a series of changes occurred (Clinton County Historical Society ca. 1980): • Landscaping upgrades, • Roof Repairs, to address damage, leaks and additions, • Interior Painting, • Eastern porch enclosed and "fireproofed" for archival storage, • Western porch windows removed, clad in stucco, • Northern first floor room renovated to office, • Front railing installed, • Stucco repaired/repainted, and • Shutters repaired/repainted.
2001	Rear addition was constructed for archival, museum exhibits, and research space for the Historical Society. This resulted in the demolition of the Rear 1907 addition.
2011	Rubber roof and interior water damage repairs in the archive room.
2019	The entire asphalt shingle roof, and rubber membrane roofs on both side porches were replaced.
2020-2024	The entire HVAC system was replaced, and outdoor landscape was overhauled and renovated.

Figure 3-2. Timeline of Rombach Place Physical Alterations

4.0 ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Figure 4-1. Rombach Place 2024, primary (south) facade, facing northwest, 2024.

4.1 General Description

The following section offers an outline of the general architectural description and existing conditions of Rombach Place as documented by this project's Architectural Historians and Historic Architect. Floor Plans and Architectural Drawings depicting these elements are presented in Section 7. Photographs of extant maintenance concerns are presented in Appendix A. Appendix B presents Historic Maps of the building depicting changes over time, and Appendix C presents the previous Survey Forms/National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

Rombach Place is a ca.1850, two-story, three-bay, side-gabled, Greek Revival style house with twentieth century Colonial Revival elements located in Wilmington, Ohio. The main facade of the building, facing south, has a three-bay design with two projecting side porches on the east and west sides of the building. The central bay of the house contains a Greek Revival, pedimented entry portico with an Ionic cornice and three-part architrave and dentil course supported by two square, wooden replacement Doric columns which were previously paired with identical round columns that are now missing. The portico sits on a concrete front porch accessed by sandstone porch steps with curved bulkheads to each side. The building has two square, fluted pilasters inset into the building. The entry door is flanked by three-light sidelights and a four-light transom. The central bay is capped with a six-over-six wood, double-hung window on the second floor. Each of the two exterior bays have two sets of two, six-over-six double-hung, wood windows on both the first and second stories. The western facade of the building has a segmented design due to a series of additions and alterations. The southernmost bay is part of the main, original, portion of the building that projects from the covered patio making up bay two. Bay two, on the second story, has the addition of two, six-over-six wood double-hung windows and a single, one-over-one

wood window in the attic, which sits above the projecting porch. The second story of the patio is surrounded by a decorative metal railing. The third bay is a full two stories in height with three windows on the first floor; two, four-light fixed windows on the exterior; and a pair of twelve-light, casement windows in the center. The second story features a series of four, six-over-six, double-hung wood windows. The furthest bay of the original building has a single-entry door next to a six-over-six double-hung wood window with an identical window on the second floor

4.2 Site Orientation and Conditions

Rombach Place is located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of East Locust Street and North Lincoln Street. The main facade is oriented to the south. The stucco-clad building is constructed in the Greek Revival style with Colonial Revival elements and a side gable roof with a pair of chimneys on both the east and west ends and a northern projection. The rear facade of the original building is no longer visible due to late twentieth or early twenty-first-century additions

and quoins on all corners. The eastern facade has a single bay with a similar projected, now-enclosed patio. The projection has a single, six-over-six, double-hung wood window with wood shutters. The second floor of the projection is surrounded by an identical metal railing to the projection on the west facade. The second floor of the building has two, six-over-six, double-hung windows, with a single identical window in the attic. The northern facade of the building is entirely covered with non-historic additions.

Figure 4-2. Rombach Place 2024, main (south) facade showing proximity to the street, facing northeast, 2024.

Condition

Rombach Place is generally in good condition, but damage is noted in some areas. Cracks can be seen in the exterior walls, although none appear to be structurally dangerous (Figure 4-6). The stucco coating of the house is cracked in many areas, often without any notable damage to the interior. The stucco coating is likely made with a high proportion of

Portland cement. These kinds of cement are very hard and inflexible. As a result, the coating does not move with the expansion and contraction of the brick substrate which can result in opening the coating to water penetration and causing aesthetic deficits. The moisture can cause the coating to spall or buckle with implications of damage to interior finishes and furnishings. Examples include the bay window on the west end of the dining room, where the plaster is cracked and delaminated in spots and at the SW corner of the enclosed west addition (Figure A-17). The stucco coating is badly deteriorated where it covers the exposed outer edges of the enclosed east and west porches and at the front porch floor where it exposes rough gravel aggregate on the interior of the slabs.

Roof

Rombach Place has a replacement asphalt-shingle, and rubber membrane roof which was installed in 2019 (Figure 4-3). The large, two-story 2001 addition has an asphalt-shingle gable roof connected to the house by a flat parapet roof on the north and east sides of the ell. Flat portions of the building with rubber membrane roofs were subject to repairs in 2011 to combat water ingress issues. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1900, 1907, 1914, 1933, and 1949) show the roof material as a noncombustible roof covering, which was most likely standing-seam metal (Appendix B).

The five-year-old roof appears to be weather-tight, with the current moisture ingress issues likely not related to the asphalt shingle roof. Additionally, during flyovers using a drone, Gray & Pape Architectural Historians noticed no visible issues with the roof.

Figure 4-3. Aerial image of Rombach Place roof, facing southeast, 2024.

Masonry

The entirety of the original portion of Rombach Place is constructed of stucco-clad brick. The stucco, likely with a high Portland cement content, was added ca. 1919 (Wilmington New-Journal 1919). The stucco has a series of cracks, most of which are located on the western face of the building. With a few minor exceptions, like the stucco at the SW

corner of the west porch, the cracks do not seem likely to result in serious structural issues if repaired in the short term.

Cracks on the western face of the house can be seen in several places including the bottom and top corners of windows on the second and third floors and on the lintel of the first floor of the projected dining room. These have spread to either side. The second floor of the dining room projection has numerous cracks, most notably on the upper-right corner, interspersed throughout the quoins and window lintels (Figures 4-4 and 4-5). Most of these cracks show the stucco material starting to bulge at the risk of falling off entirely.

Figure 4-4. Detail of stucco cracking in window frame and lintel on the western facade, facing east, 2024.

Figure 4-5. Delaminating stucco on the western facade, facing southeast, 2024.

The most noticeable areas are the cracks around the perimeter of the projected enclosed porch on the southwest corner of the west wall (Figure 4-6). During in-person investigations, Gray & Pape Architectural Historians were able to push on the cracked and failing wall material which moved, causing concerns for its stability.

Figure 4-6. Example of stucco cracking, western enclosed patio, facing northeast, 2024.

The concrete stoop and original sandstone staircase have a series of cracks, likely due to a combination of the freeze-thaw-cycle and rust expansion from the steel railing. The stoop has a series of cracks, likely from a combination of soil settling, salt penetration, and freeze-thaw (Figure 4-7). Similarly, the projecting edges of the concrete floors of the front, east, and west porches have suffered from stucco and concrete deterioration and appear to have been patched several times.

Additionally, the exterior of both third-floor attic windows show damaged stucco on the wall surface, and on the inset window frame, likely further contributing to the extreme moisture damage on the interior of the window openings.

Figure 4-7. Example of concrete cracking, front entry porch, facing west, 2024.

Overall, the stucco, masonry, and associated materials are in fair-to-poor condition. Many sections, as noted above, feature hairline cracks, spiderwebbing, and the failing of the stucco through delamination.

Entrances and Doors

The main entrance to Rombach Place is positioned at the center of the main façade facing East Locust Street. Historic photos reveal it has the same configuration as the original building. Currently, the main door is not used for everyday purposes or by the public, and visitors enter through the non-historic addition at the east elevation of the building. This historic entry doorway, with its modern panel door and storm door, original three-light sidelights, and four-light transom, is in good condition. The

historic door in the western face of the ell is unused except as an emergency exit. This door has a glazed panel above, recessed panels below, and an aluminum storm door.

Front Porch

The front porch at the center of the south facade is in poor condition. The capital and bases of the square corner columns are severely deteriorated (Figure 4-8). It is not clear if the fluted shafts of these columns are original. The two internal round columns that were paired with the square columns were removed, likely within the last several decades. Additionally, the pedimented roof of the porch shows deterioration (Figure 4-9).

Figure 4-8. Example of wood rot, southwestern entry porch column, facing north, 2024.

Figure 4-9. Example of wood rot, front entry portico, facing north, 2024.

Figure 4-10. Main Façade from East Locust Street, facing north, 2024.

Figure 4-11. Rombach Place (2024), east and north facades, facing southeast, 2024.

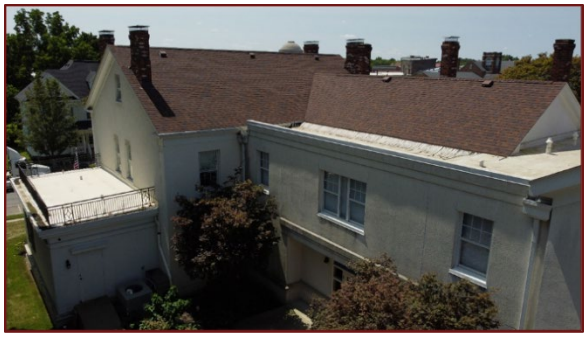


Figure 4-12. Rombach Place (2024), east facade, partially occluded by vegetation, facing southwest, 2024.

Windows

The original, double-hung, wood sash windows and their frames are intact. Sashes and frames are important character-defining features that should be preserved at all costs. While most windows have limited amounts of damage due to deferred maintenance on both the interior and exterior, they are in good condition overall. The windows are protected by triple-track aluminum storm windows.

Much of the damage to the windows on Rombach Place includes damaged/missing glazing putty, the crazing and flaking of paint, and other straightforward issues that can readily be repaired (Figure 4-13). Some windowsills have flaking/missing paint exposing the original sandstone sill material. Due to the age of the paint, it should be assumed that the paint contains lead; proper safety precautions should be undertaken when scraping/removing paint.

The windows and window openings of most concern are in the attic. These windows show evidence of severe moisture damage on the sashes, frames, and the surrounding stucco. The windowsills have been severely compromised by moisture damage. The exterior of these windows shows damaged stucco on the window frames, and moisture damaged wood sills. The damage on the exterior of these window frames likely led to the ingress of water, and other a long period of time, the plaster and surrounding wood frame failed, leading to the damage seen (Figures 4-14 and 4-15).

Figure 4-13. Historic, six-over-six window on the western façade, first floor, showing damage typical to most windows in the building, damaged glazing putty, and paint damage, facing east, 2024.

The apron and trim below the northeastern most window on the north side of Room 1-6 that was previously on the exterior of the building, shows signs of moisture damage. This window is located directly adjacent to the southeastern-most corner of the 21st century addition. The area directly surrounding, and below, the downspout on this part of the eastern façade shows evidence of an undersized gutter and downspout, leading to overflowing, splashing, and possible ingress into the interior of the building on the other side of the affected wall. This is the likely cause of the water damage on this formerly exterior-facing window apron.

Figure 4-14. Third-floor window showing extreme moisture damage, 2024.

Figure 4-15. Third-floor window showing damage, 2024.

Additionally, the windows on Rombach Place's south façade, and the eastern elevation of the eastern porch, have operable wood shutters on the exterior. The wood shutters are in various states of repair with several wood louvers missing or damaged,

particularly on the second floor. The current shutters were added in 2010.

4.3 Exterior Materials and Condition Summary

The exterior of Rombach Place retains a high level of architectural and due to age and architecture. Alterations include:

- Replaced roof
- Rear additions
- Stucco coating
- Porch enclosures

Overall, the exterior of the building is in fair condition with some major issues requiring attention. The stucco coating on the building has serious cracks in several places that cause concern. Much of the cracking shows the possibility of delamination from the substrate material. In addition, larger cracks can let in rain and other environmental contaminants leading to further unseen damage and eventual structural concerns for the masonry behind it.

- Cracks present around the perimeter of the now-enclosed porch on the western facade.
- Separation around a series of window enclosures.
- Cracks are present around most of the western side of the two-story dining room projection on the western facade.

historical integrity, despite the building's age, alterations, additions, and moisture-related damage. While most of the alterations to the building are not original, the period in which they were completed allows them their own significance

- Cracking of the wood fascia on the SE corner of the building, likely moisture-related due to its proximity to a downspout connection.
- Cracking of masonry slabs on both projecting porches on the east and west sides and concrete stoop. Further cracking can lead to structural failures.
- Cracking of the original sandstone entry steps at the front of the building. The cracking is likely due to rust expansion from the steel railings, salt penetration, and the continued freeze-thaw cycle, as well as continued wintertime use of salt for ice melt.
- Wood rot is present on several exterior building elements including:
  - The severity of the wood rot and moisture damage to the freestanding wood columns and pilasters raises structural concerns for the historic, third-period, Colonial Revival entry

portico. The westernmost column appears to have a significant lean, furthering the concerns about its structural integrity.

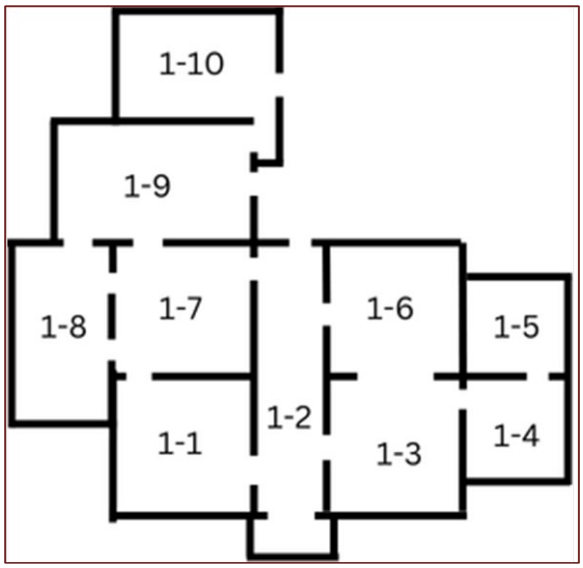
- Wood paneling located below the first-story windows at the two-story dining room projection at the western façade of the building. Some of this rot is severe, with the potential for further water ingress behind the paneling.

4.4 Interior

Rombach Place's interior layout is comprised of a single, rectangular, full 2.5-story building with a narrow linear portion at the northwest corner projecting northwards. The layout of the main portion of the house can be described as a double-pile, center-passage plan, subdivided by brick partitions. Each floor of the main section of the building is accessed from a central passage, by way of a large wooden staircase. The first two floors each have four rooms accessed through the common hallway. The linear northwest section is accessed through the room on the northwest corner and through the non-historic late, twentieth century addition. The main section of the house is underlaid by a low crawl space and a stone-lined basement is located below the inner portion of the ell. A detailed description of each room is presented below. Full architectural drawings are also present in Section 7.

Below are rough floor plans of the existing first and second floors. These floor plans have the rooms numbered by floor to make the following descriptions easier to follow (Figure 4-16).

First Floor



Room Key: First Level	
1-1	General Denver's Study
1-2	Passage
1-3	SE Room; Twin Parlor
1-4	Staff Archival Room
1-5	Fireproof Vault
1-6	Twin Parlor
1-7	Dining Room
1-8	Sunroom
1-9	Dining Room
1-10	Original Kitchen

Figure 4-16. First-floor plan with numbered rooms.

Historically, the first floor of the house was accessed by the front door facing East Locust Street. The entry leads into a passage (Room 1-2) that measured approximately 27 feet long and 9 feet ¾ inches wide at its widest point, with a 15-foot ceiling height that is consistent throughout the house. This passage provides access to the second and third floor staircases and the remainder of the interior rooms. The walls in the passage have paneled wainscoting and include a shallow molded chair rail and applied panel moldings (Figure 4-17). Due to the Colonial Revival nature of the other c. 1919 renovations, it can be assumed that the wainscoting was also added during the 1919 renovation. The passage also features narrow tongue-and-groove oak flooring with a detailed Greek-key parquet border (Figure 4-18). The staircase features turned newels, and a ramped railing supported on turned balusters. At the landings, the railing curves in a tight radius to return to the next flight. Under the staircase sits a door to a now-removed bathroom, the top two panels of the door contain a stained-glass design.

Figure 4-17. Paneled wainscoting in Room 1-2, 2025.

Figure 4-18. Greek key floor detailing and simple baseboard trim, in Room 1-2, 2025.

Figure 4-19. Room 1-2, including under-staircase-stained glass, 2024.

All doorways and windows on the first floor have nearly identical trim with flat surrounds treated with flat plain plinths and corner blocks. All the doors have panel jambs and heads. All doors on the first floor aside from the door from Room 1-2 to Room 1 (bathroom), and the former bathroom door under the staircase have been removed (Figure 4-19).

The southeast room (Room 1-3) on the first floor of the building measures approximately 16 feet 2 inches by 17 feet and is accessed by the main hallway and the room to the north. This room and Room 1-3 act as twin parlors, separated by a Greek Revival entablature with a wide frieze, cavetto bed mold, and beveled crown. The entablature is supported by Greek Revival pilasters (Figure 4-20). The Greek Revival theme is continued in both rooms with identical mantles, containing two-part friezes with square shelves supported on a molded bed. The fireboxes are flanked by semi-engaged colonettes, whose grates and hearths are clad in white tile (Figure 4-21). The room features detailed crown molding and picture molding around the circumference of the room. Like other rooms, the walls are white-painted plaster and lath. The flooring in the room is narrow-width plain oak planks added over the original flooring in the twentieth century. The flooring is consistent with those in the passage (Room 1-2), also added in the twentieth century. This room and

Room 1-6 have a tall two-part Greek Revival baseboard with a shallow elliptically molded band between a bullnose top and a plain square base (Figure 4-22).

Figure 4-20. Greek Revival entablature separating Rooms 1-3 and 1-6, 2025.

Figure 4-21. Room 1-3 showing fireplace, over-mantle mirrors, and gilt cornices, 2024.

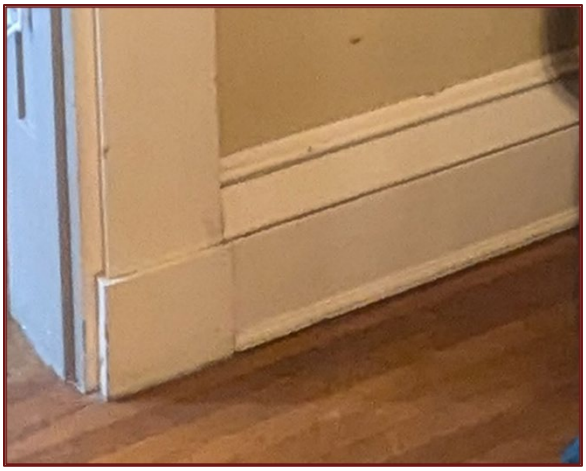


Figure 4-22. Greek Revival baseboard in Room 1-3, identical to that in Room 4, 2025.

The northeast corner room, Room 1-6 (Figure 4-25), is accessed by both the central hallway and the large pedimented doorway measuring approximately 9 feet 8 inches wide. Room 1-6 measures approximately 16 feet 2 inches by 16 feet, and like other rooms features crown molding and picture molding. The fireplace in this room is identical to the fireplace in Room 1-3, as noted above with two-part friezes with square shelves supported on a molded bed. The fireboxes are flanked by semi-engaged colonettes whose grates and hearths are clad in white tile. This room also contains two twelve-lite wood windows that now overlook the late twentieth-century addition. The flooring in this room is consistent with the rest of the late nineteenth-century flooring added throughout the first floor. Rooms 1-3 and 1-6 have matching ornate over-mantle mirrors likely added during the renovation of the house in 1919 (Figure 4-23).

Additionally, the windows in Rooms 3 and 6 have gilt cornices that date from the 1850s (Figure 4-24).

Figure 4-23. Over-mantle mirrors identical in Rooms 1-3 and 1-6, 2025.

Figure 4-24. Window gilts identical in Rooms 1-3 and 1-6, 2025.

Figure 4-25. Room 1-6, 2024.

The room at the southwest corner of the building, Room 1-1, measures approximately 16 feet 10 inches by 16 feet and 3 inches including a small projection at the southwest corner. The molding, baseboards, and door and window trim of Room 1-1are similar to the rest of the floor, except that the trim is grained to resemble wood, likely oak. The graining is darkened and likely coated with several layers of varnish. The room is accessed by a doorway to the northwest room and the passage, which contains a four-panel door with an early 20th century multipaned mirror on the passage side. The room has a Greek Revival mantle like those found in Rooms 1-3 and 1-6 but grained to match the rest of the dark trim (Figure 4-26). The fireplace surround and hearth are made of dark tiles. A built-in glass-front bookcase with a large Italianate cornice is located to the right of the mantle, likely dating from the late nineteenth century. This room features the most detailed flooring in the house, an ornamental basketweave floor with an inlaid border added over the original flooring (Figure 4-27). A brass pendant electrolier with glass shades was likely added in 1919 (Figure 4-28).

Figure 4-26. Greek Revival mantle in Room 1-1, 2025.

Figure 4-27. Oak flooring with Greek Key detail in Room 1-1, 2025.

Figure 4-28. Room 1-1 2024.

The room in the northwest corner of the main portion of the building, Room 1-7, measures approximately 16 feet 3 inches by 16 feet. The room has two doors (formerly windows) in the west wall which open into the enclosed sunroom. The openings were likely relocated at an early date when the fourth chimney was removed. A small chimney with a coal grate was added at the center of the north wall to replace the former fireplace, removed from the center of the western wall. The firebox is surrounded by a mantle formed of cream-colored, bullnose tiles with a matching hearth and wood shelf (Figure 4-29). The room retains random width tongue-and-groove flooring and cornice and picture molding which are original to the house (Figure 4-30; Clinton County Historical Society 2024). Rooms 1-1 and 1-7 have two-part baseboards with a square upper band and base.

Figure 4-29. Fireplace in Room 1-7, 2025.

Figure 4-30. Original wood flooring in Room 1-7, 2025.

The now-enclosed sunroom, Room 1-8, to the west of Room 1-7 in the main section measures approximately 12 feet 7 inches by 22 feet 3 inches and is largely devoid of features. The room has a quarry tile floor and a simple base (Figure 4-31). The room is accessed by either Room 1-7 to the east or the dining room, Room 1-9, to the north (Figure 4-32).

Figure 4-31. Quarry tile in Room 1-8, 2025.

Figure 4-32. Overview of Room 1-8, 2024.

The dining room, Room 1-9, is located just north of Rooms 1-7 and 1-8. The room measures

approximately 15 feet 3 inches by 27 feet 9 inches. Based on the evolution of the
house, the dining room likely served as the kitchen during the early years of Rombach Place and was altered and expanded in 1919 into a fashionable Craftsman/Colonial Revival style entertaining room. The room extends beyond the historic west wall of the building's ell to form a square bay with a triple window to the west, a double casement window to the north, and a wide door to the south into the sunroom. The room has no fireplace, but a projecting chimney breast on the north wall may be the location of an earlier fireplace served by a small flue projecting from the room (Figure 4-32). The detailed room features ¾ wainscotting with flush paneling and a characteristic Craftsman plate rail (Figure 4-33). The ceiling is distinguished by a series of ornamental box beams running north to south (Figure 4-34). A door in the east end leads to a short corridor connecting the dining room with Room 1-10. The flooring in the dining room is the same narrow oak seen in other parts of the first floor.

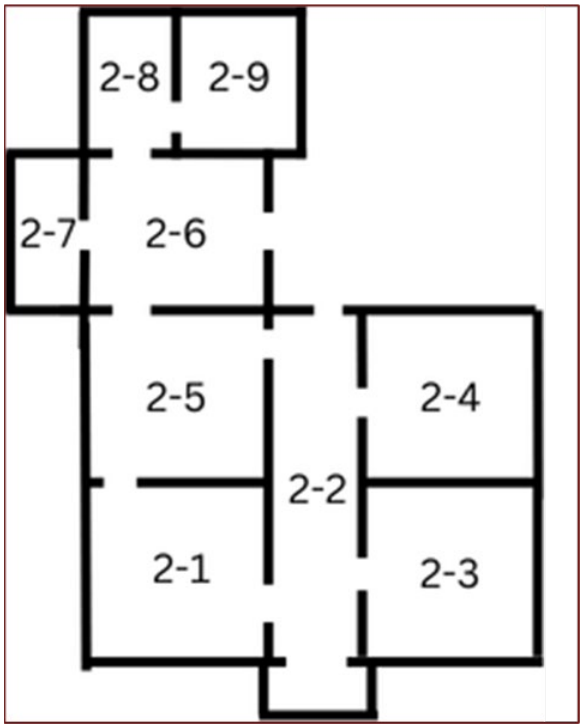
Figure 4-33. Wainscoting and chair rail, Room 1-9, 2025.

Figure 4-34. Dining Room 1-9, 2024.

Figure 4-35. Dining Room 1-9, 2024.

The northernmost historic room in the building, Room 1-10, originally served as a kitchen and measured approximately 21 feet 9 inches by 12 feet 1 inch. The room contains a closed stair to the second floor and an additional staircase to the basement. The room connects to the dining room by a five-panel door leading to the small vestibule. The window and doorway on the west wall are likely from its original construction in the late nineteenth century. The northern wall of the room contains a drywall-clad projection used to hide heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment and ducting.

Second Floor



Room Key: Second Level	
2-1	Bedroom
2-2	Hall
2-3	Bedroom
2-4	Bedroom
2-5	Bedroom
2-6	Bedroom
2-7	Sleeping porch
2-8	Bathroom
2-9	Bedroom

Figure 4-36. Second-floor plans showing numbered rooms, Gray & Pape, 2025.

The second floor of Rombach Place generally follows the same layout as the first floor. A central passage accessed by the main staircase gives

entrance to the four main rooms which branch out and the remaining rooms in the linear projection at the northwest corner of the building. The second-floor passage has similar narrow plank oak flooring to the first floor. The rooms on this floor have ceiling heights of approximately 9 feet and aside from Room 2-5 have white-painted plaster and lath walls. All rooms on the second floor, aside from the passage, have wide-plank pine flooring. The trim in the second-floor rooms is consistent and dates original to the house. The doors and windows have beveled architrave trim, and the window trim does not extend to the floor and the doors do not contain plinths at the four-panel doors. The two-part baseboards are made of flat members (Figures 4-37 and 4-38).

Figure 4-37. Balustrade, Room 2-2, Identical to that in Room 1-2, 2025.

Figure 4-38. Hall 2-2, second floor, 2024.

The room at the southeast corner of the second floor, Room 2-3, measures approximately 16 feet 5.5 inches by 16 feet 3 inches. The room was historically used as a bedroom and has a simple cove molding and simple trim around the windows (Figure 4-39). The fireplace mantels in this room and Room 2-3 are smaller variations of the Greek Revival mantels on the first floor with plain, flat pilasters. The mantles are offset on the chimney breast to permit the passage of the flues from the first floor. The chimneys in this room and in Room 2-1 have built-in presses with double-leaf, two-panel doors with flat panels. (Figures 4-40 and 4-24).

Figure 4-39. Room 2-3 with visible window trim, 2024.

The room at the northeast corner, Room 2-4, was historically used as a bedroom. This room measures approximately 16 feet 4 inches by 16 feet 1 inch. This room features simple trim, window trim, and sills. The northeast corner room has two six-over-six double-hung wood windows that now look into the late twentieth century addition. The ceiling and wall coverings were changed to modern replacements due to water damage in 2021 (Figure 4-41).

Figure 4-40. Fireplace in Room 2-3, and identical to that in Room 2-4, 2025.

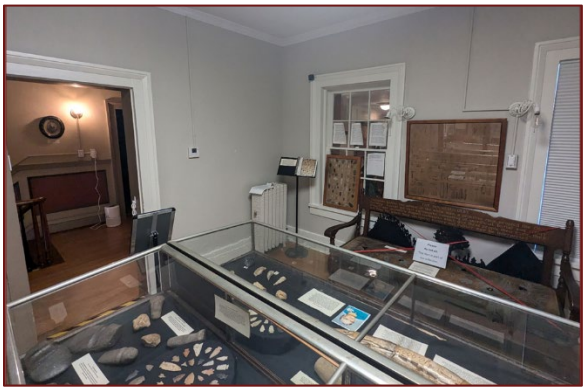


Figure 4-41. Overview of Room 2-4, with the now interior original window visible, 2025.

The former bedroom at the southwest corner of the second floor, Room 2-1, measures approximately 16 feet 5 inches by 16 feet 2 inches with a small projection on the southwest corner (Figure 4-42). The room has similar features to the other second-floor bedrooms, with simple trim and a built-in closet. The first-period mantel in this room was replaced with an early twentieth-century Colonial Revival mantel with a high shelf supported by fluted colonettes and a bevel-mirrored overmantel. The coal grate is surrounded by a painted metal surround and white tiles. The ceiling and wall coverings were changed to modern replacements due to water damage in 2021(Figure 4-43).

Figure 4-42. Colonial Revival fireplace and mantel in Room 2-1, 2025.

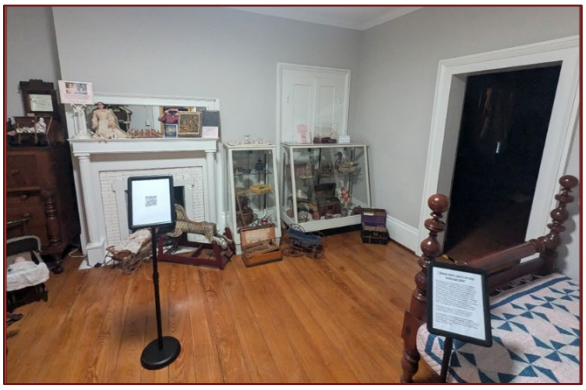


Figure 4-43. Room 2-1 with flooring and door frame visible, 2024.

The room at the northwest corner of the main section of the building, Room 2-5, measures approximately 16 feet 5 inches by 14 feet 6 inches (Figure 4-44). The room has similar features to the rest of the rooms on

this floor with simple trim and window surrounds. This room is the only access point to the additional rooms in the ell of the building. The room has no fireplace since the original on the west wall was removed. The narrow flue serving the room below still rises near the center of the north wall. The room was likely the principal bedroom and is the mostly decorated with late nineteenth-century flocked wallpaper (Clinton County Historical Society 2024; Figure 4-40 and 4-45).

Figure 4-44. Historic, Second Period, flocked wallpaper in Room 2-5, 2025.

Figure 4-45. Room 2-5, showing casing and original flooring, 2024.

The first room in the ell on the second floor, Room 2-6, is largely devoid of features, and was likely an original bedroom. Currently it is used for document and artifact storage (Figure 4-46). The room measures approximately 15 feet 3 inches by 15 feet 4 inches. Room 2-6 has trim like the Greek Revival architrave trim in other rooms on the second floor. This room has two additional rooms located off, a sunroom, Room 2-7, to the west and a former bathroom and bedroom combo to the north, Rooms 1-8 and 1-9.

Figure 4-46. Overview of Room 2-6 showing the lack of features, 2024.

The sleeping porch located off Room 2-7 is the second-story portion of the dining room addition seen on the first floor. This sleeping porch measures approximately 7 feet 6 inches by 13 feet 10 inches (Figure 4-47). The room has mid-twentieth-century wood paneling and a simple window trim around its series of casement and double-hung windows.

Figure 4-47. Overview of Room 2-7, showing wood panels, 2024.

The northernmost room on the second-floor ell, Room 2-8, is a former bathroom and measures approximately 8 feet 4 inches by 7 feet 9 inches not including two small, built-in closets at the southern doorway. The room was subdivided at the west end of Room 2-9 through an arched opening with storage on both sides (Figure 4-48). It has built-in storage cabinets. The plumbing fixtures have been removed. An Art Deco style porcelain lighting sconce survives from the removed fixtures (Figure 4-49). The flooring in this room is 12 inches by 12 inches square black tiles and likely used asbestos as a bonding agent to the subfloor.

Figure 4-48. Overview of Room 2-8 from the south, showing flooring tiles, 2024.

Figure 4-49. Extant Art Deco porcelain lighting sconce in Room 2-8, 2025.

This former bathroom connects to the northernmost room, a former bedroom, Room 2-9, which was likely originally occupied by house servants. This room measures approximately 12 feet by 11 feet 4

inches and includes a now disused staircase to the first floor (Figure 4-50). This room has simple door and window trim and a series of built-in closets at the north end (Figure 4-51). The original, American-bond brick northern wall of the first ell forms the south wall of the staircase (Figure 4-52). A five-panel door opens to the east, which formerly opened onto a porch that was demolished in 2001.

Figure 4-50. Disused staircase in Room 2-9, 2024.

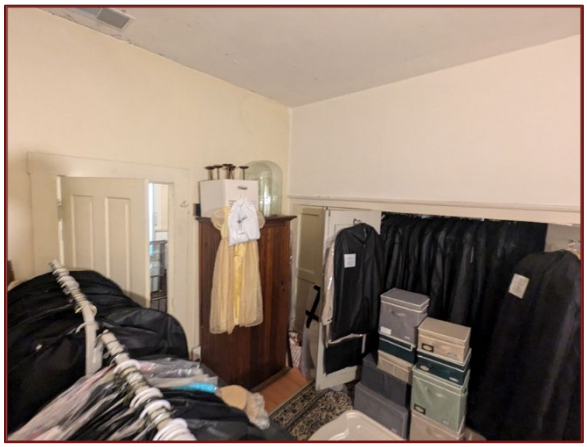


Figure 4-51. Overview of Room 2-9, showing the built-in closets, 2024.

Figure 4-52. View of exposed American bond brick, Room 2-9, 2025.

Third Floor

The third floor of Rombach Place consists of two separate rooms accessed by a central staircase located in the second-floor main hallway.

The room on the west side is used to store surplus artifacts and archival materials. The room measures approximately 16 feet 9 inches by 15 feet 9 inches and features a series of non-historic built-in shelving on the north and south sides (Figure 4-53). The shape of the ceiling is dictated by the slope and shape of the roof.

The room on the east side is similar to the west room. This room is currently used as clothing storage. Like the west room on this level, the ceiling shape is dictated by the slope and shape of the roof shape (Figure 4-54).

Figure 4-53. Third floor western room, 2024.

Figure 4-54. Third floor, eastern room, 2024.

Basement

The basement of Rombach Place consists of three rooms separated by small doorways. The basement is accessed from the first floor in the northernmost room in the building. This main, earliest built, room has a height of approximately 7 feet and has parged walls. The ceiling features up-and-down sawn joists running east-west. This room is filled with a variety of utility systems (Figure 4-55).

The southern room is devoid of utilitarian or aesthetic features and has a series of 4 by 4 support columns and a concrete-filled steel column. The rooms' walls are composed of bare fieldstone with traces of whitewash (Figure 4-56).

The third room in the basement has a disused oil tank for the former HVAC system, other piping, and ductwork. These walls are constructed of uniform-sized concrete blocks, corresponding with the 1919 construction date, along with the projected section of the dining room above . Additionally, this third room gives an access to a crawlspace running under the length of the western porch (Figure 4-57).

Figure 4-55. Basement main room, 2024.

Figure 4-56. Basement western room, 2024.

Figure 4-57. Basement northwest room, 2024.

4.5 Structural System

The c.1850 house is built on a coursed rubble limestone foundation with 2" x 12" wood joists laid 24" apart that span between the foundation walls and between the wall on the second and third floors. The first-floor joists run from east to west and it is likely that the upper floors are the same. The brick walls above are not visible, coated by stucco on the exterior and plaster on the interior.

Walls and Ceilings

The plaster walls and ceilings throughout the house are in fine condition except where the ceilings were given a drywall veneer and where noticeable humidity issues occur.

- Building-wide humidity issues: During the September 2024 survey, high humidity levels were identified throughout the building. While the high humidity may be attributed to active moisture ingress issues throughout the building, particularly in the west end of the dining room, it is most likely a condensation problem caused by the meeting of cool conditioned air and warm temperatures at the inner surface of the walls.
- While investigating water damage in the northwest corner of the dining room, measurements with moisture meters gave indications over 60% moisture content in some areas indicating a real, active moisture issue. This water has caused separation, cracking, and damage to plaster, wood trim, paneling, and baseboards. This moisture is a critical concern and requires immediate remediation and treatment.
- Wall delamination in Room 1-1and several areas in the Study room, baseboards, and plaster finish coats were in active stages of delamination. Condensation, excessive humidity, and moisture penetration through the stucco are likely to blame. Further damage can be prevented through the remediation of the moisture ingress and humidity issues.

Plaster cracks in Room 1-1:

- A series of cracks in the plaster were noticed, most visibly around the doorway in the northwest corner of the room.

Signs of moisture ingress in plaster finish coats throughout the building:

- The most notable example is in the southwest corner of the dining room, where the finish coat of plaster appears bubbled and brittle. This instance of moisture damage includes signs of ingress on the beams above. This damage is also seen in the western room of the attic and may result from penetration through the wall.

Ceiling delamination in the outer ell chamber on the second floor:

- The ceiling in the southwest corner of the room above the now-disused staircase shows signs of deterioration.

Painted plaster and drywall finishes have been damaged in the areas of moisture accumulation.

- Most notable areas of damage include the NW corner wall and southern ceiling in Room 1-9, and the SW corner in Room 2-9.

Floors

The floors throughout the building are in fair-to-good condition. They appear sanded and refinished with polyurethane. The finish is in fair condition in the twin parlors and General Denver's Office. The finish is worn and in poor condition in the first-floor passage. It exhibits flaking and peeling in high traffic areas.

The floors on the second floor are original tongue-and-groove flooring and are in very good condition except for areas in Room 2-5 where the flooring shows failed joints and a series of missing pieces. The floor in the inner ell room on the second floor retains a historic finish in the center where a fabric or linoleum rug was formerly located.

The second-floor bathroom, Room 2-8, has an old vinyl tile floor in fair condition but possibly contains asbestos.

Wood Trim

The interior trim of the windows and doors is in good condition other than paint buildup due to the number of paint campaigns since 1850. Both windows on the third floor show signs of long-term direct water damage ranging from damaged trim and surrounds, to missing sills.

Additionally, the baseboard in several areas of Room 1-1 show separation from the adjacent walls. This is likely due to the prolonged presence of high levels of moisture, which is also apparent from other moisture related plaster damage in the same room.

Painted finishes on wood trim are in good condition with few areas of peeling and other forms of deterioration.

Basement

Rombach Place staff made Gray & Pape Architectural Historians aware that during heavy rainfall, water will actively run through the basement in a consistent path and manner from the area of the crawl space under the front of the house into a nearby sump.

Gray & Pape Architectural Historians used a borescope to inspect the area where the water makes its way into the basement, but the wall was solid with few voids and no entry path visible. The location of the water ingress on an underground, non-original interior wall indicates the water flow is not likely from an interior leak and is from an exterior source.

Due to a lack of a clear entrance for the water ingress, combined with the concurrence of this water flow with rainstorms suggests the issue is likely directly connected to water carried by one of the buried downspouts on the eastern façade, likely the downspout at the northern face of the projected dining room addition.

Buried downspouts become occluded under ground level by roots, or other environmental contaminants, affecting their water tightness. The water can leak out from holes in the underground pipe, leaching through the path of least resistance.

The water heater is attached to a brick flue which has an opening just below the entry of the water heater flue preventing proper venting, which is very likely a code violation (Figure 4-58). The addition of an airtight masonry patch can rectify this.

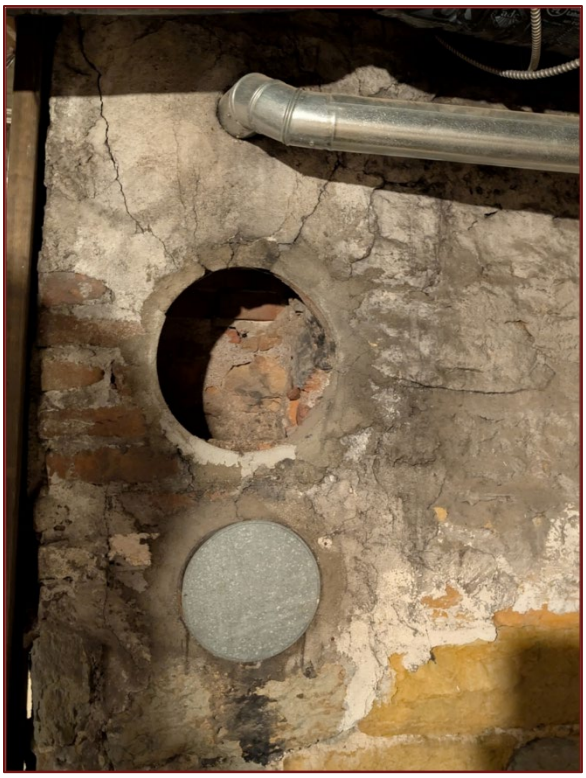


Figure 4-58. Open hole in the basement, requiring attention, 2025.

Mechanical Systems

Electrical

Due to the age of the building, it would not have been electrified when built, and it is unknown when exactly electricity was added. However, due to a series of local newspaper articles

regarding the introduction of electrical service in Wilmington, it can be assumed electricity was added between 1892 and 1917 (The Journal-Republican 1892; Wilmington News-Journal 1917). Non-historic electrical conduits are seen throughout the building.

Through borescope inspections by Gray & Pape Architectural Historians, knob and tube electrical wiring was seen in the basement crawl space (Figure 4-59). Cloth wiring was visible through inspection behind switch boxes on the first-floor passage, Room 2. It is assumed that this wiring is consistent throughout the house.

Figure 4-59. Extant knob and tube wiring in the basement crawlspace, 2025.

HVAC

The current forced-air HVAC systems are between one and six years old and show no need for repair or replacement. While not in use, elements of the former boiler system are visible in both the basement and throughout the rest of the building in the remaining radiators. The ducts leading to the first floor of the historic sections run in the basement and crawl space. The ducts serving the second floor run through the third floor from air handling units in the west end of the third floor. Ducted returns run through the crawl space, basement, and third floor of the main section.

Figure 4-60. Current HVAC units, located in the 2001 built addition, 2025.

Plumbing

No plumbing remains in the original house because the fixtures in the former bathrooms were removed.

Interior Materials and Condition Summary

Despite the age and damage present on the building, the interior of Rombach Place remains intact and in fair condition with a significant amount of original woodwork, plaster, and decorative features, most notably the unique, decorative fireplaces. Significant issues requiring attention are:

- Building-wide humidity issues and humidity levels have caused problems, most likely resulting from condensation

occurring at the meeting of cool conditioned air and warm temperatures at the inner surface of the walls.

- High levels of moisture measured on the interior at the northwest corner of the dining room have caused serious damage to plaster and wood trim. This moisture is a critical concern and requires immediate remediation and treatment.
- Baseboards and plaster in the southwest corner of Room 1-1were observed to be moisture-damaged and in active stages of delamination. Latent humidity and moisture penetration from the exterior are likely to be blamed.
- A series of plaster cracks are visible around the doorway in the northwest corner of Room 1.
- Limited moisture-related damage can be seen in plaster finish coats throughout the building.
- Ceiling delamination in Room 2-9 on the second floor.
- The floors are in good condition. Some high-traffic areas show damage and delamination of the polyurethane finish. Areas of vinyl tiles may contain asbestos.
- The basement has experienced moisture issues which suggests an interruption in the flow of water to one of the buried downspouts on the south front.
- The water heater venting should be corrected.
- The electrical system in the historic portion of the building is outmoded.

Additionally, a modern HVAC system in a historic masonry building is a possible cause, or exacerbating contributor, to the internal humidity issues. The entire system should be analyzed by a Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumping (MEP) Engineer to determine adjustments to the building's systems and envelope to control humidity problems. The investigation by the MEP Engineer should focus on the system itself, its sizing, zoning, and compatibility with the existing building, with an emphasis on the existing humidity and moisture issues.

Historic Paint Layer/Wallpaper Analysis

In February 2025, Gray & Pape Architectural Historians conducted a simple paint layer analysis in Room 1-3 of Rombach Place. The process involved using two different grits of sandpaper to remove paint, one layer at a time to reveal the individual layers. These exposed paint colors can then be analyzed through software and matches can be made

to current, commercially available, paint colors.

Two separate, but nearby, areas were analyzed in Room 1-3 where damage to paint already existed. The top of the baseboard (Figure 4-60), and the side of the doorframe on the western side of the room (Figure 4-61).
Aside from the current off-white/beige currently on the surfaces, five additional paint colors were visible. The two that stood out the most were shades of peach. Research indicates that the deeper of the two colors matches up with "Fawn" a color found in a 1916 paint color guidebook by Aladdin. This likely correlates with the large number of changes made to Rombach Place in 1919. The other prominent color is a similar shade of peach but with a beiger base. The swatch below of Benjamin Moore HC-54 is similar. The other two were simple black and two white. The two colors could be considered hues of ochre, which is a natural clay earth pigment made of a mixture of ferric oxide and varying amounts of clay/sand. Shades of ochre were readily available and popular interior painting in buildings during the nineteenth century (Chase 1992).

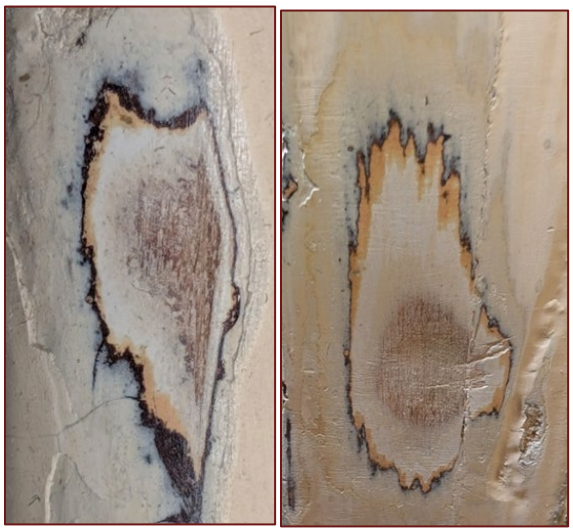


Figure 4-61. Paint Layer Analysis from Baseboard (left) and Doorframe (right), 2025.

Figure 4-62. Swatch of "Fawn" from a 1916 Aladdin color guidebook (antiquehome.org 2015).

Figure 4-63. Benjamin Moore Paint HC-54.

In addition to the analysis of paint in Room 3, a sample of historic wallcovering was taken from behind a bookshelf in the NW corner of Room 1. This sample was analyzed under a digital microscope for analysis on its composition to assist in interpretation and the potential era it was added in.
The sample obtained is approximately 1" x 0.5" and is dark green in color (Figure 4-64). As shown in Figure 4-65, the wallpaper sample is comprised of a series of overlapping, randomly placed, fibers in various hues of greens and light yellows. The random orientation of

the material in the paper lends itself to a mass-produced wood-pulp based wallpaper from the late 19th or early 20th centuries. This corresponds to the timing in which the room was renovated for use by General Denver as an office.

The materiality shown in Figure 4-64 lends itself to a Wood pulp was introduced in wallpaper production in the United States in 1855, and by the 1880s, the bulk of the commercial wallpaper made in the country was made of wood pulp, straw, and other cheaper materials, compared to the more expensive textile fibers used in earlier centuries (National Park Service 2007).

The sample shows similarities to Osborn and Little Pattern # W7360 "Chroma" (Figure 4-66).

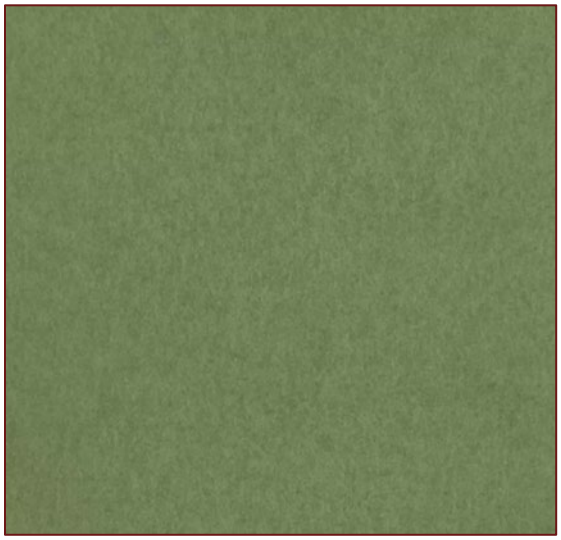


Figure 4-66. Osborn and Little "Chroma."

Figure 4-64. Wallpaper sample analyzed, 2025.

Figure 4-65. Microscopic image of wallpaper sampled from Room 1, 2025.

4.6 Building Integrity

The exterior of Rombach Place retains a high level of architectural and historical integrity, despite the building's age, alterations, additions, and moisture-related damage. Many of the alterations to the house are fifty years old or older. Non-significant alterations include:

- Replacement roof
- 2001 North addition
- East and west porch enclosures
- Front porch alteration (columns removed)
- Superficially applied wainscot in the first- and second-floor

passages, possibly added in 1919 along with other Colonial Revival-styled alterations.

The following features are identified as contributing to Rombach Place's historic character. Gray & Pape recommends maintaining the historic character of the building's exterior and the primary interior characteristics identified below:

- Overall Building Form and Massing–The overall form of the building, with its rectangular shape and double-pile, central-passage plan with ell to the north is a prominent, character-defining feature of the building and should be maintained. Any stabilization and subsequent construction should take this into account.
- Dining Room/Sleeping Porch Bay– The projecting west end of the dining room with its casement windows and elliptical transom represents architecturally significant alterations undertaken in the third period.
- Roof Form and Features– The side gable roof with pairs of exterior chimneys and returned wood box cornice distinguish the first-period form of the house as a significant example of a regionally significant domestic architecture.
- Stucco Walls– The stucco walls, quoins, and water table dating from the historic third-period renovation of the house should be maintained and repaired in kind as needed. Damage to the walls is noted in the report and should be addressed.
- Porches– The front porch has lost some integrity with moisture damage and the removal of some of the columns. The east and west porches have been enclosed after the period of significance.
- Doors and Windows–The original, six-over-six-light, wood sash windows are significant features of the exterior and should be maintained. The six-panel front door itself is likely from the third period and should be replaced to match the historic, first-period, four-panel doors in the house.
- Interior Configuration– The interior configuration, although modified through the non-historic late-twentieth century addition, retains historic integrity. The original room configurations should be retained, as well as the significant alterations made in 1919.
- Interior Features and Finishes– The following interior finishes

and features should be retained:

- Wooden staircase,
- Intact plaster and lath,
- Wood trim and crown moldings,
- First-period and third-period flooring,
- Historic four- and five-panel doors,
- Historic wood and tile mantels, and
- Wainscoting in the dining room.

5.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Statement of Significance

Properties nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) require a Period of Significance, which refers to the specific timeframe during which a resource achieved its historical importance and is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP; essentially, the Period of Significance is the period when the property was most significantly associated with important events, people, or activities that contribute to its historical value. When planning changes to a historic building, the Period of Significance should guide what building elements should be retained, replaced, or preserved.

Buildings nominated for their association with Architecture often have a Period of Significance associated with the date of construction or any significant additions or alterations to the building. Research indicates that Rombach place was originally constructed in c. 1850, with significant alterations in 1900, 1919, 1921, and 2001. Buildings nominated for their association with people important to our past may have a broader period of significance that spans the life of the individual. In the case of Rombach Place, it is significant for both its architecture as well as its association with people important to our national history. Rombach Place's Period of significance is organized into three phases: The First Period (1856-c1870): Matthew and Katherine Rombach (residents from 1856-1903), the Second Period (c1870-1890): General James William Denver and Louisa Rombach Denver (residents from 1856- 1914), and the Third Period (1919): James William Denver Williams and Dorothy Sinnett Williams (residents from 1901-1953).

5.2 Preservation Goal

The National Park Service (1990) codified in 36 CFR 67: Preservation (as a treatment approach) places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance, and repair. It reflects a building's continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

6.1 Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site while allowing for a reasonable chance to meet new needs (National Park Service 2017). The Standards (36 CFR Part 67) apply to historic buildings of all periods, styles, types, materials, and sizes. They apply to both the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached adjacent or related new construction. The Standards are applied to projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires the replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be

substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Standards for Restoration

Like those standards for Rehabilitation, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration are ten principles created to help guide changes to a historic building and its site (National Park Service 2017). Unlike Rehabilitation, the Standards for Restoration are written to assist in the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared during a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of those features missing from the chosen restoration period.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that interprets the property and its restoration period.
2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be

physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.

4. Materials, features, spaces and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials.
7. Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.
8. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
9. Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
10. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Standards for Preservation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation give guidelines for the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property and its site. Work generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary,

stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

6.2 Preservation Philosophy and Building Recommendations

As laid out in the above Standards, the treatment recommendations for Restoration, Preservation, and Rehabilitation differ (National Park Service 2017). Restoration attempts to depict a building, or a portion of one, as it appeared during a specific point in time, thus removing evidence of changes over the year. Rehabilitation attempts to make sensitive changes to a property to accommodate a new use, while retaining a building's historic character. Preservation maintains a resource in its current state by retaining the building's form as it evolved over the years. In the case of Rombach Place, a combination of the three treatment ideals is required to

better suit the combination of house museum and local historical society.

The first floor of the building holds the spaces that are most significant, both historically and architecturally. These spaces should be restored to a point in time that best represents the interpretive plan of the Historical Society. Specifically, Rooms 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-6, 1-7, and 1-9. should be treated as restoration work, so as to show their appearance at a specific point in time. Other areas in the building, like the exhibit rooms on the second floor, and room 1-8 on the first floor, can be treated as preservation, where their current appearance can be retained. The rest of Rombach Place, where its use as a historical society is clearer, should be treated as rehabilitation.

Through the use of Treatment Zones, the individual spaces in Rombach Place can be split up by the preservation methodology that best suits the use of space, the mission of the Historical Society, and the Character Defining Features of the individual rooms. Figure 6-1 gives a diagram of the building and its treatment zones by room. The division of space by Treatment Zone allows for the space to continue to have a cohesive relationship with the rest of the building while preserving and emphasizing the character defining features and the mission of the Historical Society.

This HSR should serve as a guide, the following recommendations are based on an examination of the building. Any recommendations outlined below utilize recommended approaches as outlined in the appropriate National Park Service (NPS) Preservation Briefs noted below. All recommendations take the historic building's character defining elements into consideration.

Along with the treatment zones, the rooms can be further broken down by dividing them by their extant architectural significance. The architectural significance of the rooms can additionally be demonstrated by the chosen treatment zone. As seen in Figure 6-1, the rooms listed under Restoration (Rooms 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-6, 1-7, and 1-9) retain a high level of architectural significance, which, with restoration, will continue to exude that significance. The rooms listed under Preservation (1-8, 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4 and 2-5), still have a level of architectural significance through extant features, and a small number of decorative elements. However, their level is noticeably less than those slated for Restoration. The removal of historic features, due to changes over time and due to previous damage, are the reason for their lower level of

significance. The rooms shaded in blue, for Rehabilitation (1-4, 1-5, 1-10, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, the basement and the attic) are the rooms in Rombach Place with the lowest level of architectural significance, they have a noted lack of original or historic features, and in most cases, are currently being used for administrative, or storage purposes.

Room Key: First Level	
1-1	General Denver's Study
1-2	Passage
1-3	SE Room; Twin Parlor
1-4	Staff Archival Room
1-5	Fireproof Vault
1-6	Twin Parlor
1-7	Dining Room
1-8	Sunroom
1-9	Dining Room
1-10	Original Kitchen

Room Key: Second Level	
2-1	Bedroom
2-2	Hall
2-3	Bedroom
2-4	Bedroom
2-5	Bedroom
2-6	Bedroom
2-7	Sleeping porch
2-8	Bathroom
2-9	Bedroom

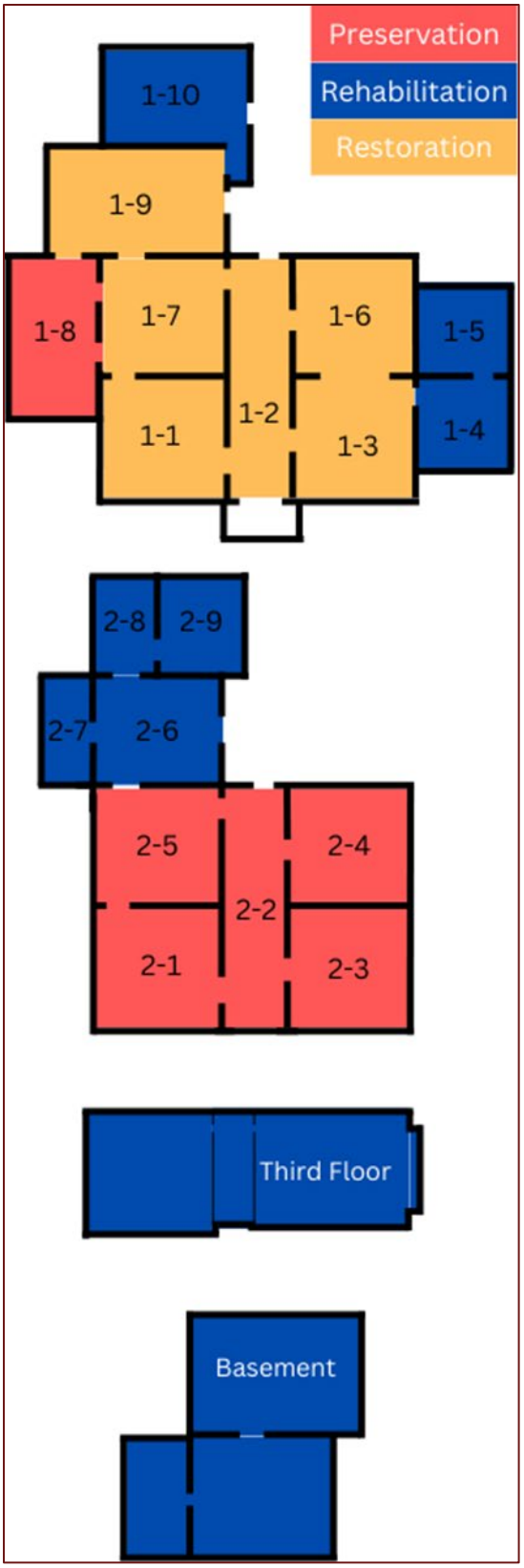


Figure 6-1. Treatment Zones Diagram and Key.

High Interior Humidity

The application of modern standards of interior climate comfort to historic buildings can often prove detrimental to historic materials and decorative finishes. Information provided in National Park Service Preservation Brief #24 can give more information on understanding the effect that modern HVAC systems can have on an historic building. A summary of Information and methods provided in the Brief for controlling humidity and temperature in conjunction with a modern HVAC system can be found below.

- Methods for controlling interior temperature and humidity, as well as improve ventilation must be considered in any modern HVAC.
- High humidity in historic buildings can be caused by a variety of factors including improper handling of stormwater along the building envelope, improper interior ventilation, and improper ventilation of mechanical equipment.
    - Proper interior ventilation and air circulation, dehumidifiers, and assessing whether exterior stormwater distribution systems are functioning adequately.
- If exterior stormwater is leaching into the building, the re-grading of soil near the building foundation or systems like perimeter or footing drains should be investigated, by a qualified moisture intrusion professional.
- Other potential solutions for high humidity include:
    - Operable exterior storm windows, to allow for the operability of the building's double-hung windows for ventilation.
    - Ventilator fans on the top floor to vent hot air out through the roof.
- It is likely that the inclusion of a modern HVAC system in a sealed ca. 1850 building combined with the 2001 addition and the need to maintain a constant temperature throughout the year has brought the unintended consequence of incorrect humidity. Adjusting the number of ducts and air returns in the building or transitioning to a zoned cooling approach are options to consider.
- Due to the complex nature of the issue, a professional Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) Engineer experienced with historic

buildings should be retained to confirm the exact cause of the humidity issue at Rombach Place.

Interior Plaster Repair

Overall, steps taken to repair interior plaster should follow those laid out in NPS Preservation Brief #21, "Repairing Historic Flat Plaster Walls and Ceilings" (MacDonald 1989).

- Due to ongoing and inactive moisture ingress, damaged sections of plaster are seen throughout the building in rooms 1-1, 1-9, and 2-9. Partial or complete removal of the plaster may be required if the plaster is found to be damaged beyond repair. Areas of damage caused by long-term water infiltration should be removed and replaced. Proper precautions should be taken when removing or working with historic plaster, including:
    - Using OSHA-approved masks because the plaster dust that flies into the air may contain decades of coal soot or lead from lead-based paint and
    - Wearing proper attire including long-sleeved clothing and head-and-eye protection.
- Intact plaster should be retained and taken care of during removal to not damage good plaster due to vibrations. Walls should not be pounded rather a small trowel or pry bar should be used to carefully pry loose pieces from the wall. Following the removal of damaged plaster, a decision should be made on whether to replaster over the existing lath or utilize a different technique. The thickness of the original plaster and the condition of the original lath should guide the decision, as well as the costs and time involved. Regardless, measures should be taken to ensure existing wood trim surrounding windows and doors will have the same "reveal" as before (The "reveal" is the projection of the wood trim from the surface of the plastered wall).

Moisture Ingress

Overall, steps taken to reduce unwanted moisture should follow those laid out in NPS Preservation Brief #39 "Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings" (Park 1996).

- Rombach Place shows at least one area of active moisture ingress, the northwest corner of Room 1-9. Unwanted moisture

is the most prevalent cause of deterioration in older and historic buildings. Moisture damage leads to erosion, corrosion, rot, and ultimately destruction of materials, finishes, and eventually structural components.

- The steps to control unwanted moisture in historic buildings are as follows:

Look for signs of moisture ingress:

- Standing water, fungus, mold;
- Wet stains, efflorescence, flaking paint/plaster;
- Musty smells in areas of high humidity; or
- Other obvious instances of moisture in interior spaces.

Identify the source of moisture:

- The five most common sources of moisture include:
- Above-grade exterior moisture
    - Weather-related moisture entering through deteriorating materials because of deferred maintenance, cracks, or environmental damage.
- Below-grade ground moisture
    - Improper handling of surface rain run-off that finds its way into the building through cracks in foundation walls, or
    - Leaking pipes and mechanical equipment.
    - Interior moisture from household use and climate control systems
        - High interior humidity can result from unvented mechanical equipment like stoves, dryers, and heaters or
        - Water used in maintenance and construction materials.

Once the source is identified, and the unwanted moisture is properly remediated, then resulting damage can be repaired without the worry of cyclical damage.

Moreover, the inclusion of a modern HVAC system in a 175-year-old building has the potential to cause the humidity issues viewed. Whether that is due to the incompatibility of the building materials, or the oversized nature of the current system.

Stucco and Masonry Repair

Overall, steps taken to repair the historic Stucco should follow those set forward in NPS Preservation Brief #22, "The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco" (Grimmer 1990).

- While stucco coatings can last over a century, the coating is not inherently a permanent or long-lasting building material. Stucco requires regular maintenance to keep it in good condition.

- Care should be taken when replacing and repairing damaged stucco to use replacement material that is sympathetic to the original. Due to the stucco coatings age, it was likely a lime-based stucco, although a simple test using muriatic acid can confirm this.
    - Test: A dilute solution of muriatic acid will dissolve lime-based stucco, but not Portland cement-based coatings.
- Small hairline cracks in the coating can usually be repaired with a thin slurry coat consisting of the finish coat ingredients or paint/whitewash.
- Commercially available caulking compounds are not to be used as a patching material as their texture and consistency differ with weathering and time.
- Larger cracks and those where delamination is seen will have to be cut out and repaired in a more extensive manner.
    - All deteriorated, severely cracked, or loose stucco should be removed down to the lath or other substrate material. The areas should be cleaned of debris with a bristle brush, and all environmental growth, loose paint, and other contaminants removed.
    - If necessary, underlying brick or masonry mortar joints should be raked out to a depth of approximately 5/8" to allow for better adhesion between the substrate and new stucco.

In addition to the above stucco repairs, the corners on the building's concrete porches are damaged, exposing aggregate. Aside from environmental conditions like the freeze thaw cycle, the inclusion of salt in winter months can lead to damage from the penetration of the salt into the concrete. As the historic porches are not used by the general public, the use of any snow/ice melt should be avoided. These breaks can be patched with concrete mixed to best replicate the exposed aggregate, color, and composition of the existing.

Door Repairs

While many doors are in good condition, where necessary the historic doors are to be retained and repaired.

- The finishes are to be restored.
- Historic hardware is to be restored and augmented with historically appropriate hardware where elements are missing.

- Clean, scrape, and paint wood doors and trim.
- Consolidate and fill missing or damaged areas with epoxy.
- Replace rotted wood in kind when necessary.
    - Carefully clean wood with light sanding before priming and re-finishing. Where wood trim is already scraped, ensure that surfaces are free of any chemical residue before priming and re-finishing. Avoid any defacement of wood profiles.
- Verify weather-tightness at exterior doors.
- Check door hardware for functionality and oil hinges.
- Retain all historic hardware, including locks.

Window Sash and Transoms

As mentioned, a majority of the windows in Rombach Place are in relatively good condition, aside from missing or failing glazing putty and the cracking/crazing of paint. Every window in the building could be stripped of paint, sanded, primed, re-painted, and applied with new glazing putty using the guidelines below.

Due to the presence of the triple-track storm windows, the degradation of the windows due to age- and weather-related issues is slowed, making their repair a non-priority.

Full window restoration by a professional restoration firm is an expensive endeavor due to the amount of labor required for each sash. Due to the non-priority nature of the repairs, other options could be explored. Making the window restoration a fundraising event, partnering with a non-profit organization for a workshop, or having staff/volunteers complete the work slowly over a period of time are options for their restoration.

Fundraising events for restoration could include simple things like the "adoption" of a single window, where participants and donors pay for the tools and materials and get to do the work themselves, getting an amount of ownership over their work. Participants could receive a picture of the completed window, certificate, etc., to further illustrate their participation.

Non-profit organizations like Heritage Ohio could be enlisted to help organize something like a window restoration workshop, where participants pay to be guided through the restoration process and work on sashes of their own. A professional would guide participants through the

process in a semi-classroom setting, before a working session, perhaps to be held in the Carriage House on the property.

The process of wood window restoration is not complicated, just time consuming. Therefore, having staff, board members, and other volunteers complete the work piece-meal over a long period of time is an option. Retaining a window restoration professional, with knowledge of the craft to guide the initial restoration sessions is recommended.

Overall, when restoration is attempted, no matter the approach, steps taken should follow those set forward in National Park Service Preservation Brief s9, "The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows" (Myers 1981).

- Rotted or damaged wood should be spliced or removed and replaced using reproduction members of similar wood species to the original.
- Minor damage should be infilled with epoxy, sanded, and painted to match where possible and depending on the level of damage.
- Clean and repair the historic wood sash or sashes.
- Re-glaze with linseed oil and calcium carbonate-based glazing putty, such as Sarco Dual-Glaze.
    - To prepare the sash for glazing putty, wipe the glazing putty rabbet with linseed oil and apply the glazing putty compound to the bottom of the rabbet.
    - Place the glass in the opening, apply the glazing putty compound, and strike at a sharp angle with a putty knife.
- Exterior windows should be painted with exterior grade oil-based paints to ensure proper longevity and glazing putty adherence.

Where the damage is more severe, specifically in both attic rooms. Once the moisture ingress issue is solved through the replacement/repair of the windowsill, and the repair/replacement of the exterior cracked stucco, the interior window of the window frame can be replaced.

Replacement wall covering can be put in-place where it has failed. Due to the non-public-facing space, if for new plaster-and-lath is cost-prohibitive, drywall can be used in its place. Additionally, a new wood

frame can be fabricated to fit the existing opening.

As historic photos of Rombach Place show wood louvered shutters on the windows, those present on the building should be retained and repaired/replaced as necessary. Methods for repair can be taken from those laid out in reference to the repair of the building's wood windows, using similar wood and structural epoxy where possible.

- Failing polyurethane can be sanded off and replaced with a new layer of a protectant finish.

The failing joints and missing flooring pieces can be removed, the underlayment cleaned, and extant pieces can be re-attached. If possible, those missing pieces can be replaced from sacrificial flooring pieces in inconspicuous areas of the room. Those sacrificial pieces can be replaced with pieces of wood from the same wood spices and stained to further match the surrounding areas.

Unless it shows signs of failure or damage, the vinyl tile floor in Room 2-8 should be encapsulated or removed as it likely contains asbestos.

- If the flooring is considered for removal, it should be undertaken by a contractor or firm with experience in the remediation of asbestos flooring.

Interior Flooring and Trim

While many of the floors in Rombach Place are in good condition, several areas show instances of wear, damage, or missing pieces.

Those in Rooms 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, and 1-6 show evidence of failing polyurethane finish due to their location in high trafficked areas of the building.

Additionally, the wood trim in Room 1-1 can be removed while the walls it is separating from are repaired from moisture damage. The trim can be gently pried from the wall surface and replaced once the moisture issues, and the wall surface is repaired. While the trim pieces are removed from the wall, they can be stripped of paint, and re-painted using an appropriate primer and topcoat.

Electrical System

As noted in Section 4.9.9.1, borescope investigation noted knob and tube wiring present in Rombach Place. The condition of the knob-and-tube cannot be fully verified due to its partial inaccessibility in some areas of the building. While knob-and-tube wiring is not inherently dangerous, it presents several

disadvantages when compared to modern electrical wiring, it has a series of potential problems that come alongside natural modifications and alterations usually present in historic buildings. Knob and tube wiring is often shrouded with fabric insulation, as noted behind a switch plate cover in Room 1-2. The old fabric insulation is likely brittle due to age, increasing the susceptibility to damage from rodents, insects, and from manipulation, leading to the potential for exposed wires. Fabric insulated wire can also not contain heat as properly as modern romex cabling, leading to another potential for fire. Additionally, knob and tube wiring lacks a grounding conductor, which reduce the chance of electrical fires and damages to sensitive equipment. Knob and tube wiring is also designed to be cooled by air exposure, and any coverage by insulation, wall material, etc, can lead to improperly dispersed heat.

There are several options to deal with the wiring present in Rombach Place.

- The current wiring can be left as is, but with a heightened sense of security and regular inspections by a licensed electrician.
- The wiring can be wholly replaced by modern romex-sheathed wiring using existing channels in the masonry and behind baseboards where needed
- The knob-and-tube wiring can be mothballed, and required systems can be switched over to a secondary, simple, retrofitted electrical system using inconspicuous switches for room lighting.

Fire Protection

Sprinkler systems are not necessarily required in the building and have the potential to damage collections if not carefully designed. A sprinkler system, paired with updated fire detection and alarms would, however, be an asset to the institution, giving it a high likelihood of survival in the case of fire.

Structural System

The joists that were visible in the basement appear to be in good condition. There is no evidence that the remainder of the joists are not also in acceptable condition. The surfaces of the brick walls above are not visible, coated by stucco on the exterior and plaster on the interior, do not appear to be suffering from serious structural issues.

Regular Monitoring Schedule

Understanding previous repairs and structural observations is a key component to assessing the condition

of a historic building; repairs, if not properly performed, can lead to structural and/or maintenance problems. Proper maintenance is the most cost-effective method of extending the life of a historic building. Decay of a historic building is inevitable, but deterioration can accelerate when the building is not maintained on a regular basis. Work done on an emergency basis can favor quick, but inappropriate treatments can alter or damage historic material (McDonald 1989).

Attached in Appendix D is a simple monitoring frequency chart. Below, are a series of sections on the features mentioned in the monitoring chart, and simple guidance on what to look for when inspecting each component.

Table 6-1. Monitoring Frequency Chart.

Feature	Inspection Frequency	Season
Roof	Annually	Spring or fall; every 5 years by roofer
Chimneys	Annually	Fall, every 5 years by a mason
Roof Drainage	6 months; more frequently as needed	Before and after wet season, during heavy rain
Exterior Walls and Porches	Annually	Spring, prior to summer/fall painting season
Windows	Annually	Spring, prior to summer/fall painting season
Foundation/Grade	Annually	Spring or during wet season
Building Perimeter	Annually	Winter, after leaves have dropped off trees
Entryways	Annually	Spring, prior to summer/fall painting season
Doors	6 months; heavily used doors may merit greater frequency	Spring and fall, prior to heating/cooling seasons
Attics	4 months, or after a major storm	Before, during, and after rain season

Basement/Crawlspace	4 months, or after a major storm	Before, during, and after rain season

Roof/Chimney/Roof Drainage

What to look for during inspection:

- Sagging gutters and split downspouts;
- Debris accumulating in gutters and valleys;
- Overhanging branches rubbing against the roof or gutters;
- Plant shoots growing out of chimneys;
- Slipped, missing, cracked, bucking, delaminating, peeling, or broken shingles;
- Deteriorated flashing and failing connections at any intersection of roof areas or of the roof and adjacent wall;
- Bubbled surfaces and moisture ponding on flat or low-sloped roofs; and
- Evidence of water leaks in the attic.

Simple maintenance tasks include:

- Remove leaves and debris from gutters and downspouts.
- Correct misaligned gutters and adjust if necessary, so the water flows to drain.
- Re-secure loose flashing at dormers and chimneys.
- Repoint joints in chimneys.

Exterior Walls

What to look for during an inspection:

- Misaligned surfaces, bulging wall sections;
- Cracks in masonry units, diagonal cracks in masonry joints, spalling masonry, open joints, and nail popping;
- Evidence of wood rot, insect infestation, and vegetative growth;
- Deficiencies in the attachment of wall-mounted lamps, flagpole brackets, signs, and similar items;
- Potential problems with penetrating features such as water spigots, electrical outlets, and vents;
- Excessive damp spots, often accompanied by staining, peeling paint, moss, or mold; and
- General paint problems.

Simple maintenance tasks include:

- Trim tree branches away from walls, remove ivy and tendrils of climbing plants
- Wash exterior wall surface if dirt or other deposits are causing damage or hiding deterioration

- Repoint masonry in areas where mortar is loose or where masonry units have settled. Resolve cause of cracks or failure before resetting and repointing
- Prepare, prime, and spot paint areas needing repainting
- Remove deteriorated caulking and sealants, clean and reapply appropriate caulks and sealants using backer rods as necessary
- Correct deficiencies in any wall attachments such as awnings and flagpole anchors, improperly installed electrical outlets, or loose water spigots

Windows/Doors

What to look for during an inspection:

- Loose frames, doors, sash, shutters, screens, storefront components, and signs that present safety hazards;
- Slipped sills and tipped or cupped thresholds;
- Poorly fitting units and storm assemblies, misaligned frames, drag marks on thresholds from sagging doors and storm doors;
- Loose, open, or decayed joints in door and window frames and doors/sash, shutters;
- Loose hardware, broken sash cords/chains, worn sash pulleys, cracked awning, shutter and window hardware, locking difficulties, and deteriorated weatherstripping and flashing;
- Broken/cracked glass, loose or missing glazing, and putty;
- Peeling paint, corrosion, or rust stains;
- Window well debris accumulation, heavy bird droppings; and
- Termite and carpenter ant damage.

Simple maintenance tasks include:

- Replace broken glass as soon as possible.
- Re-putty window glazing where putty is deteriorated or missing.
    - Take care when removing putty not to crack or break old glass.
- Clean window glass, door glazing, and storm panels using a mild vinegar and water mixture or non-alkaline commercial window cleaner.
- Clean handles, locks, and other hardware with a soft, damp cloth. Use cleaners sparingly, as they may remove original finishes.
- Tighten screws in doorframes and lubricate hinges, window sash chains, and pulleys using a graphite or silicone lubricant.

- Check windowsills for proper drainage. Fill cracks in sills with a food filler or epoxy.
- Repair, prime, and repaint windows, doors, frames, and sills when needed.
    - Sand and prepare surfaces and use material-specific patching compounds to fill any holes or areas collecting moisture.
- Correct perimeter cracks around windows and doors to prevent water and air infiltration. Use traditional material or modern sealants as appropriate.
- Remove weakened or loose shutters and store them for later repair. Consider adding zinc or painted metal to top shutters as a protective cap to cover the exposed grain.

Porches

What to look for during an inspection:

- Damaged flashing or tie-in connections of projecting elements;
- Misaligned posts and railings;
- Deteriorated finishes and materials, including peeling paint, cupped and warped decking, wood deterioration, and hazardous steps;
- Evidence of termites, carpenter ants, bees, or animal pests; and
- Damaged lamps, unsafe electrical outlets, or deteriorated seals around connections.

Simple maintenance tasks include:

- Secure any loose connections.
- Maintain ferrous metal components.
    - Remove rust and corrosion from porch handrails and other metal features; prepare, prime, and repaint using a corrosion-inhibitive coating system. Apply new primer before corrosion sets in; followed by new topcoat.
- Reattach loose brackets, lamps, or signs.
- With electrical boxes, ensure cover plates are properly sealed.
- Keep porch decks and steps free from dust, dirt, and leaf debris.
- Repair areas of wood decay or other damage to railings, posts, and decorative elements.
    - Repair with wood dutchman, wood putty, or epoxy filler as needed.

Foundation/Grade and Building Perimeter

What to look for during inspection:

- Depression or grade sloping towards the foundation, standing water after a storm;
- Material deterioration at or near the foundation, including moss of mortar in masonry, rotting wood clapboards, or settlement cracks in the lower sections of wall;
- Evidence of animal or pest infestation;
- Vegetation growing close to the foundation, including trees, shrubs, and planting beds;
- Evidence of mosso rm old from damp conditions or poorly situated downspout splash blocks; and
- Blocked downspout drainage boots or clogged areaway grates.

Simple maintenance tasks include:

- Remove leaves and other debris from drains to prevent accumulation.
- Conduct annual termite inspections.
- Keep the grade around the foundation sloping away from the building.
    - Add soil to fill depressions, particularly around downspouts and splash blocks.
    - Make sure soil does not come too close to wooden or metal elements, a 6" separation is usually recommended.
- Avoid the use of mulching material immediately around foundations as such material may promote termites, retain moisture, or change the grade of the existing slope.
- Reset splash blocks at the end of downspouts or add extender tubes to the end of downspouts as necessary.
- Manage vegetation around foundations to allow sufficient air movement for wall surfaces to dry out during damp periods. Trim plantings, and remove weeds and climbing vine roots.
- Wash off discoloration on foundation caused by splash-back, algae, or mildew. Use plain water and a soft bristle brush. Avoid chemical products unless thoroughly researched and tested.
- Avoid using salts for de-icing and fertilizers with a high acid or petroleum-based chemical content, as these materials can cause salt contamination of masonry.
    - Use sand or organic materials without chloride additives that can damage masonry.

- Look for new or recurring instances of moisture or active water ingress in the basement or attic specifically.

6.3 Conclusion and Recommendations for Repairs with Estimated Costs

Rombach Place has a rich history that is worth preserving. The existing conditions, maintenance, and structural issues outlined above require careful consideration. Long-term planning for the maintenance of Rombach Place should be a top priority. The following table provides a quick reference guide outlining the existing areas of concern previously discussed in this report for the Exterior and Interior of the historic sections of Rombach Place with their recommended repairs and estimated, non-binding costs. All recommended repairs should be completed by a licensed expert and meet recommended standards and guidelines as outlined in the Preservation Briefs noted above.[3] **The total cost for the recommendations below is $909,500.**

Table 6-2. Exterior Short-Term Repair Recommendations and Cost Estimates.

Damage/Issue Identified	Recommended Solution	Estimated Cost
Exterior Cornice Repairs	Repair the wood fascia on the SE corner of the building	$3,000
Exterior Stucco	Repair the cracks in the exterior stucco with compatible materials in order to prevent moisture ingress	$50,000
Porch Slab Repairs	Repair the concrete slab edges at the three porches	$30,000
Front Step Repairs	Use patching mortar to repair the sandstone front steps	$5,000
Exterior Doors and Hardware	Various Repairs	$3,500
Front Porch Columns	Repair/Replace the front porch columns (Two round and Two square)	$15,000

[3] Estimated costs were prepared by Glave & Holmes Architects and Engineers and should serve as a guide for future fundraising and building fundraising campaign efforts. It should be noted that the final costs could be more, and for planning purposes, it is suggested that multiple bids are obtained for each repair. Estimates include a 15% markup in price for design allowance and a 20% markup for profit, overhead, and fees.

Dining Room Projecting wall paneling	Repair paneling located below the first-story windows in the two-story Dining Room projection	$15,000

Table 6-3. Exterior Medium-Term Repair Recommendations and Cost Estimates.

Damage/Issue Identified	Recommended Solution	Estimated Cost
Exterior Paint	Repaint the exterior of the historic portion of the building	$70,000
Repair Window Sashes and Frames	Strip existing paint, repair any instances of wood rot or damage, repaint, and apply new glazing putty	$110,000

Table 6-4. Interior Short-Term Repair Recommendations and Cost Estimates.

Damage/Issue Identified	Recommended Solution	Estimated Cost
Interior Humidity Issues	Consult with MEP engineers to determine solutions and causes for interior moisture and humidity infiltration	$12,500
Interior Humidity Issues	Allowance for correction of humidity issues	$150,000
Interior Plaster/Trim Repair	Repair moisture damage on interior surfaces, including plaster and trim. Recognize that it can take months for masonry walls to dry	$10,000
Basement Water Heater Vent Hole	Patch hole in water heater vent with a secure masonry patch	$1,000

Table 6-5. Interior Medium-Term Repair Recommendations and Cost Estimates.

Damage/Issue Identified	Recommended Solution	Estimated Cost
Interior Painting	Repair interior surfaces as needed	$20,000
Interior Plaster Cracks	Patch and repair interior plaster cracks in Room 1-1. Monitor for evidence of ongoing movement in the wall	$1,500

Interior Flooring Repair	Refinish the passage floor where the finish is damaged. Avoid excessive sanding. Encapsulate existing vinyl flooring or remove safely	$3,000
Basement Moisture Ingress	Correct the source of basement moisture issues	$10,000
Electrical System Replacement	Replace electrical wiring, switches, and re-wire historic lighting fixtures. Route the wiring through existing channels in the masonry walls or behind baseboards as possible	$100,000
Interior Fire Protection	Add fire protection to the building	$300,000

Interpretive Recommendations

The research for this HSR revealed much information on many family members associated with Rombach Place. Interpretive displays for the house can take many forms, but it is recommended that the interpretation of the house be presented as the product of several generations of Rombach/Denver/Williams family members. If necessary, the focus of the interpretation should be on a few first-floor rooms to give insight into the house's occupants over time. Suggested Interpretive Recommendations are:

- Clinton County Historical Society staff has expressed interest in returning the front Parlor (Room.1- 3) to the First Period. Having an alternating display that would allow for decorative changes would enable the Society to highlight stories from both the First and Second Periods of the building's existence.
- Highlight spaces in the house that were used as servant spaces and create displays depicting day-to-day servant life in the house (Room 2-9 and 2-9).
- Restore the historic wallpaper and furnish Gen. Denver's Office to the 1880s using the identified historic wallpaper in Section 4.11.
- Restore the passage and southern parlor to their appearance in 1919 using the identified paint colors in Section 4. 11.
- Replace the front door with a four-panel door to match historic doors.

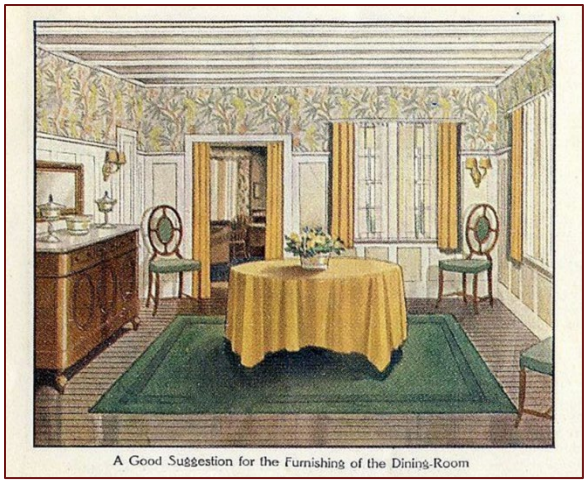


Figure 6-2. The room shown is similar to the 1919 Dining Room at Rombach Place, with correct furnishings and decorative elements. Ladies Home Journal, April 1912.

7.0 ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

7.0 ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

Figure 7-1 First Floor Floorplans

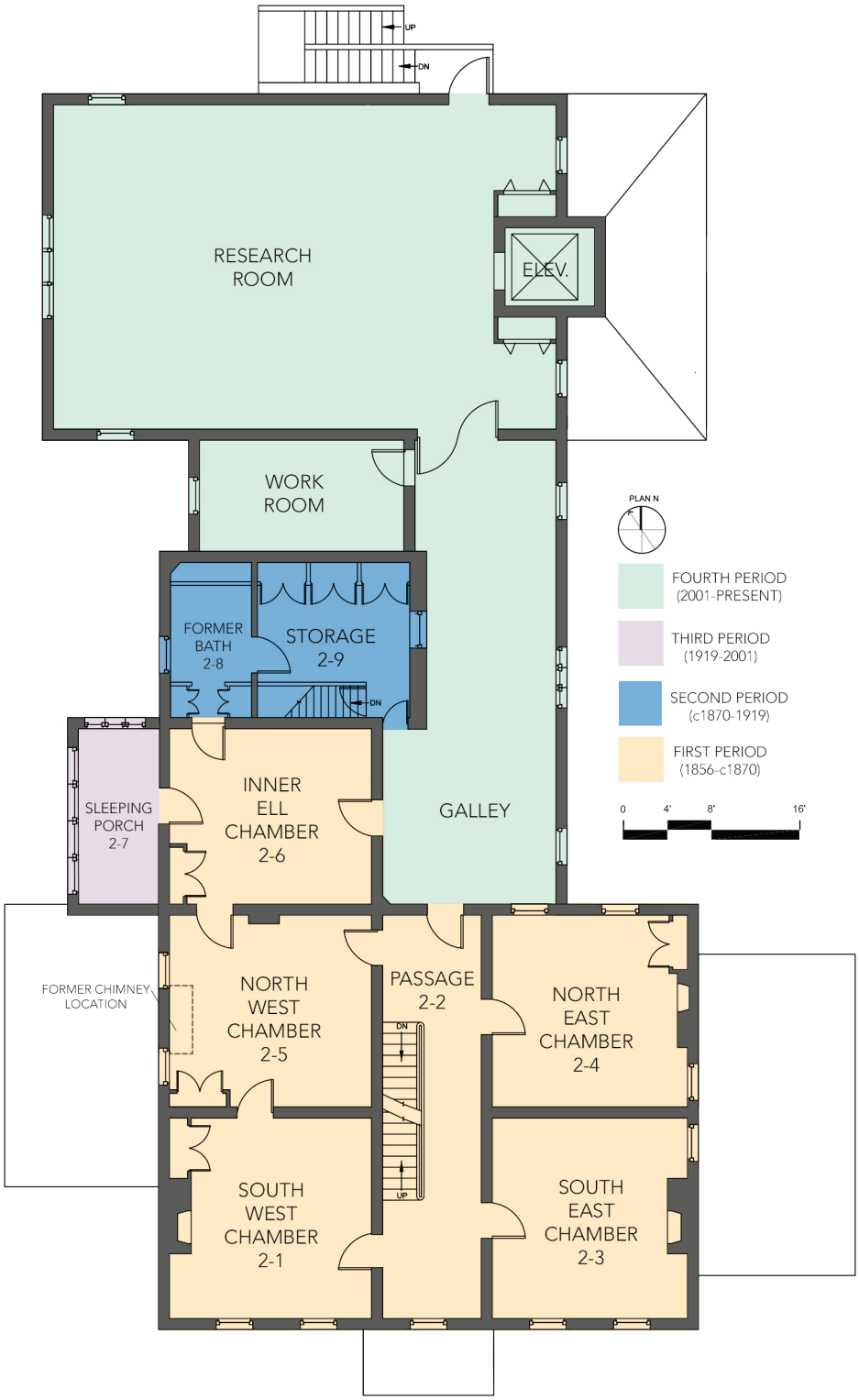


Figure 7-2 Second Floor Floorplans

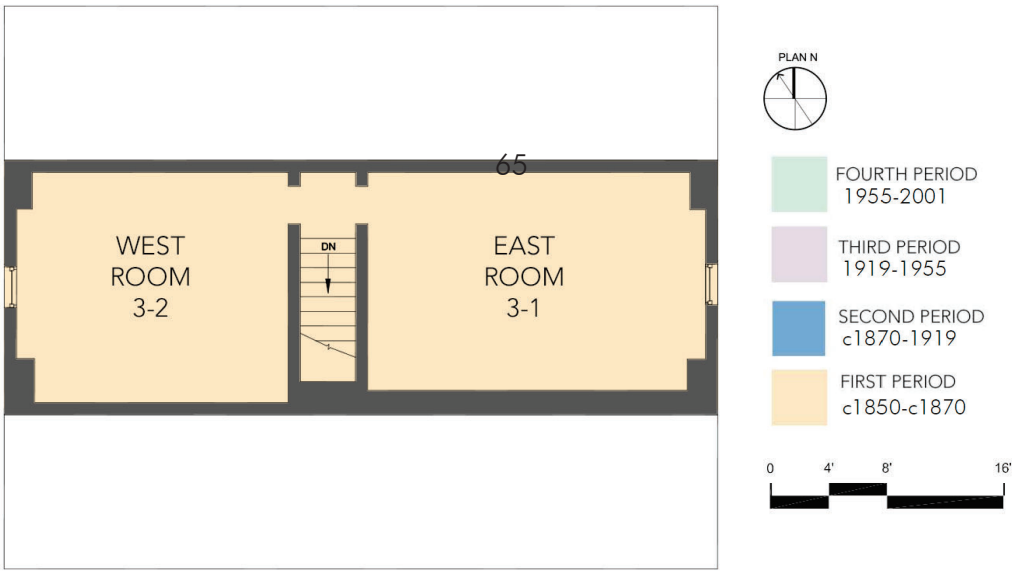


Figure 7-3 Third Floor Floorplans

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APPENDIX A: PHOTOS OF EXTANT MAINTENANCE AND BUILDING CONCERNS

Figure A-1. Example of Stucco Cracking and Delamination, northwest corner of main section of building, facing south, 2024.

Figure A-2. Example of stucco delamination, west facade, facing east, 2024.

Figure A-3. Example of stucco cracking, western enclosed patio, facing northeast, 2024.

Figure A-4. Example of stucco cracking around window frame, western facade, facing southeast, 2024.

Figure A-5. Example of stucco cracking, western fern facade facing west, 2024.

Figure A-6. Example of stucco cracking, western porch, facing east, 2024.

Figure A-7. Example of stucco and concrete cracking, western enclosed porch, facing east, 2024.

Figure A-9. Example of concrete cracking, front entry porch, facing west, 2024.

Figure A-10. Example of concrete and stucco cracking, front entry porch, facing northeast, 2024.

Figure A-11. Example of paint failure on original sandstone sill, western elevation, facing east, 2024.

Figure A-14. Example of wood rot, northwestern pilaster, facing north, 2024.

Figure A-15. Example of wood rot and paint failure, western elevation, facing northeast, 2024.

Figure A-16. Example of wood rot and paint failure, western elevation, facing east, 2024.

Figure A-17. Example of interior water ingress, northwest corner of dining room, 2024.

Figure A-18. Example of interior water ingress, northwest corner of dining room, 2024.

Figure A-19. Example of interior ingress, NW corner of dining room, 2024.

Figure A-20. Example of water damage, Room 19, 2024.

Figure A-21. Example of interior water damage, western room, third floor, 2024.

Figure A-22. Example of interior plaster cracking, southwest corner room, first floor, 2024.

Figure A-23. Example of baseboard/wall separation, southwest corner room, first floor, 2024.

Figure A-24. Example of wall substrate delamination, southwest room, first floor, 2024.

Figure A-25. Example of paint/plaster delamination and cracking, possible humidity issue, 2024.

APPENDIX B: SANBORN MAPS 1900-1949

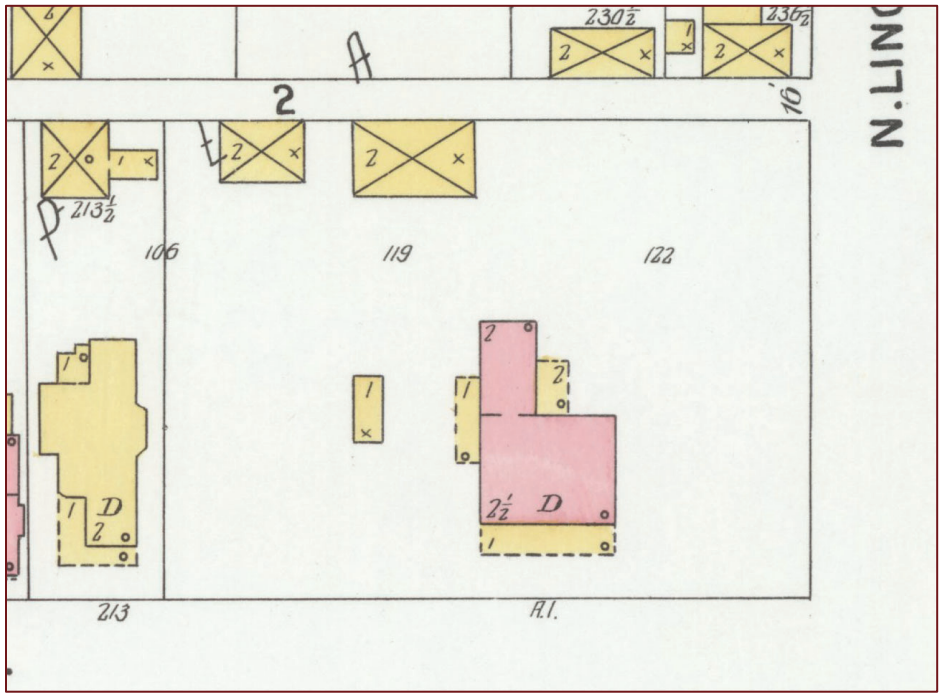


Figure 8-1 1900 Sanborn Map showing Rombach Place (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1900)

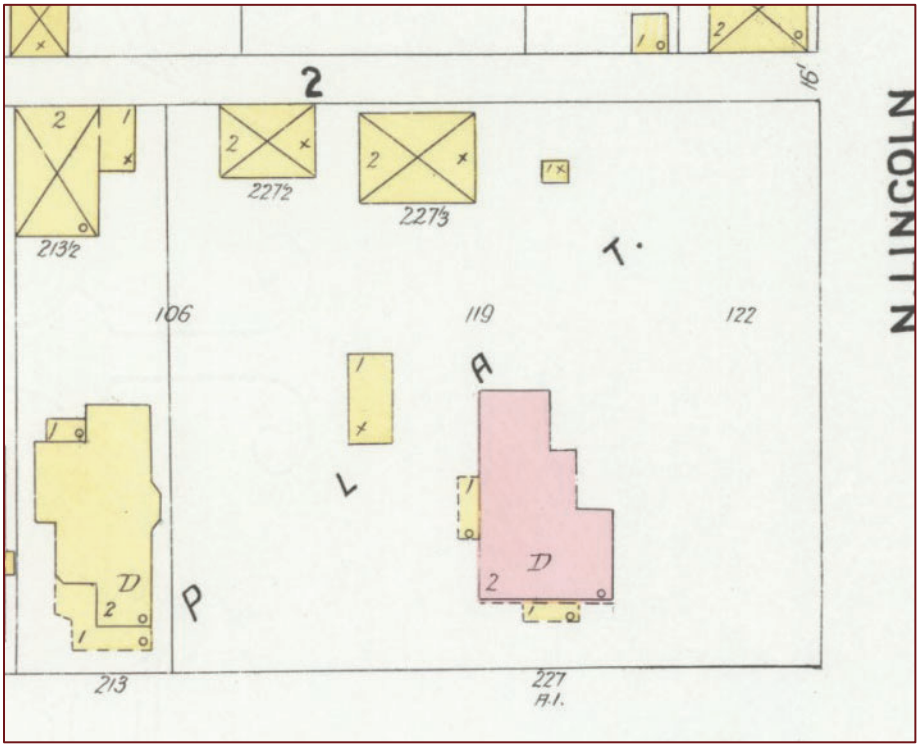


Figure 8-2 1907 Sanborn Map showing Rombach Place (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1907)

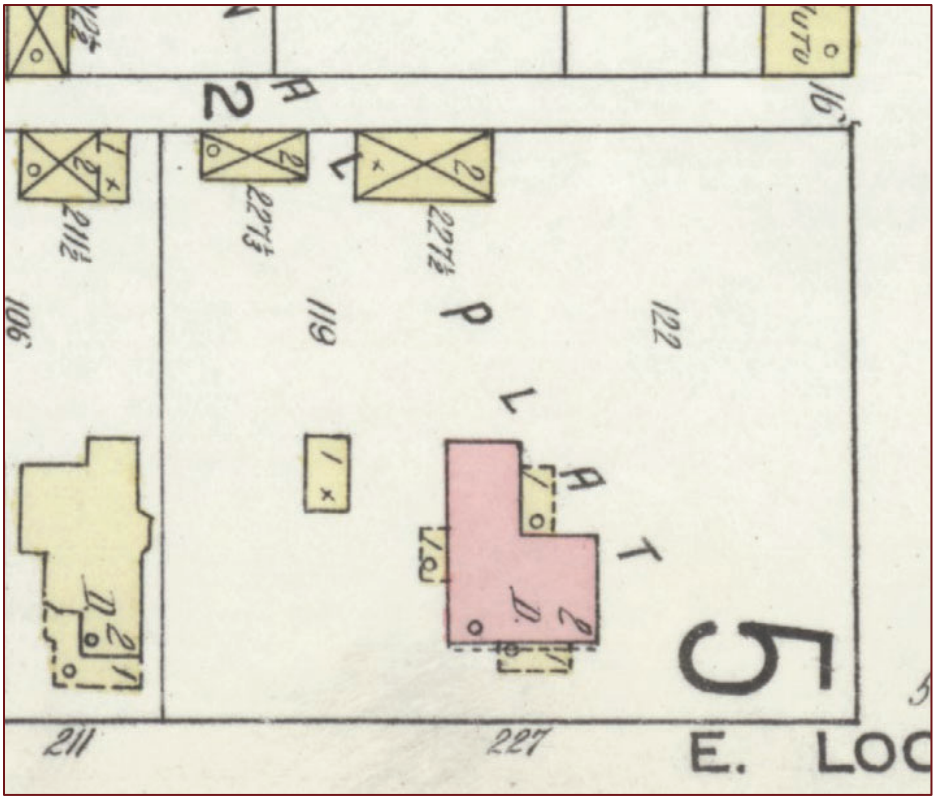


Figure 8-3 1914 Sanborn Map Showing Rombach Place (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1914)

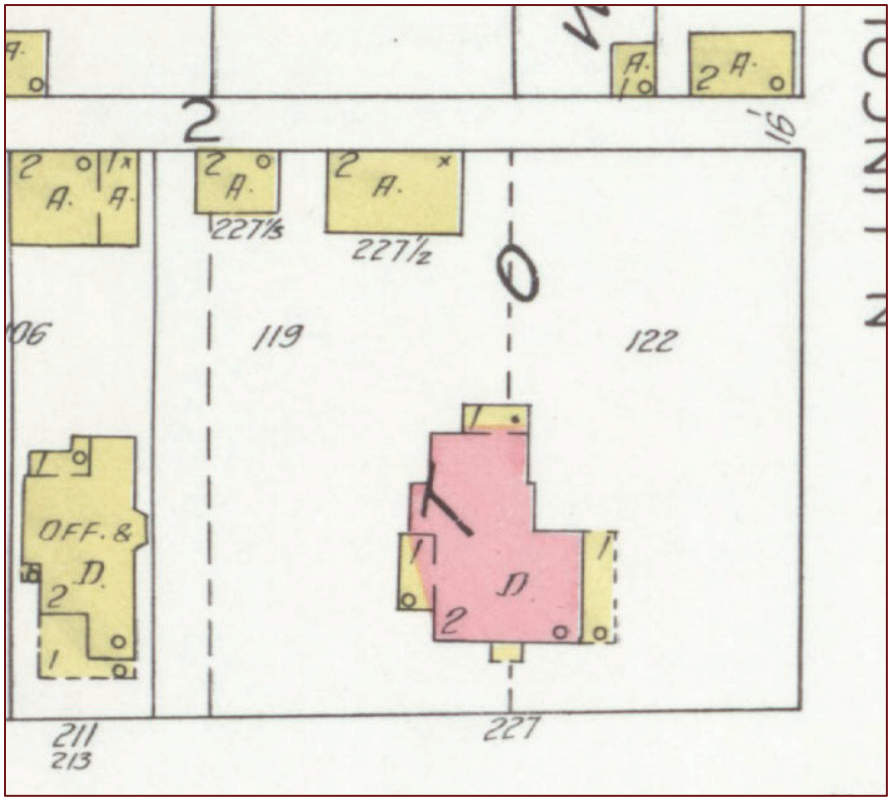


Figure 8-4 1933 Sanborn Map showing Rombach Place (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1933)

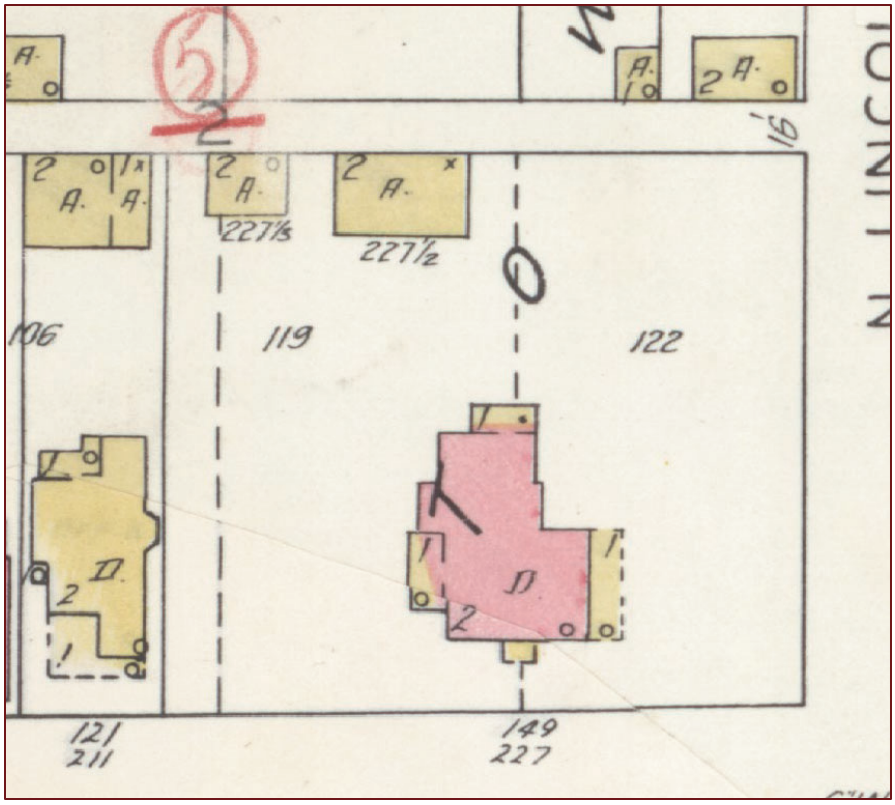


Figure 8-5 1949 Sanborn Map showing Rombach Place (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1949)

APPENDIX C: 1976 OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY FORM AND 1979 NRHP NOMINATION FORM

Form No 10-300 REV. (9-77)

OMB # 1024-0018

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED 6/26/79

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Rombach Place

AND/OR COMMON
The Clinton County Historical Society and Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
149 East Locust Street — __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Wilmington — __ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
7th

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Ohio	039	Clinton	027

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Clinton County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER
149 East Locust Street

CITY, TOWN
Wilmington — __ VICINITY OF

STATE
Ohio

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Clinton County Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER
Courthouse

CITY, TOWN
Wilmington

STATE
Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Ohio Historic Inventory

DATE
May, 1976 — __FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Ohio Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN
Columbus

STATE
Ohio 43211

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rombach Place is a two-story brick structure with T-layout. The front rectangular block is five bays wide and two deep. It has a gabled shingle roof and corbelled brick chimneys at each end. The cornice is a plain box gutter and the windows have plain stone lintels and sills and are 6/6. It was built in 1831 by Robert Wickersham and was used as a residence until 1955 when the Clinton County Historical Society acquired it for its museum and offices.

The house has had several porch additions. The small classical porch on the facade dates from 1921 and replaced a three bay Italianate structure. An open pillared porch was added on the gable and at this time also, and this was enclosed for offices for the historical society in the 1960s. A 19th century porch which extended across the western gable end was enclosed in 1921 and quoins were added to the corners. The shallow two-story rectangular projection to the rear of the western porch was apparently also added in 1921. It features a fan light transom over a double window flanked by two narrow windows on the first-story. The entire house was stuccoed in 1937.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	X POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1831 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rombach Place is significant for its associations with James W. Denver, an extraordinarily cosmopolitan individual who achieved national prominence as a soldier, lawyer, and statesman.

James W. Denver was born in Virginia in 1817, where he lived until 13 when he moved with his parents to a farm near Wilmington, Ohio. Duties on the family farm kept him from regularly attending school but was self-taught to the point of being able to teach school in his early 20's. He began the study of law in the 1840s, attended classes at the Cincinnati Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1844. Moving to Missouri, he established a practice in Platte City, and edited the local newspaper. When the Mexican War started he served with distinction as an officer with Winfield Scott in Mexico. Attracted to California by the gold rush in 1850, he soon became involved in state politics, being elected as a State Senator and then appointed Secretary of State in 1853. The next year he was elected to Congress and subsequently appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs by President Buchanan.

Throughout his journeys to Missouri and California, Denver maintained his ties to Wilmington; and in November 1856 married Louise Rombach, the daughter of a prominent businessman and banker. Denver purchased the house now known as Rombach Place as a home for his new bride. Although Denver subsequently continued his western activities he always maintained this Wilmington house as his home.

In 1857 President Buchanan appointed Denver governor of the Kansas Territories. After serving for two years in that office, he returned to his former position with the Indian Affairs office. He later resigned that position, returned to California, and was appointed a Brigadier General of the state volunteers at the outbreak of the Civil War.

Following the conclusion of the war, he returned to Wilmington and in 1870 served as an unsuccessful candidate for Congress. He became active in organizing a national society of the veterans of the Mexican War and served as its president for a number of years. During this period, although retired from public life, he frequently traveled between Wilmington and Washington, D. C. where he maintained a law practice. He died in 1902.

The house remained as the Rombach family residence until 1955 when it was acquired by the Clinton County Historical Society. Now used as a museum, Rombach Place remains as a representation of a unique 19th century statesman-lawyer.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Albert J. Brown. History of Clinton County, Ohio: Its People, Industries and Institutions. B. F. Bowe & Co. Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana, 1915.
The History of Clinton County, Ohio. Chicago: W. H. Beers & Co., 1882.
The National Cyclopedia of American Biography. New York: James T. White, 1898-1978.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME: Wilmington QUADRANGLE SCALE: 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	17	256840	4369300	B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Plats of the original town of Wilmington, Ohio being the east part of lot 106, west part of lot 119, all of lot 122 and the east part of lot 119.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: David A. Simmons

ORGANIZATION: Ohio Historic Preservation Office DATE:

STREET & NUMBER: I-71 and 17th Avenue TELEPHONE: 466-1500

CITY OR TOWN: Columbus STATE: Ohio 43211

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X STATE ____ LOCAL ____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE: [signature] 4/23/79

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

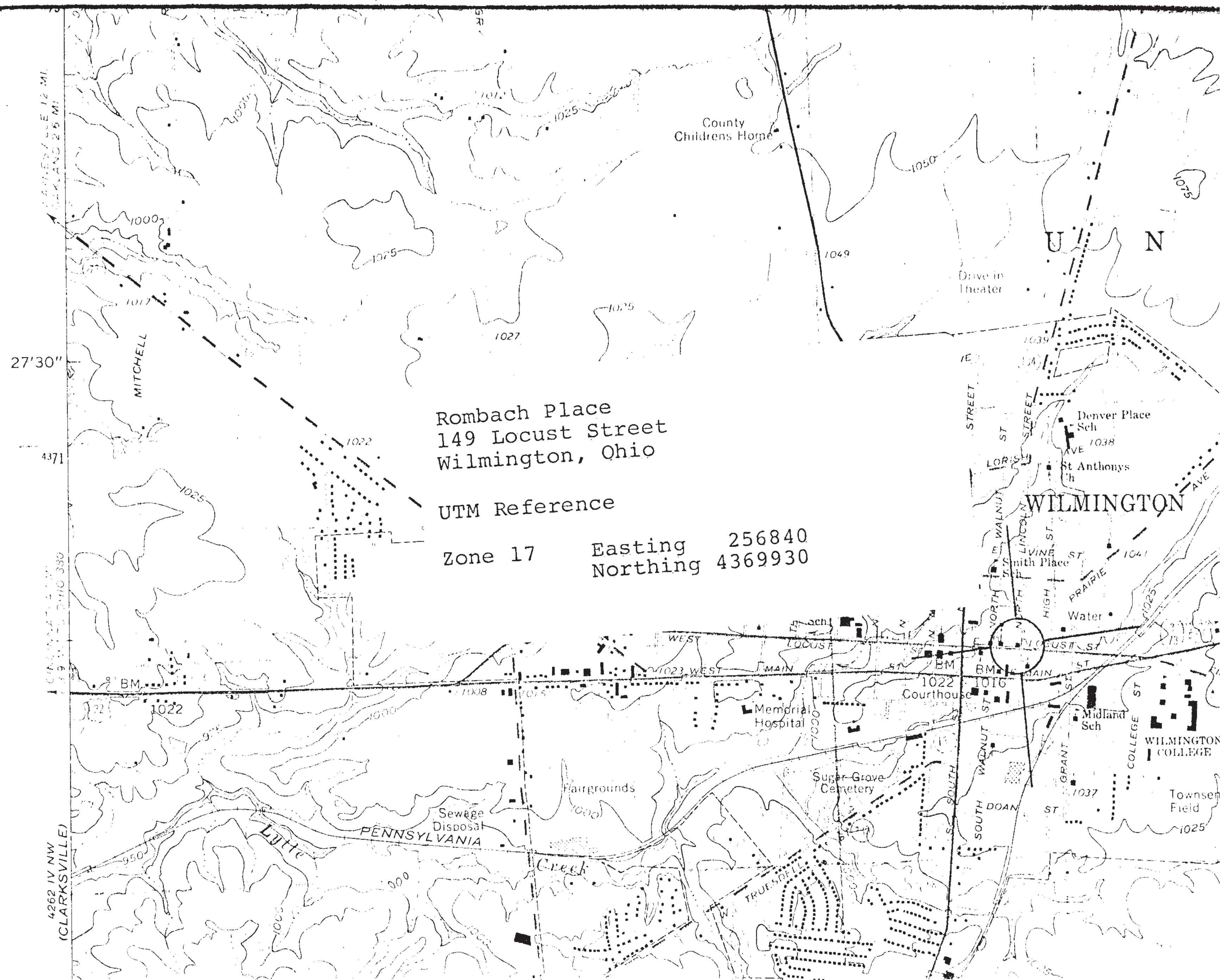
DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

GPO 921-803


Rombach Place
149 Locust Street
Wilmington, Ohio
UTM Reference
Zone 17
Easting 256840
Northing 4369930
WILMINGTON
County Childrens Home
Drive in Theater
Denver Place Sch
St Anthonys Ch
Smith Place Sch
Water
Courthouse
Memorial Hospital
Midland Sch
WILMINGTON COLLEGE
Townsend Field
Sugar Grove Cemetery
Fairgrounds
Sewage Disposal
PENNSYLVANIA
Lytle Creek
MITCHELL
27'30"
4262 IV NW (CLARKSVILLE)

Ohio Historic Preservation Office
Ohio Historical Center I-71 & 17th Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43211 (614) 466-1500

July 2, 1979

Donald D. Bernard, President
Clinton County Historical Society
149 East Locust Street
Wilmington, Ohio 45177

Dear Mr. Bernard:

I am pleased to inform you that Rombach Place, 149 East Locust Street, Wilmington, has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, United States Department of the Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Smith
State Historic Preservation Officer
Director, Ohio Historical Society

THS:cw

X. c: Mayor of Wilmington
OKI
Lois Rock, Regional Preservationist

THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Rombach Place

County: Clinton

__X__ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

_____ Multiple Property Nomination form

_____ Photographs

__X__ Photographs (copies)

_____ USGS maps

__X__ USGS maps (copies)

_____ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

__X__ Correspondence

__X__ Other OHH copy, nomcd

CES: 4/01

CODED

OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY

Historic Preservation Office
Ohio Historical Society
Columbus, Ohio 43211

1. No. CLI-1-5
2. County: Clinton
3. Location of Negatives: Museum
4. Present Name(s): The Clinton County Historical Society and Museum
5. Other Name(s): ROMBACH PLACE

6. Specific Location: 149 E. Locust St.,
7. City or Town: Wilmington — If Rural, Township & Vicinity: Union Twp.
8. Site Plan with North Arrow: 1N; North Lincoln; East Locust Street
9. Coordinates — UTM Zone 17; Lat. E. 256 700; Long. N. 4369940
10. Site ☐ Building ☒ Structure ☐ Object ☒
11. On National Register? Yes ☐ No ☒
12. Is It Hope Eligible? Yes ☒ No ☐
13. Part of Estab. Hist. Dist.? Yes ☐ No ☒
14. District Potent'l? Yes ☐ No ☐
15. Name of Established District

16. Thematic Category: C,L,M ~~MILITARY~~ ~~POLITICS/REFORM/WELFARE~~
17. Date(s) or Period: 1831
18. Style or Design: Federal ~~Style~~
19. Architect or Engineer
20. Contractor or Builder: Robert Wickersham
21. Original Use, if apparent: Residence
22. Present Use: Clinton Co. Hist. Soc. Meeting Pl. & Museum
23. Ownership: Same as above — Public ☒ Private ☐
24. Owner's Name & Address, if known: Same as above
25. Open to Public? Yes ☒ No ☐
26. Local Contact Person or Organization: Mrs. Don Couden, Curator
27. Other Surveys in Which Included: NATIONAL REGISTER

28. No. of Stories: 3
29. Basement? Yes ☒ No ☐
30. Foundation Material: Stone
31. Wall Construction: Brick Stucco Overlay
32. Roof Type & Material: Metal & Asphalt Tyle
33. No. of Bays — Front 5 Side 2
34. Wall Treatment
35. Plan Shape: rectangular
36. Changes (Explain in #42) — Addition ☒ Altered ☐ Moved ☐
37. Condition — Interior: Excellent; Exterior: Excellent
38. Preservation Underway? Already finished — Yes ☒ No ☐
39. Endangered? By What? — Yes ☐ No ☒
40. Visible from Public Road? Yes ☒ No ☐
41. Distance from and Frontage on Road: 40'; 75'

42. Further Description of Important Features: Large center hall with stairway rising to 3rd flr. Rail mahogany, risers & posts painted white. Double drawing room on right, library, display rooms, diningtoom & kitchen on left. Solarium on left & open porch on right have been enclosed for display room on left, & office & aircond. storage room for documents on right. Upstairs, 2nd flr. center hall, two display rooms on right, three rooms furnished as bedrooms, an enclosed porch shelved to display toys, beside children's room. 3 rooms to be used for display (OVER)

43. History and Significance: Built in 1831 by Robert Wichersham, builder. Used as residence until 1955. Bought for home of J. W. Denver and bride, Miss Louise Rombach. which family lived in it until 1955. J. W. Denver fought in the Mexican War, practiced law during the 1850's but rejoined the army during the War Between the States, and became a brigadier General. Later was Commissioner for Indian Affairs and also Governor General of the Kansas Territory. Denver, Colorado named for Gen'l Denver.

44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings: Located in center front of an acre of grounds (¼ block) The only outbuilding isa large barn with a cupola, located on alley. Barn has been somewhat improved on inside, and restored on outside. Hope to make alterations for use as display space soon.

45. Sources of Information: Part from family. Gen. Denver's activities are history. There is also a book commissioned by son, M. R. Denver, called Denver The Man, which is an extensive description of this gifted man and his activities.

46. Prepared by: Brook Florence Hague
47. Organization: SCOPS
48. Date: 5/5/76
49. Revision Date(s)

1. No. CLI-1-5
2. County: Clinton
4. Present Name(s): The Clinton County Historical Society & Museum
5. Other Name(s): Rombach Place

42. Exterior: Open frame porch in center of facade with two pillars supporting a full entablature and pediment level roof. Plain stone lintels and sills. Windows rectangular 6/6. One story addition to right compatable with main block. Windows have shutters. Boxed cornice.