

PRELIM DETERM. A 3-0
6/3/87

Revised 12/17/86

ROCK ISLAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION

NOMINATION FOR
LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Case # 87-4 Date 5/27/87 Time 11:50 A.M.

Common Street Address of Property: 536-23rd ST

Name and Address of Property Owner: WILLIAM K. MITCHELL
2940-5th Ave. RI.

Please attach a simple statement setting forth the reasons for requesting designation. Please refer to the criteria listed on the reverse side. (These are excerpted from the Rock Island Preservation Ordinance.)

Name(s) and Address(es) of Applicant(s):

Eve White _____
Signature Name

_____ Address Telephone

1. Legal description of property (available from abstract or County Recorder of Deeds office).

Map indicating location of property proposed for designation (assistance available from Planning Division).

3. Recent photograph (copies of old photographs or drawings may also be included).

4. Indicate whether or not the owner is aware of the proposed designation.

The owner is not yet aware of the nomination.

I hereby nominate the property at 536- 23rd Street, commonly known as the Beardsley House for landmark designation.

Although the original owner may well be considered significant, (since he served as attorney general in Illinois and postmaster in Rock Island) the house itself is significant.

There are few Civil War Era frame houses in this area still standing. The Beardsley House unchanged physical presence reminds us of the age of our town. Its unique construction of indigenous materials harkens back to a day of pioneering individualists who built one of a kind homes. Viewing such a building reminds us of where we came from and questions where we are going today.

Unfortunately, these large works of art cannot be put in museums for future generations to see. They must be first preserved by the owners and secondly protected by ordinance to insure their continued existence.

This building can be brought back to a beautiful home with the same care and commitment previous owners have shown. *

Sumbitted May 1987
Evie White

Evie White

*Enclosed, please find the legal description, description of the property, and newspaper article regarding efforts to preserve the building.



EXTENSIVE REMODELING — The living room of the Beardsley home has large flowered wallpaper, similar to that used in the era when the main section of the house was built after the Civil War. The wooden floors have been sanded and sealed in the living room, kitchen and dining room. (Argus Photo)

Argus Photos
BY FRED CHRISTENSEN

Civil War house being restored

By SUZANNE KRIDNER
(Argus staff writer)

A Rock Island home that once was a boarding house and could have been built around 1840 is being restored by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Kohlhammer.

No proof of the construction date can be found but Mrs. Kohlhammer believes the back part of the Italian Renaissance Revival style house was built around 1840 since the original stone foundation would indicate construction in that era.

The main house, built after the Civil War, has a block foundation.

THE KOHLHAMMERS purchased the home in 1970 but did most of the work the last two years, aided by their son-in-law, Fred Hann. At first they just kept the house from leaking and closed it up until renovation could begin.

The house, at 538 23rd St., had fake brick siding, which was removed and the frame home painted in a real color, silver gray.

The large front part of the house is rented as one apartment, with two smaller apartments rented in the rear.

The current tenant had seen the house before work began and described the floors as a "mess." She recently moved in with her four children ranging from 6 to 13 years old and now

Civil War house being restored

has plenty of room with the four bedrooms and three baths in the house.

THE WOOD FLOORS HAVE been sanded and sealed and new wallpaper added, along with carpeting on the stairway, the hallways and the bedrooms. The master bedroom has a fireplace and a built-in wardrobe.

Mrs. Kohlhammer said originally there was no plumbing in the front part of the house, with a sewer line converted into a kitchen, with modern plumbing, gas, and electric.

The fireplaces are the original ones. The living room fireplace is white marble with ornate center stone and relief carving. The stairway in one apartment was originally in the Harper House, once Rock Island's most elegant hotel.

A decorative white and brown paint job was done on the main stairway with turned balusters and heavy newel post.

Much of the information on the house was gathered by an Augustana student, Marcia Hoare, as an independent study in 1975.

MRS. KOHLHAMMER has taken great care in choosing wallpaper and other fixtures for the rooms. She said she wants to preserve the original appearance of the house as far as possible.

Two original gas fixtures are located beside the front windows in the bedroom.

PRIVATE DEVELOPER — The local developer used in the James Beardsley home in Rock Island was one of the oldest architects in the city. The house was built in 1874. It is reportedly owned in 1970 by James Beardsley's great-grandson, Alvin Hull.

Beardsley was a prominent architect in the house and probably created when the house was built, since they were the main source of information then.

The main section of the house was built in the house stands on a hillside in the city of Rock Island, the oldest suburb, the City of Rock Island, known as the town of Stephenson.

James Marsh Beardsley apparently was the original owner of the house. The Civil War period the Beardsley subdivision, as now restricted, sprouted up on Earlwood. Alvin Hull purchased the house and some property for \$10,000 in 1874.

Other owners number about eight. Beardsley came to Rock Island in 1855, working in the county clerk's office, and later becoming a lawyer.

HE WAS INVOLVED in many of the incidents surrounding the Civil War in the Beardsley home. He was a member of the county clerk in 1862 after returning home from the war, and he also served as attorney general in 1864 and 1865 before the Supreme Court of the state and the United States. He served as mayor of Rock Island between 1869 and 1871.

Pontiac prison riot

HOAX?

10/10/78

536 - 23RD STREET
BEARDSLEY HOUSE - CA 1875

MAJOR JAMES BEARDSLEY IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BUILT THIS HOUSE. HE MAY HAVE LIVED HERE FOR A FEW YEARS IN THE 1870'S. THE ALVIN HULL FAMILY LIVED HERE FROM 1874 TO 1891. AFTER THE TURN OF THE CENTURY IT WAS OWNED BY THE BASILIUS WINTER FAMILY BEFORE IT WAS RENOVATED BY MRS. HELEN KOHLHAMMER A FEW YEARS AGO, IT HAD BEEN USED AS A ROOMING HOUSE.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE: THE ONE STORY REAR PORTION WITH THE GABLED ROOF IS BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST PART OF THE HOUSE, PERHAPS DATING TO THE 1850'S. THE FRONT MANSARD ROOFED PORTION, WHICH IS BELIEVED TO DATE FROM THE 1870'S, HAS BEEN PARTIALLY RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL APPEARANCE. FANCY TRIM ATOP AND APPLIED TO THE WINDOW FRAMES IS MISSING AND PENDANTS ORIGINALLY HUNG FROM THE UNDER-ROOF BRACKETS. THE HOME HAD BEEN COVERED IN IMITATION BRICK SIDING, BUT THIS HAS BEEN REMOVED TO THE ORIGINAL CLAPBOARD. THE FRONT PORCH IS NOT ORIGINAL, BUT DATES TO THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. THE ORIGINAL FRONT PORCH WAS VERY TINY - SIMILAR PERHAPS, TO THE SMALLER ENTRIES ON THE HOUSES FURTHER NORTH (516 AND 524).

STYLISTIC DETAILS: THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW MANSARD-ROOFED HOUSES IN THE CITY OF ROCK ISLAND. THERE ARE TWO DORMERS AT THE REAR OF THE MAIN MANSARD AND ONE WHICH PIERCES THE EAVE, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE SMALLER MANSARD. BRACKETS IN PAIRS

DECORATE THE ROOF EDGE. HOLES AT THEIR OUTSIDE EDGE SHOW WHERE PENDANTS WERE ONCE INSERTED. THE SIDE WINDOW FRAMES HAVE A WIDE PORTION AT TOP AND BOTTOM AND THE WINDOWS HAVE A 2 OVER 2 PANE CONFIGURATION.

THE FRONT ENTRY HAS A ROUND-TOPPED TRANSOM, WHICH PROBABLY HAD SMALLER GLASS PANES IN A DESIGN ORIGINALLY, AND DOUBLE DOORS WITH ROUND-TOPPED WINDOWS AND OCTAGONAL LOWER PANELS. THE FRONT PORCH WITH ITS TUSCAN COLUMNS AND TURNED SPINDLES, DATES FROM THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. THE FLOOR IS OF UNUSUALLY THICK BOARDS. THE FRONT AND SIDE SIDEWALKS ARE OF OLD BRICK AND THE FOUNDATION IS OF CUT STONE. THE PRESENT BOARD AND BATTEN SIDING OF THE REAR PORTION OF THE HOUSE IS NEWER, BUT MAY BE HISTORICALLY ACCURATE. THE GABLED ROOF EXTENDS OVER THE OPEN VERANDAH WHICH HAS NEWER TUSCAN STYLE COLUMNS. THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT SIZED GABLED DORMERS. THE FOUNDATION HERE IS OF IRREGULARLY SIZED STONES.

OTHER ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS:

BRACKETED SUN ROOM ON SOUTH SIDE OF 1 1/2 STORY MANSARD PART OF HOUSE PROBABLY NOT ORIGINAL, BUT IS VERY OLD.

TWO ORIGINAL WIDE-TOPPED CHIMNEYS.

TWO SMALLER WINDOWS ON NORTH SIDE PROBABLY RECENT ADDITIONS. CLAPBOARD NARROW, BUT WIDER THAN THAT USED AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

ROCK ISLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION