

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

FINAC

STATE: INDIANA
COUNTY: OWEN
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Moffett - Ralston House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bixler Road (1 1/2 miles north east of Patricksburg)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Patricksburg

STATE: Indiana CODE: 18 COUNTY: Owen CODE: 119

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Fletcher S. and Allyn L. McCracken

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bixler Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Patricksburg

STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Owen County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:  
City Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Spencer

STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: INDIANA  
COUNTY: OWEN  
ENTRY NUMBER: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This house was originally a one story, gable roofed, clapboard, five room structure built in 1864 with stone and yellow poplar taken from the farm. It had little decoration, six over six windows and a simple front porch. Following his first wife's death in 1870 Mr. Moffett remarried and added a second story and a summer kitchen to the rear. This second story addition was unique in that it was entered from a small outside stairway. Its floor plan of four rooms with large central hall and local tradition indicate that it was used as a dormitory of sorts for the hired hands on the large farm.

The addition of a second story changed the appearance of the house dramatically although when photographs are compared, the window and door locations indicate that it is the same structure. The second floor had a hip roof, carved and paired brackets placed above the windows and an ornate porch with a balustrade were added. The old six over six windows were placed at the rear of the house and two over two windows were put in the front. Shutters and lintles were added to all windows. The result was a change from a very simple vernacular structure with a slight Greek Revival feeling to a modest Italian Villa. A metal roof was placed over the split oak shingles in the 1930's. There is also a barn from the same period as the house nearby.

The interior is finished on the first floor with back to back cast iron fireplaces, possibly imported, oak wainscotting and woodwork in the two main front rooms. The rest of the house has yellow poplar woodwork that has been hand grained to resemble oak.

In the last two years the house has undergone considerable renovation. After having stood vacant for a number of years it has surface deterioration but was structurally sound. The Fletcher McCrackens installed insulation, wiring a new furnace, bathrooms, and a modern kitchen. They also added an inside stairway to make the second floor accessible. Care was taken to see that the integrity of the structure was preserved. The Oak wainscotting was cleaned of many coats of paint, the first layer of wallpaper was duplicated as closely as possible and the hand grained wood was cleaned and repaired. The front porch was rebuilt to duplicate the one added in 1870 and the original poplar siding was cleaned and painted. The house is now a comfortable, liveable structure with an appearance that is very similar to that of the 1870's.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1864 - 1872**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Moffett-Ralston House is significant as an example of 19th century rural Indiana architecture and for its association with Samuel Moffett Ralston. Silas Moffett was a prosperous farmer in Owen County, Indiana owning more than 1000 acres on which he raised sheep, cattle, and fine saddle and draft horses. He was also interested in politics, a hard working perfectionist, and demanded the same from those associated with him. The Moffett-Ralston House is an expression of his changing ideas and needs for a home. His first simple house built in 1864 to serve the modest needs of a new farmer was remodeled into a modest Italian Villa in 1870 to reflect his new marriage, the increased size of his farm, and his status in the community.

It was at this house that Samuel M. Ralston, Governor of and Senator from Indiana spent some of his formative years. Born in 1857, Ralston moved to his uncles farm after the depression of 1873 along with his brothers. Moffett sent them to the Patricksburg Normal School for an education while they worked on the farm. Ralston graduated from the Danville Normal School in 1884 and entered the bar in 1886. It was not until then that he moved away from Owen County.

It was the opportunity for education presented by this uncle and perhaps his rigorous discipline that geared Ralston to become an attorney, Governor, Senator and enabled him to be introduced as a possible candidate for president in the 1924 Democratic convention. The major reform legislation of Ralston's term as Governor include an inheritance tax law, a vocational training law, a workmen's compensation act, and a primary election law. He also established the public service commission, began Indiana's state parks system and initiated a renewed interest in Indiana history by establishing a historical commission in 1915 in view of the coming centennial for the state.

Samuel Moffett Ralston is one of Indiana's important governors and the house in which he spent his boyhood years is an architectural and social statement about a man who guided part of Ralston's life.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Counties of Clay and Owen, Indiana - Blanchard, Charles Ed.; FA Battey, Chicago, 1884 Pages 603, 854

The Clay City Democrat, Thursday Dec. 27, 1962.

The Spencer Evening World, Spencer Ind. Tuesday Feb. 5, 1963.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	39°	19'	25.5"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	89°	55'	25.5"
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"			
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:

Mrs. Fletcher S. McCracken

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET AND NUMBER:

Bixler Road

CITY OR TOWN:

Patrickburg

STATE

Indiana

CODE

18

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

SEE INSTRUCTIONS