

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FINAL-COMLETE

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Welborn-Ross House
other names/site number _____ 051-499-22020

2. Location

street & number 542 South Hart Street N/A not for publication
city or town Princeton N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Gibson code 051 zip code 47670

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Peter R. Roberts

1-30-96

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Welborn-Ross House
Name of Property

Gibson IN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof ASPHALT

other METAL: aluminum

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested approved 10771 IN
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870-1898

Significant Dates

1870

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Welborn, William Pinckney

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

NR files

Welborn-Ross House
Name of Property

Gibson IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

16	449380	4244620
Zone	Easting	Northing

3

Zone	Easting	Northing

2

--	--	--

4

--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Camille B. Fife, Thomas W. Salmon II

organization The Westerly Group, Inc. date 05/22/95

street & number R.R. 1, Box 141 telephone 812-696-2415

city or town Farmersburg state IN zip code 47850

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. and Mrs. David Ross

street & number 207 Olive Drive telephone 812-386-7807

city or town Princeton state IN zip code 47670

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Welborn-Ross House
Gibson County, Indiana

Narrative Description

Summary

The Welborn-Ross house is a two and a half story brick Italianate residence. It has an asymmetrical, modified cross-plan with a rear wing which may predate the balance of the structure. The building contains an intersecting gable roof and an ornate, mitered porch which is highly decorated.

The walls are of brick, common bond, with a limestone water table. The major windows have limestone heads and sills. A bay window on the south elevation also contains ornate scrollwork brackets and trim. The ground floor interior demonstrates the Victorian style in its mahogany woodwork and fireplaces.

The house is well situated, set back on a large lot in a tree-lined residential district (with some commercial intrusion) which is located south of Princeton's courthouse square. It fronts west, on Hart Street, with a secondary pedestrian entrance on Pinckney Street. Several specimen trees grace the large lawns, including an enormous example on the southeast sector whose diameter is greater than five feet.

Although oversided at the eaves, and with some inappropriate side and rear porch additions, the structure retains its original character, especially in its plan, its ground floor parlor, its massing and its ornate front porch.

Description

The Welborn-Ross house was constructed between 1875 and 1881 on an oversize lot which was originally comprised of three city lots in the community of Princeton, Indiana - lots number 5, 6 and 11 of the Southwark Addition, located between Hart and Main streets, with Pinckney as the southern boundary. Today, the property includes all of lot 11 and a portion of the western section of lot 6, the other lots having been sold off over time. The property fronts on Hart street on the west and Pinckney on the south. The balance of lot 6, which fronts on Main street, is presently occupied by a combination food and gasoline emporium which does not seem inappropriate in this neighborhood of primarily residential structures mixed with commercial.

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To the north of the property, facing Hart street, are two nicely constructed bungalow homes, and a similar structure is located to the south, on Hart and Pinckney. The other homes in the immediate vicinity are a mix of nineteenth and early twentieth century frame and brick structures, well-maintained, with neat lawns and landscaping. The topography of the site is reasonably level, although this portion of the town enjoys a slight elevation. Approximately five blocks north of the property is the town square, also on a level rise, between, the ground dips slightly. About two blocks west of the house, is the former Evansville and Terre Haute Railroad whose frequent freight trains demonstrate its continuing level of activity.

The present site occupies just slightly more than one quarter of the square block between Hart and Main, Pinckney and Monroe streets (originally lots 5, 6, 11 and 12). It is well maintained, with attractive street trees along the sidewalk, mature trees within the lawn areas and well-placed foundation shrubs. The landscape is in keeping with the other older houses in the neighborhood. Street curbs and sidewalks contain grass verges. The Hart street walk is concrete, while the Pinckney street sidewalk is of brick pavers set in a herringbone pattern. The lawns are spacious, interrupted by concrete walks from each major sidewalk. They nicely contain the building. Silver or Sugar Maples skirt each curb, creating a pleasing, regular rhythm of street trees. On-site trees include a Beech, Fir, several Ash and Maples as well as a Horse Chestnut. Many of the on-site and street trees are specimens.

The northern part of the site (or back yard) contains a concrete paved auto court with a metal and wood four bay carport and a landscape storage building. The auto court is accessed via a lane, which is an approximate 10' easement through the lots to the north.

The Welborn-Ross house is built on a slightly asymmetrical plan, typical of the Italianate style. Here, a basic gable-front and wing form has had a shallower wing added on the south elevation. This distinctive plan is somewhat obscured by the porch with glass-block infill also on the south side, which was added during the latter part of this century. On the east elevation, a nearly square, two story addition is present. This brick wing is of more compact dimensions, both in plan and elevation, than the main part of the house and may date from an earlier era (see below).

The interior spaces of the house differ somewhat from their original configurations, a result of subdivision into apartments sometime after 1955. The main entry, located within the porch facing

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Hart Street, leads into a hall which originally contained the main staircase. Evidence for this staircase, which was located at the right side of the hall, can be seen in a slightly curved base molding about halfway down its length. In addition, a duplicate house, built on exactly the same plan (reversed), has been located in rural Gibson County, near Owensville. This house shares its plan and similar decorative detailing with the Welborn-Ross home, except that it is of frame construction and does not contain the eastern wing described above. All of the interior and exterior woodwork is intact in the rural home and the plan of the building has not changed since its construction in 1879.

Flanking the central hall on the south side of the Welborn-Ross house is a parlor, the smaller of two, which contains a bay window and a fireplace, all with ornate woodwork. The northern parlor is much larger and retains much of its decorative woodwork and detailing, especially on the doors and windows. East of the small parlor is a large room which opens into the hall as well as to the south porch and which also contains a fireplace. A closet and bathroom are contained on this floor, with entrances in the east end of the hall. Floor coverings on this level are of hardwood, often covered with carpet. A stairway within the south porch leads to two additional apartments upstairs, one on the east and the other on the west side of the house. Access to an additional apartment is gained by an outside door on the south facade of the east wing and to the second floor from a complicated rear addition on the north side of the building.

The main, projecting wing of the building, facing Hart street, contains three bays. The primary entry, within the porch is at left and two, segmental arched, full length two-over-two light windows complete the composition. Within the confines of the porch, a deck-to-ceiling glass-walled enclosure has been added, and a one-story brick extension constructed to house a bathroom for the apartment conversion.

The entire house is constructed of brick, laid in common bond, with a limestone course as a water table around the main block. The east wing is also brick, of common bond, but without the limestone coursing. The medium-high gable roof is intersecting and contains wide eaves, with prominent returns at the gable-ends. The roof line is decorated with a deep frieze and decorative cornice, much of which is still present although covered with siding at this time. The decorative cornice treatment is evident from the "shadow" of brackets in the gable ends which match those on the porch. The asphalt roof contains three, corbelled brick chimneys on the main house and a smaller chimney on the rear addition, which has a truncated, low-pitched hipped roof.

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Welborn-Ross House
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As previously mentioned, the front porch, with its decorative scrollwork, is an outstanding feature of the house. It is mitered on the north side, and has a concrete floor placed over a tongue and groove decking, with square columns grouped in pairs, singly, or in a cluster of three. The shafts of these columns have chamfered edges. The bases are decorated with molded rectangles set into the faces, with a square cap and sub base. They are headed by similar capitals with turned wood bulls eyes on each capital face, square molded upper capitals which support a decorative lintel composed of built up vertical members with low pyramid applicades as bases for scrolled brackets which are trimmed at the upper edge by crescent-shaped work. These brackets support a panelled soffit. Pairs of columns are separated by a fretwork element with a combined circle and linear motif. The openings between sets of columns have a panelled fascia divided into segments by a miniature of the major brackets. An arch also spans this opening, infilled at each corner with curvilinear fretwork and punctuated at the center with two turned and band-sawn pendants.

The fenestration of the building includes evenly spaced, segmental-arched windows on the first and second floors of the main structure. The windows are double hung, two-over-two lights, also arched. Plywood infill has been applied on the outside of the frame to accommodate square storm windows, but the original wood frames are intact. Window heads on the first and second floors are of dressed limestone, with no projection, except within the porch area where two rows of radiating voussoirs are used. A single row of voussoirs suffices for the heads of the attic windows. All window sills are of limestone, flat, with a slight projection, except those in the attic, which are of wood. The bay window on the south side of the house was obviously an afterthought, since a corner of a radiating voussoir is visible at the upper left roof/wall juncture. However, this must have been erected reasonably close to the original construction date, since the ornate woodwork is quite well matched. In addition, this feature is also present on the "twin" house in rural Gibson County. In the Welborn-Ross house the windows in the east wing differ from those in the main building; those on the second story have flat limestone heads and those on the first floor contain a single row of radiating voussoirs.

A non-contributing metal lolly column and concrete rear porch with an approximately 2' wide block projection were added to the house probably at the time of its conversion to apartments. Located at the north side of the house, and protected by the projecting north wing, these elements do not detract from the character of the front or primary elevation.

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The doors of the house have been somewhat impacted. However, a double leaf panelled door with upper lights, which is presently located at the entrance to the south porch probably belongs to the main entry and could be restored to this position.

The only significant interior features of the house are concentrated on the first floor and include the woodwork in the bay window of the small (or ladies) parlor on the south side of the house. All interior woodwork in this room is intact and includes compound moldings, panelled frames and (in the bay) a simplified rinceau-type ornamentation in the form of a single strand foliate applique. Each ceiling panel in the bay contains a single oak leaf applique and the segments are unified by a center, half-octagon panel. All woodwork is a rich mahogany color. High, compound baseboard moldings match the woodwork on doors and windows and a painted chair rail at the height of the fireplace mantle delineates a wallpaper wainscot. The fireplace in this room may be of a similar era as the other woodwork and contains carved, floral decoration, mottled tile surrounds, a cast iron fireback and molded portrait tiles. The hearth consists of a continuation of the upper tiles, bordered by plain tiles laid in a geometric pattern.

Window transoms are present in both interior and exterior doors on the ground floor and one additional fireplace is located in the room north of the parlor, although its surround has been changed.

Construction and/or alterations which have occurred to the property can be categorized in three major phases: The first, or original phase of construction, which, from deed research probably occurred between the summer of 1852 and 1853, when a "fine dwelling house" (according to an auction notice of 1857)¹ was erected on lots 6 and 11 in the Southwark addition. Although it cannot be definitively determined, it is possible that the east wing of the present house remains from that era. The second, and significant building phase occurred after 1870, when the property came into the Welborn family, when Dr. William P. Welborn and his wife Mary constructed the present two and one-half story brick home sometime between 1775 and 1881. Following this construction, probably at the end of the century (according to plans in Sanborn maps of 1895, 1900 and 1907) remodelling of the porch (to provide the miter) and addition of the bay occurred. The third phase of development occurred following the death of Dr. Welborn's son George J. Welborn in 1955, when the house was sold out of the family and converted to the "Pinckney Apartments". This major overhaul included the removal of the central interior stair, the probable reworking of the back (interior) stair to

¹ *Princeton Clarion*, November 14, 1857.

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serve the two upper apartments, additions of various bathrooms, enclosure of the south porch, and the construction of the rear concrete block addition and stair.

According to Sanborn Insurance maps, a two story porch was in place on the north facade of the main structure until at least 1928. This may also have been removed during the mid-twentieth century remodelling. The auto court, car port and landscape storage building appear to have been added as a convenience for the tenants. The aluminum siding over the eave areas could date from this period, but was probably installed more recently. Finally, the brick was cleaned with high pressure abrasives and tuck pointed with modern mortar, most likely sometime during the last two decades.

While some of the changes which have occurred to the house have been extreme, none have succeeded in destroying its essential historic character, and the present owner's proposed restoration activities will undoubtedly restore it to much of its former glory.

A Note Regarding the Resources on the Property: The spacious lot upon which the house is located is surrounded on one side by a brick walk which contributes to the ambiance and setting of the house, however this is not physically in the lot, thus it is not included in the resource count. The property does contain a rather long carport, however, which is included in the resource count as a non-contributing resource. (A tool shed, a temporary building, is not included.) Unfortunately, a simple count cannot portray the relative scale, importance, and impression of the two resources. The carport, although long, is relatively low and modest in scale. It does not appreciably detract from the site, nor does it in any way reduce the impact of the main building.

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Welborn-Ross House
Gibson County, Indiana

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Welborn-Ross house is significant under criterion B, for its association with Dr. William P. Welborn, an important local physician, banker and entrepreneur, who contributed to the growth and development of Princeton, Indiana's early commercial life and who participated in the establishment of important educational and cultural facilities in the town. Rather than achieving significance in any one field of commerce, Welborn is important for his many contributions to the local economy at a critical period. The period of significance spans the date of construction of the house and the year of Dr. Welborn's death. In addition, the building meets criterion C and is an outstanding example of the Italianate architectural style, as demonstrated in rural midwestern towns during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It is one of two structures in the county, built on the same plan which are particularly noteworthy for the exuberance and craftsmanship of their exterior woodwork. The Welborn-Ross home is the only remaining brick example of this particular design in Princeton.

Historical Information

Gibson County, Indiana of which the town of Princeton is the seat, was organized in 1813, along with several other southwestern Indiana counties which were originally part of the older Knox County. It was named after General John Gibson, a Revolutionary War hero and Secretary of the Indiana Territory from 1800 to 1816. Princeton, in Patoka Township, was chosen as the county seat as early as 1814 and the land for the town surveyed in the same year. It was named after William Prince, one of four county commissioners at the time, who won the honor through casting lots.²

Part of the county had been surveyed as early as 1794 and 1802, with the lands thus platted given to veterans of the Indiana Wars. The first settlers may have arrived as early as 1789, locating around the Patoka River in the north central part of the county. Rivers formed the earliest transportation links, and the first road connected ferries on the White River and the Patoka.³ Settlement of the area in the first

² *Gibson/Warrick County Interim Report*, Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Indianapolis, 1982., p. xvii.

³ *Gibson County/Warrick County Interim Report*, p. XVII.

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half of the nineteenth century was gradual, but began to accelerate with the advent of the railroads in the 1850s. As with many towns in the midwest, the growth of such links, spurred agricultural and commercial expansion. It was this later era of development, which would create the climate of economic expansion, out of which would emerge the Welborn-Ross home and other similar structures in Princeton. The town of Princeton was influenced by several railroad lines which ran through it and enjoyed the benefits of railroad shops, built between 1891-1894, which by 1914 employed 350 people.⁴

The Welborn-Ross house is significant for its association with commercial development in Princeton during these years, and especially for its association with one of the town's most respected community leaders. Upon his death in 1898, Dr. William Pinckney Welborn was touted as "not only a progressive man of affairs ... but a man of modest and unassuming demeanor, well educated, a ... self-made American ... and active in the support of laudable public enterprises. ... a man of public spirit, intellectual attainments and exemplary character."⁵

He was the eldest son of a well-known patriarch of Gibson County, and part of a large family who made many contributions in the early settlement of southern Indiana. His father, Samuel P. Welborn, came to southern Indiana as a young man with his parents, Moses and Deborah Welborn and worked on a farm in Gibson county, where he met his future wife, Mary Waters, and became a successful farmer as well as serving for four years as county treasurer. A county leader during his life, Samuel P. and his wife Mary raised eleven children on their farm near Owensville in Gibson county. Two of their children became renown for their contributions to Princeton and Gibson County's public life, Dr. William P. and his brother Oscar M. a lawyer and businessman who became a Circuit Court Judge.

William began his education in the district schools and academies of the county, then spent a term at the State University in Bloomington, Indiana. He trained in medicine by first "reading" with a local doctor at Owensville, following which he completed the full course at a medical college in Philadelphia, graduating a few years before the opening of the Civil War. He participated in the war as a surgeon, with the Eightieth Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry and returned to Gibson County following the close of hostilities to pursue his medical

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Stormont, Gilbert R. *History of Gibson County, Indiana, Her people, industries and Institutions*, B. F. Bowen & Co., Indianapolis, 1914, Reprinted, Unigraphic, Indianapolis, 1977. p. 899.

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practice.⁶ By 1868, he had joined with J. T. Fleming to form Fleming & Welborn, druggists at No. 3, Lewis Block in Princeton's Courthouse Square, probably in addition to his medical practice. By May of the following year, Dr. Welborn had dissolved the partnership with Fleming and continued in his own practice as a Physician and Surgeon, with offices in Alex. Devin's block, in Princeton. The same month, he married Mary F. Jerauld, the daughter of a local merchant.⁷

In 1870, Dr. Welborn became the Democratic candidate for Gibson County clerk, and won the office with a healthy margin, with strong support from his home town of Owensville and the rural areas within its sphere. In 1870 the 460 square miles of Gibson County contained a population of about 20,000 people. It was said to be one of the best in the state for agricultural pursuits, with rich bottom land soil. The Wabash and White rivers marked its western and northern boundaries and the Patoka river lazily wound its way from east to west in the northern half. Timber was also of good quality, especially black and white walnut, ash, oak, and hickory. The eastern sector of the county was known for the quality of its coal deposits.⁸

The town of Princeton was poised for growth during these years. The country surrounding it was rich in agricultural products and two railroads were soon to cross in the town. The Evansville & Crawfordsville railroad had been in place for some time, but in 1870, the Louisville, New Albany & St. Louis Air Line Railroad was completing a right-of-way which would carry it through Princeton and 10 miles west to Mt. Carmel, Illinois. The railroad planned to complete the entire line from Louisville, Kentucky to St. Louis, Missouri within two years. The town itself, located on high rolling ground was said to contain about 2,500 inhabitants, several brick business blocks and handsome private residences. Although the present brick courthouse would not be constructed for a number of years, the town boasted nine church buildings and a twelve-room, 27' x 88' schoolhouse on a two acre lot which cost an impressive \$35,000. A substantial group of businesses had sprung up, including mills, furniture and implement manufacturers as well as agricultural industries. One bank, two newspapers, hotels, stables and retail merchants completed the town's list of

⁶ Stormont, p. 900

⁷ *Princeton Daily Clarion*, February 14, 1898; *Princeton Union Clarion*, October 1, 1868, May 1, May 8, 1869.

⁸ *Princeton Union Democrat*, September 3, 1870.

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entrepreneurs.⁹

Dr. Welborn continued his service as County Clerk until 1878. During this time, he became a Director of the Peoples National Bank of Princeton, which was authorized in 1874, with a capital of \$50,000.¹⁰ Later he would be appointed its cashier, a post he would hold until his death in 1898. By 1878, when his term as Clerk had expired, Dr. Welborn had joined W. D. Downey, a local merchant, in a dry goods business, but gave up that association when, in c.1883, he was elected cashier. At the bank, he was constantly sought out for financial advise, and was said to have contributed his expertise to the success of several local businesses. Another of his interests was the local water works company (later called Princeton Water & Light), for which he served as an organizer, and lifelong stockholder. The growth of commerce in his adopted home town was of great interest to him and he devoted considerable time to its advancement.¹¹

His contributions to the cultural life of the community included nearly twenty years as an influential member and later, president of the school board, from c. 1879 until his death. The Princeton Public Library was privileged to have him as an organizer and longtime board member. He served as an elder of the First Presbyterian Church, from the time of his return from the Civil War, often attending state and national affairs on behalf of the local congregation. In February of 1886, during his tenure with the Library Board, a disastrous fire burned the building and all the books. No insurance was available to cover the loss, but the board rallied and quickly raised a sum of \$5,500 to restock the library and erect a new facility on the east side of the town square.¹² Dr. Welborn's interest in the library was continued by other family members, including his son George (Jerauld), who served on the board after his father's death, and as secretary in 1903.

The opening of the Euterpe Hall, c. 1881 in Princeton, Indiana, was eagerly awaited by the local citizens, who looked forward to the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *The Broad Axe*, Sept. 5, 1874 (Princeton, Indiana)

¹¹ Peattie, Elia W. *History of Gibson County, Indiana*, orig. 1897, Rep. 1980, Cook & McDowell, Owensboro, KY., p. 67.; Stormont, p. 901

¹² Princeton Public Library, History in Vertical files, Princeton Public Library, Incorporated August 9, 1881.

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concerts, lectures and other cultural events to be offered there. It was a spacious facility, located over W. D. Downey's "New York Store", on the square. Messrs. Downey and Welborn, proprietors of the hall offered many interesting entertainments and edifying events. It was the victim of a massive fire in Princeton's downtown which occurred c. 1893.

Dr. William Welborn and his wife Mary had six children, four of whom lived to adulthood: George (Jerauld), Oscar P., Maurice J., and Charles H. The eldest, George continued his father's interests in local commerce, with several local business enterprises, including Welborn-Criswell clothing store. He continued to serve on the board of directors after retiring as manager of the Princeton Telephone Company.

The land which included what was to become the town of Princeton (as well as the Welborn property) had been issued to Henry Hopkins in 1813, via a patent deed from the U. S. Government. After donating the portion which would become the county seat, the original owner sold off much of the balance. By 1825, the section which contains the Welborn-Ross house was owned by a John D. Hay and Robert Williams, but was transferred, by court order to Sally Hay in 1827. Three years later, in 1830, she had passed away, but her property, including city lots number 5, 6, and 11 in the Southwark Addition, had been laid out according to instructions in her will. Several other owners held the unimproved lots from 1830 to 1852 when Thomas and Eleanor J. Scantlin purchased the property (lots 6 & 11) for \$300. One year later they sold the same two lots to William Reavis, Jr. for \$2,500, having added considerable improvements.

By 1857, Mr. Reavis had been ordered to sell the property which included lots 5, 6 & 11 in Princeton at auction (along with other assets) to settle a trust fund of his ward. The auction notice, which appeared several times in November and December, 1857 promoted the "following valuable real estate, ... Lots number 5, 6 and 11 of the Southwark addition to the town of Princeton ... the same being the fine dwelling house and lots now occupied by William Reavis. ..." ¹⁴

The successful bidder was local merchant, George N. Jerauld, who purchased the house, the lots and an additional 80 acres in the county

¹³ Embree, Louise, "Over My Shoulder", series in Princeton Clarion, 9/29/1945 - 6/29/1946; Folck, Mrs. Virginia, *Princeton from Tomahawks to Trenches*, c.1964, p. 36, both in vertical file, Princeton Public Library.

¹⁴ *Princeton Clarion*, November 14, 1857.

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for \$1,945. The property remained in the Jerauld family until February of 1870, when it was gifted, for \$1, to George and his wife Nancy's daughter, Mary, who had married Dr. William P. Welborn the previous May. It remained in the Welborn family until the death in 1955 of William and Mary's son George J., who had inherited it in 1923, from his deceased mother. During the 1930s additional parts of the property were sold off and by the time of George's death, the property only included lot 11 and a portion of the western part of lot 6, with a right-of-way through other lots from the north - the same configuration which exists today. The house had become known as the Pinckney Apartments by 1961 and during the years to the present enjoyed several owners. It was purchased in 1994 by Mr. & Mrs. David Ross.

Dr. William P. Welborn was a man of good business sense who provided well for his family. His estate at his death in 1898 included shares of stock in the local bank, utility company, land investments, and other assets in the amount of nearly \$44,000 (not including the house on Hart street). Shares of stock in the library, a printing company and the county agricultural society were evidence of his wide interests. The bank closed its offices on the day of his funeral as did nearly every other business on the square. The outpouring of grief included nearly the entire town. A week later, a memorial service was held at the Presbyterian Church, where citizens as well as school children honored his memory.¹⁵

The Welborn-Ross house was built during an era of commercial development in rural Indiana and the midwest which emerged during the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. This expansion following the age of pioneer settlement and the Civil War, was largely the result of increased transportation available to agricultural and manufacturing interests. New markets were developing and new and better products were finding their way to them. Although the vagaries of financial panics were present, it was a time when those who understood merchandising and marketing could prosper. For a man like Dr. Welborn, known for his wise financial mind and canny business judgement, such a time offered opportunity. As a visible symbol of his success, the home represents this era of prosperity, and thus evokes the image of nineteenth century commercial success in Princeton, Indiana. Today, it attains significance from this association and, indirectly, from its association with others who pioneered early commerce in the town.

¹⁵ Princeton Daily Clarion, February 21, 1889

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Architectural Significance

The Italianate style, first made popular in the United States in the 1840s and 1850s through the pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing, retained its popularity in rural Indiana until the end of the century. The Welborn-Ross house, typifies the asymmetrical type, often seen in farmhouses and city properties of well-to-do, influential families. It possesses the popular arched windows, and complex brackets which are so indicative of the Italianate style. Yet, the overall impression of the house, because of its substantial massing and its setting, is one of permanence and solidity. The east wing, with its low pitched roof, and second floor fenestration butted up against the roof line frieze, serves to anchor the house to the ground upon which it sits. The brick massing, particularly in the main wings of the house, and the flat limestone arches, tend to enhance the impression of solid conservatism. Balancing this is the free intermingling of symbols in the ornately decorated porch.

The house and its setting are somewhat unique in Princeton. While this style can be found in other local examples, the particular combination of the plan, massing and decorative detailing is unusual, with only one other example, in the rural county. It attains significance, first, as an example of the style and second, because of the craftsmanship of the ornate woodwork. The combination of fretwork, turnings, brackets and applique, on the main porch vividly demonstrates the nineteenth century craftsman's dedication to ornament. This element of the structure, also identifies it as a part of the later evolution of the movement, High Victorian Italianate, which presaged the extreme decoration of the Queen Anne style. Thus, the Welborn-Ross house is significant as an interpretation of the popular Italianate style which was uniquely suited to small, rural communities in the midwest. It demonstrated to those within its sphere the solid success as well as the cultural ambitions of its owners.

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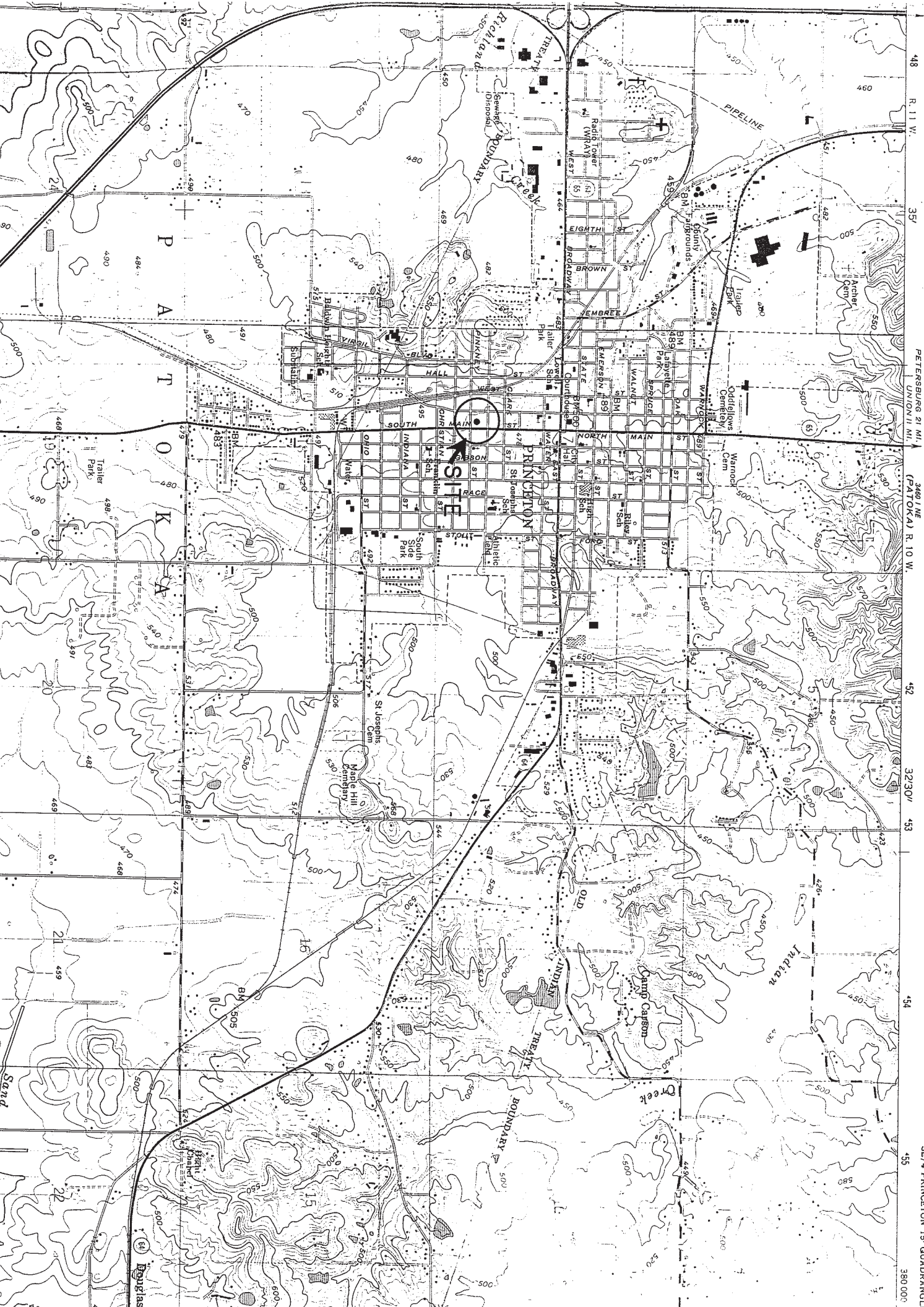
Vertical Files in the Princeton Public Library, including History of the Library, and various local history categories.

Estate records, tax records and other material in the genealogy room of Princeton Public Library, and records of the Clerk, Gibson county.

Deed abstract, property of the owner.

Verbal Boundary Description - The property includes all of lot number 11 in the Southwark addition of the town (now city) of Princeton, Indiana as well as a part of lot number 6, more particularly described as follows: Begin at an iron in the south line of said lot no. 6, at a point 115 feet west of an iron at the southeast corner of said lot 6 and run thence west along the south line of said lot no. 6, 33.5 feet to the southwest corner thereof; thence north along the west line of said lot 112.75 feet; thence east parallel to the south line of said lot no. 6 a distance of 33.5 feet; thence south 112.75 feet to the point of beginning; excepting the following tract: a parcel of ground in the form of a right-angle triangle situated in lot no. 6 of Southwark Addition to the town of Princeton, Gibson County, Indiana, bounded and described as follows: Begin at a point 35.75 feet south and 21.75 feet east of the northwest corner of lot no. 6, and run thence east parallel to the north line of said lot 11.75 feet; thence south, parallel to the east line of said lot, 20 feet to an iron; thence northwesterly 23.2 feet to the place of beginning; ALSO a parcel of ground in the form of a right-angle triangle situated in lot no. 6 of Southwark addition to the town of Princeton, bounded and described as follows: Begin at an iron 15.75 feet south and 10 feet east of the northwest corner of lot no. 6 in Southwark addition to the town of Princeton, and run thence south parallel to the west line of said lot 20 feet; thence east parallel to the north line of said lot 20 feet; thence east parallel to the north line of said lot 11.75 feet; thence northwesterly 23.2 feet to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification - The property boundary consists primarily of the original city lot, number 11, which has been historically associated with the property. In addition, the portion of the adjoining lot no. 6 is included, which has also historically been part of the property.



48 R. 11 W. 35' PETERSBURG 21 MI. (PATOKA) R. 10 W. 42 32'30" 43 44 45

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