

Final

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 **Rankin, Alexander Taylor, House**
other names/site number **Maier-DeWood Residence** **003-215-28081**

2. Location

street & number **818 South Lafayette Street** **N/A** not for publication
city or town **Fort Wayne** **N/A** vicinity
state **Indiana** code **IN** county **Allen** code **003** zip code **46802**

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.)

J.C. Smith **10-26-04**
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:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

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

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

0

Underground Railroad Resources in the United States

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th c.: Greek Revival

OTHER: Hall and Parlor

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: ASPHALT

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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

c.1841-1844

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Rankin, Alexander Taylor

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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
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 #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

ARCH, Inc; Allen Co-Fort Wayne Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	656680	4549250	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		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 Angela Quinn, Executive Director

organization ARCH, Inc date 09-07-2004

street & number 437 E. Berry St., Suite 204 telephone 260/426-5117

city or town Fort Wayne state IN zip code 46802

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 ARCH, Inc.

street & number 437 E. Berry St., Suite 204 telephone 260/426-5117

city or town Fort Wayne state IN zip code 46802

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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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 1

Alexander T. Rankin House
Allen County, Indiana

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Alexander T. Rankin House, located at 818 South Lafayette Street in downtown Fort Wayne, Indiana was built c. 1841. It is a 1-1/2-story brick structure in the Greek Revival style, with a one-story wood frame addition on the east façade, added c.1855, with simplified Greek Revival details. The brick structure has a simple gable-front plan, while the wood-frame addition is of side-gable construction. The east wall of the brick structure is also wood-frame also, and its construction date and the reason for the use of wood as the material are unknown. The side-gable wood frame addition appears to have been another house, moved to the location, and connected to the brick house. Some cross-timber framing that may be part of the side-gable structure can be seen along the connecting wall, and within a closet space. Both the roof of the main structure and that of the wood-frame addition are gabled. The rear or west plane of the side-gable structure abuts the wall of the main brick structure, creating a deep valley at the junction of the roof and the wood frame wall of the brick structure. A shed-roof addition on the west facade was constructed in the mid-19th century, but was demolished during the 1980's.

The interior of the house retains many original features and also wall and trim finishes. An early slate fireplace mantel and surround, baseboards, window casings, doors, and other decorative elements remain. The original staircase, railings and balustrade are intact.

For clarity, The Brick and wood-frame portions of the structure are treated separately.

BRICK STRUCTURE--EXTERIOR

The Alexander T. Rankin House, 818 S. Lafayette Street, was built c. 1841 on the West Side of S. Lafayette Street between Berry and Wayne Streets. The brick structure of the Rankin House is built in the Greek Revival Style. The main block of the house, found to the west of wood-frame addition, is basically square. A brick frieze detail is found near the roofline on north and south facades, with brick returns on the west wall.

The south façade is two bays wide. An entry door with wood lintel and threshold is located in the south east corner, protected by a shed roof hood with un-ornamented support brackets. The first floor window sashes have been replaced with vinyl, and the windows retain their stone lintels and sills. Second floor window sashes have been replaced with vinyl and the original stone lintels and sills are wrapped in aluminum. Three iron, star-style, turnbuckles are spaced evenly between the first and second floors.

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The west façade is three bays wide. An entry door with stone lintel and threshold is located near the northwest corner. Two first floor windows are original and have six-over-six lights, stone sills and lintels. Two second floor windows have been replaced with vinyl windows, and sills and lintels are wrapped in aluminum. Deterioration and movement of the west masonry wall had continued for many years, necessitating the installation of a steel beam on the exterior of the wall to slow further movement. In 2004 the masonry wall was rebuilt using original bricks, and the steel beam removed.

The north façade is two bays wide. A single window is found on the 1st floor, with stone sill and lintel. Two second floor windows have had sashes replaced with vinyl, and sills and lintels wrapped in aluminum. Three iron star-style turnbuckles are spaced evenly between the first and second floors.

The east façade is wood-frame, with clapboard siding, currently covered with asphalt faux-bricks. No openings are found on this wall. No frieze detail is located on this wall.

WOOD-FRAME STRUCTURE—EXTERIOR

The wood-frame addition (east of the brick structure) is one story. It has a side gable roof, and the arrangement of a hall and parlor house. The door is Federal/Greek Revival in style, with narrow paneled pilasters and lintel. An early metal mailbox is located on the south door jam, which is only accessible when the door has been opened. The door is centered on the east façade, with double-hung windows located on either side on the main façade of the house. No window openings are found on the south side of the wood-frame structure. The north side has no window openings, either. An interior chimney is centered on the north wall, covered with clapboard below the eaves. The firebox area is exposed on the exterior north wall, with a narrow trim framing it, separating the bricks from the clapboard. Other parts of the north wall are clapboard. The brick chimney has prominent shoulders that rise above the roof line. An asphalt faux brick covering currently covers portions of the north and south walls, and removal is underway. The east façade has a small, latticed vestibule surrounding the front door. The vestibule retains decorative cornices and a small hipped-roof hood over the doorway.

BRICK STRUCTURE—INTERIOR

The brick portion of the Alexander T. Rankin House originally had two first floor rooms, with a north-south brick dividing wall. Two smaller rooms were divided from the larger rooms at the north ends with a wood-frame interior wall. The small rooms were later developed as a bathroom and kitchen area.

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The more eastern of the two original rooms retains several layers of late 19th and early 20th century wallpapers and borders. A dropped ceiling and fluorescent light fixtures were installed, and have recently been removed, exposing original early 20th century electric ceiling fixtures (electricity was installed throughout the house between 1920-1930). A storage cabinet has been constructed against the east wall, next to an entryway to the east addition room. The flooring is wide wood planks.

The western of the two original rooms has modern wood-grain paneling over several layers of wallpaper. A four-panel door is located at the stairwell to the second floor. A 5 foot x 3-foot trapdoor is located in the floor to the basement. A dropped ceiling and fluorescent light fixtures were installed, and have recently been removed, exposing early 20th century electric ceiling fixtures.

The small kitchen room located at the north end of the eastern room is paneled, with modern sink and cupboards. The bathroom is located at the north end of the western room, and retains early 20th century fixtures. Water and sewer pipes are exposed. An enclosed stairwell is located on the north half of the western room, leading to the second floor.

The stairs leading to the second floor open to a narrow hallway, with railing on two sides of the stair opening. There are three bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. The two larger bedrooms are located to the east of the stairwell.

The northern room has one window on the north wall. Original window and baseboard trim remains, and there is a round flue cover found near the southwest corner of the room on the west wall. A door on the south wall opens to the south bedroom.

The south bedroom has one window located on the south wall. A closet is found on the west wall, with an early two-panel door, early hardware and doorknob. Early twentieth century wallpaper is found on the walls and ceiling of this room. A doorway located on the west wall, north of the closet, leads to the center hallway.

On the west side of the second floor is a smaller bedroom and very narrow bathroom. The bedroom is located in the southwest corner of the building. Windows with original trim are found on the south and west walls. A small closet with early hardware and doorknob is located on the east wall. Several layers of mid-19th century wallpaper have been revealed along the south wall. Areas on the ceiling reveal periwinkle distemper paint. Plaster was removed from the west wall during the recent rebuilding of the west masonry wall.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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The bathroom is located on the north half of the western part of the second floor. An early twentieth century sink remains, as well as a late 20th century shower stall. Walls have beadboard wainscoting, indicative of the room's twentieth century installation. The original use of the room is not known.

From the first floor west room a trap door and wooden staircase provide access to a cellar area. The cellar room is separated from the foundation by interior rubble-stone walls, located 3-4 feet inside of the outer walls, creating a four-foot space between interior walls and foundation. Adjoining the cellar, is a subterranean brick cistern, with whitewashed walls. Dimensions are unknown, as the cistern is only partially visible, and not accessible. The cistern is located beneath the northern part of the west room of the brick structure.

WOOD-FRAME STRUCTURE—INTERIOR

A latticework trellis provides shelter to the front door, creating an open vestibule. The entrance to the trellised vestibule was originally a round arch, but was altered when a modern door was installed. The doorway opens into a large room located on the north half of the wood frame structure. A smaller area is located to the south, separated by a wide-open archway. An early slate fireplace mantel and surround are located on the north wall. To the left of the fireplace the remnant of a cupboard has been located, although a plaster wall was later installed, covering the cupboard opening. The cupboard space was located when exterior measurements and interior measurements indicated extra space behind the north wall, and a test hole was cut, exposing the cupboard space. An area to the right of the fireplace may also have the same, but has not been investigated.

Windows are located on the east wall centered in the larger north room, and the smaller south room, with original window casings. A wide baseboard is found in both rooms, matching the baseboards found in the brick structure. The wide baseboards were removed during removal of c1970s paneling, revealing an earlier narrow baseboard behind the wide boards throughout the wood-frame structure.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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ENVIRONMENT

The Alexander T. Rankin House is located on the east side of downtown Fort Wayne on a block bounded by Lafayette, East Wayne, East Berry and Barr Streets. The block has historically seen a mix of residential, religious, institutional and governmental uses. The building fronts east on Lafayette Street, although it may have had an earlier orientation either to the south (toward Wayne Street) or to the west toward the Presbyterian church built and served by Rev. Alexander T. Rankin. A historical marker that commemorates the church was located on that property, but has been removed recently. This early church also served as the school for the community's youth during the 1830s and 1840s. Further west along the alley was located the first public market in Fort Wayne, in 1837, with a permanent market building first constructed in 1838. The Old City Hall building (Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society) is also located at the West end of the alley at Barr Street. A concrete parking area abuts the structure on the west, accessed by a brick alley to the north of the house that is parallel to Wayne and Berry Streets. The building was used as a residence until the 1980s when it was converted to light commercial use. The building has been poorly maintained during the past twenty years, particularly the masonry and foundation along the west wall, and the juncture of the wood-frame addition to the main house at the east wall. Despite these challenges to its integrity, the building retains most of its significant features.

To the north of the Rankin House is a brick alley. North of that is found a large substantially altered commercial structure, currently vacant. The Rankin House is located about 6-10 inches into the public right-of-way of the alley. To the northwest across the alley is located the carriage house of the McCulloch-Weatherhogg House.

To the east of the Rankin House is located a public sidewalk, an asphalt-filled park strip, and South Lafayette Street. Lafayette is the primary northbound traffic artery in Fort Wayne. This road is also the path of US 27, directly connecting the Rankin House to the Levi Coffin House, National Historic Landmark, in Fountain City, Wayne County, Indiana.

To the south and west of the Rankin House is large parking area for a doctor's office located further south and west. At the north end of the parking lot is located a steel shed/garage, abutting the Rankin lot. To the south of the Rankin House a small concrete walkway, garden area with lily-of-the-valley and a small apple tree, and a chain-link fence mark the current boundary of the Rankin property. To the south of the fence are a parking area, a driveway, and an early twentieth century brick double house. Further south is found a brick commercial building located at the intersection of Wayne and Lafayette, and oriented to Wayne Street.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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The Alexander T. Rankin House, the brick commercial structure and the brick house are located on Lot 8 of Hanna's addition to Fort Wayne. The lot extends from the alley north of the Rankin-Maier House to Wayne Street. The south half of the lot was sold in 1842, perhaps after the construction of the Rankin House on the north half of the lot. Further land sales have resulted in the Rankin house currently having only a 30foot wide lot.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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Addendum

On October 18 and 19, 2004, an assessment of the Alexander T. Rankin House was completed by Samuel Y. Harris, PE, FAIA, of S. Harris and Company, and Ron Koenig, Architectural Conservator with Building Arts and Conservation. Of particular interest was the junction of the wood frame structure and the brick structure. To better view the juncture, a test hole was made in the southwest upper corner of the wood frame structure, and the plywood flooring panels were removed from the north west portion of the wood frame structure and the east side of the east room of the brick structure. These removals made visible the following:

1. Removal of the flooring revealed that the brick structure's east wall did not have a foundation consistent with the erection of a brick wall. The only foundation visible was a wide (12") hand hewn beam resting on several rubble piles on top of the ground. This beam carries floor joists, but does not support the wood frame wall.
2. Immediately to the east of the hand-hewn beam was another hand-hewn beam (14" wide) also resting on several small piles of rubble, on top of the ground. This beam provides the foundation for the west wall of the wood structure. This also indicates that the wood frame structure existed independently of the brick structure prior to its connection to the brick house.
3. The wall opening made in the upper part of the southwest corner of the wood frame structure uncovered a second wood frame wall that was part of the brick structure, and not part of the wood frame structure, indicating that a wood frame wall had already been constructed on the east wall of the brick structure, prior to the addition of the wood frame structure. The two walls are next to each other, but are not connected. The lower half of this wall appears to have been removed to tie the wood frame structure to the house. It appears that this wood frame structure was added soon after the original construction of the brick house.

Summary:

The examination of the junction of the wood and brick portions of the Alexander T. Rankin House shows that the east wall of the brick portion of the structure was originally constructed as a wood-frame wall. A section of the wall was removed at the time that the wood frame structure was moved to the site and connected to the home. There is no indication that a brick wall was intended or constructed on the east side of the brick structure. Thus, the east wall of the structure retains much of its original appearance, with the addition of the wood-frame structure addition being a very early alteration. The Alexander T. Rankin House retains much of its original appearance, and maintains integrity.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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Statement of Significance

The Alexander T. Rankin House, c. 1841, is significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion (B): "Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past." Utilizing the Associated Property Types described in the *Underground Railroad Resources in the United States Theme Study*, the property meets the description of "(2): Properties associated with prominent persons. These include abolitionists who were actively involved with harboring fugitives or aiding them in other ways." Although some questions remain as to the reason the frame house was moved to the site, the brick house retains significant character from Rankin's era and meets the spirit of integrity expressed in the theme study.

Alexander T. Rankin has been identified as an Underground Railroad participant. Alexander T. Rankin organized abolition organizations in both southern Ohio and northern Indiana. His activities increased support for abolition and Underground Railroad activities in both states. Alexander T. Rankin is the only recorded individual who participated in the organization of both the Ohio and Indiana Antislavery Societies. The Alexander T. Rankin House is the only standing structure in Fort Wayne that is known to be connected to abolition or Underground Railroad activities. The Alexander T. Rankin House retains sufficient integrity to convey the significance and historic identity of this site.

Alexander Taylor Rankin was born December 4, 1803 in Dandridge, Tennessee, to Richard and Jane Steele Rankin. Alexander's older brother, John Rankin, was born in February 1793. After graduating from Washington College in southeastern Tennessee in 1826, Alexander moved to Ripley, Ohio, and resided with his older brother, John Rankin. John Rankin identified Alexander as one of the seven students he trained for the Presbyterian ministry, at his home in Ripley:

"A second student was my brother Alexander T. Rankin. He studied under me both science and theology. He possessed superior talents and is a popular preacher. He has ever maintained a high rank among public speakers. In the church of Felicity he was very successful as a minister."¹

During the same year that Alexander moved to Ripley, John Rankin became nationally known for his abolitionist views in 1826, with the publishing of *Letters on American Slavery*, and Alexander was undoubtedly aware of his brother's increasingly radical abolition stance. The John Rankin home in Brown County, Ohio, is a National Historic Landmark, due to its association with John Rankin and as an Underground Railroad site.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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Alexander T. Rankin soon became involved in his brother's activities, and began his travels to organize and educate the public about the need for immediate emancipation. He later described his early activities:

“The letters were written in 1823-4, and published at Ripley, Ohio in *The Castigator*, a weekly paper edited by David Amen...and shortly after issued in book form from the same press. Mr. Cox, a bookseller in Maysville, Ky., sold many of them. In 1828 I sold them in Kentucky and Tennessee—sometimes paid my tavern bill with them—and never was disturbed.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Descendents of John Rankin state that Alexander T. Rankin was an Underground Railroad operator, along with his brother. (Galen Mauss, to ARCH, April, 2004) Galen Mauss, a great-great grandchild of John Rankin, recalls many conversations about Underground Railroad activities told to him by his great-aunt Rose, who was the granddaughter of John Rankin. “Aunt Rose” described *her* Uncle Alexander Taylor Rankin's participation in Underground Railroad activities with *her* grandfather, John Rankin. Rose Rankin was the daughter of John Rankin's son, Arthur Tappan Rankin. She spent much time visiting her grandparent's home at Ripley, and had a very good recollection of the property and many URR stories, according to Mauss.ⁱⁱⁱ

In October 1829 Alexander T. Rankin married Mary Merriweather Lowry at Ripley, Ohio. Mary Merriweather Lowry was the daughter of abolitionists Adam Lowry and Julia Doak Lowry, and the sister of Jean Lowry Rankin, the wife of John Rankin. Another Lowry sister married Robert Henderson Rankin, the brother of John and Alexander T. Another sister, Lucinda Lowry, married William McNish, also described as an Underground Railroad participant in Ripley.

The Lowry sisters had one brother with abolitionist connections, Samuel G. Lowry. Samuel G. Lowry was John Rankin's first student, and worked with John Rankin to teach slaves while both still resided in Kentucky. Mob violence and threats ended the effort. Samuel G. Lowry worked for the American Home Missionary Society as supplied minister and an agent in Northern Indiana during the 1830s, and also assisted in the organization of Hanover College.

In 1830 Alexander Rankin was hired to lead the Presbyterian congregation of Felicity, Clermont County, Ohio, near Ripley. He soon became involved in Clermont County abolition activities. He was chosen to be the Clermont County “Manager” of antislavery activities at the formation of the Ohio Antislavery Society, held in Putnam, Ohio in April 1835. At that time, a total of 51 Ohio counties had sufficient abolition activities to designate “managers.” Of this 1835 list, Wilbur Siebert or other sources have documented at least 1 in 3 to be Underground Railroad conductors.

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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Underground Railroad activities in Clermont County, Ohio have been well documented. Clermont County has 19 "Network to Freedom" sites designated by the National Park Service—the most of any county in the United States. Another dozen sites have also been identified for their connections to abolition and freedom seekers, but have not yet been designated. Clermont County is located between Ripley in Brown County and Cincinnati in Hamilton County.

The 1835 Ohio Antislavery Society was affiliated with the national organization, The American Antislavery Society, (AAS) which was led by William Lloyd Garrison, and others. It advocated immediate emancipation and equal rights for African Americans. Following the organization of the Ohio statewide organization, John Rankin was hired by the AAS to organize local antislavery groups and activities in Ohio. Alexander T. Rankin followed, and became a strong abolition lecturer and organizer in his own right.

As an agent of the American Antislavery Society, John Rankin was invited by Alexander in 1836 to speak at the Felicity Presbyterian Church, while the Cincinnati Presbytery was holding its regional meeting. After the Presbytery refused to allow the lecture, Alexander and John found an alternate location. John Rankin writes:

"My brother, A.T. Rankin, who was the pastor of the church at Felicity, invited me to deliver a lecture on slavery during a meeting of the Cincinnati Presbytery. I consented, but his session refused to let me use the church for that purpose. This measure of the session was very unpopular, for I had founded the church. The Methodists gave their church and it was crowded with hearers, and the members of the Presbytery attended. At the close of the lecture sixty names were given to form an antislavery society and that village was a stronghold of abolitionism to the end of the war."^{iv}

During this time, Alexander Rankin gave many public presentations and sermons on abolition on his own and with John Rankin. He spoke on at least one occasion at the Cranston Memorial Presbyterian Church in New Richmond, Ohio, located along the Ohio river waterfront, according to The Clermont County, Ohio Freedom Trail brochure, which notes:

"The Cranston Memorial Presbyterian Church took an early and uncompromising stand against slavery...The church hosted a number of anti-slavery speakers including James G. Birney, publisher of "The Philanthropist," Calvin Stowe, George Beecher, John Rankin and Alexander T. Rankin."^v

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Alexander T. Rankin House
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In 1837 Alexander T. Rankin was beaten by a mob following an abolition lecture in Dayton, Ohio, and his own descriptions of the account, and the extent of his injuries were reported in several leading abolitionist newspapers, including *The Philanthropist* (February 25, 1837), and *The Friend of Man* (Utica, New York, March 29, 1837). Alexander's description:

"Messr. Editors,
I have commenced my labors lecturing again. The injury I received in the mob scrape, on the 13th, kept me pretty close confined until the 21st; but the effects are now nearly removed.

The opposers of abolition are supremely deluded in their measures to arrest the progress of anti-slavery principles. One would think that the blindness of fanaticism itself would be more judicious in the selection of the means. Never was more strikingly verified the old maxim, "whom God intends to destroy, he first makes mad," than in the late disgraceful riot in Dayton. The influence of that affair, unquestionably, has made more abolitionists in that place than I could have done in a dozen lectures. How true it is that God sometimes makes even the wrath of man to further his inscrutable purposes...

Everything has been done to prejudice the community against me and the cause of human liberty, but the spirit of inquiry cannot be intimidated—the people will think and determine for themselves. If the father of lies had been there, himself, in person, his fruitful genius could not have exceeded the invention of his dutiful subjects in fabricating and retailing slander. As a specimen of the false statements, take the following. One man is said to be willing to swear that I said publicly, "that I was not only in favor of amalgamation, but intended to marry a black wife"—the most unlikely thing in the world for a man to say who has a wife and children at home. But, whether the opposers throw eggs, beat me, lie, or be still, inquiry goes on; our cause advances.

The result reminds me of a remark once made by an opponent. He said abolition was the most singular thing he had known. For, whether the lectures were opposed by arguments, or their meetings

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broken up by mobs, or were attended in peace, the cause
advanced." (The Philanthropist, February 25, 1837.)

William Lloyd Garrison also included mention of the incident in his newspaper, but left unclear whether Alexander or his more famous brother, John was the victim, noting only that "Rev. Rankin" was recovering from injuries received in Dayton. (*The Liberator*, March 9, 1837). This type of confusion may well have occurred in other documents about the Rankins, masking Alexander's specific activities in assisting freedom seekers and promoting immediate emancipation. While John Rankin and his sons continued to be more well known as they remained on the hill atop the Ohio River at Ripley, Alexander Rankin did not stay long in any location until the 1850s, as he lectured on abolition, organized abolition activities, and worked as a minister for several churches and for the Home Missionary Society. As such, Alexander T. Rankin never developed the widespread reputation of his brother or nephews.

Alexander T. Rankin is reported to have visited two small settlements in Allen County, Indiana prior to his hiring by the Fort Wayne Presbyterian congregation. Historian T.B. Helm noted that Rev. Rankin provided a worship service in a cabin near Huntertown, Perry Township, in 1834, and at the home of Christian Parker in St. Joseph Township in 1836. Abolition sentiments and activities were later recorded in both locations, and A.T. Rankin may well have visited these sites as he lectured against slavery, introducing himself to the Fort Wayne area prior to his hiring.^{vi}

During the 1830s the American Home Missionary Society was active in Indiana, providing (primarily) Presbyterian ministers to serve scattered Protestants in sparsely settled locations and emerging towns. Alexander T. Rankin's brother-in-law, Samuel G. Lowry, served Crawfordsville, and other northern Indiana areas during the 1830s and eventually was assigned the task of supervising, and overseeing other ministers as an "agent" to the society. In this capacity he wrote to the Society's headquarters, that the Fort Wayne church has found no one, as they did not want a young minister. (April 13, 1836). Lowry very likely suggested Alexander T. Rankin for the Fort Wayne position.

In 1837, the Presbyterian congregation at Fort Wayne, Indiana, hired Alexander T. Rankin to work as their pastor, and the minister and his family moved to northeastern Indiana. Deed records show that the family first purchased and likely settled on land located in Fort Wayne at the northwest corner of Lewis Street and Hanna Street, about six blocks to the east of the Presbyterian Church location.

Shortly after his arrival, congregation member Hugh McCulloch wrote to his fiancée, Susan Man about the new minister:

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“His brother, John Rankin, is a very distinguished abolitionist, and I am disposed to think that, on the subject of slavery, they sympathize with each other, both in feeling and sentiment. He (our preacher) is composed of the right kind of material for an abolitionist. Uncommonly fearless in expressing his sentiments, with a mind deeply imbued with the great principles of natural equality and civil liberty, he will be, I think at all times, the prompt, decided, and fearless champion of the oppressed, and the advocate of the slaves.” (McCulloch to Man, 19 September, 1837, Hugh McCulloch papers).

Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase later appointed Hugh McCulloch U.S. Comptroller of the Currency, and then he was appointed to be the Secretary of the Treasury from 1865 to 1869 during the administrations of Abraham Lincoln and Johnson. McCulloch served again as Secretary of the Treasury from 1884-1885 during the Arthur and Cleveland administrations.

In September 1838 Alexander T. Rankin was one of the organizers of the Indiana Antislavery Society, and was named to the board of Directors of the organization.^{vii} As described by author Pamela Peters, “James Morrow of Jefferson County was elected President, Dr. Luke Miesell, Vice-president, and Rev. A.T. Rankin and William Beard, Directors. The gatherings were called ‘library meetings’ for the protection of the participants.”^{viii}

In addition to his duties as minister to the Fort Wayne Presbyterian congregation, Alexander T. Rankin was hired as a paid agent to Indiana for the American Antislavery Society during 1839. That fall, the AAS sent Arnold Buffum to the state as well. Buffum was one of the founding members of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and his arrival in Indiana makes clear the importance of A.T. Rankin’s organizing efforts. One historian noted:

“The abolition movement in neighboring Indiana, which had finally become organized only the year before, did not accomplish much in 1839. In April the American Antislavery Society agency committee began negotiating with E.O.Hull of New York concerning an agency in the Hoosier state, and in May agreed to pay him \$500 per year as he requested, but the letter the committee received from Hull in late June on his way to Indianapolis is the last bit of information available about the venture. The committee decided in June to employ A.T.Rankin for a year’s agency in Indiana, and in the fall Arnold Buffum went to the state as part of the A.A.S.’s effort to abolitionize the West...”^{ix}

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Indiana's most well known, and well documented Underground Railroad agent Levi Coffin sheltered over a thousand freedom seekers at his home north of Richmond, Indiana. Coffin wrote of such organizing efforts of Rankin, Buffum and others, who:

“devoted much time and labor in pleading the cause of the oppressed, until the eastern, middle and northern counties of the State became so strongly abolitionist in sentiment, that the number of the people were very small who would risk their reputation in giving aid to the slave-hunters. Public opinion became so strongly anti-slavery in our neighborhood, that I often kept fugitives at my house openly, while preparing them for their journey to the North, without any fear of being molested.”^x

Levi Coffin also noted the successful activities of the Underground Railroad in the Fort Wayne area during Rankin's time in Fort Wayne, when he described two freedom seeker's trip through Indiana, accompanied with a note from Coffin, stating: “Please receive and forward the same to George D. Baptist, Detroit, Michigan, by way of Camden and Fort Wayne; I consider that to be the safest route.”^{xi}

The work by Rankin to build support for abolition, and encourage some to assist freedom seekers in the Fort Wayne area paid off, despite a growing population of German and Irish immigrants who were disinterested in the slavery issue, but very interested by the populist leanings of the Democratic party. At least one local African-American resident provide direct assistance to freedom seeker Jacob Cummings in 1840, indicating growing support and assistance for Underground Railroad activities in the Fort Wayne area.^{xii} These efforts would continue through the 1840s and 1850s.

Even while serving in Fort Wayne, Alexander T. Rankin continued to travel, and maintained his connections to the Felicity community and Clermont County, Ohio. A Fort Wayne resident from Clermont County, Lewis G. Thompson, mentioned the family in a letter to a brother in 1840: “The roads are fine now. Brother Rankins, our Minister, left Felicity in a buggy with his family on Tuesday...and arrived here on Saturday night being only five days.”^{xiii}

In July 1841 Mary Merriweather Rankin died, leaving Alexander to raise their four children. Within a week of her death Alexander T. Rankin purchased the site of 818 Lafayette Street, and either built the home or moved into the already constructed home soon after. Alexander's mother-in-law, Julia Doak Lowry, moved to Fort Wayne to assist with the children. The site adjoins the site of the Presbyterian Church, which was built under Rankin's direction. The Presbyterian Church was located at 334-336 East Berry Street, the site now occupied by the

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McCulloch-Weatherhogg Double House, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The property lines of 818 Lafayette and 334-336 East Berry meet at the northwest corner of the Alexander T. Rankin House, separated by the alley. A commons area was located between the church and the home, and served as the site for at least one community celebration of July 4th (Fort Wayne Sentinel, 1842).

The Rev. A.T. Rankin often preached against slavery at his pulpit in Fort Wayne. Hugh McCulloch's fiancée replied to his letter describing Rankin's sermons, "I should like to hear one of Mr. Rankin's abolition sermons...I hope Mr. Rankin will make an antislavery man of you."^{xiv} The Lutheran minister in Fort Wayne, Jesse Hoover, also commented on Rankin's abolition stance: "(He is) a warm abolitionist...I fear this will injure him someday."^{xv} Local newspapers noted his abolition message as well. *The Fort Wayne Sentinel*, 30 April 1842 reported:

"Our newest pastor, Mr. R., is a brother of the celebrated abolitionist of Ohio by that name, who has probably done more than any individual to render slavery unpopular in the West. Our pastor is likewise an abolitionist, strong and ardent in his feelings of opposition to the institution of slavery and bold and independent in the expression of his views on this delicate subject."

Historian George Mather, in his thorough history of early congregations in Fort Wayne describes Alexander Rankin's preaching and his abolition activities:

"If there was a white leader of Fort Wayne's underground railroad operatives during the late 1830s and early 1840s, it was most likely the Reverend Alexander T. Rankin, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, a founder of the Indiana Anti-Slavery Society, and brother of the Reverend John Rankin, who assisted escaping slaves at Ripley, Ohio."^{xvi}

Others did not view Alexander T. Rankin's abolitionist views and organizing activities in such good light in Northern Indiana. During the heated campaign for U.S. Congress during the summer of 1843, Rankin apparently was in favor of the Whig candidate, the abolitionist Lewis G. Thompson. On August 19, 1843, the Fort Wayne Sentinel reprinted a strongly worded warning to Rankin from the Marion *Democratic Herald*, Grant County, Indiana:

"Clerical Politicians:

We would be pleased if some friend of the Rev. Mr. Rankin of Fort Wayne, the Presbyterian clergyman of that place, would favor us with a copy of the letter sent by that gentleman to the abolitionists

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of this county. We have no wish to do injustice to the Rev. gentleman, and regret we that we are compelled to notice his interference, but if the letter purports to contain the matter we are advised it does, his clerical robes shall not screen him from the lash. Should we not be allowed to see it, we shall take it for granted that our information is correct, and that it was only designed to aid Mr. Thompson, by secret circulation among the abolitionists, and nowhere else.”

Five days after this appeared in the Fort Wayne newspaper Alexander T. Rankin resigned his position as minister of the Fort Wayne Presbyterian Church. He remained in the area for a short time after, working for the American Home Missionary Society, and occasionally preaching at the Fort Wayne Presbyterian Church, through the beginning of 1844, before moving to western New York.

Alexander T. Rankin served in later years as a Presbyterian minister in abolitionist locations in New York such as Mendon, Monroe County and Black Rock, near Buffalo. In 1859 and 1860 he served as a Missionary to the Kansas territory, and visited several abolitionist sites in Kansas, including several visits to the abolitionist port city of Quindaro, near Kansas City, and also Moneka in Linn County. Quindaro—now an archeology site located within modern day Kansas City—was organized in the early 1850s by a tri-racial settlement of Wyandot Indians, European Americans, and African Americans, with a goal to provide a safe location for freedom seekers fleeing Missouri. Moneka was a utopian community founded by Underground Railroad leaders Augustus and John Wattles, who hid John Brown in Augustus’ home following the Osawatamie Massacre. (Diary of Alexander T. Rankin).

Alexander T. Rankin was successful in his efforts to preach the message of abolition and to organize abolition activities in northeastern Indiana, while serving a small congregation in the frontier town of Fort Wayne. His participation as an underground railroad supporter, agent for the American Antislavery Society, and organizer of both the Indiana and Ohio Antislavery Societies, was extraordinary, and identifies him, without doubt, to be a “prominent person” in the Underground Railroad and Abolition movement in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

By September 1843, Rankin’s home at 818 Lafayette Street had been converted into use as the first school for women in Fort Wayne. A Fort Wayne Sentinel advertisement for September 30, 1843 noted:

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“Fort Wayne Seminary: Miss M. Wallace proposes to open a Female Seminary in this city, at the house lately occupied by Rev. A.T. Rankin, commencing on Monday, the 2nd of October.”

Following Rankin's departure, the Fort Wayne Presbyterian Church sought a new minister, amidst the growing tension between New School and Old School Presbyterian factions. Miss Matilda Wallace—the school teacher using Rankin's home-- became an organizing member of the break-away New School 2nd Presbyterian Church the next year, along with some of the other abolition members of the local Presbyterian congregation, under the leadership of Charles Beecher. Her use of the Rankin house, and association with the abolitionist Charles Beecher indicates a continuation of use of 818 Lafayette by abolitionists through at least the end of 1844. Charles Beecher was the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher, and was also a strong abolitionist and Underground Railroad participant. Charles Beecher ministered to the 2nd Presbyterian congregation until 1850, when he moved to New Jersey to take the pulpit of a Free Presbyterian Church, the denomination organized by John Rankin during the mid-1840s.

Following the 1844 separation of the Fort Wayne Presbyterian congregation, the home remained the property of Old School Presbyterian congregation member Henry Ayres until its sale in 1847 to Asa Naylor, who resold it in 1849 to John G. Maier. An assembly of Democrats elected Maier Postmaster in 1853, and his views on slavery and abolition are unknown.

ⁱ Rankin, John. *Abolitionist: The Life of Rev. John Rankin: Written by Himself in his 80th Year*. Huntington, West Virginia: Appalachian Press, Inc. 1978. Pg. 46.

ⁱⁱ Rankin, Alexander Taylor. *Truth Vindicated and Slander Repelled*. Ironton, Ohio: Printed at the Register Office. 1883. P. 7.

ⁱⁱⁱ Galen Mauss interview, June 8, 2004. Galen Mauss is the son of Berneice Pauline Rankin and Carl Mauss. Berneice Rankin was daughter of Arthur Thomas Rankin, granddaughter of Arthur Tappan Rankin, and great granddaughter of John Rankin.

^{iv} Rankin, John, *ibid*, pg. 53.

^v *Clermont County, Ohio Freedom Trail: Underground Railroad and Abolitionist Sites*. Brochure. n.d. Published by collaborative effort between Clermont County, Ohio Board of County Commissioners, the Clermont County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Clermont Celebrates, Inc., and the National Park Service.

^{vi} T.B.Helm, *History of Allen County, Indiana, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Chicago: Kingman Brothers, 1880. Pp. 168 and 173.

^{vii} *Proceedings of the Indiana Convention, Assembled to organize a State Anti-Slavery Society, Held in Milton, Wayne County, September 12, 1838*. Cincinnati: Samuel A. Alley, 1838.

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^{viii} Peters, Pamela R. *The Underground Railroad in Floyd County, Indiana*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc. 2001. Pg. 34. Peters refers to the dissertation of Marion Clinton Miller, *The Anti-Slavery Movement in Indiana*.

^{ix} Gamble, Douglas. *Moral Suasion in the West: Garrisonian Abolitionism, 1831-1861*. Ohio State University, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1973. Pp. 180-181.

^x Coffin, Levi. *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin, the Reputed President of the Underground Railroad; Being a Brief History of the Labors of a Lifetime in Behalf of the Slave, with the Stories of Numerous Fugitives, Who Gained Their Freedom Through His Instrumentality, and Many Other Incidents*: Electronic Edition. Text transcribed by Apex Data Services, Inc. Images scanned by Tampathia Evans. Text encoded by Apex Data Services, Inc., Melissa G. Meeks and Natalia Smith. First edition, 2001. Academic Affairs Library, UNC-CH, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001. Pp. 229-230.

^{xi} Coffin, p.455.

^{xii} Siebert, Wilbur, *Underground Railroad Materials*. Ohio State Library, Microfilm roll 79.

^{xiii} Praying Grounds and Pleading Terms: *The Letters of Lewis G. and Wilson L. Thompson, 1837-1844*. Fort Wayne: Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society, 1969. August 17, 1840.

^{xiv} Susan Man, Plattsburg, NY to Hugh McCulloch, 29 January 1838, found in Mather, p.34.

^{xv} Jesse Hoover to Susan Man, 11 November, 1837, found in Mather, pg. 35.

^{xvi} Mather, George Ross. *Frontier Faith: The Story of the Pioneer Congregations of Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1820-1850*. Fort Wayne: Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, 1992. Pg. 210.

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Verbal Boundary Description

North 30 feet of Lot 8, Hanna's Addition to the town of Fort Wayne; in addition, the south two (2) feet of the public right of way of the alley located to the north of the described parcel.

Boundary Justification

This is the legal description of the Alexander T. Rankin House, located at 818 South Lafayette Street. The additional two (2) feet portion of the public right of way of the adjacent alley includes the north wall of the Alexander T. Rankin House. The house encroaches 1 foot (12 inches) into the public right of way of the alley, and the additional 1 foot provides a small buffer zone.

Alexander T. Rankin House

49 16 000000

