

THE TODD HOUSE



HISTORIC TOUR

MAY 9-10, 1987

To Benefit

THE OLD OPERA HOUSE

COURTESY OF THE EVENING/WEEKEND JOURNAL

HISTORY OF THE TODD HOUSE

By Wanda Perry

This excellent example of victorian (Queen Anne) architecture was the home of Frances Packette Todd until her death earlier this year. Construction of the house was completed in 1892 by John Thomas Gibson, maternal grandfather of Frances Todd. Mrs. Todd moved from Locust Hill to this house when she was two years old in 1904. Her youth was spent here, and being an only child, she inherited the house from her mother, at her death. Several years prior to Mrs. Todd's death, she conveyed the house to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Because the north wall of the house is adjacent to the site of John Brown's hanging, it is located on a historic site. At the time of John Brown's hanging, this area was an open field. A marker near the north wall of the house bears John Brown's name with the date of his death (Dec. 2, 1859).

John Brown was tried and found guilty of treason at the courthouse in Charles Town in 1859. Brown was transported in an open wagon to the gallows reated on a box containing his coffin. This wagon may be seen today in the Jefferson County Museum located in the CHarles Town Library Building.

When the house was completed in 1892, it was of the most sophisticated architectural design, with every modern convenience incorporated into the construction. About five years ago the house was completely restored under the direction of Keith Knost of Shepherdstown. Mrs. Todd did, however, select the fabrics, wall coverings and colors from the samples which she was shown. The furniture in the house are all family pieces, some of which were found in the attic and basement.

Wonderful examples of Americana furniture from 1770-1900 abound. The visitor will find many fome examples of Federal, Empire and Victorian furniture. Certainly one of the finest pieces of furniture in the house is the signed, **slant-top desk** made for Henry Beddinger in 1784 at the time of his marriage to Rachael Strode. The visitor's choice might be the **Federal card table** (circa 1810) with bellflower inlay or one of many **Rococo Revival** pieces in the house. **Family portraits**, Victorian pastels adorn the walls.

The dining room boasts an extensive collection of Blue Canton china. A lovely little set of white and gold French porcelain manufactured at the French factory which was a favorite of Marie Antoinette enhances a side table.

The guests should find the stained glass windows, oak paneling and eighty-five year old graffiti in an upstairs closet of interest.

Although not open to the public, Mr. Gibsons' study on the third floor retains its original wallpaper. Sidewalls and ceiling are both papered in a print. The original gas chandelier still hangs unchanged. The attic contains an incredible collection, including china, furniture, Mrs. Todd's toys, clothing, trunks which had not been opened for nearly 100 years and memorabilia of three generations of the Gibson family members.

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BEGIN YOUR TOUR HERE

ENTRANCE FOYER AND HALL

Beige was chosen for the hall because Mrs. Todd remembered that color in the hall as a child.

One hundred ten rolls of Scalamanandre beige paper were used in the hall. The stained glass in the door relates to the hanging light in design. Woodwork in the hall is oak. Bars which held portiers are still in place in the doors to the right and left of the entrance. The original portiers of crimson velvet, with gold fringe, are in a trunk in the attic.

Hall portraits: Capt. James Gibson, a veteran of the War of 1812 and father of Col. John Gibson.

Susan Greg Gibson (wife of Capt. James Gibson).

Floors are of oak and were probably originally carpeted with Wilton carpeting, very popular during the Victorian era.

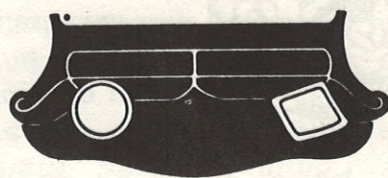
Hepplewhite table, one of the finest pieces in the house, (circa 1810), with inlay in the back of the hall.

Candlesticks on the table are French gilt. Neo-classical mirror — Imari bowl.

Sofa in the hall is American, about 1850.

Halltree is Victorian.

Chinese cabinet is a cocktail cabinet with side door for glasses, 20th century.



KITCHEN

The kitchen contains a large valuable collection of steins.

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LIVING ROOM

Mrs. Todd told Mr. Knost she wanted roses everywhere in this room, remembering the room having been papered in roses. The paper in this room is a document paper from 1860-1900.

Shutters. Throughout the house are original to the house and were almost always closed to prevent light from fading the furniture and carpets.

Parlor Set (actually 2 sets combined) came from Locust Hill - Rococo Revival — 1860's.

Card Table American Federal period with bellflower inlay made between 1800 and 1810.

Side Chairs 1860's

Candlestand — Reproduction 20th century

Marbletop Table 1860's Rococo Revival

Astral Lamp — made by Cornelius & Co. in 1830

Statues — cast metal - 19th century

Girandoles 1850's

Sconce same period — originally fueled by gas

Andirons 19th Century gilt and patented metal

Mirror over card table - 1850 American

Whatnot contains 19th century ceramics

Chandelier — original to room

Chinese Nest of Tables 20th Century

Carpet Mr. Knost found this Kerman, which is about 50 years old in Mrs. Todd's Washington D.C. storage facility.

Most of the living room furniture was in pieces when Mr. Knost undertook restoration of the house. He has commented that this house presented, perhaps, one of the greatest challenges of his decorating career.

19th Century Oil Lamp, electrified

Engraving 'Lady Washington's Reception' 1850 from an original painting by Daniel Huntington.

French Ink Wells (pair)

Porcelain Plaques — 19th Century German (over whatnot)

Minton Vases (1860's) on whatnot



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DINING ROOM

Mrs. Todd insisted that the room be blue with the colors in the pastel painting beside the mantel incorporated in the drapery fabric.

Chandelier is not original to the house.

Sideboard of New York origin was made about 1830.

Outstanding collection of **Blue Canton** in china cabinet and on dining table. Gem of the Blue Canton Collection is the fruit bowl on sideboard with fruit carving.

White with gold French porcelain set made about 1810 in France in the French porcelain factory which was a favorite of Marie Antoinette.

Marbletop sideboard (Circa 1860) very appropriate for the dining room with carved grapes, pineapple, etc.

Mantel Notice decorative satin-glass doors above mantel—Do they remind you of Japanese lanterns — popular motif of the time?

Imari is modern — vases are 19th century Chinese

Wine cooler Sheffield plate

Dining table late 19th century. Leaves for the table are in the attic.

Painting of a young girl we believe was purchased by Mrs. Todd.

Carpet is a Ferraghan 1930-1940

Pastel Painting beside mantel, about 1850 was Col. Gibson's favorite painting.

Chest of drawers Neo-classical mahogany veneer

Corner cupboard blocks door to pantry. 19th century

Small serving table Reproduction Duncan Phyfe on serving table **Pearlware basket and stand** about 1800. **Double-handled piece** (cream with wine painting) late 19th century. **Covered pitcher** 1860.

Coffee Urn 19th century Sheffield

Candlesticks 20th century

Painting of Apollo late 19th Century

Mirrored Sconces European mid 19th Century

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STUDY

The Slant top desk is this room is one of the most important pieces of family furniture in the house, having been made for Henry Beddinger in 1784, at the time of his marriage to Rachel Strode. It was probably made in Pennsylvania and is signed and dated by the owner.

Bookcase 1920's

Bookcase (free-standing) Neoclassical — 1830's

Empire footstool 1830-1840

Candlestand — 19th Century

Pembroke table beside sofa — American 1810

Bronze and Enamel pieces Chinese 19th Century

Painting over door might have been painted by Mrs. Todd's mother

Candlesticks (on mantel) 18th Century English

Chandelier — original — gas Neo-Classical design

Sampler was made by Sara Gibson (sister of the gentleman whose portrait hangs in the hall) in 1820 when she was nine years old.



LANDING

Tallcase Clock late 18th Century
— possibly Pennsylvania

UPSTAIRS HALL

Pair of Tables one drawer
stands with spool-turned legs — 19th
century

Sofa late Rococo Revival 1865

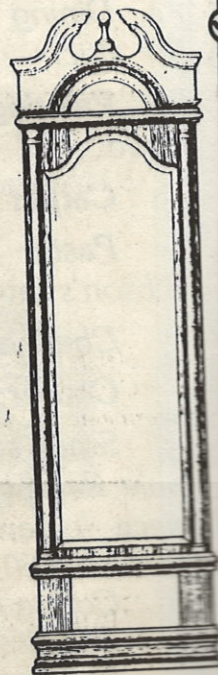
Chinese chest early 20th century

Chest of drawers 1840 Empire

Dressing table — with glass knobs 1820

Engraving 'Franklin's reception at Court of France'

Oriental Rugs 20th Century



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SECOND FLOOR

RIGHT FRONT BEDROOM

(Miss Susan Gibson's)

Italian Cassone 17th Century Interesting carved Satyr. Corner supports — only 17th

Century piece of furniture in house.

Bed 19th Century American

Chairs 1860's

Cheval Glass Rococo Revival 19th Century

Empire dressing table Philadelphia 1830

Writing desk — with inlay 1920

20th Century Chinese Chest

Print above bed of Doges Palace

Table (beside bed) 1830

Shaving stand early 19th Century on Empire chest of drawers

LEFT FRONT BEDROOM

(Guest Room)

The closet in this room contains the graffiti from 1890's.

Work table American 1840

English Rosewood Traveling Case: This lovely little traveling case was made about

1810 and has a secret panel

Ogee Mirror 1840

Birdseye maple table — Reproduction

Remaining furniture 20th Century

BEDROOM

(Frances Todd's Room)

Chest (2 top drawers) Late 19th Century

Chest in corner Early 19th Century with boxwood escutcheons

Dressing stand (with mirror) Empire 1840

Chinese chest (20th Century)

Overmantel mirror — American 1820

Gilt mirror (over chest in corner) 1850

Victorian Toilet Water Containers on chest

BACK BEDROOM

(Guest Room)

Sleigh Bed American 1840

Carpeting and drapery colors were chosen to match colored panes in window. This determined the color choice for the bedrooms made by Mrs. Todd. Mr. Knost confided that

Marble top chest of drawers American 1860

Worktable — Empire 1830

Marbletop Washstand 1850

Overmantel mirror — gilt — American 1830

(Cabinet top on bottom drawer case (early 19th Century)

(Married piece - bottom 1850's)

Glass Front Case Victorian period

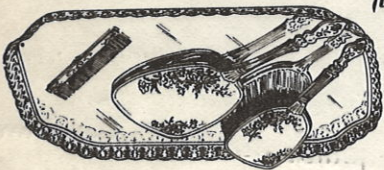
COOK'S ROOM

Again notice color choice dictated by color of panes

Chest of Drawers — 1810

Shaving Stand 19th Century

Other furnishings reproductions



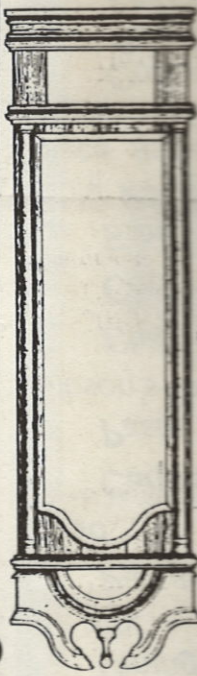
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Todd's mother

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