

salon answered the need to be a communication space adjacent to other formal areas of the mansion. The formal dining room, billiard room, and central parlor originally opened into this new room, allowing for large crowds to circulate from room to room.

Heiman understood architectural principles of proportion and balance, well evidenced in his 1859–1860 addition to Belmont. The salon was to be three times as deep as the now incorporated gallery. Maintaining the historic ceiling height of the gallery would have been claustrophobic to the design. Proportionally, had the accepted height been maintained, the room would appear much smaller than its actual size (58'x 28'6"). Heiman wisely arched the ceiling to a height of 22' creating a massive barrel vault, one of the architectural glories of Belmont. With the assistance of Heiman, the Acklens created one of the largest rooms of any domestic interior in the state prior to the Civil War. Only Rattle and Snap, the George Washington Polk home in Maury County, comes close to having a room of comparable size.

To encircle the salon at the height of the old gallery ceiling, Heiman designed a classically detailed, multi-faceted plaster cornice, featuring spread-winged eagles as the principle element. Had the ceiling not been arched in Heiman's salon, the wide multi-faceted cornice would have been ponderous and overwhelming. This is far from the fact in reality; it is now the prin-

cipal element of the room. As completed in 1860 Heiman brought a more refined educated hand to Belmont than those whom had formerly been employed at the site.

A primary feature of the open Belmont gallery, now lost to the enclosure, would have been light and air coming into the house. Heiman managed to create the illusion that the new room was still open to nature by including multiple window openings to the north. Two tripartite windows, (a wide central window flanked by narrow windows) one on each side of the centrally located bay, run from floor to the cornice line on the north wall. The lower sash in these windows are each just over six feet tall. The central sash opens full height rising into a wall pocket built above the top sash. People could then pass through onto what is presumed to have been a cast iron balcony originally running the length of the room around the existing bay.³⁵ The three windows in the bay all operate exactly the same, again allowing access to the balcony.

This "window wall," for that is essentially how it functions, is unusual for this period in time. More typical of the 1870s and 1880s than the 1850s, this feature brought Belmont forward into another age. Heiman's tripartite windows are the most obvious Italianate feature of Belmont displaying arched sash, the tops of which contain panes of colored glass.³⁶ From these windows Strickland's recently completed Tennessee State Capitol could be viewed in the distance.



In 1859-1860, the Acklens completed their last addition to Belmont. The new Grand Salon measured 58' by 28'6", with a 22' ceiling. (C.C. Giers, photographer, ca. 1870, Belmont Mansion Association)

Harking back to his classicist youth in Prussia, Heiman removed a number of original square gallery posts in the center of the old gallery opposite the stair, replacing them with a column screen of four fluted Corinthian columns visu-

ally dividing the new salon from the old porch. These columns were centered on a new staircase much more fitting for the use of Adelia Acklen's new space.

Gone was the presumably utilitarian gallery stair, now replaced with a centrally