

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Architect's Work Sheet for "Photo-Data Books" (Part II)

CAPTAIN FRANCIS WATLINGTON'S HOME  
name of structure

Florida, Monroe, Key West  
state, county, town or vicinity

FLA-192

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit

New England Bahamian house, scaled to the 5 1/2 foot stature, with three large disproportioned front facade dormers.

Condition of fabric: Fair

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR

<u>Number of stories</u>	<u>Number of bays</u>	<u>Over-all dimensions</u>	<u>Layout--shape</u>
One and one-half	Two	40' x 45'	rectangular

Foundations: Quarried lime rock and brick piers.

Wall construction, finish, and color: Lapped wood siding, weathered, unpainted

Structural system, framing: Wood

Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: Front porch full length of front facade.

Chimneys: None

Openings - doorways and doors: Simple paneled doors, with double leaf shutters.

    windows and shutters: Double hung windows, with double leafed shutters.

Roof - shape, covering: "A" frame, terne metal shingles.

    cornice, eaves: Not applicable

    dormers, cupolas, towers: Three large disproportioned dormers conflicting with scale of front facade. Dominant feature.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR

Floor plans (by floor)

First floor: Small central hall and stairway with all rooms entering thereon.

Attic : Half story, similar.

Flooring : Wood, tongue and groove.

Wall and ceiling finish: Exposed siding, painted.

Doorways and doors: Simple, paneled.

Decorative features and trim: Devoid.

## CAPTAIN FRANCIS WATLINGTON'S HOME

able hardware: Simple, period hardware, much of original retained.

hting, type of fixtures: None original

hting (fireplaces, stoves, central) None

PE AND SURROUNDINGS

Location (by compass reading) and general setting

onted directly on street, facing East on West side of Duval Street. Building elevated  
its piers.

tbuidings:

ilitarian satelite out-structures, providing services and servants quarters. Large  
tick fireplace in detached outhouse kitchen.

ndscaping and walks, enclosures:

Large trees in rear.

Prepared by Charles E. McCoy, Jr., Architect  
Old Island Restoration Foundation, Inc.  
Date of visit November 14, 1966 Key West



HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## Historian's Work Sheet for "Photo-Data Books" (Part I)

Name of Structure CAPTAIN FRANCIS WATLINGTON'S HOME FLA-192  
 State Florida County Monroe Town or vicinity Key West  
 Street Address or Location 322 Duval Street  
 Present Owner (give address) Mr. Earl Johnson, 322 Duval St., Key West, Fla.  
 Present Occupant Mr. Earl Johnson Present Use Residence

**Brief Statement of Significance:** Traditionally called the oldest house in Key West, it is said to have been built as early as 1825 and moved by Richard Cussans from Whitehead Street to its present location in 1832. Later, and for many years, the home of Captain Watlington, it has remained in his family until this date.

PHYSICAL HISTORY (indicate sources of information for all statements)Original and subsequent owners (chain of title)

John W. Simonton sold all of Lot 1, Square 25, to Thomas A. Townsend and Asa F. Tift in 1834 (Deed Book B, p. 96).

No record has been found of Cussans' purchase of part of this lot.

In 1839, Richard W. Cussans sold to William M. Wall his house and lot, part of Lot 1, Square 25, consisting of 80' on Duval, beginning on the line dividing Lot 1 and Lot 2, and running 197' 9" deep. These are the present dimensions of the property (Deed Book C, pp. 62, 63).

Wall sold to Nicholas D. Herder\* in 1842 (Deed Book C, pp. 213-215).

Herder until 1869, when it was deeded to Emeline Watlington (Deed Book C, p. 441). It has remained in Watlington family since that date. (Monroe County Records, County Court House, Key West, Fla.)

Date of erection Said to have been 1825 Architect Not known

**Builder, suppliers, etc.:** One legend is that this house was built by the United States Government as quarters for Naval Officers of Commodore David Porter's Anti-Pirate Squadron. However, in the newspaper "The Key West Advertiser" of 1829, Cussans placed an ad as being a carpenter and joiner (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., microfilm copy in Monroe County Public Library, Key West, Fla.). The County records show that in 1829, Cussans owned property on Whitehead Street.

**Notes on original plan and construction of building:** None

**Notes on known alterations and additions, with dates and architects:**

A number of alterations have occurred through the years, but no records of these are known and alterations are of no great importance.

The most unusual feature of the house is the three dormer windows on the street or front side of the house, each dormer being of a different size.\*\*

## CAPTAIN FRANCIS WATLINGTON'S HOME

On the first floor, an office was built for Captain Watlington by enclosing part of the back porch and adding a bay to the side. A small outside porch provided private entrance to the office from the street. Later, the other end of the porch was enclosed. A second porch (screened) was later added on other side.

Originally the front porch rail had rectangular ballusters, but these have been replaced by simple cross supports. <sup>✓ TURNED</sup> ~~TURNED~~ W. W. W. ? I  
E. JOHNSON

HISTORICAL EVENTS AND PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH BUILDING

Captain Watlington was one of the early settlers and prominent figures in maritime activities. A fine pilot, he was in command of not only merchant ships but wrecking vessels as well.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

No drawings, specifications or manuscripts have been found.

Deeds for this property are in the County Court Clerk's office, Monroe County Court House, Key West, Florida.

Microfilm: U.S. Census, Monroe County 1830-1880; Monroe County Tax Rolls 1845-1860, 1866-1876, Monroe County Public Library, Key West, Florida.

Secondary and published sources:

A Guide to Key West, American Guide Series, Hastings House, N.Y., p. 83, second edition, 1949.

A Guide to Early American Homes, South, Pratt, Dorothy & Richard, Bonanza Books, N.Y., 1956, p. 119.

Key West in Transition, Edited by M. E. Gilfords, Bernard DeWitt, Pub. by Key West Administration, WPA, Dec. 1934, p. 20.

The Coral Tribune, Cappick, Marie, Key West, Fla., August 24, 1956, p. 5; Ch. XV, p. 4, 1957.

Key West the Old and the New, Browne, Jefferson B., The Record Company, St. Augustine, Fla., 1912, p. 192

Interviewees: Mr. Earl Johnson, owner, 322 Duval St., Key West, Florida

Likely sources not yet investigated: None

Prepared by Betty M. Bruce  
Old Island Restoration Foundation, Inc  
Key West

Date November 1966