

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Double-Pen Houses of Noblesville, Indiana

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PAGES: 109

The two double-pen houses documented in this project are rare surviving examples of both folk/tradition-informed construction, (vernacular architecture) and antebellum housing. As there are only thirty or so antebellum structures extant in Noblesville, Indiana, and only three houses of the double-pen plan, the importance of documenting these structures becomes clear.

Neither structure stands alone in a void; each must be placed within the context of its time (1840s-1860s), and place (Noblesville, an urban environment) to be fully understood. Transportation, the construction trade, and industry as it existed in Noblesville during the period 1840-1860 all had a direct effect on who built the houses, and on the materials used in the houses. The concentration of skilled labor, the presence of industrial capacity in the form of sawmills, and the availability of such things as hardware are all a result of an urban environment. A study of primary source documents describing these factors is thus highly relevant in understanding the physical fabric of the houses.