

Third Avenue Hotel
(John Weber House)
Cambria City Neighborhood
222-24 Chestnut Street
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5736

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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Location: 224 Chestnut Street, Cambria City, Johnstown, Cambria County, Pa.

Description: No. 224 Chestnut is a multi-residential building facing southeast at the corner of Chestnut Street and Second Avenue. The two-and-a-half-story building is square, wood-framed, and covered with vinyl and asbestos siding. The cross-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A main entrance faces the intersection of Chestnut Street and Second Avenue, while side entrances face each street. There are four rectangular, double-hung windows on the second floor. The first floor has been altered with a large picture window on north side.

History: No. 224 Chestnut was constructed between 1886 and 1891, possibly in 1889, by John Weber, a German laborer in the steel mills. Weber came to Johnstown in about 1880.

Initially, the property bore several addresses. In 1889, Weber resided at 224 Chestnut. The "Third Avenue Hotel" was at 224-1/2 Chestnut. Thomas Donnelley, the hotel proprietor, lived at 222-1/2 Chestnut. In 1890, Weber sold the building to Christian Yeger, a German laborer, for \$1,000.

Eger operated a saloon at 206 Chestnut Street in 1889 and may have resided in Johnstown as early as 1869 (when a city directory recorded a "Christ. Yeager"). After the 1889 Johnstown flood, Eger opened a new establishment, the Hohenzollen House, at 210 Chestnut Street. After 1895, the hotel was named the "Conemaugh Valley Flood Hotel," managed by August Heine, a German saloonkeeper who resided at 224 Chestnut with his wife and two children through 1900. Frank Baker, a Hungarian bartender and his wife Bertha, rented 222 Chestnut. Christian Eger was listed in the 1900 census as "landlord." In 1901, 224 Chestnut, still owned by Eger, again bore the title "Third Avenue Hotel," Thomas Donnelley, proprietor.

Christian Eger conveyed the property to Anne Donnelly on April 25, 1906, for \$8,000. The 1910 census recorded Thomas Donnelly as owner of 224 Chestnut, where he and his wife, five children and a sister-in-law lived. Donnelly worked as a hotelkeeper. No. 222 was rented to a Pole, Frank Sadosky, a heater in the steel furnaces, and his family of four.

In 1913, 224 Chestnut was again known as the "Conemaugh Valley Flood Hotel." The building has been owned by the Audi family since 1962.

Sources:

Deed and Tax Assessment Records, Cambria County Courthouse, Ebensburg, Pa.

Johnstown City Directories, 1869, 1889, 1901.

Sanborn Map Company, Johnstown, Pennsylvania (New York, The Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1891, 1895, 1911, 1913).

United States Census, Cambria County Pennsylvania, Cambria Borough (1880); and same, City of Johnstown, Fifteenth Ward (1900, 1910).

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Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). An overview of history of the city (HABS No. PA-5669) and an overview of the neighborhoods of Cambria City and Minersville (HABS No. PA-5672) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the downtown and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Jeffrey Hickey in August 1988 under the direction of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, the supervisory historian of the project. Hickey's and other project historians' work was published as The Character of a Steel Mill City: Four Historic Neighborhoods of Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1989), edited by Kim E. Wallace. Illustrations in the publication include large format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe and 35 mm photographs taken by the project historians.