

409 West 12th Street

409 West 12th Street was an interesting variation of the Shotgun house, with a false front and, much like the classic Northern Kentucky Townhouse, a two bay façade with no front entry. In plan, the house was a center chimney double pen plan with additional rear service rooms (Figure 2). Stylistically, it was Italianate. The false front raised the stature of the house's street view, and allowed for a bracketed cornice (Figure 3, left). The house roughly matched its neighbors in appearance, looming larger than the brick shotgun three doors up the street at 415 West 12th (Figure 1). It was clad in blue vinyl siding covering earlier painted wood weatherboard (Figure 8).

The house appears on the 1877 Atlas (see 411 w 12th) and on later Sanborn maps (Figure 2, right). 1890 and 1892 Covington City Directories list as a resident, Bernard Vonbokern, a laborer. The 1890 U.S. Census lists a 35 year old Bernard Von Bokern, born in Kentucky, living on west 12th Street with his 58 year old German-born mother, Elizabeth Meyer, his stepfather G. H. Meyer, and half-brother Frank Meyer.

Like its immediate neighbor at 411 West 12th, 407 had a raised mortared rusticated cut stone foundation, fenestrated with a pair of two-light wood casement windows on the street façade (Figure 7). These were spaced corresponding to the 2/2 sash windows lighting the first floor above (Figure 3, left). The two main windows were surmounted with bracketed Italianate hood molds. The shuttered lone center window above signaled the gable hiding behind the false front. East of the house foundation, two stone columns flanked steps to a concrete walk running along the side of the house. Along this side, the house was pierced by two doors and four windows set symmetrically w/d/w/w/d/w. The side windows were 4/4 wood sash. These lit the three larger interior spaces, a front parlor sharing a chimney with a chamber behind, and a kitchen at the back. Offset behind that was a smaller, well-lit room used as a dining area, with its own exterior entry. In the ell of the offset next to this room was a batten-hatch entry to a steep cellar stair (Figure 3, right and Figure 6). The cellar had a dirt floor, stone walls, and a typical later furnace, ductwork, and plumbing (Figure 15).

The front room had some later arts and crafts period alterations in the front door and the fireplace surround (Figure 9). An arched doorway led to the chamber behind (Figure 11). A frame closet protruded into this room. A doorway led to the kitchen behind, which had short run of modern kitchen cabinetry with a sink and a stove location (Figure 13). Divided off the side of this room was a narrow space with a coat closet and a bathroom (Figure 14, left).



Figure 1: 409 West 12th (at left), with 411, 413, 415, & 417 West 12th Street.

409 W. 12th ST

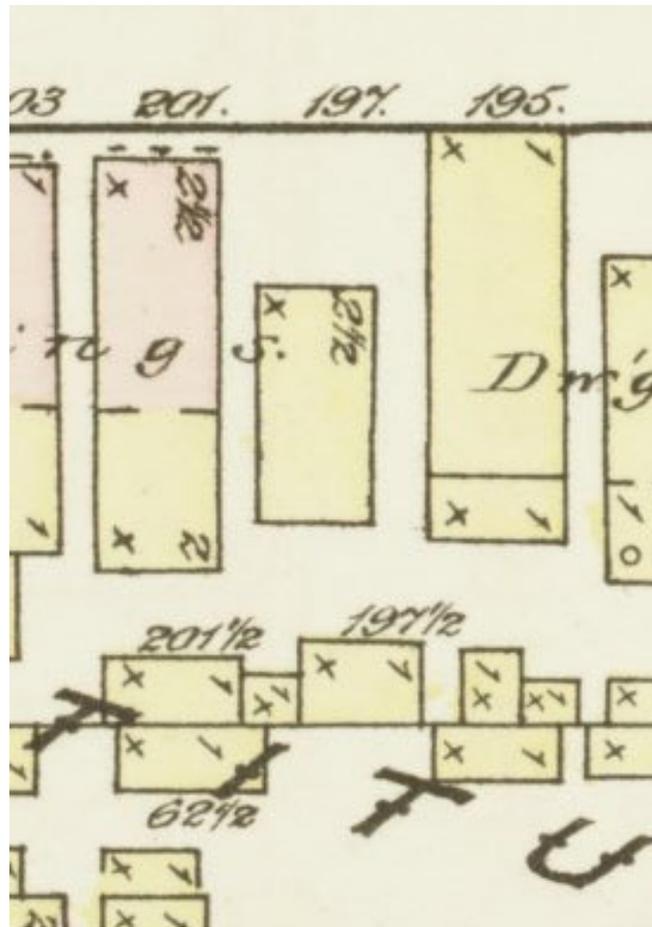
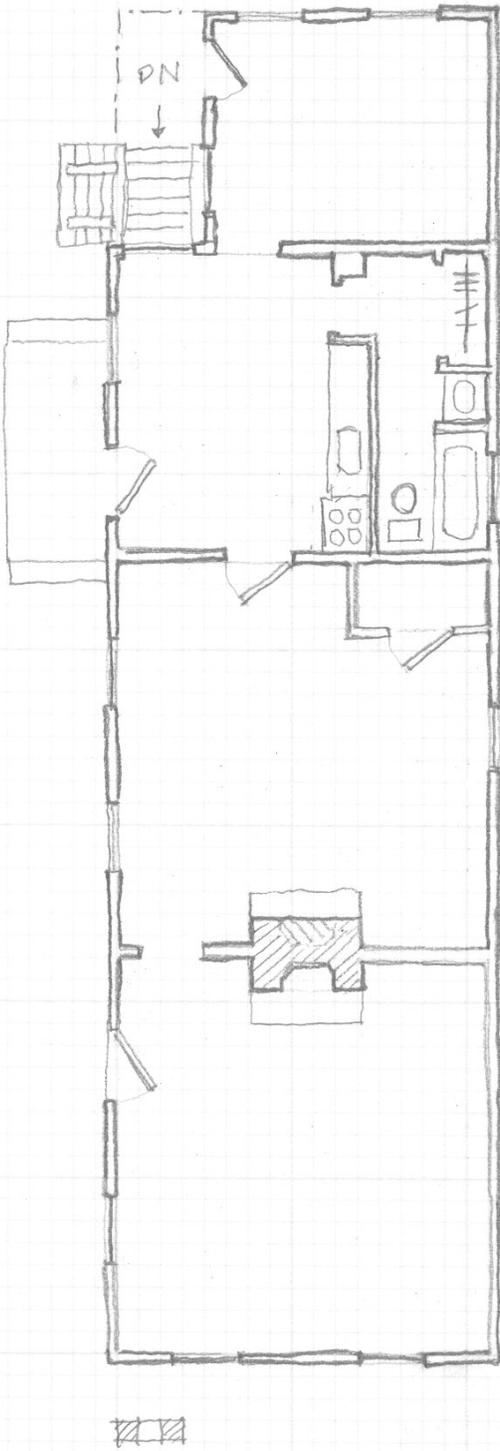


Figure 2: Left: Floor plan of 409 West 12th Street. Scale in feet. Right: 1886 Sanborn map, 411 West 12th was then numbered 195.



Figure 3: 409 West 12th Street. Left: front of building, from north. Right: back of building, from South, showing basement entry.



Figure 4: 409 West 12th Street, from South



Figure 5: 409 West 12th Street, from Southwest



Figure 6: 409 West 12th Street, detail of bulkhead entry to basement.



Figure 7: 409 West 12th Street, detail of stone foundation and basement window.



Figure 8: 409 West 12th Street, detail of original weatherboard underneath later vinyl siding.



Figure 9: 409 West 12th Street, interior of front room looking south.



Figure 10: 409 West 12th Street, interior of front room looking north.



Figure 11: 409 West 12th Street, interior of second room looking south.



Figure 12: 409 West 12th Street, interior of kitchen looking south toward back room.



Figure 13: 409 West 12th Street, interior of kitchen looking west toward bathroom.



Figure 14: 409 West 12th Street. Left: Interior of bathroom. Right: detail of mantle in front room.



Figure 15: 409 West 12th Street, interior of basement.