UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Perhaps no other single structure in the State of Arkansas can command such widespread interest as the Terry Mansion. The occupants of this house have included Albert Pike, philosopher, scholar, soldier, and poet; Captain John Fletcher, banker and politician; John Gould Fletcher, Pulitzer Prize winning poet; and David Terry, U. S. Congressman.

This stately home was built in 1840 by Albert Pike, Arkansas' most colorful citizen, at a cost of \$7,000.

Albert Pike was a man of absolutely unflagging energy and of universal interests and accomplishments. He was a successful lawyer, poet, politician, p.ilos-opher, and oriental scholar, but only a mediocre soldier. Pike, who was born December 29, 1809, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and educated in the schools of that state, entered Harvard University in 1824. Because of financial difficulties, he was forced to leave Harvard; and after teaching at several schools in Massachusetts, he headed west.

Albert Pike arrived in Fort Smith, on the Lorder of the Indian Territory, in 1832. It may have been during this time that he became familiar with the Indian nations and decided to do something about their plight. After teaching school in Crawford and Pope Counties, Pike was brought to Little Rock in 1834 by Robert Crittenden then Secretary of the Arkansas Territory, to assist in the editing of the Arkansas Advocate. Pike eventually bought the paper as a business investment, but the venture was unsuccessful. Pike was married in October, 1834, at Little Rock to Mary Ann Hamilton, daughter of an early settler of Arkansas Post. She later became difficult to live with because of ar uncontrollable temper.

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8. Significance

Pike was admitted to the Arkansas bar in 1835 and over the next few years practiced law state-wide. It was during this period that he built his Little Rock home. In 1846 he was admitted to the bar of the United States Supreme Court at the same time as Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin.

At the outbreak of the Mexican War, he raised a company of cavalry for service in the regiment of volunteers commanded by Arkansas Governor Archibald Yell.

Pike had apparently been impressed by the injustice done to the American Indians by the federal authorities. He acted as the attorney for the Choctaws against the United States for compensation for lands which had been ceded to them in a series of treaties extending from 1786-1855, but from which they had been removed. In March 1859 the Senate eventually awarded the Choctaws almost \$3,000,000 as a result of Pike's efforts, but the compensation was never paid.

Although a friend to the Indians, he was no friend to the Catholics and in the 1850's became a leader of the Know-Nothing Crusade against Catholicism as a result of his growing involvement with Masonry. At this same time (1853 to 1857), Pike practiced law in New Orleans, after having learned the fundamentals of Roman and French law on his own. Later he was to translate "The Pandects of Justinian," the compilation of Roman law under that emperor.

With the outbreak of hostilities in 1861, Pike devoted himself to the Confederate cause. It was he who penned the patriotic words to "Dixie," the song that became a Confederate rallying cry. He was commissioned Brigadier General by the Southern Government; and he led a brigade of Cherokee cavalry at the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas. He served as the Confederate envoy to the five civilized tribes achieving great success in this area. All the civilized tribes allied themselves with the Confederacy. For a short time during the war, Pike served on the Supreme Court of the State of Arkansas.

After the war, Pike's associations with the house he built came to an end. The home had tragic memories for him. His daughter Isadore had committed suicide; a son,



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8. Significance

Walter, had been killed in the war; and Albert, his youngest, was drowned while swimming in the Arkansas River. These tragedies also affected Mrs. Pike, who came to be labeled "queer" by the citizens of Little Rock.

Leaving his wife, Pike left Little Rock for Memphis and late in 1868 moved to Washington, D. C. where he was thereafter to make his home. Most of the rest of his life was spent in lecturing, practicing law, and pursuing scholarly and philosophical interests, particularly Masonry oriental philosophy. During his residence in Washington, Pike translated the <u>Rig Veda</u> of the Hindus and the <u>Zend Avesta</u> of the Persians.

As a literary figure, Pike is considered an important antebellum southern poet, although not a great one. His first literary work, Prose Sketches and Poems Written in the Western Country, was published at Boston in 1834. These poems seem to have been greatly influenced by and imitative of Byron, Shelley and Wordsworth. In 1838, nine of Pike's poems, "Hymns to the Gods," were published by Blackwood's Magazine, a leading English literary journal. General Pike's poems are currently represented in most anthologies of southern poetry, and he is cited in Cambridge History of American Literature and the Oxford Companion to American Literature.

General Pike died in Washington in 1891. At the time of his death, he was reputed to be the greatest Scottish Rite Mason in the Western Hemisphere, if not the greatest in the world.

Sometime after 1870 Mrs. Pike was pursuaded to move into more humble quarters, and the house was sold. In 1874, it became the Arkansas Female College with General Levin Lewis as its President; and although never a financial success, it became quite a fashionable school for the young ladies of the area.

In 1889 the college closed; and the home was purchased by Captain John Fletcher, a prominent citizen of Little Rock, to house his growing family.

Captain John G. Fletcher was a member of that clan of Fletchers who from the early colonial period had helped

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8. Significance

settle the new lands from Virginia to Arkansas, and who contributed to Arkansas planters, politicians, businessmen, and even the current Roman Catholic Bishop of Little Rock. Captain Fletcher was the grandson of John Gould Fletcher who settled in Randolph County, Arkansas, before 1815 and who was a Revolutionary War veteran haling from eastern Tennessee. Henry L. Fletcher, a son of John Gould, moved to Saline County with his family about 1825. His son, Captain John Gould Fletcher, was the third owner of the house.

Captain Fletcher came to Pulaski County and Little Rock sometime between 1825 and 1861. At the outbreak of the war, Fletcher was a member of the Capitol Guards of the State Militia. When this regiment was reorganized, Fletcher was enrolled in Company A, 6th Arkansas Infantry, C. S. A., and rose to the rank of Captain after Shiloh. It was during the war that Fletcher and Peter Hotze, an Austrian immigrant, agreed to form the business partnership which made them both wealthy.

After the war the two men began a general merchandise store in Little Rock. They were so successful that they eventually dropped the retail trade and dealt only in cotton. Peter Hotze had his office in New York while Fletcher supervised company operations in Little Rock. In 1878 Fletcher married Miss Adolphine Krause, sisterin-law of Hotze. From this union were born John Gould Fletcher, the famous imagist poet, and Mrs. David D. Terry, present occupant of the house.

Captain Fletcher also served as president of the German National Bank, one of the city's leading financial institutions. When he purchased the house in 1889, Captain Fletcher had already served three terms as Mayor of Little Rock (1875-1881) and one term as Sheriff of Pulaski County. In 1900 he ran unsuccessfully for governor on a "trust-busting" platform. He died in 1907.

John Gould Fletcher was only three years old when the Captain purchased the Old Pike Home. John Gould experienced a somewhat sheltered childhood (he wasn't allowed out on the street alone until he was ten years old). He was at first privately tutored, then enrolled in the private schools of Little Rock until he entered the public high school.

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8. Significance

Captain Fletcher had determined that his son should attend Earvard University, and with that in mind John Gould was enrolled in Phillips Andover Academy in Massachusetts for a year to prepare himself.

John Gould entered Harvard in 1904, and it was there he became encouraged to write verse. He had been deeply impressed by visits he made to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts while he was at Andover and by the symphonies he was able to attend. He was something of a recluse and spent much of his time alone with nature away from the bustle of the college. When he was 19, the summer after his freshman year, and through the encouragement of friends, he wrote his first poems.

Because of financial difficulties and a growing dissatisfaction with the academics of the University, John Gould left for Europe in the summer of 1908. He was 22 years old. He would be an accomplished and recognized poet when he returned to the United States permanently.

It was Europe which first recognized the genius of the young poet. He was a close friend of two giants of his day - Ezra Pound, the founder of Imagism, and Amy Lowell, one of the chief exponents of the Imagist movement in the United States.

Imagist poetry, of which Fletcher's verse is a significant part, utilizes common language, and attempts to create new rhythms and clear, concise images while maintaining complete freedom of subject matter. Thus, it is a revolt against the romantic conceptions of poetry and breaks away from classical verse forms. The simplest, most commonplace things are fit subjects for poetry for the Imagists. They wrote in the same vein as Whitman, but they maintained a quiet intensity rather than his awesome power.

Fletcher's greatest poetic achievements were in his poetic "symphonies." He attempted to reproduce in this verse the texture, mood, rhythm, and total effect of symphonic music. Robert Penn Warren, writing in the May 1932 issue of Poetry said of Fletcher,

"His work would be important, if for no other reason, on account of the extension of

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8. Significance

rhythmical possibilities or the language and the peculiar care bestowed upon the richness and variety of verse texture...in his 'highly - orchestrated and colored words' Fletcher had exploited surprise and resolution in a fashion not dissimilar to the verse of 'Ash Wednesday.' ... and Fletcher was the first, or one of the first to develop a type of imagery which Edith Sitwell has since erected into something like an oblique technique of vision."

Between 1915 and 1947 Fletcher produced a significant amount of poetry and prose. These included three histories, his autobiography, <u>Life Is My Song</u>, and ten volumes of poetry including <u>Goblins and Pagodas</u> (1916), <u>The Black Rock</u> (1927) and his <u>Pulitzer Prize winner</u>, <u>Selected Poems</u> (1938). In addition, Fletcher was a contributor to the imagist literary magazine <u>Poetry - A Magazine of Verse</u> along with Pound, Lowell, H. D. and D. H. Lawrence.

Fletcher returned to the United States for two years in 1914, but he returned to England in 1916 and married Florence Arbuthnot of London. After several attempts to return to the United States, he did so in 1933.

At this time he became a leader of the Agrarian Movement, of which John Crow Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren were other leading figures. This group advocated the South's return to the land and an agricultural economy. It resisted industrialization and advocated the re-establishment of self-contained and self-sufficient centers of population and culture.

In 1936 he married Charlie May Simon and settled, more or less permanently, in Arkansas on an estate west of Little Rock. The rest of his life was spent writing, lecturing, and traveling. After some months of illness, John Gould Fletcher drowned in a stock pond near his home, an apparent suicide.

The Pike Mansion had a lasting impression on the poet and his work. In <u>Life Is My Song</u> he states,

"The influence of the house, in its magnificence and decay, the qualities of mind and heart that I inherited from my parents, and my own

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education all urged me to become a poet. Had I not been predisposed by my mother to contemplate life aesthetically rather than take active part in the games played by the boys of the neighborhood; had I not been provided from an early period with an endless subject for romantic meditation in the aspect and appearance of the old house, so rich in memories of the past, and equipped besides with an actual authentic ghost ... my story might have been different."

Adolphene Fletcher, daughter of Captain Fletcher and present occupant of the house, was married there in 1910 to David D. Terry, a young Little Rock attorney. The family made their home in the old house for 53 years. Mrs. Terry gave the house to the City of Little Rock in 1965, to be assumed by them after her death.

David Terry was a prominent citizen of Little Rock. He had been admitted to the Arkansas Bar in 1903; and after years of successful practice, he served as United States Congressman for four terms. In 1935 he was the sponsor of the first legislation providing for direct federal aid to the public schools. After an unsuccessful bid for the United States Senate he was appointed by President Roosevelt to be director of the Flood Control River and Development Commission for Arkansas. He was also concerned with local affairs, and he served on the Little Rock School board and as president of the Little Rock Boys' Club. He died in 1963.

The old home is an outstanding example of Greek Revival architecture. It has been the home of one of America's most colorful figures, a poet-scholar-soldier of national reputation, Albert Pike. It was also the home of a poet of international reputation, John Gould Fletcher, besides being the residence of two men prominent in Arkansas. Thus, the house has a unique historical and cultural significance worthy of notice.

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