

Smokehouse & Carriage House

The Smokehouse, c.1817

The central section of the smokehouse was constructed c.1817. The interior rafters are where the prized country hams were hung while a slow fire preserved and flavored them. The tall, conical shape of the ceiling helped the smoke linger, drawing it up. The smoke escaped through the openings in the brick. The adjacent wings—one of which houses a coach given to Henry Clay by the citizens of Newark in 1833—were added as storage prior to 1882.

Henry Clay's Coach and McDowell Era Carriage House

Attached to the smokehouse are two wings added as storage space before 1882. Henry Clay's coach is located inside the eastern wing. This coach was presented as a gift to Henry Clay from the citizens of Newark, New Jersey in 1833. The stately C-spring coach weighs approximately 1,500 pounds and can accommodate four passengers. The driver sat in the front guiding as many as six horses. Clay and his family used the coach in their travels for many years. It remained at Ashland until 1874 when it was displayed at an exposition in Louisville and purchased by a Louisville carriage maker. It remained in Louisville until 1951 when a descendant of the carriage maker gave it to the Henry Clay Memorial Foundation. The coach was in bad condition, having survived two fires between 1874 and 1951. It was restored by generous donors in 1951 and again in 1991.