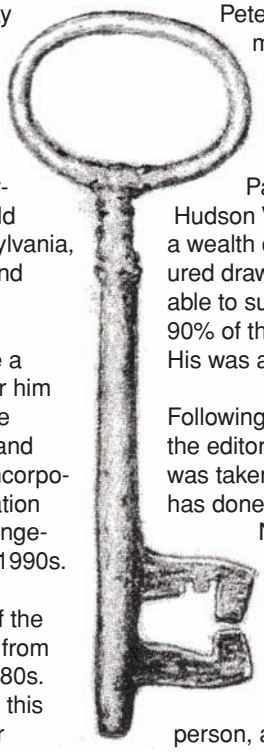
The Society for the Preservation of
Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture

January – March 2010 **Newsletter** Vol. 13, No. 1-3

President's Letter

Nineteen years ago, Peter Sinclair published Living History, the ancestor of the HVVA Newsletter. The earliest issues of Living History dealt primarily with agricultural matters, such as the cultivation of fruit and vegetables, and the breeding of 'Old Spot' pigs. As time went by, there began to be references to barns and hay barracks. Hay barracks had a special place in Peter's heart, and you can say that he became a world expert on them. Peter was also interested in timber framing. I attended several conferences of the Timber Framers Guild with Peter – at Bethlehem Pennsylvania, Williams Lake in Ulster County, and Plymouth, Massachusetts.



Peter found Living History, as fine a publication as it was, too much for him to deal with on his own, and made arrangements with the New England Farm and Home Association to incorporate it as a section in their publication Rural New England, and this arrangement lasted for a time in the mid-1990s.

Peter and I had been members of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society from its earliest years, from the late 1980s. Most of the field trip organized by this group were centered in the Upper Hudson, around Albany, Rensselaer, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties. It bothered Peter that there seemed to be little interest on the part of those planning D.B.P.S. field trips in studying and recording the Dutch barns of the lower Hudson Valley, and thus the 'Mid Hudson Chapter of the D.B.P.S.' was born in 1999. In spite of living in far away Long Island, and with involvements with a period house in Connecticut, I attended as many of the field trips that Peter organized as I could, and started producing drawings and text for use in Peter's new publication.

In early 2000, the momentous decision was made to essentially break the connection with the D.B.P.S. and the Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular was established, and registered with the State of New York. At first its logotype had the initials SPHVV, but in August 2000 'Architecture' was added to the name and it became HVVA.

And so it was until the Fall of 2006 that Peter Sinclair, almost singlehandedly produced and distributed monthly issues of the HVVA Newsletter. Much of the content Peter garnered on field trips he made with Roger Scheff, Alvin Sheffer and Bob Hedges. Important discoveries were made, vastly expanding our knowledge of the Dutch, the Palatines, and the English in the Hudson Valley. The publication provided a wealth of documentation in text, measured drawings and photographs. I was able to supply some of this material, but 90% of the HVVA Newsletter was Peter's. His was a phenomenal achievement.

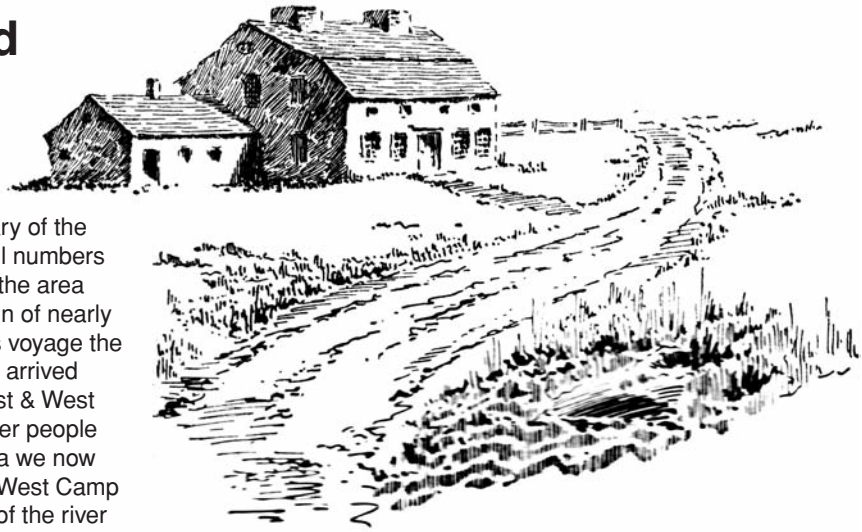
Following Peter's stroke in October 2006, the editorship of the HVVA Newsletter was taken in hand by Rob Sweeney who has done an excellent job of producing the Newsletter and getting it to the membership. Rob has also done an exemplary job of organizing field trips and other events for the benefit of the HVVA membership. But it is a huge amount of work for one person, and we need more contributions in the form of written articles, drawings, photographs from the membership. One solution might be to "broaden our horizons" and have articles on cultural aspects of our vernacular heritage, but while still attempting to keep our major focus on architecture? My own emphasis is going to continue (a) the study of gable-fronted houses and to explore an idea that they were possibly the most common house form into the first half of the 18th century, and (b) to try to find early examples of timber-frame house construction in Ulster County. There is still plenty of work to be done on uncovering the history of our building heritage!

John Stevens
January 2010

Around the Neighborhood

By Ken Walton

(photos by author unless otherwise noted)



In 2010, we will be celebrating the 300th anniversary of the arrival of the Palatines to the Hudson Valley. While small numbers of Palatines did arrive earlier, such as the forty or so in the area of Newburgh a couple years before, the mass emigration of nearly 3,000 folks departed from England in 1710, making this voyage the largest single migration during the colonial period. They arrived October 4, 1710 at their "permanent" settlements of East & West Camps along the Hudson River, although with 25% fewer people due to the high mortality rate. East Camp being the area we now call Germantown on the east shore of the Hudson and West Camp (the area is still named such), being on the west shore of the river in the northeast corner of Ulster County, north of the village of Saugerties, but then was part of Albany County. A program was set about by Queen Anne of England to take this group of religiously persecuted (by Louis XIV of France) refugees of the Rhine region to the new world in order to produce naval stores from the abundant pine forests in exchange for the debt accrued in their transportation and care upon arrival.

Discontentment of the Palatines settled in almost immediately upon arriving. They were of the belief they were to be sent to the Schoharie valley for lands promised to them there and settling at the Camps along the Hudson was unacceptable to most of them. While there were several reasons for the failure of the program, this became the primary factor in the release from their obligations to the Crown in 1712. However, Henry Beekman, the son of the patentee of nearby Rhinebeck, convinced 35 Palatine families to create farmsteads on land leased to them where they would pay an annual rent for generations to come.

In the Neighborhood

Today, unfortunately, virtually nothing exists of the East Camp settlement. The closest testament we have of the Palatines of the area is the 1746 Parsonage House (Pfarrhaus) at 20 Maple Avenue in Germantown. The stone section of this bank house (now covered with stucco) is considered the earlier section with the kitchen in the cellar. A side hall entrance on the level above leads to the main room on the left. A framed addition was constructed to the right of the entrance in 1767. The Germantown History Department is based out of the latest "kitchen wing" of the house. They have published a pamphlet with an in depth history of the early pastors and the later families that have occupied it over the years, including a detail description of the last major renovation started in the late 1940's which most likely saved the house from complete destruction.

1746 Parsonage House (Pfarrhaus) in Germantown

Johann Michael Pultz house, c.1740, (now the Old Rhinebeck Inn) in Rhinebeck.

One of the most notable examples of a Palatine farmstead is fortunately one of the oldest and best documented to exist. Best of all it is currently being restored with hopes of opening it up as a public museum. The farmstead I'm referring to is the Neher-Elseffer-Cotting-Losee site in Rhinebeck on Route 9, just north of the intersection with Route 9G and is commonly known as the Palatine Farmstead. Franz Neher, a cordwainer by trade, built the house in 1727. In 1762, he sold the property to Lodowick (Ludwig) Elseffer and has remained in the family for seven generation until 2001. The house does display some Federal-style characteristic from a remodeling in 1830. It is to this era the preservation of the house will be restored to. Also on the property still stands a Dutch barn built in 1770 and is being restored as well. Heading up this effort is the Palatine Farmstead Committee of the Quitman Resource Center for Preservation and tours can be arranged by contacting them. For those also interested in old churches, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. Peter built of stone in 1784 and was remodeled with the bell tower and a new entrance in 1824 is just a little further north on Route 9. It is on the site of the first Palatine church built of logs in 1730.

Adam Ackert, one of the original Palatines, built a stone house at 66 Fox Hollow Road, off the west side of Route 9, south of the

village of Rhinebeck. It contains a stone lintel on the east side marked “A.E. 1719” (Ackert was often spelled with an “E” in early records.) A farmer, Adam, had a total of eighteen children after being married twice. Many of his descendants remained in Rhinebeck or crossed to the west shore of the Hudson. John Brown purchased the house and enlarged it in 1763. The house is known for his son, Abraham, or as “Willowdale.” It remained in the Brown family for more than two hundred years. This house is currently for sale, if anyone is interested in living in a historic home of Palatine background. Along Fox Hollow Road, was the old route used by the area’s farmers to bring their wheat to the mill on the Landsman Kill.

For an opportunity to stay overnight in an old Palatine farmhouse nearby, seek out the Johann Michael Pultz house at 340 Wurtemburg Road in Rhinebeck. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The house as it stands now evolved one room at a time. The current proprietor of the Bed & Breakfast (Old Rhinebeck Inn) states on their website the dining room was built as a single room house in 1740. The house was expanded into a five bay, center hall house with a chimney at each end by 1750. The theory put forth in Nancy V. Kelly’s book, Rhinebeck’s Historic Architecture, is the two bay section to the north was built around the same time as a separate structure and was repositioned to become a wing around 1800. There is no mention when the south wing was built, but the fieldstone foundation is exposed at the rear with an entrance to the kitchen cellar. One can visit the B&B’s website to see photographs of the rooms.

Wurtemburg evolved as a grouping of farms to the southeast of Rhinebeck as Henry Beekman brought a second wave of Palatines directly from the Wurtemberg area of Germany in 1730’s. Soon after, in 1760, Pultz donated some of his land to the south of his farm for the building of a church. Now standing on site is the 1832 / 1861 version of the Federal styled church built in 1802 to replace the original structure. There are other old homes strung along this road that were built after the Pultz house and is certainly worth a ride along the length of the old road.

Also sitting on part of the Wurtemburg tract at 12 Old Primrose Hill Road is the Captain Matthias Progue house with a 1763 datestone and is on the NRHP. Its likely Matthias came over in this second wave and became a captain of a sloop for Henry Beekman. The roadside elevation creates the appearance of a two-story house, but in fact, is built into the hillside with only its upper story exposed at the rear. Further west on the road on just the other side of the hill is a very vernacular wood frame house

This house is next door to the Progue house on Old Primrose Hill Road. Does anyone know whose house this was and how old?

Traver House at 55 Wynkoop Lane in Rhinebeck.

encompassing a later style center gable. While I suspect a Progue descendant erected it, this is just a guess and I would like to hear from one who knows more about the place.

On a circa 1749 map, it shows a plain Henry Beekman called Bocke Bush (Beech Woods), which laid south of the village and west of the current Route 9. He divided this land into four farms to be leased. Two surviving stone houses overlook this plain. One can be seen on the west side of Route 9 with a street number of 6125. It is known as the Steenberg Tavern. The other is listed on the NRHP as the Fredenburg House, a Dutch family who was a later owner. It is likely the original owner was Nicholas Emigh (Eighmy), one of the 1710 Palatine emigrants. The house has a cornerstone dated 1716. By 1728, he left Rhinebeck to settle in Beekman further south in Dutchess County, where larger farms were available and the house became the property of Fredenburg family. In the mid-19th century, it was incorporated into the Livingston’s Grasmere estate. The house still contains many of the German vernacular features. The one and a half story structure has clapboard siding in the gable and it is considered the primary entrance to the home is in the east gable end. The garret level retains a domed section of the chimney that served as a meat-smoking chamber. The current owner completed a large frame addition on the north side of the house in the past couple of years.

One of my favorite houses in the area is the Traver House at 55 Wynkoop Lane just off Route 385, also known as the Sepascot Trail. It is a structure with many external clues to the story of how it has evolved over the years. Kelly describes the north end of the house as the oldest part; that of a 1730-50 period one room house with massive beams with slight chamfers. The house is constructed into the steep hillside so the east elevation has the cellar exposed with a door and small windows. The primary entrance is stated to be the one in the north gable end that leads to the upper level and has a peak of clapboard with a steeply pitched roof. The section to the south dates from about 1790 and the stone first floor has its own door and a wood frame second story. In 1959, a kitchen addition and part of the rear wall were removed and a frame wing was added. As late as 1929, the wooden grain storage bins were still in place in the garret. Anna Maria Hoffman, the widow of Nicolas Traver (Treber), was among the 1710 Palatine families. This house is believed to be the home of her eldest son, Bastian Traver.

A few decided to settle to create homesteads really deep in the wilderness. Even today, the Melius-Bently house can be con-

The Jacob Bookstaver house, c.1750, in Montgomery, Orange County.

Muller house in Montgomery, Orange County. There is a vertical seam between the right & center eyebrow window. To the right of the seam is claimed to be built in 1724.

sidered remotely situated at 270 Mt Ross Road (CR 50) near the county line for Columbia and Dutchess. Looking upon this house is like looking at an architectural timeline of the 18th century. At the left end, stands the one and a half story, one room house with a single slant roof line of the early 1700's. To the right, the mid-18th century expansion follows the same lines as the original structure but being a larger version that is two rooms deep and therefore having a higher roof line plus a dormer. On the far right end is the full 2 story, 3-bay Federal expansion that was added near the close of the century. This house appears it could be a true study of the development of living quarters throughout colonial times. Unfortunately, it is hard to get a clear look at the place for the road as there is a high stockade fence across the entire front with even higher vegetation growing directly behind it.

There are some more Palatine houses that have been in various publications, such as the Hendrick Martin House on Route 9, on the north side of the village of Red Hook. Also, the Pitcher House on Pitcher Lane in the town of Red Hook received fairly extensive coverage in the October and November, 2005 issues of the HVVA newsletter. These articles can be viewed from the website. If one desires, one can even dine on Sushi in a Palatine house. Edo Sushi is right on Route 9 in the village of Hyde Park and occupies the stone house once belonging to the Bergh and Stoutenburgh families. More in line with its history, it used to house a German restaurant for many years.

Before heading to the west side of the Hudson for a "looksie" at what Palatine houses exist there, near the bridge that crosses the river, on River Road north of Route 199 is one more house I wish to mention. At the street address of 703 is a stone house that belonged to the Feller family. Another bank house the central cellar door faces away from the road frontage. The first floor features a "Dutch" door surmounted by a five-pane transom. It also has cut lintels and stone sills. The five bay front porch and gable dormers were a much later addition. Recently, c.1750 farmhouse was joined to a much larger building in the rear by means of an ell.

Over on the other shore of the Hudson, that being the settlement of West Camp, one family, the Dederick's, decided to stay and prospered in the immediate vicinity for generations. William Dederick's stone house of 1743 still stands today on a remnant of an old West Camp road. It even served as the local black smith shop and Post Office. The house was "modernized" in 1800 to give it a more Georgian style look, but the first floor still reveals its Palatine roots. A few hundred yards further north and right on Route 9W, is a stone house known to most as only the "West Camp" house. This place has been for sale for many years and is in need of a lot of TLC, but little is known about its history. It would be easy to conclude it has a Palatine background being in the heart of West Camp, but what little I have manage to dig up about the place associates it as either the Dutch house of Gemmerling or TenEyck and that it may have been built as early as 1735. If anyone has any information that would clear up the line of ownership, I would like to hear from you. Lets hope it will soon get the attention it so needs to keep it around for its tricentennial, for there has already been a house (and Dutch barn) in the area that was lost in recent years. On Emerick Road, which leads to the river from Route 9W, was a Dederick descendant who built a classic center hall, one and a half story stone house in 1762. Known as the Friendship Farm and Jack Donahue's sport camp, it succumbed to fire by arson.

Another prominently known Palatine house in Saugerties is the Trumpbour Farm on the east side of Old Kings Highway, north of the Katsbaan Church. Nickolas, as tradition goes, built this stone house for one of his daughters around 1732. The property is still owned by his descendants and there was a recent effort by the family to convert the house into a museum of Palatine history. The attempt appears to have fizzled and I do not know why.

There are far too many Palatine houses in the town of Saugerties to mention them all here and it can become quite a task to keep them all straight. For instance, on Kings Highway heading south of the village, there is a string of Myer family homes. There's the obvious one with a historic marker stating the stone house is on land deeded to Christian Myer in 1724, of whom, eighteen descendants served in the Revolutionary War. Many of their homes still exist, but I have not been able to figure out whose is who, including the one mentioned above with the marker. There are two more that are so similar, I would draw the conclusion they were built right around the same time. This would be the one at 1032 Kings Highway and one at 22 Warren Myers Road (yes, the street name could be a clue, but many times streets are named for a later generation). Is there someone who can help clear up the ambiguity around this cluster of family homes? For those wishing to learn more about the Palatine houses in the Town of Saugerties and visit some in person, the town's Historic Preservation Commission will be holding a tour in May. Watch the HVVA website for upcoming details.

One region that does not seem to get as much recognition, but had a strong concentration of Palatines is the Town of Montgomery in Orange County. I have not yet determined if this group branched off from the Camps or were some that migrated from Newburgh, but are worthy of mention.

The easiest to find is the Smith-Miller house, known as the Montgomery House on the historic marker. Built by Hans Smith in 1771, it was upgraded by Johannes Miller twenty years later to a 2 story, 5-bay wide house. But not a typical 5-bay house of the period, it consists of a side hall main entrance at the south end. Miller was an important participant in the creation of the Newburgh–Cochecton Turnpike in the early years of the ninetieth century, which runs right in front of his house, known today as Route 211. The house sits on the south edge of the village, just before reaching the Orange County airport.

In looking for the Jacob Bookstaver Palatine house on the NRHP, I accidentally stumble onto the Muller house at 198 Schmidt Lane off of Albany Post Road in Montgomery. The owner has done some research in an attempt to place this house on the NRHP. He states, the right side of this timber frame house is the original one room house plus garret built in 1724. There is still evidence of the ladder and trap door that led to the garret. The remainder of the house was added in 1750. In order to reach the Bookstaver house, one has to drive up the driveway of the Muller place, which used to be the old road from the village. Continuing up the dirt path, a historic marker will announce your approach to the wood framed, center hall, one and a half story house. While the date it was built is not known, it is believed to be a mid-18th century home that was remodeled in 1779 as a rafter bears that year. His descendants made more modifications around 1845.

Above: *Unidentified house at 246 Spring Lake Road in Red Hook. Could this be an old Palatine homestead?*

Below: *Unidentified house at 64 Stone House Road in the Town of Clinton. Looking for info on this great stone house.*

Some of the Orange County Palatines also used stone, as late as the 1770s, to build their houses. The Gideon Pelton farmstead on Rockafellow Lane is one such example. The stone section built in the 1770's is sandwiched between a large framed "addition" of 1830s vintage and a diminutive yet even newer wood frame addition to the other side.

The Nosy Neighbor

While following the Dutchess County Tourism driving tour for the northern part of the county, I happened onto a house that just screams "EARLY PALATINE" to me. At 246 Spring Lake Road in the northeast corner of the town of Red Hook, sits on the south side of the road a one and a half story, three bays with a right-sided entrance and four over four sidelights. Two obvious late replacement four-over-four windows are to the left of the door. A later bay was added to the right of the door with an additional six-over-six window. The metal roof is steeply pitched with no dormers. I would like to hear from anyone who has any background on this place.

Of course, this does not even scratch the tip of the mountain of Palatine houses in the region of the Hudson Valley, not to mention those just a little further west in Schoharie Valley. There will be no better year to get out and hunt down some of these gems. Take advantage of the celebrations planned throughout the year as many of the locales honor their heritage.

When hunting for old houses, sometimes just looking at the map will give you enough of a clue as to where to find one. They can even be down right specific as to what kind of house to find. Such is the case when looking around Rhinebeck and close by in the Town of Clinton, I saw on the map; Stone House Road. I just had to drive along that road and sure enough… there it was!… the classic Dutch one-and-a-half story stone bank house with a center hall with clapboard gables, three shed dormers and a rustic full width portico. Please, someone tell me it is a genuine 18th century Dutch house? ■

For more information about most of these houses and more, go to www.HVVA.org and click on the "Mapping History" tab. Anyone that can add more information to any of the mentioned houses or has any other comments they wish to send, please drop me a line by email at ***kaw9862@optonline.net*** *or by snail mail: Ken Walton, 12 Orchard Drive, 2nd Fl., Gardiner, NY 12525. On the subject line of the email, please include 'HVVA' – so I can expedite a response. Until next time… happy hunting!*

A Half-timber house at Gottefroy, Orange County

By John Stevens

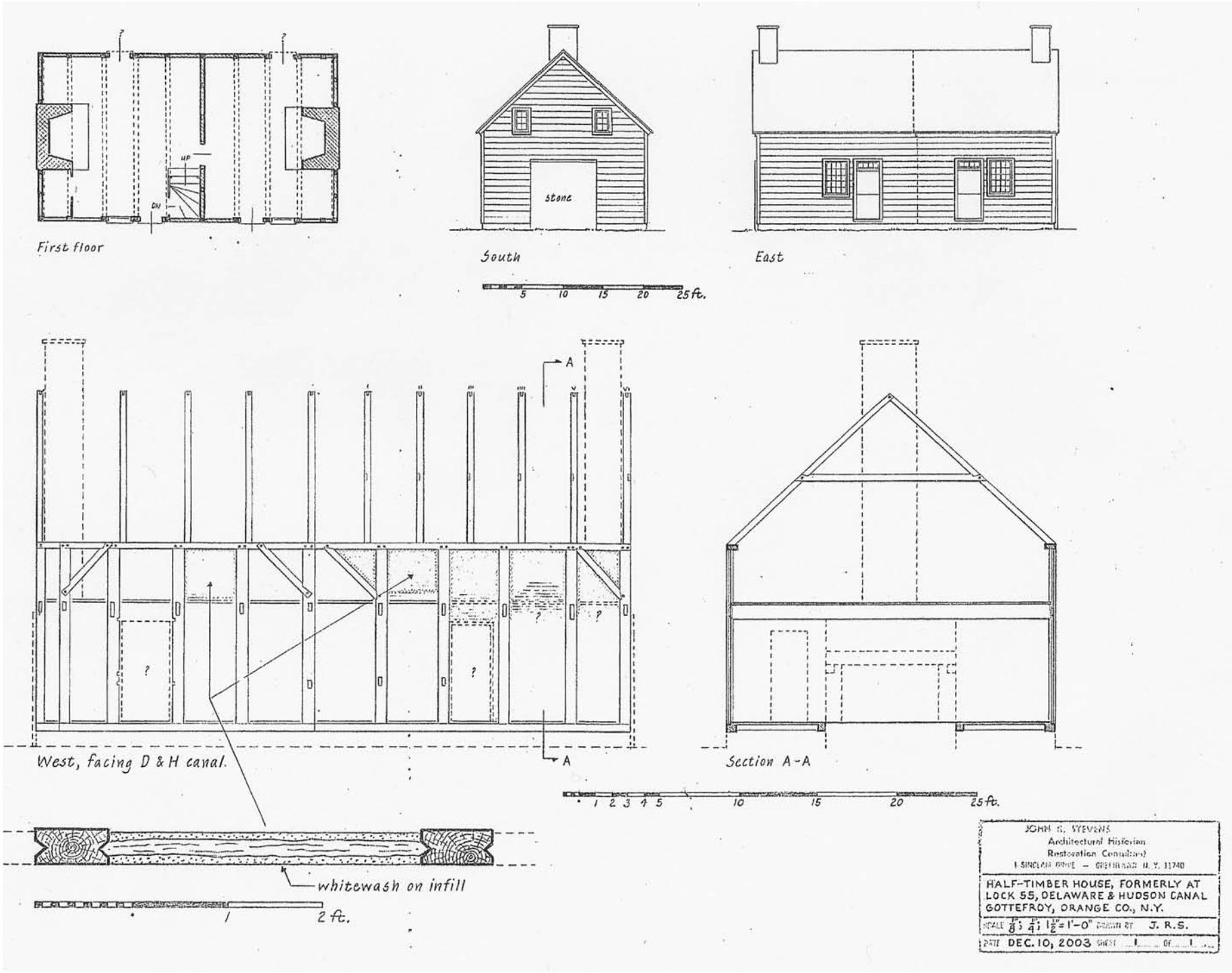
In the *HVVA Newsletter* of January, 2007 (Vol. 9, No.1) there is an article of mine on an unusual half-timbered house located on Rt. 209 in the Village of Westbrookville, Sullivan County. Another half-timber house found on the same expedition in November, 1967 was located in the Village of Gottefroy in Orange County. This ruined and abandoned building was located close to the road. It faced east. Not far behind it were the remains of a lock on the Delaware and Hudson Canal. I have subsequently learned that this was lock 55, one of a flight of locks south of the Neversink Aqueduct. The house had served as a lock-keeper's house when the canal was in operation.

It interested me that the house had the paired door and window arrangement that I had become familiar with in my work on the Minne Schenck house at Old Bethpage Village Restoration, and represented a Dutch-American house type (twin-door house) found in the lower Hudson Valley and Long Island in New York, and in northern New Jersey. The general aspect of the house was of the early 19th century. The walls seen from the road were weatherboarded and it had a moderately pitched roof.

What was seen on its back (west) side presented quite a different picture. On this side the framing was fully exposed and there was no evidence of cladding, like the weather-boards on the other walls. Here was H-bent framing from three building campaigns. The northern part was the oldest-initially 16 feet long, and with 1½ feet added to its north wall for reasons difficult to understand! The southern part was 20 feet long, making the total length of the house 37½ feet. The house was 21 feet in width. The height between the first and second floors was 7 feet, 6 inches. The front and back walls measured 12 feet from the underside of the sills to the tops of the plates.

Like the Minne Schenck house, the inside faces of the wall posts were exposed- about an inch was left showing. This seems to have been commonly done up to the middle of the 18th century when it became customary to plaster over the interior faces of the posts. The wall panels were infilled with clay and straw packed around riven sticks. These sticks had sharpened ends that fitted in 'V' grooves cut in the sides of the posts all the way from the sills to the plates. The Minne Schenck house had similar infill, but in its case the infill was applied after the cladding (shingles on riven wood lath) was in place. In its case, the riven sticks fitted snuggly between the posts, and were held in position by ¾ inch square pieces nailed to the sides of the posts.

But the Gottefroy house was something different – it originally did not have wooden cladding, as noted above, there was no evidence that the west wall ever did have it. Both the exterior and interior surfaces of the infill had been worked smooth and whitewashed. For many years I had a chunk of this exterior wall material, with its whitewashed


First floor
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East
stone
5 10 15 20 25ft.
A
A
West, facing D & H canal.
Section A-A
1 2 3 4 5 10 15 20 25ft.
whitewash on infill
2 ft.
JOHN G. STEVENS
Architectural Historian
Restoration Consultant
1 SINCLAIR DRIVE — GREENLAWN N. Y. 11740
HALF-TIMBER HOUSE, FORMERLY AT
LOCK 55, DELAWARE & HUDSON CANAL
GOTTEFROY, ORANGE CO., N.Y.
SCALE 1/8"; 1/4"; 1 1/2"=1'-0" DRAWN BY J. R. S.
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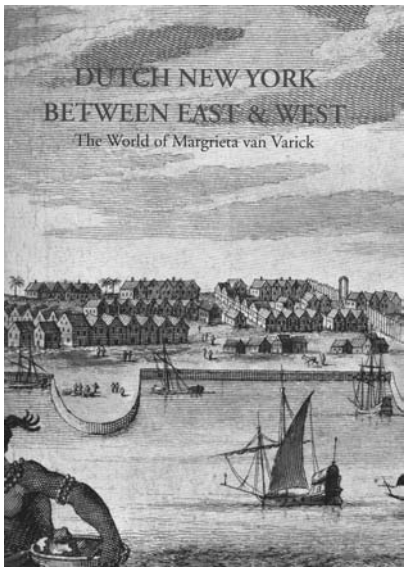
Book Review



Dutch New York
Between East and West
The World of Margrieta van Varick

Presented in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage of discovery and celebrating the lasting legacy of Dutch culture in New York, this book explores the world of a fascinating woman, her family, and the possessions she accumulated over an eventful lifetime. Margrieta van Varick was born in 1649 in the Netherlands, but she spent many years at the extremes of the Dutch world – in Malacca on the Malay Peninsula and in Flatbush, now part of Brooklyn. She arrived in New York in 1686 with her husband, a Dutch Reformed minister, and set up a textile shop, bringing with her an astonishing array of objects from the Far East and Europe. Her shop goods, along with her household furnishings, were meticulously recorded in an estate inventory made after her death in 1695.

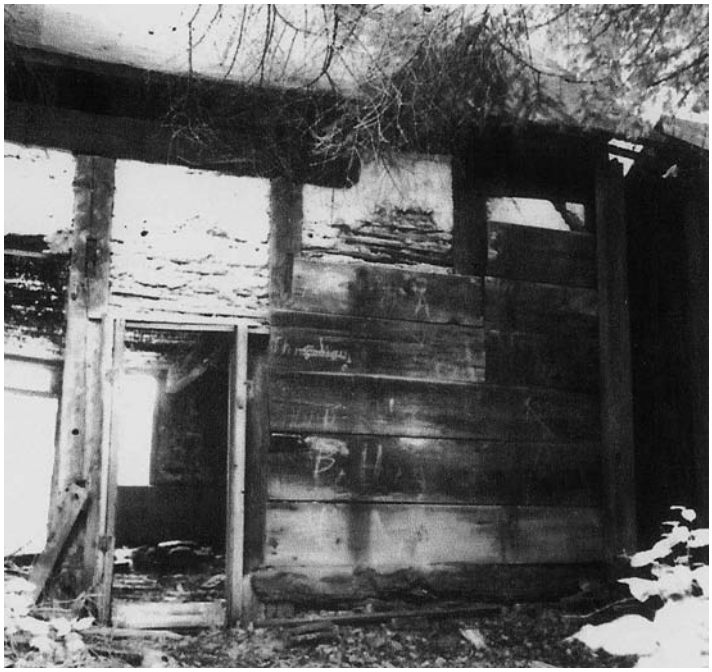
The inventory lay forgotten for more than two hundred years but was rediscovered in the twentieth century, pointing the way to new research into the histories of New York City, the Dutch overseas trading empire, women, and material culture. An intriguing selection of this ground-breaking research is presented in this volume. It has been edited by Peter Miller, Dean and Chair of Academic Programs at the Bard Graduate Center, and Deborah Krohn, Associate Professor at the BGC. Essays by leading scholars in the field illuminate aspects of Margrieta's world. An interview with renowned historian Natalie Zemon Davis conducted by Peter Miller considers the role of inventories in historical inquiry. Although to date it has been impossible to link specific objects to the items in Margrieta's inventory, representative objects have been chosen for the exhibition. They serve as springboards to discussions by a group of more than thirty leading curators and scholars, covering different areas of expertise, who have contributed catalogue entries. The intense investigation of the past by this wide group of scholars holds up a mirror to present-day New York and serves as a reminder of a vanished world.

surface in my office, along with one of the wall sticks but they seem to have been left behind when I left Old Bethpage Village!

The 'V' groove method of supporting infill seems to have a Palatine connection. I also saw this method used in the wall construction of the Lutheran Parsonage at Schoharie (see Plate 20 in *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830*) and it has also been seen in the Hudson Valley in the area where the Palatines were settled in the early 18th century, to produce 'naval stores' such as pine tar (see *D.V.A. in N.A.*, page 42, figure 31).

Incidentally, a photograph of the north wall of the Lutheran Parsonage at Schoharie, taken when the house was being restored, and seen by the writer on a visit to it in 1999 showed that under the weatherboarding, the original white-washed infill panels had survived. Related to this is the 'Secondary house' at the Ariaantje Coeymans house. Within the 'connector' between it and the north wall of the stone house its infilled and whitewashed south wall survives. Two differences, however: the sticks that hold the infill in place are smaller than those at the Parsonage, are rounder in section and the ends fit in bored holes in the faces of the posts on 6 inch centers. This same technique was used in the John Bowne house (1661) at Flushing, Queens County, and in the hall walls of the Jean Hasbrouck house at New Paltz in Ulster County. The other difference is that instead of the exterior surfaces of the wall posts being exposed, they were hacked and plastered over.

I have not been back to Gottefroy since I measured the house under discussion so many years ago, and I would suppose it was demolished. But maybe not? Perhaps it is worth another look? ■



HVVA Ghent Tour

By W. R. Wheeler

A dozen or so members of HVVA convened in Ghent, Columbia County, on 21 November 2009. Three houses on Leggett Road and County Route 22 were on the agenda; an invitation to look at a fourth house was extended to diehards at the end of the day.

Our first stop was the Nicholas Kittle house at 1346 County Route 22 (42˚19'41.88"N, 73˚40'34.37"W, 302' elev.). The present owners' received knowledge is that the house was constructed in 1754 or thereabouts, and that the east end (the house faces NNW) constitutes an earlier dwelling brought to the site at a later date.

This interpretation was borne out after some examination. This part of the house appears to have always been used as a kitchen. It is the only section of the dwelling which has a proper basement (the remainder having crawl spaces), suggesting that it might have been added quite early on – since a cellar would have been important for food storage. The evidence for interpreting the kitchen as an addition is chiefly documented by the presence of clapboard siding on the east gable of the main portion of the house in an area that is presently covered by the gable roof of the kitchen wing. Some during our visit thought they saw evidence of the frame of the kitchen wing fitting poorly onto the foundation, and suggested that it might not be the first structure on that site. If that is the case, a possible earlier kitchen would have had to have had a leanto roof to accommodate the observed gable clapboarding.

The kitchen wing had a fireplace, likely jambless, in its east wall. Evidence for this is found in a discontinuous end beam and a remaining trimmer. The beams in this portion of the house are all beaded, except for the side of the first interior beam which faces the former jambless location. There is no shelf or other indications of a support for a hearth in the basement, further suggesting that the present structure might have been moved and that the jambless wasn't rebuilt at the new site. This portion of the house may date to c.1760. The floors have concealed splines. Portions of the beam ends were exposed, and evidenced marriage marks on some examples. Two early sash remain on the second floor in the east gable end. A paneled door of a type also seen leading to the west wing is preserved in a second floor chamber of this part of the house.

As originally constructed the main portion of the Kittle house was probably either one room, or a room and a half deep. The small size of the structural components indicates that it may have been constructed c.1785. This portion of the house was originally five bents wide; high placement of the windows and smooth planing indicate that the beams were left exposed. The walls were filled with brick nogging, two panels of which are presently visible in the kitchen. An additional three bents (2 bays) were added to the west, probably c.1790. A final small addition with neoclassical detailing on the interior dates to c.1810 and was added to the west. So the house grew rather quickly to its present form. The floors of all of these portions of the dwelling appear to be tongue-and-groove.

Graffiti on the west side of the collar tie located at the juncture between the two portions of the main part of the house is signed by Andrew Kittle, and although it's not entirely clear, it might make reference to either the construction of the addition, or of his residency on the site. It includes the word "housed" or "house." The author may have been Andrew son of John (1785-1855) or Andrew son of Nicholas, the earlier Andrew's grandson and alive in the 1870s (Thomas P. Hughes, American Ancestry Vol. II, Columbia County. Albany, NY: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887, p. 67; Hamilton Child, Gazetteer and Business Directory of Columbia Co., N. Y. for 1871-2. Syracuse, NY: The Journal Office, 1871, p. 239). Much of the wood used in the house appears to be pine.

Kittle House – 1346 County Route 22, Ghent

Above: *Detail of the Kittle house framing and exposed nogging.*
Below: *Graffiti of Andrew Kittle.*

The remaining three houses on our tour were all located on Leggett Road. The first two of these – at 342 and 297 Leggett Road – may be those identified in the 1873 Beers atlas as owned by J. Finkle at that time (D. G. Beers & Co., Atlas of Columbia County, New York. Philadelphia: D. G. Beers & Co., 1873, p. 43).

The house at 342 Leggett Rd. (42˚20'49.57"N, 73˚41'25.81"W, 362' elevation) is located at the juncture with Curtis Road. We met Ruth Piwonka at the site. The house has recently undergone extensive renovations under the direction of Kate Johns, Kinderhook architect. Work included refurbishment in the main portion of the house, as well as the construction of a substantial wing to the north and one to the east, off the east end of the house, together with landscaping.

342 Leggett Road, Gent

Above: *First floor hall at 342 Leggett Road, Gent*
Below: *Attic rafter pair looking east at 342 Leggett Road, Gent*

From the brief examination possible during the visit it was clear that the older part of the house was constructed in two phases. It now presents as a center passage dwelling of one and a half stories in height. As originally constructed, it may have been a two room dwelling without center passage. If this interpretation is correct, at some intermediary period before the west bay was added, partitioning was added to divide the western half of the house into a hall and two small rooms. It is possible that this was an original condition, and the house always had a transverse passage; additional work would be required to put this question to rest, however. Evidence for the two rooms (now subsumed into the parlor) is found in cuts in the wainscot and baseboard on the west wall of the hall, and the presence of gains on the west side of the beam over the west hall wall. The gains do not extend over the current single door, nor do they extend over a similar width to the north of that door, which corresponds to the patch in the wainscot on the other side of the wall. Together this evidence points to two doors, rather closely spaced on the west side of the hall. It is possible that the present north door was originally the door to the northwest chamber, and was simply relocated to its present site when the house was remodeled in the mid-19th century.

The entire early portion of the house has an excavated basement. Only the east room appears to have had a fireplace, suggesting the two small rooms (or, possible single large west room) went unheated. There is no basement under the west addition.

The west addition is indicated by differences in framing – the second floor joists are sawn, mid-19th century examples – and by the presence of gain cuts in the westernmost beam of what is understood as the original portion of the house. A Greek Revival mantle is located on the west wall.

The roof rafters have Roman numeral marriage marks on their west faces, possibly made with a saw, and extending most of the width of the face of the rafters. The rafters are pegged at their apex. Eight pairs were observed, and they are numbered from east to west. Two additional bents at the west end cover the mid-19th century addition. They are sawn and butt joined and nailed at their apex.

Most of the wood used in the house appears to be pine. Hemlock was possibly used in the mid-19th century addition. Extensive repairs have been made to the first floor structure.

After a late lunch we returned to Leggett Road, visiting the house at 297 (42˚20'38.60"N, 73˚41'22.37"W, 343' elevation). One of the notable features of this dwelling was the transverse beam, similar to one recently observed at the Rushmore house in Athens vicinity, Greene County, which was placed at a later date to give additional support to a series of long, undersized beams. I think this technique probably became necessary to repair houses constructed toward the end of the 18th century and in the early 19th century, when smaller beam dimensions were being used, and longer spans were being attempted. As at the Rushmore house, this beam, which is located in the east end of the dwelling supporting the second floor, has been interpreted by some as a summer beam. Close examination demonstrated that the small beams are continuous, and that they have simply been cut on their undersides to receive the supporting transverse beam. As at the Rushmore house, this beam is pine, and bears extensive weathering. I suspect that both represent early 20th century alterations, accomplished after the ceilings were removed. The older beams are oak or chestnut; the newer beam is pine or hemlock, and may have come from a barn. A groove cut along its entire length may represent the location of a board partition, but whether this was for its current installation or in its original site is unknown. The latter is likely, however, since a partition along that line would have intersected with the east fireplace at its center.

297 Leggett Road, Ghent

The house was constructed in (apparently) two phases. The beams at the west end of the house are pine, and are beaded. Those at the east end of the house are, as noted above, chestnut or oak, and are rough hewn. Although not visible because of recent work, the owner indicated that the collar ties at the east end of the house were comprised of saplings. Those at the west end of the house are sawn, with parallel kerfs.

A join in the north top plate is seen at the back of a small counter located at the top of the stairs. This identifies the location of the join between the two phases of construction. In the basement, the first floor joists of the east end are laid with their broader faces down, an older method. All signs point to the west portion – possibly as much as four bays wide – having been constructed later. What is confusing however, is that the first floor rooms were ceiled in the older portion of the house, yet are beaded and were finely planed in the west end of the house, before subsequently being ceiled over. It is not clear why this would be the case.

The house was recently renovated under the direction of Kinderhook architect Kate Johns. Much of the original or early work was covered at that time. The door leading from the basement kitchen to the exterior was modified to accommodate a raised basement floor, which now features radiant heat. The original partitions were removed at that level, and beaded boards, not native to the house, were installed there.

Graffiti is located at the SW corner of the foundation, west of the kitchen door, and on the marble stepping stone at the first floor entry. No barn survives on the site, but a late 19th or early 20th century outbuilding incorporate a rectangular porch post with lambs tongues into the studding of its east wall, possibly from the house.

The final stop of the day was 276 Leggett Rd. (42˚20'34.56"N, 73˚41'18.92"W, 350' elevation). We spent only a brief time in this house, which has recently been purchased by the owners of nearby 297 Leggett Road, as their future permanent residence. They plan on extensive renovations, including a substantial wing to the east with a family room and kitchen, to take in the view to the southeast. This house may be that identified on the 1873 Beers atlas as that owned by J. Fradenburgh (D. G. Beers & Co., Atlas of Columbia County, New York. Philadelphia: D. G. Beers & Co., 1873, p. 43).

The "upright" pavilion and "wing" portions of this house appear to have been constructed during one building campaign. The box frame of the upright section, with intermediary posts on the long sides, is visible at the second floor level in a crawl space in the wing, where it is seen to have never been clapboarded where it is covered by the wing. All technologies used point to a c. 1850-1860 construction date, and the owner confirmed that the house appears first on an 1857 map, but not on one from the beginning of that decade. As originally constructed the house was heated by stoves, with flues passing thru metal thimbles straight to the attic. No chimneys survive in the upright portion of the dwelling; it is possible that the flues extended thru the roof. A bracket chimney supported on a closet is located at the second floor level in the wing.

Reused structural members from an earlier dwelling, consisting of oak joists supporting the west end of the first floor of the upright section, and some other substantial, hewn members, were observed. These materials appear to date to the 18th century. The structural elements which were not reused appear to have all been pine or hemlock. Larger members were hewn, smaller were sawn. The top plates of the upright section of the house were continuous along the length of the house, perhaps 30 feet in length.

Thanks go to our hosts, who graciously opened their homes to us! ■

South-west corner of 276 Leggett Road, Ghent

Above: *View of the back of 276 Leggett Road, Ghent*
Below: *The bracket chimney on 2nd floor wing*

Wagon Doors in Dutch-American Barns (Part Two)

By Gregory D. Huber

This is the second installment of the three-part article on wagon doors in Dutch-American barns. The first installment covered a number of general topics seen that concerns wagon doors. They included basic wagon door construction, size of wagon door openings, wagon doors in the Netherlands and sizes of hay wagons among other topics.

In this second installment topics covered are the following:

- Seventeenth century wagon doors
- Bull barn with earliest wagon doors (?)
- Wooden hinged wagon doors in New York State
- Fifty barns with evidence of having wooden hinged wagon doors
- Wemple barn as classic example of traditional wagon doors
- Barns with wooden hinged wagon doors
- Pentices on end walls
- North and south country pentice types
- *Mittelmanse*
- Original Lengths of barns
- Off-center wagon doors

William Bull and Sarah Wells three-bay three-aisle barn near Goshen in Orange County, New York is purportedly the earliest classic barn that remains in the Dutch-American barn realm. It was dendro-dated 1726. Its roof structure and side aisles are not original.

Seventeenth Century Wagon Doors

To say that seventeenth century barns (or house barns) had wagon doors is to state the obvious. But actual references to wagon doors in seventeenth century contracts are unusual. One specific citation to a wagon door appears in a surviving contract dated February 8, 1674 where Harmen Bastiaensz undertook to build for Jan Maertensz at Kinderhook (Columbia County) a barn 50 feet long and 26 feet wide with ten foot wide side aisles (Dutch – *uytlaet* or outlets). A double door was to appear at the front end of the barn. (This information is found in – *Early Records of Albany* – Notarial Papers 1 and 2, 1660-1696, Pages 424-425.)

Possible original wagon door section at the Bull barn resting against far end wall. Modern wagon doors were patterned after the frame of this door. No front vertical wood boards remain on very old door.

Bull Barn – Earliest Barn with Wagon Doors?

The earliest barn of Dutch type in America thus far identified is the dendro-dated 1726 Bull family barn in Orange County, New York. A wagon door that may be an original one stands detached (against an end wall) in the barn. It has an ancient look. It is of frame construction where four horizontal wood pieces or bars are tenoned into a vertical mortised wood piece or stile on the attachment edge of the door. No front vertical boards remain. This door was actually a single full height door that constituted one half of the full wagon door – that is – both sides.

The wagon doors now in place at the barn were patterned after the apparent original wagon door just discussed. Sam Phelps a local Orange County contractor built both end wall wagon doors more than twenty years ago. Each end wall has two single height wagon doors – one at the right and one at the left. At the house side end wall each door measures 11 feet 9½ inches in height and 5 feet 6½ inches wide. Thus the wagon door opening is a little shy of 12 feet high by 11 feet wide. These modern doors are attached at two points along the outer edge of the door where a metal pintle is driven into the door post. Another metal piece is looped over the pintle and is driven diagonally through the vertical door stile and extends one inch out beyond the wood piece. This extension is slotted so that another metal piece is driven vertically into the slot and acts as a wedge. The door pivots on the pintle such that the door swings outwardly.

Close-up of pintle attachment of modern wagon door at Bull barn. Pintle is inserted into door post and it joins to metal piece that is inserted into stile of door frame.

Each door half has six vertical front face boards. The four horizontal reverse side bars (rails) are each 3½ inches by 2½ inches. Each bar is separated by about three feet two inches. There is also a single diagonal bar that stretches from one lower corner to the opposite upper corner. The horizontal bars are cut out half way through their thicknesses to engage the diagonal bar. The vertical member or stile is mortised at four different points to receive the tenoned horizontal bars and all joints are pegged.

There is just one main difference between the "near" end wall doors and the "far" end wall doors. At the near end doors the horizontal wood pieces join to only one side stile. In contrast, at the far end wall the horizontal wood bars join to two side stiles – at each of their ends. Why this difference was brought about is unknown.

All the frame wood pieces in the four modern door sections are oak. The front vertical boards are all pine. The one very old un-attached door has two horizontal oak pieces while all other pieces are non-oak and have not been identified.

Wooden Hinged Wagon Doors in New York State

As stated above about twenty-five barns have been found with at least one end wall or side entrance wall with its original wagon doors largely intact. Only two thus far have been seen in New Jersey while all the rest have been located in New York. The majority of all three-aisle barns of about pre-1810 vintage (probably rarely after this time) in New York State had wooden hinged wagon doors. However, a number of barns in the southern areas of the state and sporadically elsewhere and in all of New Jersey never had original wagon doors with wooden hinges. This statement is based on barns seen in the last 35 years.

There is one simple criterion in determining if wagon doors in a particular barn had wooden hinges. If prominent horizontal slots about three inches wide and three inches deep are present on wagon door posts that are original to the barn then it is known that wooden hinges were a part of the fabric of the doors. In most barns these slots extend across the full widths of the inner face of the door posts. But in certain cases as Bob Hedges reports particular barns on the east side of the Hudson River have door post slots that extend only about half way across the posts. These partial door post slots are a variation of the norm or those slots that appear across the full widths of the posts. These partial slots help to substantiate some of my own findings. All the slots received that part of the wooden hinge that went beyond the edge of the door. If four slots are seen in one door post then that side of the door opening had an upper door section and a lower door section – that is – two slots per door section – one slot for the upper hinge and one slot for the lower hinge. If there were three slots of equal width per door post then it is known that there was a single full height door at that side of the door opening. It appears that some full height doors had just two wooden hinges and therefore only two slots would have been included in these door posts.

Both sides of Bull barn's near end wall door opening is seen with frame constructed wagon doors.

The John Snyder circa 1820 side entrance Dutch-Anglo barn with slots in "interior" door post for wooden hinged wagon doors.

Many or most barns in about the northern 80% of where Dutch three-aisle barns were built in New York State in the pre-1810 era had wagon doors with wood hinges. Probably certain post 1810 barns also had wood hinged doors. Other barns of both pre and post 1810 time frames most likely had batten wagon doors.

Fifty Barns with Evidence of Having Wooden Hinged Wagon Doors

To date about fifty barns in New York have been located that have evidence of having had wagon doors with wooden hinges. Likely another dozen or so barns or even more had evidence of possessing wooden hinges that either went un-noticed or un-recorded. The surviving original fabric in these doors as far as all elements are concerned seen in the various barns has a considerable range. The most complete doors found thus far have been found in the Wemple barn near Schenectady where both end walls retain almost all the original elements of the doors. At the opposite end there was a barn off Route 101 in Albany County that had just three recycled wagon door posts and they were incorporated into a post 1800 barn. All the posts had slots for the reception of wooden hinges.

Barns with indications of having wooden hinges have been located in ten counties in New York State. The following (see below) is a breakdown of barns with

wooden hinged wagon doors in the counties where they have been found. There are two important aspects related to the incidence of these barns in various counties. One is that not all counties were investigated equally for barns that had wooden wagon door hinges. And not all counties had an equal number of barns built there or that survived there. These two factors skew the numbers seen below from what the actual relative occurrence of barns with wooden door hinges that originally existed in the early to mid nineteenth century and the actual survival rate of the doors into the late 20th century.

New York Counties	Number of Barns with Wooden Door Hinges
Ulster	26
Albany	9
Greene	3
Montgomery	3
Columbia	2
Schoharie	2
Rensselaer	2
Dutchess	1
Schenectady	1
Fulton	1

Clearly Ulster County has by far the greatest number of surviving barns with wooden hinged doors or having some evidence that they had them – that is wagon door posts with slots for the hinges. Two important things should be said about the high incidence of barns in Ulster County with wooden hinged doors. One – more Dutch related barns have been found in the county than any other county. Two – there are more pre-Revolutionary War era barns that remain in the county than anywhere else. Wagon doors would seem to have been a well established trait incorporated in barns by at least the mid-eighteenth century and likely before. Much more can be said about the dynamics on the differential numbers of barns that have been found in the various counties.

Of the numbers above, as many as 17 pre-Revolutionary War era barns have been seen with evidence of having original doors with wooden hinges. Three of the barns have been lost since their discovery. At least seven of these have been located in Ulster County. Seven of the 17 barns actually had most of the original fabric of the doors intact including the actual wooden hinges. Other barns lacked the doors but the tell-tale hinge door slots could be seen. Thus all the barns had various levels of originality – from the Wemple barn with virtually pristine condition doors to the dislodged barn doors found as part of the floor of side aisle lofts in two barns to only one or two door posts with the slots in other barns.

Wemple four-bay three-aisle barn near Schenectady, New York has the most complete set of end wall wagons doors (with wooden hinges) anywhere in Dutch settled areas.

As a special note of interest a three-aisle barn is located within about 3½ miles of the Adirondack State Park boundary that had wooden wagon door hinges. In addition, in that barn both end wall anchor-beams have three widely spaced mortises for pentice arm attachments. The barn is located in Fulton County in Ephratah on Route 10.

Van Bergen Barn - Earliest Known with Wooden Hinged Wagon Doors – Circa 1730

John Stevens visited the circa 1730 Van Bergen barn a few times. The barn formerly stood near Leeds in Greene County, New York. This was fortunate as it was revealed that the barn had wagon door posts with wooden hinge slots. His examination showed that the barn had only one main end wall wagon opening. The replacement wagon doors were three pieced – a full height door at one side and double half door sections at the other side. This can be seen in a 1928 photo (not shown here) of the barn.

Wemple Barn as Classic Example of Traditional Wagon Doors with Wooden Hinges

As a means of illustrating the basic or full appearance of end wall wagon doors with wooden hinges in a three-aisle Dutch-American barn the peerless Wemple barn serves as an outstanding and best possible example. This is very definitely the earliest surviving barn with nearly fully intact original wagon doors at both its end walls in Dutch-settlement areas in America. A two-part article was written exclusively on the wagon doors in the Wemple barn in the Barn Field Journal for the New World Dutch Barn Survey 2000 in the August 2005 and October 2005 issues – "The Original Threshing Floor Doors and End Wall Side-Aisle Animal Doors of the Wemple Dutch-American Barn." A discussion of these doors is included here as the article is very difficult for most readers to obtain. One photo of the doors is included in Fitchen's book and an excellent drawing of the southwest end wall doors is seen in John Stevens' book – *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America*. In this article sketches are seen of two of the three wagon doors – a single full height door and upper door half at the southwest end wall are provided to give a broad look at the fabric of the doors. A full photo of the northeast end wall wagon doors is also seen.

Before going on, it may interest some readers to know that Eric Sloane – the well known painter of early American farm scenes that often included barns – said several decades ago that no barns were known to have survived (into the second half of the 20th century) that had intact doors with wooden hinges. We know now that several doors with wooden hinges have been found in upstate New York.

The Wemple barn that stands in Rotterdam near Schenectady in Schenectady County, New York is a circa 1760 structure. This awe-inspiring barn was discussed in Fitchen's book and up-dated in the second edition (2001). It is a classic three-aisle barn of four-bay construction in excellent condition. It measures 56 feet long by 47 feet wide. It retains in nearly 100% original condition both its end wall wagon doors. At each end wall is a single full height door at one side and two half door sections – upper and lower halves at the other half of the wagon door opening. Each single height door is just shy of 12 feet high and 4 feet 8 inches wide. Each half door varies in its height – the upper doors are each 5 feet 9 inches high and the lower doors are 6 feet in height (at far end wall) and 6 feet 1½ inches in height (at the near end wall). All wooden hinges all of oak as originally included in the doors remain intact.

The inclusion of a full height door and two half doors per end wall was likely quite common in pre 1810 barns in much of New York State. This condition (only at one end wall) is seen in the older of the two Fredericks barns near Altamont in Albany County among other barns one of which is the excellent circa 1790 Ostrander barn (now ruinous) also near Altamont in Albany County. Certain post 1820 English style side wall entry barns in the Hudson River Valley also had a single full height door and two half doors at the wagon door opening. At least a few of these have been seen in Ulster County.

Interior of near end wall of Wemple barn is seen with its original half door height wagon doors with wooden hinges.

Most of the elements of the one wagon door complex at one end wall in the Wemple barn are nearly identical to all the other elements of the door complex at the other end wall. Thus the statements that follow about the "near" end wall doors (closer to the circa 1760 brick homestead house) apply to the "far" or northeast end wall doors. Certain exceptions will be noted. The only major difference but not related to any original conditions is that the full height door at the far end wall was cut horizontally in half at one point so that two door halves – an upper and a lower – were created. Later the two door halves were re-united. All three wood hinges remain.

It is important to note that many traits of the doors will not actually be included in this description as there are far too many aspects that would occupy too much space in this article. To render an idea of the number of details that could have been discussed almost two dozen pages of notes with a number of drawings were taken on the six door sections at both end walls in late September 2001 when the Wemple barn was documented. Suffice to say however that the most salient traits will be discussed.

Wagon Doors with Wooden Hinges

The wooden door hinges will now be described. The size and disposition of the wooden hinges in the wagon doors seen in the Wemple barn appear to be quite normal for a three-aisle barn where they occur. They can be of smaller size as for example the wooden hinges at the Nieuwkirk barn dated 1766 on Hurley Mountain Road west of Kingston.

In any given barn all wooden hinges in the wagon doors appear to be the same basic size. The Wemple barn is no exception in this regard. It seems that all wooden hinges in all examined barns thus far were made of oak *(Quercus spp.*) for obvious reasons of the need for strength. This is true even in barns that were constructed mostly or completely of pine (white or pitch variety) timbers. In the Wemple barn nearly all (or all) timbers were made of pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*). Even the wagon door posts of substantial size (11 by 9 inches) are of pitch pine where in other barns of pine door posts are fairly often of oak.

The oak hinges in the Wemple barn as in most barns (there are two known exceptions including the Collins barn west of Ravena in Albany County) extend across the full width of all door sections at both end walls. In addition there is about a seven inch extension (beyond the door edge) at each attachment end of each hinge. The full lengths of the hinges vary a bit from 5 feet 3 inches long to 5 feet 5 inches long. The extensions fit into the horizontal slots in the wagon door posts where they join to wood pintles. The hinges are of nearly uniform height along its full length – at the pintle end it is 2¾ inches and at the other end it is 3 inches. The thicknesses of the hinges vary by more than a factor of two to one. At the meeting edge (where two opposite door sections touch at each end wall) it is very close to two inches thick and at the pintle end it is just over four inches thick.

At near end wall of Wemple barn is wagon door post with slot for wooden hinged door. Door that swings on wood pintle is open and has swung into the barn.

The hinges are all neatly chamfered along their upper and lower edges. Unlike other doors in certain other barns there are no "knobby" or thickened ends (seen in the circa 1760 Oliver barn) at the pintle ends. The pintles secure the various door sections to the door posts. In the up country – north of Ulster County on the west of the Hudson River and north of Dutchess County on the east side of the river pintles are often attached to the posts in a different manner than those to the south.
In the north pintles in barns such as in the Wemple barn are set into vertical grooves in the door posts. Often in mid-Hudson River area barns pintles sit on top of the door posts. All pintles are almost always nailed via wrought nails to the posts. Possibly the longest pintle appears in the John Snyder barn west of Saugerties where the pintle secures two wood door hinges of two separate door halves.

Wood pintles in the Wemple barn are about 14 inches long and about 1¼ inches wide. Wood species of pintles was not recorded but is quite probably oak.

Battens on Wagon Doors

All door sections have at least one rear side batten. All the sections have a single diagonal batten. All the sections but one has a horizontal batten. Certain other barns with original wooden hinged doors have no horizontal battens at all such as the doors found at the Oliver barn site on the south side of Route 209 in Marbletown, Ulster County.

Each door section in the Wemple barn except the single height door at the northeast end wall has one diagonal batten. All the battens are pine. In very standard tradition in most vernacular barns in the northeast and likely beyond diagonal battens on every entry door (wagon, animal or human) stretch from the bottom corner at the attachment side of the door to the upper corner of the opposite side of the door. This orientation is done apparently to minimize sagging due to gravity. Remarkably enough, exceptions to this batten orientation occur in some barns.

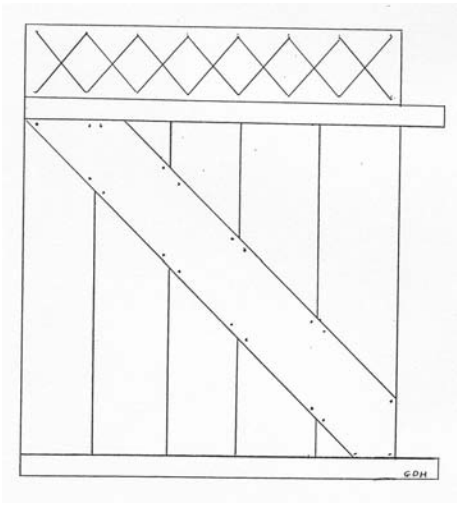
At the southwest end wall the diagonal batten of the single height door is the longest in the barn and is about 10½ feet long and 13¼ inches wide. Wrought nails secure the boards to the front vertical boards. The two diagonal battens of the single height door at the northwest end wall are about 5½ feet long and are 12 inches wide.

Each half height door has a single diagonal batten and those at the northeast end wall are 12 inches wide and those at the southwest end wall are each 10 inches.

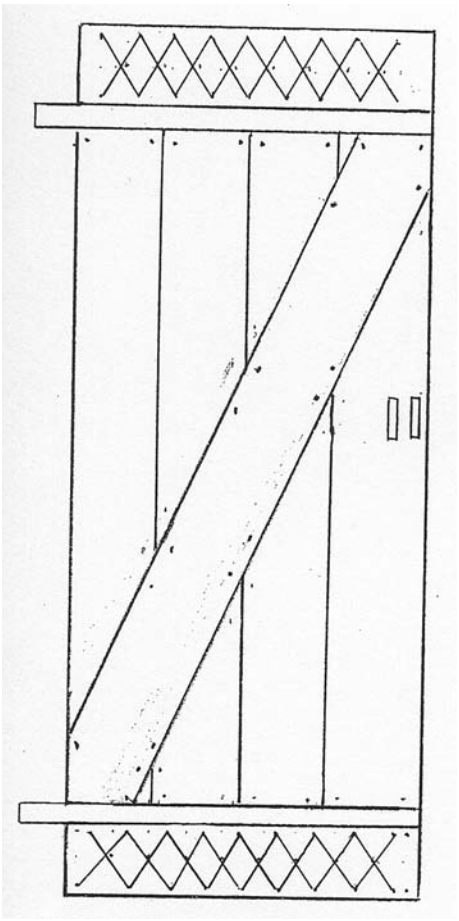
As far as horizontal battens are concerned all but two door sections have just one horizontal batten. The single height door at the southwest wall has a batten at both its top end and lower end. The upper door half at the northeast wall has no battens at all. These battens vary from ten to twelve inches wide. It is curious to note that both door sections at the northeast wall – the single height door and the upper half door each do not have upper battens. This reason for this apparent aberration is unclear.

Precisely Placed Scribe Lines forming X's on Horizontal Battens

One element of the high level craftsmanship seen in the Wemple barn is the placement of the wrought nails that secure the horizontal battens to the front vertical boards in all the wagon doors. They also appear in all the side-aisle animal entry corner doors. The nails were positioned where diagonal scribe lines cross. Such scribing on battens in Dutch related barns is extremely rare. The placement of nails in door battens in other barns while not random is not as precise as seen in the battens of the Wemple barn wagon doors. The superbly crafted circa 1790 Fredericks barn near Stone Arabia in Montgomery County (now disassembled) had doors with such X scribing.



Above: *Sketch of half door section at near end or southwest wall of Wemple barn. Note scribed Xs on batten on rear face of door.*
Below: *Sketch of full single height door section at southwest wall of Wemple barn. Note scribed Xs on two rear surfaces of battens of door.*



All the placements of the nails that varied somewhat from door section to door section in the Wemple barn were done in an utterly precise manner. That is to say for every batten in a given door the distances between nails in each row of nails or nails relative to other nails in different rows are absolutely consistent. For example, on the bottom batten of the single height door at the northeast wall there are three horizontal rows of nails. The upper and lower rows each consist of seven nails and the middle row consists of six nails. Horizontally each adjacent nail is placed a tad less than nine inches from each other. Each nail in the middle row is placed precisely half way (vertically) between the nails in the upper row and the lower row that are closest to it. In the process six Xs were formed.

Each of the horizontal battens in the single height door at the southwest wall has three rows of wrought nails. In contrast with the battens in the door mentioned above each of the upper row and the lower row has nine nails and the middle row has eight nails. Horizontally each adjacent nail is placed 6¾ inches from each other. Each nail in the middle row is placed precisely half way (vertically) between the nails in the upper row and the lower row that are closest to it. Thus eight Xs were formed. (See sketch that shows how the nails were positioned in battens in the southwest single height door.) More Xs were formed on the southeast end wall door because the nails were placed more closely to each other. These doors have lasted nearly a quarter of a millennium.

Wooden Door Latches

Door latches are seen on the single height door and the lower half door section on the southwest wall. They are both of the sliding bar type. The half door section is the more complete of the two. It is a three piece oak latch with 2 ten inch long upright keeps or retainers where the 18 inch long slide bar glides along. Slide bar is notched a bit at either end to fit into the vertical wood pieces. The two pieces are separated by 11½ inches.

Just above the sliding bar latch is a possibly original or very old oak and metal door lock that is 10¼" by 5½". This lock is set "into" the wood of the rear face of the front vertical board of the door. Three bolts with nuts secure the lock to the front board. The keyhole is plainly seen.

Full Height Door

A full or single height door appears at the away from the farm lane side of the wagon door opening at the southwest end wall. The battens have already been described. This door may be somewhat exceptional related to doors in other barns in that there are only two full door width (plus extension) wooden hinges. The opposite end wall full height door has (original condition) three wood hinges which appear to be more the norm. Some information seen just below is a repeat of information above.

The height of the door is 11 feet 11 inches and its width is 4 fee 8½ inches. Horizontal battens appear at the very top (eleven inches wide) and very bottom (twelve inches wide) of the door. Each batten has three rows of wrought nails securing them to the front vertical boards where eight Xs (scribe lines) were formed on each batten. The single diagonal batten is 13¼ inches in width. Both wooden hinges are each 5 feet 3½ inches long and they taper significantly not in their height but in their widths – 4¼ inches at the pintle end to 1¾ inches to the other end.

There are four front vertical tongue and grooved boards each about 13 ½ inches wide. (Other full height door has five front boards that vary considerably in widths – 6" to almost 14".) Apparently all the doors in the barn were never painted.

Barn Door Hook

When the Wemple barn was first visited in late February 1976 this single height door section had a wooden hook for the hanging of harnesses or perhaps other items related to farming. It was about a foot and a half long. It had an angled stem (thin tree branch) that emanated from the main stem about four inches from the bottom of the hook. The hook appeared several inches below the upper wooden hinge and was nailed to the inner surface of one of the front vertical boards. Such hooks on the interiors of Dutch barns are quite rare. One such hook (actually a remnant) appeared on a post on the northwest end wall of the now non-extant circa 1815 three-aisle four-bay barn on Route 30 south of Middleburgh (Fitchen Barn No. 51). Another three-aisle barn with a hook was seen on Butterville Road west of New Paltz in Ulster County. The Lawrence Shultis three-aisle barn near Woodstock also had a hook on its one end wall anchor-beams. Others appear in other barns.

Upper Door Half

The upper half door that appears at the farm lane side of the southwest wagon door opening will be described. It is along with the lower door half virtually 100% original. This door section is 5 feet 9 inches high and 4 feet 9 inches in width. The lower door half is 3 inches taller. It has an 11 inch wide horizontal batten at its very top where there are again three rows of wrought nails where seven Xs were formed. A 10½ inch wide diagonal batten is also seen.

The wooden door hinges are 5 feet 4½ inches long where the hinges extend almost eight inches beyond the door edge. Each hinge is three inches in height and tapers in depth two to four inches with the greater dimension at the door attachment side. All corners are chamfered.

Front vertical boards of the upper door half vary just a little in their widths – from 10½ to 11½ inches. There is no tongue and groove arrangement.

Where Door Halves Meet at Pintle Area - Oak Plate

What might be unique in the Wemple barn is the spot where the two door halves (upper and lower) meet at the northeast end wall at the pintle area. The two door hinges of the two door sections are immediately adjacent to each other. But at the pintle area between the hinges is an oak plate that is 9½ inches by 4¼ inches and ¾ inches thick that separate the hinges. The common door post slot that receives the two hinges is 7¼ inches wide. The pintle here is 19½ inches long. The wide slots that appear at both end walls may be unique in the Dutch realm. In nearly all other barns where two doors sections meet there is a separation of hinges by seven to eight inches or so. The interesting thing is that there is no oak plate at the southwest end wall where the two half door sections meet. The reason for this disparity can not be explained. The plate might have acted as a shim as an accommodation or adjustment when the three door sections were brought together by the builder. Inclusion of the plate was perhaps borne of a need to insure that heights of both door sides were equal.

Pentices at End Walls

Pentices or short roof projections that extend several feet (little direct evidence available to discern exact lengths) beyond end walls were incorporated into many or perhaps most barns in New York State over the wagon doors. Anyone who has ever been in a barn in a strong rain storm can attest to the fact that water can pour into the end wall of a three-aisle classic barn if there are no protective pentices to ward off the rain. The inclusion of pentices in these barns was well warranted indeed.

The manner in which pentices were constructed varied to a certain extent depending on the geographic area in New York State. Direct evidence of the existence of pentices is much lacking in New Jersey barns. However, the possible pre Revolutionary War era Washington Well

At far end wall of Wemple barn is wagon door with overhead pentice. Note pentice arms that are not original to barn.

barn in southern Somerset County in New Jersey has some indication that pentices might have been present.

Basic elements of pentices consist of two construction features. The first element was the presence of several (3 to 7) horizontal beams or arms that extended depending on the barn from the end wall anchor-beam and out beyond the end walls by about 3½ feet to 5 feet. These arms basically form the base of the pentices. The arms stretch across the full lengths of the pentices (side to side) and sometimes beyond. For example, in the case of the Larger Wemp barn (Fitchen Barn No. 31) there were four pentice arms on at least one end wall; the one at the one end was apparently to protect the human door immediately adjacent to the wagon door. The second element was the presence of rafters that were each in line with the arms. The Wemple barn at each end wall originally had three pentice arms.

North Country Pentice Arms

In the north-country pentice arms normally emanate from three holes or mortises (less often four holes as in the case of the Fredericks – Gremps barn in Montgomery County) in the vertical faces of the end wall anchor-beams in barns. These inner extensions and wedges as remnants survive in several barns. In a very unusual case the three-aisle four-bay Buffo pine barn in northern Schoharie County that was dismantled in August 1994 retained three of its original pentice arms that extended exteriorly by 26 ½ inches. In this barn there were no inner extensions of the pentice arms. Other barns had this trait such as the Zeh barn in Schoharie County. In addition, the Buffo barn had wagon doors that did not have wooden hinges. There was evidence that the doors however swung into the barn. In nearly all cases the exterior lengths of the arms in almost all barns simply rotted way for obvious reasons.

South Country Pentice Arms

In the south-country or areas south of both Albany County and Columbia County (at each side of the Hudson River) pentice arms articulated to end wall anchor-beams in a decidedly different manner in those barns to the north that had distinct mortises for the pentices as described above. In two cases in barns in Ulster County namely the Bogart barn and the Bruyn-Mahoney barn along Route 209 pentice arms extend from the first inner anchor-beam over to the top of the end wall anchor-beam and then on to the exterior of the barn. The Bogart barn has four original hewn arms but the rafters are replacements of the originals. In the case of the Mahoney barn perhaps uniquely the pentice extends across the full width of the nave. Seven original pentice arms are seen except the one arm that is not original in the interior of the barn. The rafters appear to be, quite remarkably, original. As such it is very likely the Mahoney barn that retains the most original pentice anywhere in the entire Dutch settlement area.

Above: *Pentice at end wall of Bogart barn in Marbletown, Ulster County with original arms and non-original rafters. Pentice stretches across full width of wagon doors.*
Below: *Close-up of possible original mittelmanse at end wall wagon doors at Bogart barn. Note how top end of post enters into soffit of end wall anchor-beam. The post in this barn is seen to the exterior of the door while in other barns they are seen inside the wagon doors.*

Pentices in certain barns can appear on both an end wall and an eave wall. In the case of the original condition four-bay circa 1825 (or later) Crispell side wall entry barn near Gardiner in southern Ulster County the pentices on each wall may be original. At another original condition side entry barn of very unusual (interior) construction a few miles north of New Paltz on the east side of Route 32 the side wall pentice may be original.

Mittelmanse – Middle Post

The last remaining element related to original wagon doors and their openings is the topic of the vertical post that holds the two door sections together when the doors are left either half open (one side is open and the other is closed) or fully closed. The post is also called a *mittelmanse* – or 'little man in the middle.' Such original posts are very rare. One possible surviving original one is the post at the Bogart barn site. It appears at the exterior of the wagon doors. Posts in certain other barns were positioned at the inside of the doors. Such posts at most barns likely just simply wore out or were lost and later were replaced and rather simply so.

The John Snyder side wall entry open-bay circa 1820 barn along Route 212 (north side) a few miles west of Saugerties retains a possible original *mittelmanse*. At the bottom of the post a few feet were ripped out. At the top of the post a seven inch long and 1¾ inch thick tongue of wood (integral to the wood piece) is seen which was engaged into the oblong hole in the soffit of the end wall anchor-beam. The hole is four to five inches long and about three inches wide. The Snyder post is 2¾ by 3¾ inches in cross section at

about its mid-point. The Bogart post is clearly tapered and at its mid-point is 3 by 3¾ inches in cross section. The post is made of a strong wood but is not oak and is certainly not pine.

Original Lengths of Barns

While on the topic of soffit holes in anchor-beams it would be beneficial to point out that the presence of such holes is an excellent indicator in general of the original lengths and/or numbers of bays of various barns. So many barns were altered in the nineteenth century it is sometimes rather difficult to discern the original length of certain barns. If an oblong hole appears in the very middle (not always) of a soffit in an anchor-beam, and there seems to be a good to a considerable amount of wear around the edges of the hole and the anchor-beam has a shorter depth than the other anchor-beams that are present then there is very good to excellent chance that the original end wall has been identified. It is advantageous to know that this procedure is not always a fool-proof way of ascertaining if an end wall of a three-aisle barn was original. Barns possess other features and so can afford other means of knowing if an H-frame was an original end wall.

As a simple extension of the idea of identifying an original end wall the method just out-lined can also be a definite aid in the determination if a barn had either one or two end walls with wagon door entries. Certainly all U-barns (true or variant) have only one anchor-beam with a mittlemanse hole. Further, it is known that almost all the barns in Schoharie County as mentioned above have only one end wall wagon entry as these barns each have just one mittlemanse hole in their anchor-beams. Such a simple observation can lend a great deal of information about the basic structure and general utility of a given barn.

Off-Center Wagon Doors

In the great or even vast majority of cases in three-aisle barns, wagon doors are centered on end walls where they occur. In several barns off centered doors have been seen. This is the case in the doors in the van Alstyne barn (Fitchen Barn No. 11) and the pre-Revolutionary War era barn south of Catskill in Greene County. Another was the Studdiford barn in Somerset County, New Jersey. There are others. The reasons for such off-centered positions are not precisely known but it would seem to be as accommodations for other existing conditions at the barns or barn sites. ■

The Palatines in Saugerties: A History Written in Stone

By Susan Puretz

While some may debate whether Henry Hudson stopped in Saugerties at the Sawyerkill in 1609 on his voyage up the Hudson, there is substantial evidence that the Palatines came to Saugerties in 1710. This is the 300th anniversary of their arrival in West Camp. To commemorate the event, the Town of Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission will focus on the stone structures associated with the Palatines during its second annual Historic House Tour to be held Saturday, May 22.

Of the 68 stone houses and churches in the Village and Town of Saugerties, there are many associated with the Palatines and some of those will be included on the tour; however, the identities of these historic structures will be kept under wraps until May 22, the day of the tour. At that time, the lucky persons, having purchased the limited number of tickets available, will be surprised by the diversity of the historic stone buildings that have been selected. Several of the houses will also have interiors available for viewing.

Stone Houses Reflect History

The tour begins at the Information Booth at McDonald's on Rt. 212 in Saugerties and follows two routes. Some of the stone houses on this year's tour are unoccupied. Viewing the interior space of these homes, unobstructed by furniture placement, can give a sense of the proportions of the interior. Interestingly, but not unusual for the time, the land around one of the houses on the tour contains the remnants of an 18th century cemetery.

Cooperation into the Future

The stone house tour is another fine example of cooperation between a town and its residents. The tour's sponsor, the Town of Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission, has as its purpose the protection, enhancement and promotion of landmark structures. It's because these properties have distinctive architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage, that they foster civic pride for the citizens of Saugerties. The preservation and protection of these properties enhances the attractiveness of the Town to residents and visitors, thus supporting and providing stimulus to the local economy. For the stone house owners who have graciously consented to allow visitors on their properties, the benefit is that more people will see and appreciate the beauty and historical value of these local treasures.

TOUR INFORMATION

Date:
Saturday, May 22, 2010 11 AM - 5 PM
(torrential rain date: May 23)

Tickets:
$20.00 advance sale April 22 to May 19
at Smith's Hardware and Inquiring Mind
(both in the Village of Saugerties)

Tickets by mail:
Stone House Tour, Saugerties Town Hall,
4 High Street, Saugerties, NY 12477
(make check payable to Town of Saugerties HPC)

Tickets on day of tour:
$25.00 tickets are sold from 11 AM to 2 PM at
the Visitor Information Booth (Rte. 212 McDonalds)

For further information call (845) 246-2800 ext. 470

Sponsored by Historic Preservation Commission – Town of Saugerties

Membership info

If you have been receiving this newsletter, but your membership is not current and you wish to continue to receive the HVVA newsletter and participate in the many house-study tours offered each year, **please send in your dues**.

Membership currently pays all the HVVA bills and to keep us operating in the black. **Each of us must contribute a little.**

Membership dues remains at a low $20 per year ($15 for Students). So if you haven't sent in your dues or given a tax deductible donation to the HVVA mission, **please consider doing so now.**


The Society for the Preservation of
Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture
Newsletter
From the Editor

❑ Yes, I would like to renew my membership in the amount of $.....

❑ Yes, I would like to make a tax deductible contribution to help the effort of preserving the Hudson Valley's Architectural Heritage. Enclosed please find my donation in the amount of $.....

Name .....

Address .....

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State ..... Zip .....

Phone .....

E-mail .....

Please mail checks to:

HVVA
P.O. Box 202, West Hurley, NY 12491

Designed by Jon Dogar-Marinesco www.pointblanq.com

A look back

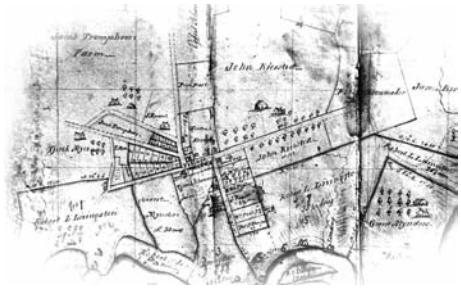
*The **Dr. Matthew Jansen House** – located at 43 Crown Street, Kingston, NY – recently visited by HVVA members during our much enjoyed Holiday Tour this past December. Look for more research to come as we piece together the clues to this house's development. Photograph circa 1880, used by the courtesy of the Friends of Historic Kingston.*

Calendar

Flatbush – Take Off!

Saturday, February 20, 2010 – 10:00 AM

Explore some new discoveries in Flatbush and Rhinebeck. Meet at the Ten Broeck House, 1019 Flatbush Road, Kingston, NY. For more information call Rob Sweeney at (845) 336-0232



March on Palatines

Saturday, March 20, 2010 – 10:00 AM

Visit early structures with an actual Palatine descendant! Meeting at the Germantown Parsonage, 52 Maple Ave., Germantown, NY. For directions call Alvin Sheffer at (518) 828-5482.

Southern Sojourns

Saturday, April 17, 2010 – 11:00 AM

Join us for our yearly trip to the southern most region of the Hudson Valley. As we explore the vernacular architecture of Northern New Jersey. More information to follow on-line at **www.hvva.org**

There will be an official business meeting over lunch. Trustees please try to attend or send committee reports in advance.

Celebration in Stone

Saturday, May 22, 2010 – 10:00 AM

HVVA members will support the Historic Preservation Committee of the Town of Saugerties by combining our monthly study tour with this special stone house tour of Saugerties. See inside story for more details.

Please note there is no regular 3rd Saturday scheduled event in May, due to the excitement and popularity of this event among our members. See you on tour!

For more information, please check HVVA.org