The Society for the Preservation of
Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture

January – March 2012 **Newsletter** Vol. 15, No. 1-3

The Van Vechten House, Catskill, New York
Frederick Edwin Church, 1847 (detail)

From the President:

HVVA has made much progress as an organization during the past year. We've come a long way from the days when Peter did almost all of the writing, editing and publishing and most of the tour organizing.

Starting with the annual meeting of January 2011 we began the work of transitioning into a fully active board. Our bylaws state our chief goal as to "survey, record, research and preserve the traditional, rural and vernacular architecture of the Hudson Valley." The bylaws say that we will do this by studying these buildings, by establishing an archive of information and artifacts pertaining to them and by promoting public awareness and preservation of these resources. The work of our committees is intended to support the goals of our organization. I'm pleased to say that the first fruits of these efforts – including a member survey and beginning work on the archives been undertaken by the Research and Education Committee. I encourage and expect all trustees – and any interested members! – to become active in the work of one of the committees. If you are a trustee and are not already signed up for a committee, you'll be getting a call from me soon – many hands make light work! In response to requests by the membership (in the survey), John Stevens and I have agreed to conduct a two-day training for those interested in learning how to document buildings. More on this can be found in another part of this newsletter.

In the spirit of our group, I'd like to make a special appeal to those of you who are active in the preservation/restoration field, to share the fruits of your work and research with us. This might include supplying us with historic structure reports, articles for the newsletter detailing work you've done, or dendrochronology reports (we have a number of these posted on our website; the more we have, the better a resource it becomes! – several important structures are known to have been dendrodated during this past year). I am preparing an expanded version of the bibliography which I posted on the website last year. Please email me with any suggestions and additions; I'm hoping to upload the update sometime during March.

And finally, thanks to Rob Sweeney taking over the reins as editor of the newsletter after Peter Sinclair's stroke in November 2006 – HVVA could have easily foundered at that point and Rob's sense that it was crucial to keep the newsletter going was central to our moving forward in the wake of Peter's illness. With this issue – after more than five years as our second editor – Rob steps down, handing over the pen and scissors to Neil Larson. Thanks to Neil for being willing to take over this responsibility.

With an all-volunteer organization such as ours, content for publications is frequently short-at-hand. Please consider writing for the newsletter. Share your observations from one of our tours, a pet research project, or something that you've taken the time to look at independently. Please send all potential newsletter contributions to Neil at **nlarson@hvc.rr.com** in MSWord format. Contributions will be due the 15th of January, April, July and October for each of the quarterly newsletters.

The Research & Education Committee has put together an interesting lineup of tours for the coming year. Please consult the calendar at the back of this newsletter for information on upcoming events. Updates and additional information on these and other events are regularly posted to our website at www.hvva.org.

See you in the field!

Wally Wheeler

HVVA News & Announcements

Trustees Maggie MacDowell and Ken Walton in the basement of the Elting House in New Paltz.

Since our last newsletter members have visited old houses in New Paltz, Wallkill, Town of Newburgh and the Flatbush area outside of Kingston.

At our annual meeting in January, new trustees and officers were elected. They are John Hanzl of West Camp and John Ham of Troy. Sam Scoggins term as a trustee has expired. John Ham has replaced Karen Markisenis as secretary. Rob Sweeney has added Corresponding Secretary to his many titles. Neil Larson has taken over Rob's duties as editor of this newsletter.

We have a full calendar of tours for the upcoming year and hope to see more members taking advantage of these interesting and educational excursions. If you have ideas for new places for us to organize field trips around, please let us know. Contact Ken at kaw9862@optonline.net.

Upcoming Tour
Town of Rochester, Ulster County
Date: April 21, 2012
Time: 10:00 am
Meeting Place: Parking lot of Rochester Reformed Church, 5142 Route 209, Accord

Visits to at least three historic farmsteads are planned – with a break for lunch.

New HVVA Program Offering:

Field Documentation and Drafting for Beginners – June 2 & 3, 2012

John Stevens and Wally Wheeler will present a two day course on the basic techniques of field documentation and drawing. Included will be what comprises a field pack, types of measuring, what and why things are measured, drawing techniques, and "industry standards" for documentation packages like that used by the Historic American Building's Survey. The intent of this workshop is to introduce HVVA members to professional field documentation methods so that we begin to record buildings to more consistent standards. Also, we would like to get more members involved in the exciting world of field documentation! A deposit of $50 is requested at registration, the full amount of which will be returned after completing the course. The workshop will be held with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 10 registrants. The workshop site will be announced at a later time to registrants. Those interested must contact Ken Walton by April 15.

To register or for more information contact Ken at kaw9862@optonline.net or 845-883-0132.

Celebrating The Yesteryear Of Saugerties

Historic Flatbush House Tour – May 12, 2012

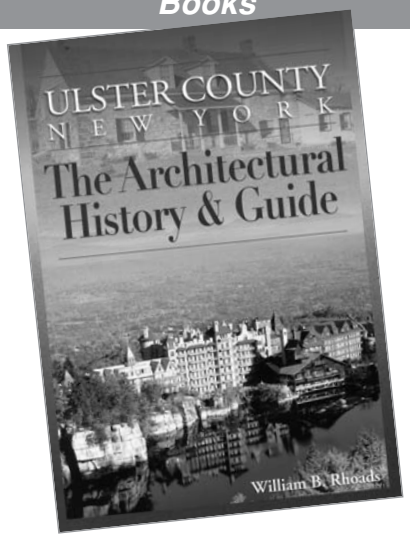
On Saturday, May 12th (torrential rain date May 13), from 11:00 am to 5 pm, the town of Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission invites the public to step back into the past and take a self-guided visit to unique sites as part of the annual historic house tour. Celebrating the hamlet, this year's tour crosses town borders as you travel the length of Flatbush from Glasco in the Town of Saugerties, south to East Kingston in the Town of Ulster to view houses, barns, and a church that reflect its historic fabric.

A highlight of the tour is the Benjamin Ten Broeck house, built from 1751-1770. This is a well-preserved example of a stone house whose architecture is not only Dutch but has stylistic touches distinctive to Ulster County as well. The rest of the sites, some with spectacular views, will be revealed on the day of the tour.

Advance tickets are available from April 14 to May 9 at $15 per person. Tickets may be purchased at Smith Hardware and at the Hudson Valley Dessert Company (on Main Street in Saugerties) until May 9, or by mail (until May 4) with checks made out to Town of Saugerties HPC, and mailed to: Historic House Tour, Saugerties Town Hall, Saugerties, NY 12477. Day of tour: $25 tickets are sold from 11 to 2 at the QuickChek station (3048 R. 9W near the intersection of Rt. 9W and Rt. 32).

For more information, call 845-246-2800 ext. 470 or visit http://www.historichousetour.com

Books



William B. Rhoads, *Ulster County, New York: The Architectural History & Guide* (Delmar NY: Black Dome Press, 2011).

With informative entries for over 325 sites located in all 20 towns and the city of Kingston in New York State's Ulster County, Bill Rhoads has aptly illustrated the variety and changing architectural styles of nearly 300 years of architecture in the Hudson River Valley and Catskill Mountains. His entries range from the Dutch limestone houses of the Colonial era, through the Federal, Greek Revival and Victorian periods, up to the Modernist architecture of the 1950s tracing the history of one of the first regions to be settled by Europeans. The author's survey of Ulster County architecture takes the reader through the cataclysm of the Revolution and the burning of the city of Kingston, New York State's first capital in 1777, the post-Revolutionary expansion and the burgeoning commerce on the Hudson River during the 19th century, to the industrial revolution, the building of canals, and the railroad age. Information on most sites includes the histories of the owners, the architects, and the builders, as well as the social and historical context in which the structures were built. This lavishly furnished book contains 340 illustrations which will clearly jog your memory or inspire a drive.

William B. Rhoads is professor emeritus of art history at SUNY New Paltz, where he taught from 1970 to 2005. His publications include studies of Colonial Revival architecture and Franklin Roosevelt's sponsorship of architecture and art. His previous book, *Kingston, New York: The Architectural History & Guide* was published by Black Dome Press in 2003.

Tobias van Steenburgh House

97 Wall Street, Kingston, Ulster County, New York

By John R. Stevens, Architectural Historian, Hurley, NY

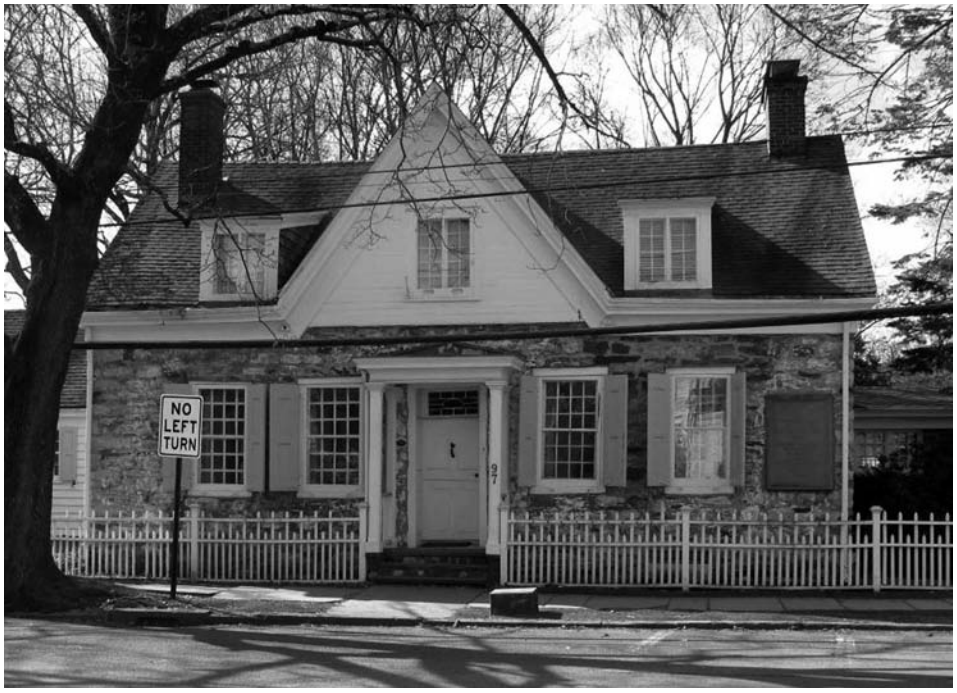
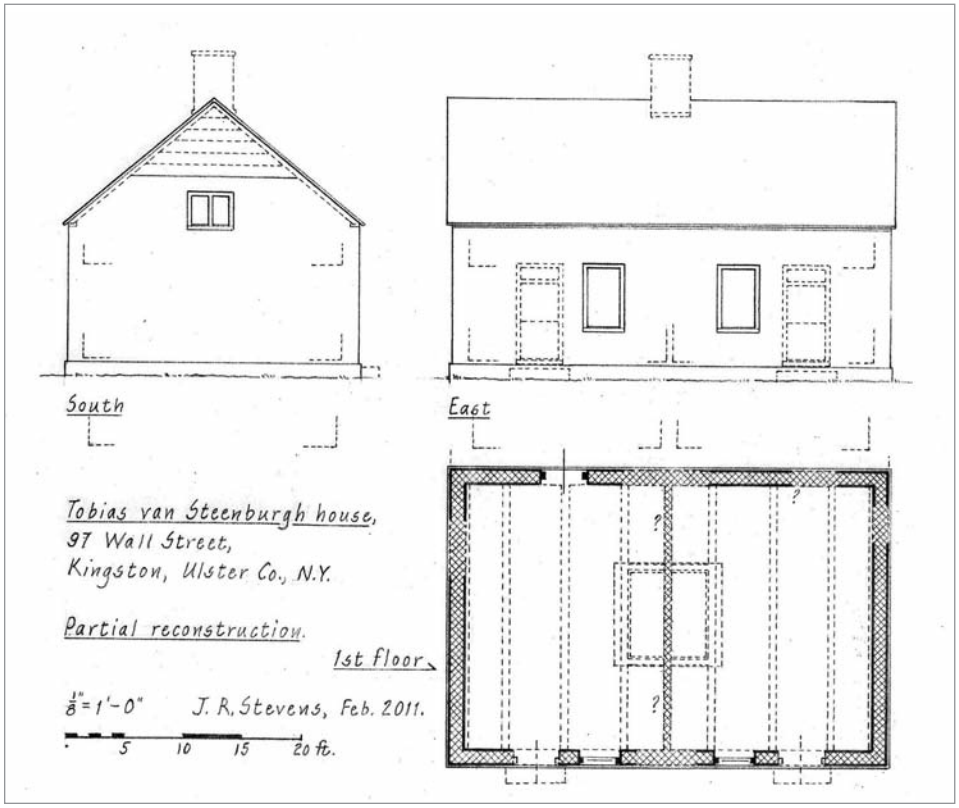


Fig.1 – *View of Tobias van Steenburgh House from east. Photo by Jill Fisher, 2012.*

Fig. 2 – *Tobias van Steenburgh House, reconstructed exterior elevations and first floor plan.*



Apparently built in the mid-18th century, the Tobias van Steenburgh house is claimed to be the only house in Kingston not burned by the British on October 16, 1777. The writer had the opportunity to survey this house with Jim Decker and Harmony Waters on December 31, 2010. He has been back to it several times since then, taking measurements and photographs. HVVA visited the house during its field trip to Kingston on December 10, 2011.

The house is located south of the Stockade District on the west side of Wall Street at the end of Franklin Street *(Fig. 1)*. The main unit measures 37 feet 6 inches in length (north – south) and 25 feet in depth (east – west). It is of rubble stone construction, 1½ stories with the end gable tops of wood frame above the collar ties. The south gable has narrow weatherboards; the north gable has board-and-batten siding. The roof pitch is about 39 degrees.

Originally it was a two room house, each room having an exterior door in the east wall *(Fig. 2)*. It had a center wall with back-to-back jambless fireplaces and a central chimney *(Fig. 3)*. About 1800 the central wall, fireplaces and chimney were removed and a hallway created in the center of the house, occupying the space between the former hood beams. There

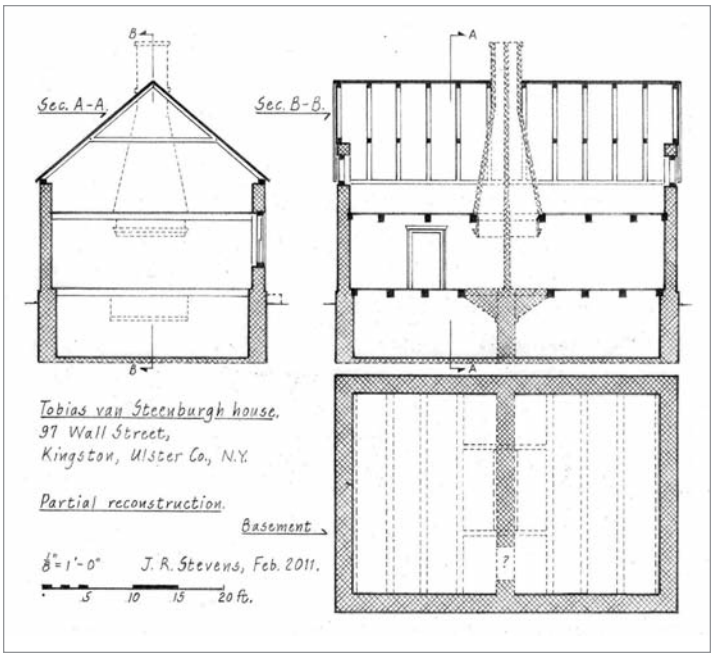


Fig. 3 – *Tobias van Steenburgh House, reconstructed sections and basement plan.*

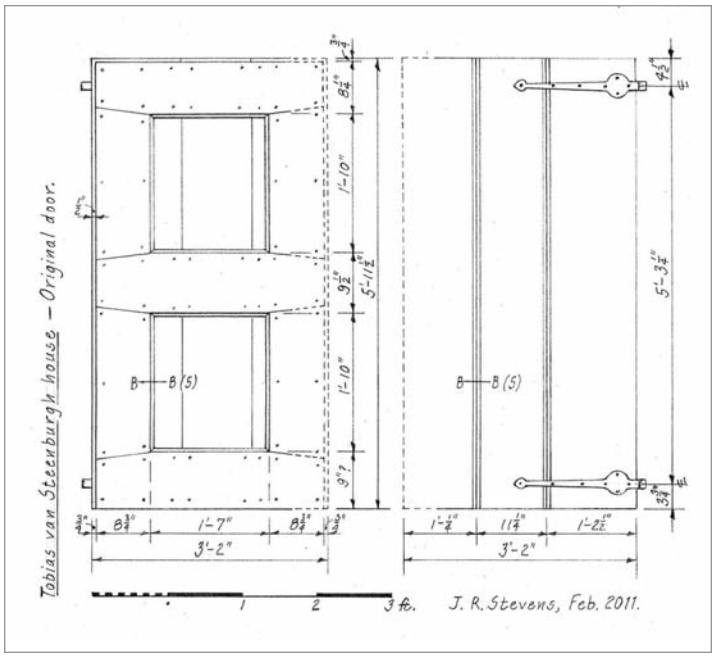


Fig. 4 – *Tobias van Steenburgh House, detail, original door.*

is a staircase on the south side of the hall, with a basement stairway under it. The center entrance on the front façade with its divided door and rectangular transom was added at this time. The door has on the inside diagonal lining boards set within narrow margin pieces, and is hung on Dutch nailing pad hinges.

The window frames on either side of the present front door are the original ones, and that on the south side of the doorway retains its original sash and shutters. The frame on the north side of the doorway has c. 1800 sash now, but retains its original shutters. These are of false panel construction and the battens have slightly splayed joints with the false rails *(Fig. 5)*. The sash from the north window were transferred to the new window frame that replaced the south doorway. A complete window unit replaced the north doorway.

Both original second floor end wall windows survive. They are mullioned 'bolkozijn' frames *(Fig. 6)*. That on the north wall lost its function in the c. 1800 changes to the house when a chimney was built in front of it. Its sill was replaced in the 20th century. It has its original shutters with their Dutch nailing pad hinges. On April 21, 2011 one of these shutters was opened up – perhaps for the first time since the chimney was constructed. The interior of the frame does not have casement rabbets, and was unpainted. The south gable window was not blocked off by a chimney as the chimney was built to the east side of it. The original frame survives. Its sill appears to be a replacement. The shutters are gone and there are 6 light, outward-opening casements, Internally there are single light, inward opening casements.

The first floor beams are roughhewn oak. They measure about 8½ inches wide, and 11 inches deep. The south hearth trimmer survives. It is 6 inches wide and 8¼ inches deep. The second floor beams are smoothly planed pine. They measure about 7½ inches in width and 10 inches deep. The former hood beams are 8 inches in width and 12 inches in depth. The roof structure could not be examined.

The c. 1800 renovations introduced fireplaces in both the first and second floor rooms at the north end of the house and on the first floor at the south end of the house. As noted previously, the flue of south fireplace was offset to the east side of the ridge to avoid the gable window. These fireplaces have refined, Federal style mantels that appear to be original, although there also is evidence of 20th-century Colonial Revival "restoration" work, such as the addition

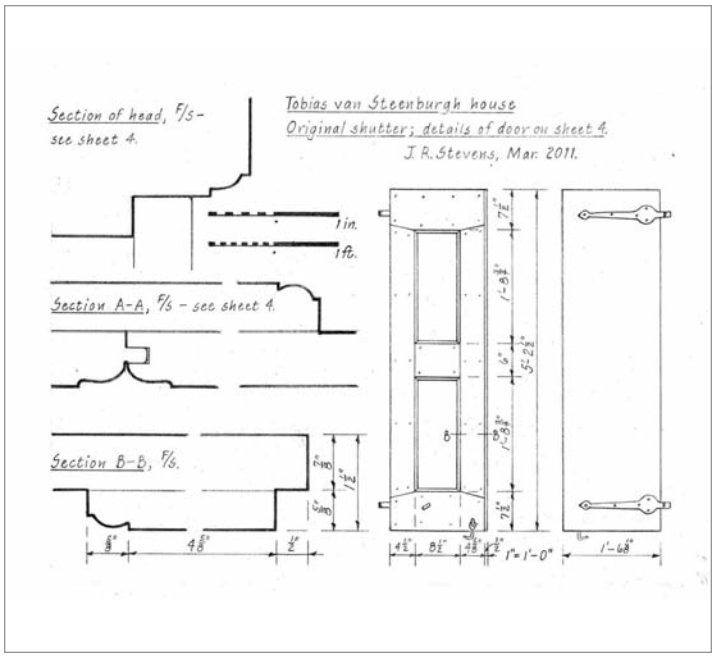


Fig. 5 – *Tobias van Steenburgh House, detail, original shutter.*

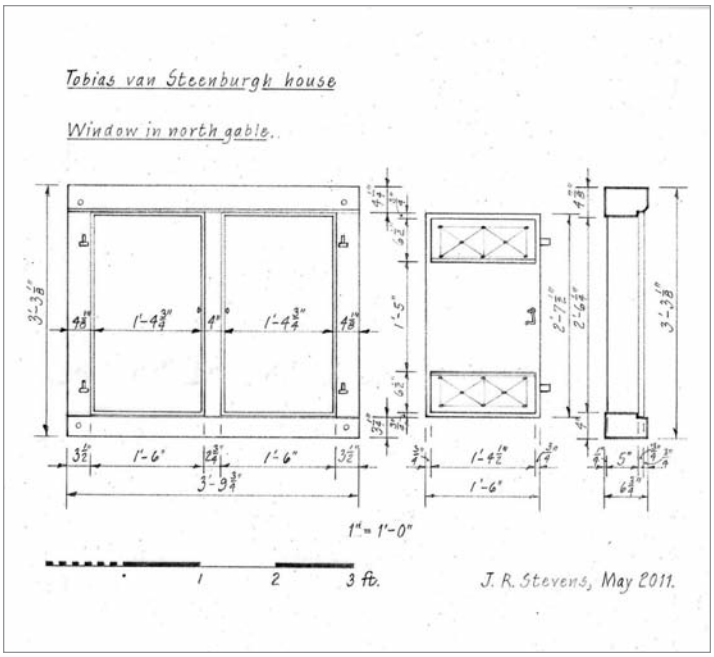


Fig. 6 – *Tobias van Steenburgh House, detail, original window in north gable end.*

of antique Dutch blue and white tiles around the opening of the second floor fireplace.

The c. 1800 doors in the hall partition walls are four panel, flush-beaded one side, and plain recessed on the other. The door casings are simple in treatment, with backband moldings. At the back (west end) of the hallway is a door from the original construction phase of the house that formerly accessed the lean-to section of the house, but now opens into a closet. It is of false-panel construction, with two panels. Like the shutters that have been discussed, the battens have slightly splayed joints with the false rails. One side has been cut down to narrow the width of the door to fit its present location. It retains its original Dutch nailing pad hinges. This door may originally have been used in mid wall of the house.

The staircase is from c. 1800 and has simple, refined detailing with a square, tapered newel. The balusters are square in section. The handrail is basically round in section. The enclosure under the stair, which accommodates the basement stairway, is of random-width beaded boards.

A lean-to of timber frame construction was built on the west side of the house either contemporaneously with the stone part or possibly as an early addition. What survives today is of relatively recent construction, but the doorway accessing it on the west wall of the south room is mid-18th century. The door frame has on its east side a cornice molding cut out of the solid with carved returns. The false-panel door is very similar to, but not identical with the door at the west end of the hallway that has been discussed *(Fig. 4)*.

Changes to the house include a central gable wall dormer on the front façade flanked by shed-roof dormers. A view of the house published in 1888 depicts the house with only two shed-roof dormers and a later post-card view shows it with the central gable dormer alone. In the second view, the gable dormer contains a pointed Gothic window, which has since been replaced with a flat-headed window and shed-roof dormers have been built again to project a more Colonial appearance. The roof edges were given typical heavy cornices in the late 19th century. The façade gable has a smoothly finished field. On the north end of the east wall is a large plaque, installed in 1897 by the Daughters of the American Revolution, commemorating the fact that this house was spared burning by the British in 1777.

The van Steenburgh House has survived in excellent condition, with many original features as well as high quality work from its c.1800 modifications. It is a significant architectural artifact in the city of Kingston. ■

Some background on the Tobias Van Steenburgh House

By Neil Larson

In 1897 Kingston's Wiltwyck Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a large plaque on the Tobias Van Steenburgh House celebrating it as a survivor of the burning of the city by British troops on October 16, 1777. They also referred to the house as "the home of the Van Steenburgh family for two centuries." Typical of plaques and other historical markers erected in the Colonial Revival period, both assertions are a bit exaggerated in favor of antiquity and Revolutionary War events.

On page 308 of his *History of Kingston* published in 1888, Marius Schoonmaker gave a more conditional account of the fate of the Van Steenburgh house.

> In the absence of any official record the opinion has generally prevailed, based on tradition, that Kingston was entirely consumed, only one house and one barn having been left standing. The house was understood to have been that of Tobias Van Steenburgh, Jr., third generation of the Van Steenburgh family. In reference to the Van Steenburgh House there are various accounts given. One is that Mrs. Hammersley, a prominent Tory lady, lived there, and the house was spared on her account. That does not appear very probable, judging from the conduct of the red-coats on the other occasions. Another is that they set fire to the house, but the recall was sounded before the fire had progressed much and was quickly extinguished by slaves who were concealed in the woods in the immediate neighborhood. Another account given is that, it being a hotel, one of the slaves who remained behind rolled out a barrel of rum, knocked in the head, and treated the soldiers to their hearts' content until the recall sounded, leaving the house untouched.

The identity of Mrs. Hammersley cannot be otherwise documented, and there is nothing to indicate that the Van Steenburgh family did not own and occupy the house throughout the entire Revolutionary period. It also can be assumed that the Van Steenburghs were sympathetic to the rebellion and members of the local militia, so the presence of a "prominent Tory" in the house at the time is questionable. Nor is there any record to suggest that the house being used as a hotel at the time. The size and character of the house does not correspond with that of a conventional inn or tavern, and the Van Steenburgh's status does not comport with that occupation. However, the theory that a fire was started but extinguished in the house is an interesting one (the family did own slaves), and the substantial alterations that occurred in the house at the turn of the 19th century may have been in response to the damage that occurred as well as the change in fashion.

By all appearances and John Stevens's reconstructive analysis, the stone house was constructed in the mid-1700s, probably by Tobias Van Steenburgh (1708-1804), a carpenter, who married Sarah Persen (1710-1770), the daughter of Matthys Persen and Tanne Winne and widow of Abraham Elting, sometime after Elting's death in 1734. Tobias was the grandson of Jan Jansen van Amersfoort, also a carpenter, who according to Marc Fried's *Early History of Kingston*, received a lot in the new portion of the village in the spring of 1661. Whether Tobias's grandfather or father had built a house there previous to him is not known. That Tobias was a carpenter suggests that he built the doors, windows and other wood elements in the house surviving from that period.

Tobias Van Steenburgh would have been 69 years of age at the time of the British raid and living in the house with his youngest son, also named Tobias, who was born in 1754. The son Tobias, his wife, Antje Van Gaasbeck (daughter of Jacobus Van Gaasbeck and Debora Kierstede), and three children were enumerated in the house in the first U.S. census in 1790; included also were six slaves. Their eldest son, Abraham T. Van Steenburgh (1785-1874) was the next head of household. He also was a carpenter, and he married Annatje Hasbrouck (1799-1887), with whom he produced eleven children. The 1850 census records Abraham and Ann Van Steenburgh with a household containing six of their children, notably sons Tobias, a carpenter aged 25 years, and Rufus, a blacksmith aged 21 years.

Thirty years later, Tobias and Rufus were enumerated in the same household in Flatbush where Rufus was employed as a farmer and Tobias still was working as a carpenter. Evidently, the house had passed out of the family's possession by 1880 and into the hands of as-yet unknown owners intent on memorializing its past associations with the Revolutionary War. Although, it was about this time that the large front dormer was constructed that brought the appearance house into conformance of many other updated stone houses in Kingston. (Its late date may associate the change with the addition of a bathroom.) By 1930 lawyer and county judge Joseph M. Fowler lived there with his family. A 1947 account mentioned the house was owned by Dr. Henry L. Bibby, who probably added the office and maid's wings and made the Colonial Revival "improvements" to the house. ■

Monmouth County, New Jersey and Its Three-Aisle Dutch Barns

Schenck Barn, Dated 1788

By Greg Huber

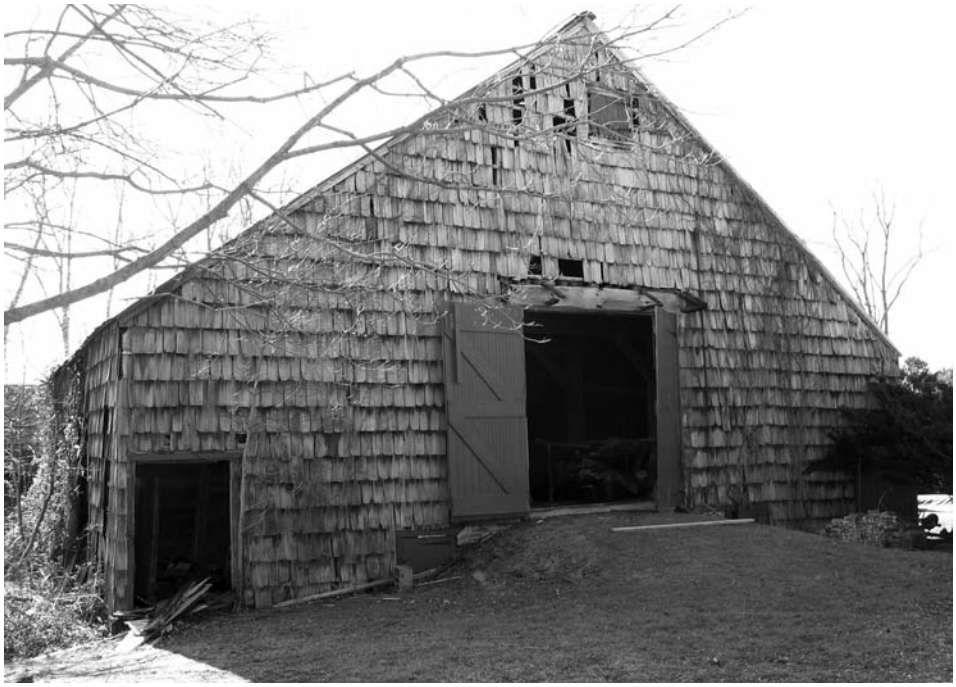


Fig. 1 – *View of Schenck Dutch barn from east showing ramp entry and old shingle siding. Photo by Gail Hunton, Monmouth County Parks Department, 2012.*

The Schenck Barn is one of only 3 three-aisle Dutch barns surviving in Monmouth County, New Jersey. (A previous article focused on another of these: the Longstreet barn at the Historic Farm Park in Holmdel.) The Schenck barn is located on a historic homestead, now known as "Rock Maple Farm," situated on the south side of Schanck Road just west of Route 34 in Holmdel. It stands a little less than seven miles south of Raritan Bay. My first inspection of the barn was made in 1991 when it was owned by the Nelson family. Today, the Somma family owns the property and buildings. The barn stands approximately 215 feet to the rear of the homestead house, with the end wall nearest the house facing northeast. Wagon doors are centered on each gable end. Corner doors are present on the northeast wall but do not exist on the southwest or back wall. *(Fig. 1 and 2)*.

The Schenck structure is one of the most interesting Dutch barns in all of New Jersey. Its aesthetic, picture post card quality occasioned its inclusion in Elric Endersby and Alex Greenwood's 1992 book, *Barn – The Art of a Working Building*. The main attraction of the barn is a center aisle elevated on a basement with an earthen ramp approaching wagon doors on the northeast end wall *(Fig. 1)*. This is a rare, if not unique, feature for a classic three-aisle Dutch barn. As one of very few Dutch barns remaining in Monmouth County, it is not clear how unusual it might have been.

Exterior Features

The exterior of the Schenck barn measures 51 feet 5 inches wide at each end wall and 41 feet 2 inches across each side wall. Side walls are 12 feet 4 inches in height, a medium height as far as three-aisle Dutch barn standards are concerned. The bases of the side walls are about five feet below the floor level of the center aisle. The roof ridge is close to 27 feet above the floor of the center aisle.

Like the Longstreet barn the Schenck barn retains some very old and possibly original exterior wood shingles on both its northeast end wall and southeast side wall *(Fig. 1)*. The rear or far end wall and the northwest side wall have new wood shingles *(Fig. 2)*. As mentioned in my Longstreet barn article, wood shingle siding appears to have been common on three-aisle Dutch and Dutch-Anglo hybrid barns in the central New Jersey region. The Schenck barn shingles are about 30 inches long with 13 inches exposed to the weather. It is generally true that the longer the shingle the earlier the building. Shingles in the Schenck barn are secured to interior horizontal slats that are spaced about 14½ inches on center.

The origin of the use of wood shingles as exterior cladding on several Monmouth County Dutch barns is not known with certainty. However, it is known from various sources, in particular Rosalie Fellows Bailey's *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York*, that the first Dutch-American settlers (including the Schenck family) who came to the area in the 1690s originated from New York City and western Long Island where wood shingles were a common siding material for houses and agricultural buildings. To this day, a few Dutch-American three-aisle barns there have wood shingles on their exterior walls.

The use of wood shingles may be seen in photographs taken between 1890 and 1940 by German émigré Eugene Armbruster in Brooklyn and Queens of dozens of Dutch-American houses and a number of three-aisle barns. In pictures of several buildings, the wood shingles appear to have been ancient. One of them was the Jan Martense Schenck house, built in Flatlands in the late seventeenth century. (Portions of the interior of this house are now preserved in the Brooklyn Museum.) So it seems that there was a long established tradition of using wood shingles on buildings in that area. It is not a long stretch to say that certain inhabitants

Fig. 2 – *View of rear gable end from southwest showing elevated door to threshing floor and doorway into basement to the left of it partially hidden by vines. Photo by Gail Hunton, Monmouth County Parks Department, 2012.*

of Long Island very likely carried the custom of wood shingle siding with them to Monmouth County.

There is evidence for pentice roofs above the center aisle doors on both the front and rear of the barn *(Figs. 1 & 2)*. Much of this feature is missing on the front wall providing a view of five downward sloping holes in the anchor beam spaced about 2½ feet in which the pentice frame was mounted. Few, if any, New Jersey barns have been recorded with this feature. Innumerable three-aisle barns in New York State, particularly in the Mohawk and Schoharie River Valleys, have or had pentices over the wagon doors.

Interior Features

The Schenck barn is of four-bay construction as are the other three-aisle barns measured in the county. The center aisle is 26 feet 1 inch wide. The northwest side aisle is 12 feet 9 inches wide while the southeast side aisle is 12 feet 6 inches wide. All H-frame members are oak. This wood is common in Dutch-American barns in Monmouth County and elsewhere in most of New Jersey. Softwood timbers are almost non-existent in the state, whereas they are common in barns in the Schoharie and Mohawk River Valleys in New York State and some areas somewhat south of the valleys.

The H-frame posts, except for the last inner frame, are fairly uniform in their sizes, measuring about 9½ by 14½ inches about four feet above the wagon floor. The last inner post at the northwest side is a remarkable 18 inches wide, making it the second widest post so-far known in any three-aisle barn in either New York or New Jersey. (The widest post, over 20 inches in dimension at its top, was recorded in a barn, no longer extant, at another Schenck homestead in Holmdel.) The portion of the posts above the anchor beams (verdiepingen) extend 5½ feet to the purlin plates. This dimension is generally consistent with many circa 1790 barns. This post extension is one of the shortest in any barn in central New Jersey. Each of the posts has a single raising hole positioned off-center about six inches below the top. Other barns, such as the Longstreet barn, have raising holes in similar locations. Posts of the end wall bents have raising holes several inches below the upper tie beams of the bents.

Three inner anchor-beams are close to 16 inches in height at their mid-points and are an inch or two less in height at their ends *(Fig. 3)*. All anchor-beams have prominent extended tenons that are square in contour; the tenons are double wedged. Each end wall H-frame has an upper tie beam just below the attachment of the H-frame posts with the purlin plates. These upper ties also possess extended tenons that are wedged, a not often seen feature in upper ties. All H-frame braces are hewn. Inner bent braces are similarly sized at 7¾ by 5¾ inches. End wall braces are considerably smaller but are longer than the braces of the inner bents. Braces from the posts to the purlins are fairly substantial in size. All of them are hewn and attach to the posts about two-thirds of the way down the upper post extensions (verdiepingen).

Fourteen pairs of original hewn rafters constitute the roof structure. Rafters are peculiarly secured to the purlin plates with long pegs that extend six to eight inches below the plates. This trait is infrequently seen in other Dutch barns.

The threshing floor appears not to be original for the first eight feet or so at the front of the barn. Beyond that the floor planks are likely original as pegs are seen to secure at least some of the floor planks. The Schenck barn is one of only 2 three-aisle barns in all of New Jersey that has a distinct basement area below the wagon floor. The other barn, a big timbered structure, is located near Oldwick in Hunterdon County in west-central New Jersey. It is likely a pre-Revolutionary war era building. This barn has partial stone end walls. The inclusion of the basement area under the wagon floor has an unknown origin. The space was not likely for general storage. Rather it may have been for some type of crop storage as they may have had some specialty farming at the homestead. In-depth research is required here to ferret out any possible reason for the rare presence of the basement.

A five foot wide door on the Schenck barn at its southwest end wall leads into the basement *(Fig. 2)*. The basement area that occupies the entire area below the middle aisle was not an afterthought or a retro fit of any kind. This can clearly be seen as the regular H-frame posts actually emanate from the bottom of the

basement level or floor. They then extend through the wagon floor and ascend to the purlin plates. The height of the basement ceiling is about 6 feet 4 inches. The floor is dirt. On the sill at the far end wall is the carved date of 1788 with initials PS. This is one of the very earliest, if not the earliest, dated three-aisle barn in all of New Jersey.

The dirt floors of the side aisles' floors are five feet eight inches below of the center threshing floor *(Fig.1)*. This condition is unprecedented in any other three-aisle barn. It is not unusual to see floor levels of side aisles a foot or so lower than the threshing floor. The greatest difference seen by the author (except the Oldwick barn) was about 18 inches in a barn in Schoharie County, New York. Because the side aisles are so much lower than normal, transverse beams tie the middle H-frame posts to the side wall posts at three different levels. This feature may be unique in the Dutch-American barn realm. Certain other tie beams at other positions in the barn have been removed.

Summary and Conclusions

The Schenck three-aisle Dutch barn is a unique building. One of only three such barns remaining in a county that had fairly extensive Dutch-American settlement makes it quite rare. But the presence of a basement under the center aisle distinguishes it as nearly peerless. Only one other barn in Oldwick, New Jersey has a distinct basement section.

The basis for the existence of a basement in the barn is not at all known. It can be said that this feature was unquestionably conceived and constructed as a major part of a specialized barn. But the curious circumstance is that barn specialization did not generally appear in the northeast (and perhaps elsewhere) until after 1820. This was the time of the Industrial Revolution when individualized barns became much more the norm than at around the time of the Revolutionary War era. Perhaps a family history could be done on the homestead and the owner, ostensibly a Schenck family member, had a special land use situation. That the barn was built according to very specific needs at the farm is a foregone conclusion. Whether there were other area barns that more or less duplicated the proportions and general size of the Schenck barn it can not be said. Research may be done into certain agricultural practices by farmers in Monmouth County in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. What may be found may be very revealing.

The presence of what are likely original wood shingles on two of the exterior walls is wonderful evidence that certain vernacular building customs were very likely transferred from western Long Island to Monmouth County, possibly as far back as the early 1700s. For whatever culturally based reasons, settlers on Long Island often favored the use of shingles over horizontal weather-boarding and that tradition was maintained when they moved to Monmouth County and established their homesteads.

All the regular features of the barn, including the verdiepingh, basically agree with the carved 1788 date seen on the sill. This barn may at one time be dendro-dated to see if the generated date agrees with the carved date.

Many of the diminutive sized Dutch barns of the pre-1790 era did not survive the effects of changing agricultural economies in the nineteenth century that required structures with greater storage capacities. Others were altered significantly with additions that increased the heights of their side walls and their length to create higher crop volume areas. The Schenck barn is one structure that escaped the alterations that were so prevalent in the 1830 to 1875 era. For this we can appreciate the barn's special status as one of the few that survived as it was originally conceived.

Other than the very unusual traits outlined above, the barn was well constructed and has withstood the ravages of time for the past 220 plus years. It is one of the very best remaining eighteenth century three-aisle barns in the entire state of New Jersey. Some repair work at this time is needed especially the side walls and new siding is required on its two exterior walls. In general, however, few barns in either New York or New Jersey of this age of construction have been maintained in such basic pristine condition. It is particularly imperative that this barn of high architectural merit be saved so that its' rare features will remain part of the local cultural landscape. There is not another barn like it. ■

Fig. 3 – Three H-frames are shown at their northwest ends. Note extended tenons of anchor-beams with square contours that are often seen in oak construction. Photo by author.

Editor's Note

The Agricultural History of Monmouth County, New Jersey

Greg Huber's article in this issue on the Schenck Dutch barn leaves the question of the function of its basement open to speculation. The following excerpts from a context study the editor made for a historic structure report for the Longstreet barn in 1995 may provide some insight into the matter.

In the context of conventional Dutch barns in New Jersey and New York, the presence of a basement is singular to the Pleasant Valley area of Monmouth County. If the basements were larger, better ventilated, or if the barns were dated later during the era of agricultural improvement and intensified dairy farming (such as when some of these Monmouth county barns and many others across both states were later hybridized in the nineteenth century), it would be assumed that they were built to accommodate cattle in the manner of prototypical basement or bank barns. However, these basements are low, close and dark with, as in the case of the Schenck Dutch barn, limited access. They more appropriately represent large root cellars. Yet, while the plan and function of these barns challenge standard assumptions about the design and use of Dutch barns, they all find an explanation in the agricultural history of Monmouth County and its long association with the potato.

Most sources on the agricultural history of New Jersey overlook the role of the potato as a significant farm crop until the mid-nineteenth century. There is very little statistical evidence of farm production prior to this point, particularly in the eighteenth century. The general impression is that the potato was grown by most people in small quantities as a garden crop to put food on the table and in animal troughs rather than to send to market. By the time systematic records on agricultural production began being kept by the U. S. Census Bureau in 1850, just about every farm in the Northeast had an acre or two planted with Irish (white) potatoes. Certain areas in northern New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine produced Irish potatoes in great quantities, with twenty or more acres devoted to the crop, and those areas are still known as sources for the potato market today. Likewise, the farms situated along the belt of green marl that defined the inner coastal plain of central New Jersey, with a potassium-rich soil ideally suited to the crop, constituted one of the most productive potato-growing areas in the United States. For all the years agricultural records have been kept in New Jersey, Monmouth County has registered the highest acreage and yields of Irish potatoes of any county in the state. The Pleasant Valley area in Holmdel, Marlboro and Middletown townships, until recently, was carpeted with potato fields.[1]

Though the production of potatoes increased in Monmouth County in the nineteenth century, specialized buildings did not materialize to represent their enormous role as a commodity. As with apples in recent years, climate-controlled warehouses have been built by certain farmers to stockpile potatoes and extend their involvement directly into the market place. Yet, traditionally, potato farmers would ship their produce to market as soon after the harvest as possible and would not look to store any significant amount of the crop on the farm. This is why the architectural history of Monmouth County or other potato-growing areas does not include "potato barn" as a distinctive type, historic or otherwise. Nevertheless, all kinds of "cellars" are present beneath houses, granaries and cribs, and barns.
In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these were places where seed potatoes were temporarily stored while being prepared for planting in the early spring, where barrels or sacks of potatoes were stockpiled during the harvest until the entire crop was assembled for shipment, and where the farm's supply of potatoes were kept until they were consumed. On the Longstreet Farm, there is a cellar under the Dutch barn as well as one under the granary that is now interpreted as the farm's "potato house." There is also a sizable cellar under the kitchen in the house. All these cellars combine to indicate the importance of the potato in the evolving farm economy and the diet and lifestyle of the family itself.

What remains is to restore an image of Pleasant Valley when the Schenck Dutch barn was built and understand its place in the agricultural activity of the New Jersey Colonial period. Although the presence of a cellar under a Dutch barn is, in itself, a remarkable discovery, placing its function in an accurate eighteenth century context poses a certain challenge with the source material readily available. None of the titles consulted in agricultural history dealt effectively, if at all, with the Colonial experience. Most agricultural literature focuses on improvement rather than history, so none of the published material about potato growing gave much of a backward glance. The paucity of agricultural data from the eighteenth century balanced against the rich detail available between 1850 and 1880 invites dangerous comparisons across historic eras. There are books on agriculture that were published during the era Pleasant Valley was settled and the early period of the barn, but the primary research has yet to provide

an authoritative text on the subject. Except for Charles Read, a gentleman living in Colonial New Jersey, who kept copious notes on agriculture and, with the help of his observations, informative aspects of early potato farming are revealed.[2]

One thing is obvious: potatoes were as important a crop in 1750 and they were in 1850. Based on travelers' accounts, potato fields were noticeably present on the eighteenth century landscape, not just in Monmouth County, but throughout New Jersey and New York. Peter Kalm noted in 1748 that potatoes were planted by almost everyone. "Some people preferred ashes to sand for keeping them during the winter...The Bermuda potatoes have likewise been planted here, and succeeded pretty well. The greatest difficulty is to keep them during the winter for they generally rot in that season." Still, potatoes were considered so common that the crop was passed over in most agricultural treatises of the era. Charles Read devoted several pages to potatoes in his notebooks, in which he identified three classes of potato: sweet potatoes, Bermudas (a red sweet potato) and Irish potatoes. Read was impressed with the prodigious yield and monetary return possible with Bermuda potatoes. In a 1767 entry, he refers to a Burlington County, New Jersey farmer's experiment that produced the equivalent of 19,600 pounds of red potatoes per acre and profiting nearly 80 Pounds (in currency). But the crop had another important use:

> D[uke Marmadu]. Fort says that He once raised more than He could sell & fed his Hoggs wth them & the pork was very good. That at Hervest He bought 2 Piggs & carried them home on his back they might weigh 15 lb each and He killed them at Xmas they weighed 150 lb each. He gave them potatoes raw. Boiled wou'd have been better.

From the *Transactions of the Society of Edenborough* published in 1743, Read extracted a number of references to Irish (white) potatoes of which the mention of feeding the flowering tops of the plant to cows is noteworthy.[3]

Read goes on to explain the methods of production and feed uses of other root vegetables such as turnips ("sowed for Sheep and Cattle") at a yield of 640 bushels per acre, carrots ("better for sheep &c. than turneps") at 230 bushels per acre, parsnips ("to the advantage of Hoggs") of which "a vast Quantity will grow on an Acre," and beets ("for Hoggs"). In the case of cabbage, which Read lists as "for cattle" but warns, "NB Cabbages give butter an ill taste but may feed fattg cattle." He computed that an acre of land plowed into 22 rows 660 feet long and three feet apart and planted with cabbages one foot apart would produce 14,520 cabbages "of wch give a Cow 12 pr day it will keep a Cow 1210 days or 7 Cows 180 days." Calculating the materials and labor involved at 17 Pounds per acre, Read equates the cost very favorably with feeding 20 cows 61 days.[4]

Charles Read's "Notes on Agriculture" provides a revealing perspective in which to consider the Schenck Dutch barn's cellar. He indicates that in the period the barn was built and functioning, vegetable crops were popular forms of feed for the numerous animals being raised on farms. These root vegetables needed to be stored to help nourish the livestock through the winter, and cellars were the ideal environment. Read also demonstrates how a large amount of feed could be produced on a few acres of land and with surprising yields. Once a farmer was considering storing even a fraction of ten tons of potatoes, 15,000 cabbages, 640 bushels of turnips or vast quantities of parsnips and carrots possible from a single acre, a large cellar was required. Thus in Monmouth County, the Dutch settlement area in New Jersey's green marl belt, where potatoes and other root vegetables were known to have been prevalently grown in the eighteenth century, it is understandable that when erecting the farm's largest building during that period, a root cellar of significant proportions was a component of the multi-purpose storage and housing facility such as the Dutch barn. More research is necessary to confirm this assertion, but the local conditions of land, farming practice and cultural tradition combine in this eighteenth century building to create a very significant and early modification of the New World Dutch Barn. ■

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[1] See Pitt & Hoagland, *New Jersey Agriculture: Historical Facts and Figures* (Trenton: NJ Dept. of Agriculture, 1943), p 279-83. The authors compiled production statistics by decades from 1839 to 1939. Monmouth County produced more bushels of potatoes than any New Jersey county over the entire period, ranging from 273,280 bu. out of a state total of 2,072,069 (13%) in 1839 to a high of 4,177,438 bu. out of a state total of 10,319,306 (40%) in 1919. (Production both in Monmouth County and the state declined rapidly and significantly by 1924 and stabilized at an annual level of around two million bushels for the county and eight million for the state (25%) over the next twenty years.) Monmouth County had 7,725 acres planted in potatoes in 1879, 13% of the New Jersey total (41,609); the next nearest competitor (Gloucester) recorded 4,282 acres, and fourteen of the state's twenty counties registered 1000 acres or fewer. In 1919, Monmouth County had nearly 25,000 acres in potatoes.

[2] Charles Read was a resident of Trenton. See Carl Raymond Woodward, *Ploughs and Politicks: Charles Read of New Jersey and his Notes on Agriculture, 1715-1774* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 191).

[3] Peter Kalm's *Travels*, p 339, as cited in David S. Cohen, *The Dutch American Farm* (NY: NYUP, 1992), p 116. For references to Read, see Woodward, p 259-60, 296-9.

[4] Woodward, p 299-304.

Vernacular Documents VII

Inscribed on the Work: Drawings for Buildings Found In Buildings

By Walter Richard Wheeler

Although rare, drawings generated by builders, either during the construction of a building or in anticipation of constructing another building, are sometimes encountered on structural members within houses and barns. Examples of this practice – which essentially involves the utilization of available flat wood or stone surfaces for engraving or sketching drawings of framing details or decorative features, are known from ancient times and are sometimes found at archeological sites. In America, examples are confined to a more recent date. Two drawings – one for the design of an arched opening with keystone, scribed into the face of a board with a stylus, and an ink drawing of a design for an elaborate mantle – were discovered on boards incorporated into the Belle Farm in Gloucester County, Virginia when the mid-18th century house was razed in 1930.[1]

Closer to home, several drawings of this type are known. During renovations to the Schuyler Mansion in Albany about ten years ago, one of the modillion blocks on the north side of the second floor center hall, near the top of the stair, was removed for repair. A full scale chalk sketch of the carved block was found under the block. Unfortunately, no photographs are known to have been taken, and since just one block was removed, we don't know whether or not a number of them were sketched out or if serendipity caused the one that needed to be reattached to be the \one with the drawing behind it.

At the Beems farm in the Town of Brunswick, Rensselaer County, one of the anchorbeam posts in the New World Dutch barn on the property retains a drawing of an H-bent complete with anchorbeam, posts and braces *(Photo 1)*. This drawing may date to c.1830, when it is believed that the barn was built. Its simple form, and the fact that it is inscribed on a structural member makes it likely to have been quickly drawn for the benefit of an apprentice, rather than for construction.

Photo 1 *(left, top) – Detail of post in the Beems New World Dutch barn, in Brunswick, Rensselaer County, NY, showing drawing of anchor beam and braces (June 2010).*

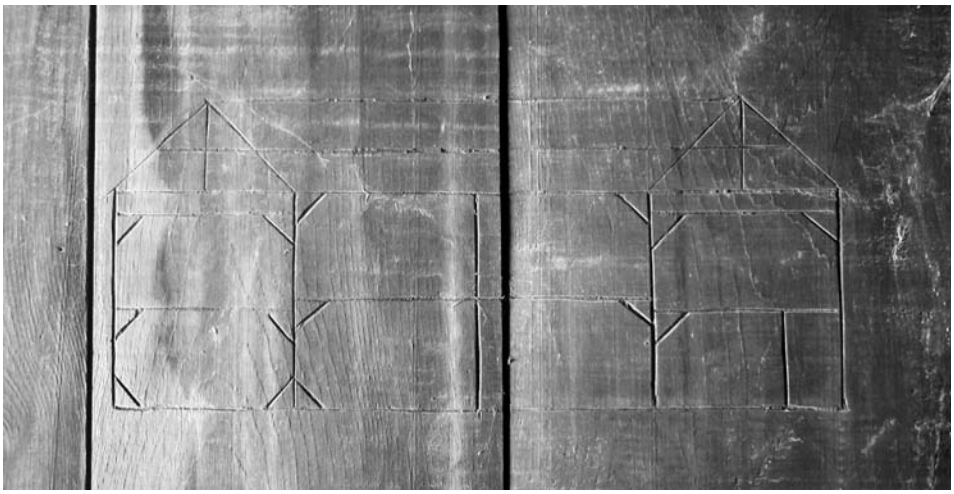
Photo 2 *(above) – Drawing of a beam and suspended pitchfork (?) found on the back of a board in the Loomis House, Oxford, Chenango County, NY (February 2011, photo by Bill Krattinger).*

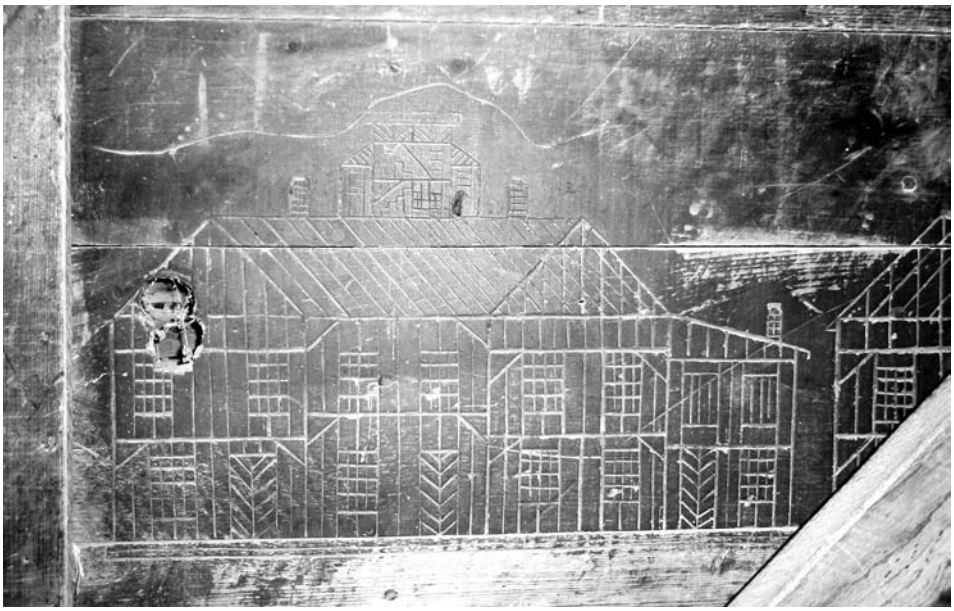
Photo 3 *(left) – A c.1870 barn on the Wilson farm, Blenheim, Schoharie County, NY (June 2009).*

A similar drawing, this one of a bent with what appears to be a three-pronged pitchfork suspended from it, has recently been found on a plank used in the construction of the Loomis house in Oxford, Chenango County, New York *(Photo 2)*. This particular inscription may have been inscribed for apotropaic rather than constructive purposes. That is, it may have had associations with folk magic. Anyone who has spent time in old buildings has come across magical symbols – frequently in the form of "daisy wheels" or glyphs.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of drawings inscribed on the structural elements of a building are the four isometric framing elevations of a house and three barns found in a c.1870 barn on the Wilson farm, in the Town of Blenheim, Schoharie County *(Photo 3)*. All four drawings are found on one of the interior plank crosswalls of the main barn. The first drawing *(Photo 4)* depicts a two-bay barn with dropped plates, and illustrates only the principal structural components of the building. The three remaining drawings differ from this in that they all show details of door and window placement on the frame, and show studding in the exterior walls. In addition, these more finished drawings have been painted white and red so that the contrast between drawing and background is heightened. This was done by painting the drawing with whitewash so that the grooves would be filled. After that a dry brush loaded with red paint was used to color the flat uncarved surface.

These three drawings show larger buildings, all with cupolas surmounting their frame. The first, going left to right *(Photo 5)* depicts a two-bay two story house with large square cupola.





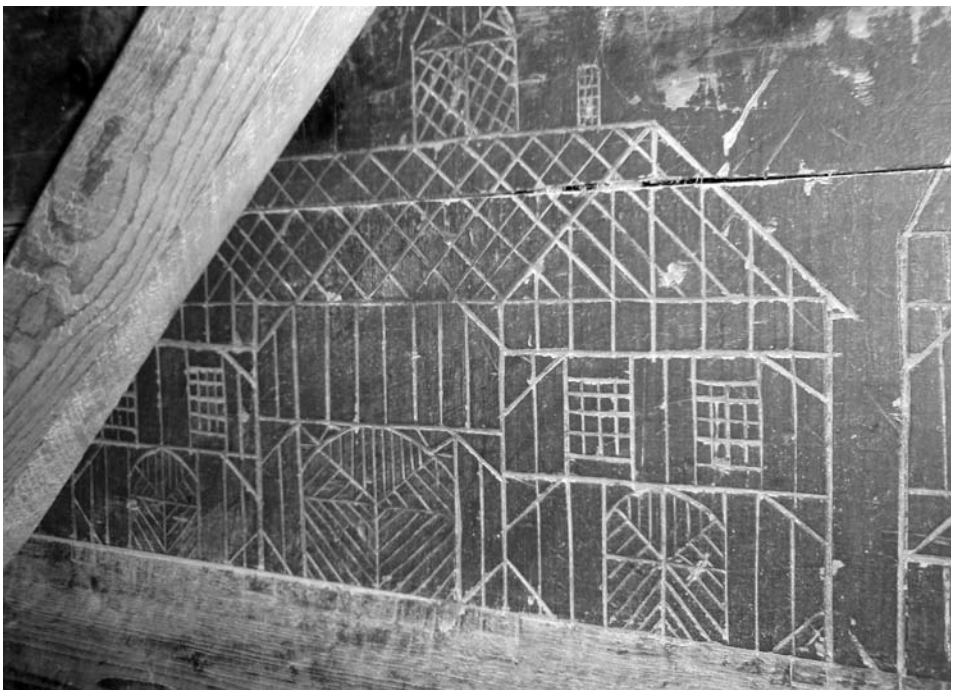
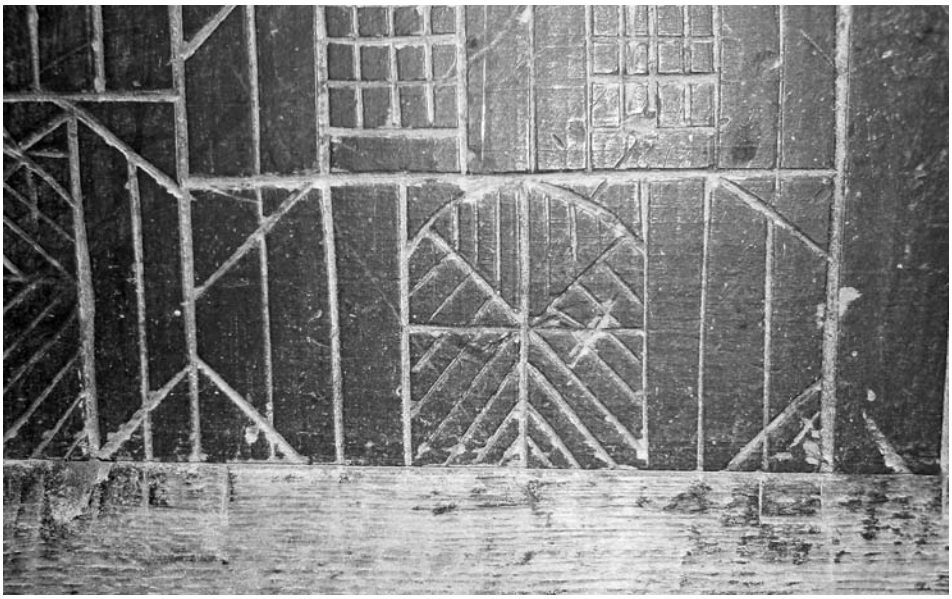


Photo 4 – *Drawing of a barn inscribed on a wall of the Wilson barn (June 2009).*

Photo 5 – *Drawing of a house in the Wilson barn. A portion of the wagon barn drawing shown in Photo 6 is seen here, at right, partially obscured by a staircase (June 2009).*

Photo 6 – *Drawing of a wagon barn in the Wilson barn (June 2009).*



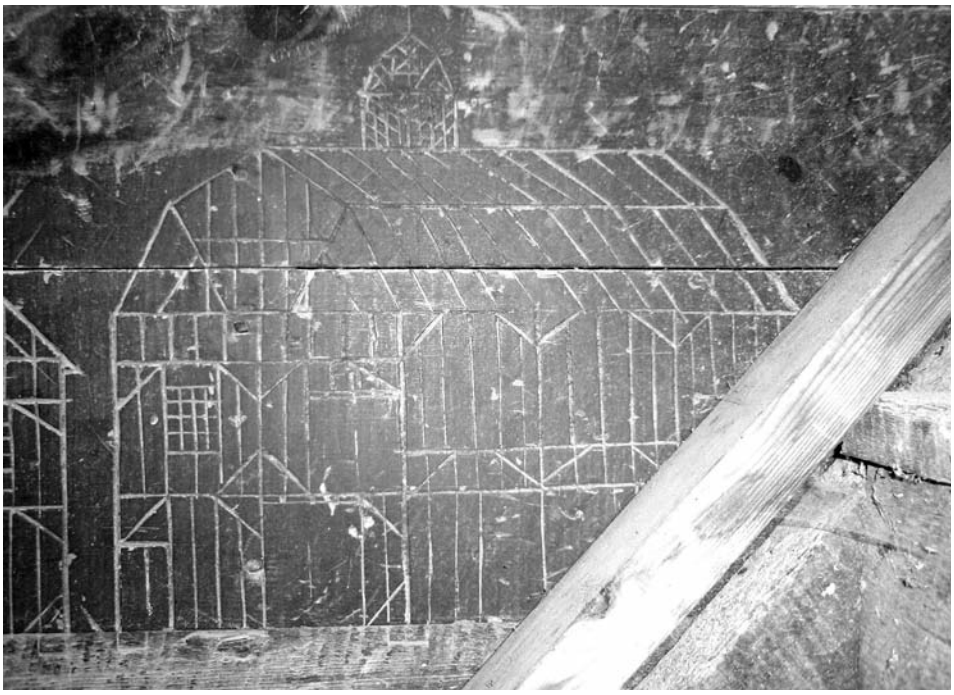


Photo 7 – *Detail of drawing in photo 6, showing technique used to depict the doors and windows of the barn (June 2009).*

Photo 8 – *Drawing of a gambrel roofed barn i n the Wilson barn (June 2009).*

Photo 9 – *Barn on the Cornell farm, Blenheim, Schoharie County, NY (June 2009).*

It is possible that what I'm calling a cupola was intended as an elevation of a different building, since it appears to be drawn at an entirely different scale, itself being two stories in height like the house. The house has a gable roof with a leanto across the back.

To the right of this is a large elevation of what might have been intended as a wagon or carriage barn. It appears to have a wide arched door on its long wall and smaller doors of similar form at each end. A square cupola, with side walls filled with latticework and a pyramidal roof, surmounts the gable-roofed building *(Photos 6 and 7)*.

Finally, to the right of that drawing is an illustration of a three bay gambrel roofed barn *(Photo 8)*.

Because of the drawing technique used – in which multiple elevations are shown simultaneously – it is difficult to determine what some of these structures would have looked like. However, the barn in Photo 4 has been identified by locals as that still standing on the Cornell farm, located to the west of the Wilson property, based upon the similarity of the framing *(Photo 9)*. It may be that the other three buildings – the drawings for them all executed in the same style and at the same elevation on the wall – were destined for one still-unidentified farmstead.

I'd like to hear from any readers who may have additional examples of this practice which they have encountered. ■

[1] See Marcus Whiffen, *The Eighteenth-Century Houses of Williamsburg: An Architectural History* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg, 1960), 29-30, for illustrations of both of these drawings.

Around the Neighborhood

By Ken Walton *(photos by author unless otherwise noted)*

A while back, I had mentioned how current maps can sometimes point the way to historic houses. For example, in the Township of Clinton in Dutchess County, just a short distance from Rhinebeck, there is a short road named Stonehouse Road and sure enough if you drive along the road you will come across a charming 18th century stone house.

After pretty much exhausting such obvious roads on current maps, I discovered that from the internet, one can access a decent sampling of older maps of the Hudson Valley region. In fact, one can find maps online that go all the way back to when the houses we seek were considered contemporary. The example I will use for this column is a map I had downloaded of the 1682 Loveridge Patent; drawn with the subdivision that existed around the year 1770 *(Fig.1)*. The map was drawn by Henry M. Brace, Esq., a New York City lawyer and historian of the second half of the nineteenth century. This patent is in Greene County in the Township of Catskill.

The patent is bounded by the Kaaterskill Creek to the west, the Catskill Creek to the north and the Hudson River to the east and therefore encompasses the southern portion of the present-day village of Catskill with its residential neighborhoods to the south & west. Where Embought Road turns right off of Route 9W and heads east to the Hudson River at Greene Point before making a ninety-degree turn to the north marks the southern boundary of the patent. Within the patent is drawn the twenty-nine sub-divisions and is denoted with the owners names along with twenty-three existing structures; most likely the houses in which the owners resided.

In an attempt to overlay the older map onto a current one, it was my hope

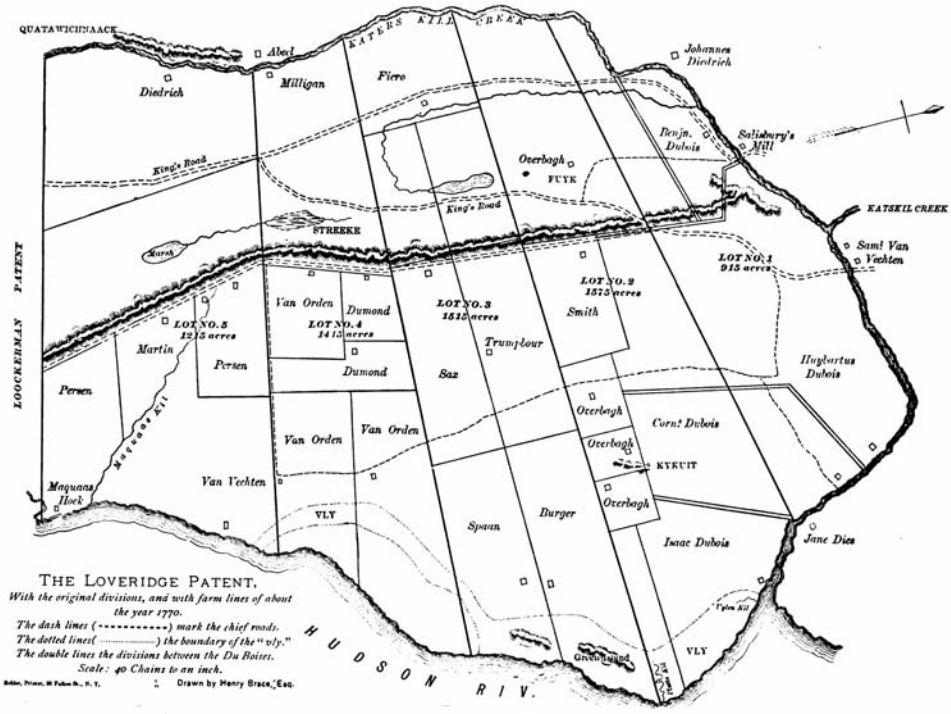


Fig. 1 – *Map of Loveridge Patent, c. 1770, drawn by Henry M. Brace.*

Fig. 2 – *Benjamin DuBois House, c. 1740 with extensive later alterations.*

Fig. 3 – *Cornelius DuBois House, 1762. A celebration of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis that ended the Revolutionary War took place here.*

Fig. 4 – *John H. DuBois House, 1774. Directly behind it is the Middle School the district built in recent years.*

that I could determine the locations of the twenty-three buildings marked even if they don't exist today. In this particular case, it was not an easy feat to accomplish as the road system has been dramatically altered over the centuries with very little remaining of the original roads. Fortunately, with the help of the placement of a couple of well-known stone houses that still stand today and other landmarks, an excursion proved to find some "new" discoveries.

Early Stone Houses in the Loveridge Patent

In 1728, Benjamin DuBois, a grandson of the New Paltz patentee, Louis DuBois, had purchased the northern 2,500 acres of the Loveridge Patent, from the Hudson to the Kaaterskill Creek, along the south shore of the Catskill Creek, and around 1740 constructed a stone house to be the center of his homestead.[1] The house still stands today at 347 West Main Street, although the gray paint, c. 1850's alterations (five-bay front façade, steep roof and Gothic trim) heavily disguises much of the early character of the stone house *(Fig. 2)*. Today, it serves as the administration offices for the Catskill School District.

By the time of the 1770 map, Benjamin's son, Huybartus had taken over the original homestead, but the land was subdivided and his brother, Cornelius built his stone house in 1762 just a few hundred yards to the east. This house, too, exists today with a NYS historical marker in front of it at 281 West Main Street *(Fig. 3)*.

A third and youngest brother, Isaac, received the parcel farthest east, near the mouth of the Catskill Creek, but his house does not exist today. Isaac's son John tore down the old stone house and erected a brick house in 1822. Actually the builder of the original stone house on this site was Huybartus, built for himself and his family and Isaac was to initially get the original family homestead built by his father according to Benjamin's will of 1760. Within the next two years, the brothers swapped homes and

the father's will was updated to reflect the change in 1762.[2]

In between the two existing houses mentioned above, stands a third stone house that is not depicted on the Loveridge Patent map. That is because the house was built by Cornelius's son John H. DuBois in 1774, four years after the map is dated. This house can be seen at 343 West Main Street and is used as the Catskill Central School District Superintendent's Office *(Fig. 4)*.

Another key landmark on the map is the ford that crossed the Catskill Creek on the Kings Road, known today in fragments as the Old Kings Highway. On the north side of the ford still stands the Van Vechten house at the end of Snake Road, once part of the Kings Road. The wall that faces the road has iron numbers that spell out 1690 placed by Van Wyck Van Vechten after he purchased the house in 1872 *(Fig. 5)*. It was passed down through the descendants that this was the year the original portion of the house was built.[3] Today, the house is an obvious composite of additions and alterations over the years that hides the earliest portion of the house as seen from the exterior *(also, see detail of Frederick Church painting on page 1)*.

Another place the map shows as bordering the patent is the David Abeel house on the west side of the Kaaterskill Creek at 739 Route 23A *(Fig. 6)*. A New York State historical marker marks the entrance to a long dirt lane that winds its way to the circa 1750's stone house. According to the marker, this was the site of a Tory and Indian raid during the Revolutionary War and David Abeel along with other family members were abducted and taken across the Canadian border. Eventually they were released and returned home.

The uplands in the middle of the patent was called Imbought and the current Embought Road is a variation in spelling and leads to the heart of the area. Marked on the map is a hill top named Kykuit and was the highest point in the area. The current road circumvents the west slope of the hill top and in a clearing on the south side stands an old stone house. According to the map, this is the eastern most of three Overbagh houses that were oriented from east to west bordering the DuBois farms. In her book, *Historic Catskill*, Jessie Van Vechten Vedder mentions that the Palatines preferred the uplands and a family of Overbaghs from Germany did arrive in Catskill via East Camp by the 1730's. Johan Peter Overbagh's tombstone is said to be the oldest in town with its inscription: "1734, Septem. 14. J.P.O.B." A nephew, Christian Overbaugh, is reputed to have inherited some land here and built a stone dwelling about 1745 with a chimney on the outside. The house became the Imbought House of James P. Overbaugh. I have yet to determine if

Fig. 5 – *The Van Vechten House, with wall irons dating it at 1690, has long been a landmark for travelers fording the Catskill Creek on nearby King's Road.*

Fig. 6 – *The David Abeel house was included on the 1770 Loveridge Patent map, even though it was outside its boundaries on the west bank of the Kaaterskill Creek.*

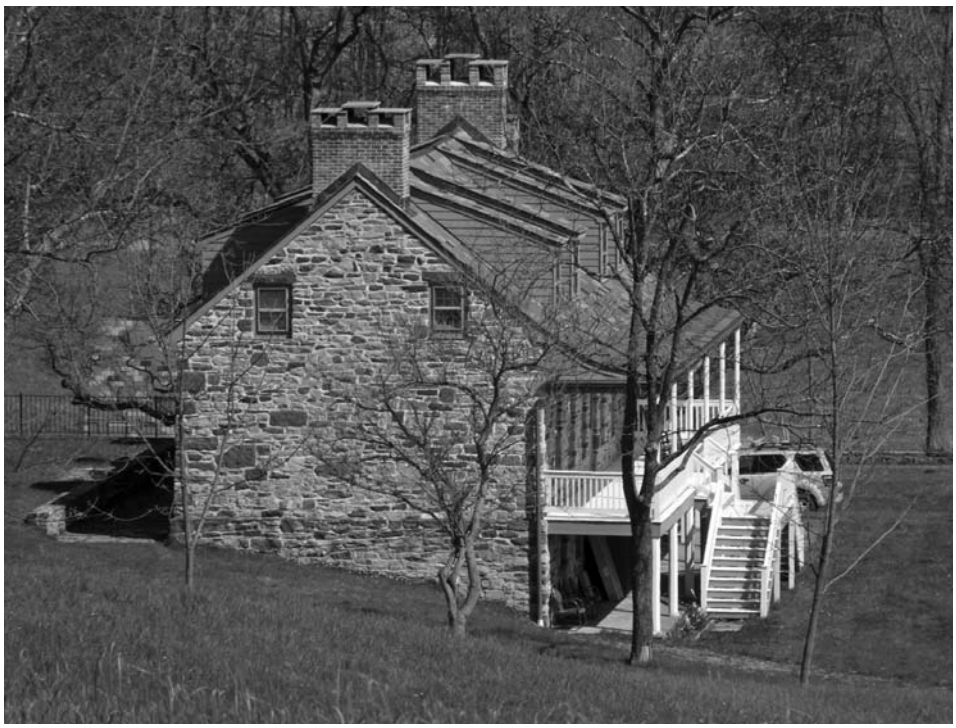


Fig. 7 – *Remnants of the gable end of an old Overbagh stone house can be seen worked into the mid-19th century brick house. The now dead-end Landon Avenue is a portion of the road shown on the 1770 map.*

Fig. 8 – *With three date stones, this Wynkoop house was built in sections, but none of them existed in 1770.*

the surviving stone house at 680 Embought Road is this building.

The westernmost of the three Overbagh houses may also survive as a portion of a larger brick edifice at 169 Landon Avenue *(Fig. 7)*. From what can be seen from the road, the whole northern face and three quarters of the western wall on the first floor is stone masonry. The remaining southern portion of the west wall and all of the south side, which is also the front, and continuing up two plus stories is all brick. With its hipped roof and lantern in the center, the Italianate brackets under the extended eaves and the stone lintels and sills, the house has a strong Civil War-era character with just a hint of its 18th-century origins.

Heading a short distance further south on Embought Road, there is a short dead end road named Anbach Road that heads to the Hudson. Up on a rise is a stone house. It is another one that does not show on the Loveridge Patent map because it was built in 1792, if the first of three dates stones is taken as the built date. According to Vedder in *Historic Catskill*, Evart Wynkoop acquired a farm on the Loveridge patent in either 1789 or 1791. His son, Hezekiah, built a "block-house" on this farm, but moved to Kingston. Hezekiah's brother, William, then moved in and made it his home *(Fig. 8)*. A second date stone with the initials "W. WK" and the date 1820 indicate that William altered the house more to his liking. Yet a third date stone in the southeast corner also documents a modern stonemason, Austin C. Sartori, has expressed his craft on the house. Although Vedder did not specify which farm Wynkoop acquired in relation to the map, she did mention that the farm in between Overbagh's and Wynkoop's farms was acquired by Wilhelm Dietrich for his son, Zacharias. He lived in a stone house that was built by Philip Spaan in 1749 and this property is displayed on the map. The house stood for another hundred years until Peter Z. Dietrich replaced it with a newer one. Since the

Dietrichs possessed the Spaan farm, then the Wynkoops must have acquired the Van Orden farm adjacent and to the south of the Spaan property. This assumes of course, that the Wynkoop farm was not a more recent subdivision.

The Nosy Neighbor

Getting back to Wilhelm Dietrich, in 1783 he owned the southwest corner of the patent, between the Kaaterskill Creek and the King's Road. He, too, was a son of a Palatine from Wurtemburgh who was a weaver by trade and lived in West Camp.[4] Existing today is a Dedrick Road that turns off Old Kings Road in the same vicinity. Last weekend, I took a ride to see what still may be there and at the end of the dead end road was a gated private driveway with several "Keep Out" signs. It holds promise as the dirt lane seems to wind down towards the creek where the map shows there once stood Dedrick's place. Does anyone know what is down there? It looks like a stone house in aerial views.

There is a stone house that is tucked into the hillside on the west side of Route 9W on the section between Embought Road and Route 23A, placing it squarely in the middle of the patent on the old Post Road *(Fig. 9)*. However, the map shows six houses along this road, but they are all on the east side of the dirt lane. An attempt to determine which of the old subdivisions the house sits on is difficult as there are no other landmarks in the area to use as a reference, but if I had to make an educated guess, I am of the opinion that it is located on the Sax farm situated between the Trumpbour to the north and the Dumond subdivisions (1765) of the original Van Orden farm to the south. As I have not been able to retrieve any information about this house, it quite possible that it was built after 1770 and thus would explain why it is not showing up on the proper side of the road on the map. I hope this example will inspire others to seek out old maps and use them in their searches for existing history.

Fig. 9 – *This house on Route 9W sits squarely in the middle of the patent, but is on the wrong side of the road to be any of the ones marked on the map. More information is needed about this place.*

A house not old enough to be on the map, but worth mentioning for its historical significance is the Cantine House at 251 West Main Street in Catskill, which was built around 1797. In 1807, Martin Van Buren (our 8th president) married Hannah Hoes here in a ceremony performed by Judge Moses Cantine. The house was then known as the Huxton House owned by Hannah's brother-in-law. Sam Wilson and his wife Betsy lived here from 1817 to 1826. While living in Catskill, Wilson operated a sloop line and a general store, and he was a partner in a slaughterhouse. It is claimed at Sam was the inspiration for the "Uncle Sam" image that became an iconic symbol of America. You may visit the home and have a meal inside as it is now a restaurant named the "Captain Kidd's Inn".

Since the last column which was on the topic of Columbia County, I have heard from Martha McMaster. She has forwarded information about the mentioned stone house at 134 Legget Road in Ghent. According to the owner of the house, it was built c.1740-90 by Revolutionary War Captain or Colonel Kittle. He is buried in a small graveyard on a rise above the stream a short distance north of the house on the left side of Legget Road. Thank you Martha.

Of course, I am always interested in hearing from anyone who knows more about these houses mentioned or of others not mentioned here. I also want to thank those members who have contacted me about their interest in the old houses. These discussions have been loads of fun. Hope to hear from more of you… happy hunting! ■

For more information about most of these houses, go to ***www.HVVA.org*** *and click on the "Mapping History" link under the "Research & Resources" heading. Please send any comments you have to:* ***kaw9862@optonline.net*** *or by mail to: Ken Walton,12 Orchard Dr., 2nd Floor, Gardiner, NY 12525. If [HVVA] is at the beginning on the subject line of the email, it will help me expedite a response.*

[1] Jessie Van Vechten Vedder, *Historic Catskill* (1922), 61. Digitized on Library of Congress website.

[2] Anson DuBois, D.D. & James G. Du Bois, comps. *Documents and Genealogical Chart of the Family of Benjamin DuBois, of Catskill, New York* (1878), 60. Also Google Books.

[3] Helen Wilkinson Reynolds, *Dutch Houses in the Hudson Valley before 1776* (1929; rpt. Dover, 1965), 123.

[4] *Historic Catskill*, 86.

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.**

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Designed by Jon Dogar-Marinesco jon@oldbrickhouse.com

A look back

This photograph was gleamed by HVVA member Dawn Elliot, Look closely and you'll spot a nice example of a new world Dutch barn in the top right corner! The location where the photograph was taken is unknown, but clearly was in the realm of "Old" New Netherland as the architecture testifies.

2012 Calendar

April 21	Tour of historic farmsteads in the Town of Rochester led by Neil Larson
May 12	Historic Flatbush House Tour, sponsored by the Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission *(See announcement posted elsewhere in this newsletter)*
May 19	Tour in northeastern Rensselaer and southern Washington counties led by Wally Wheeler
June 2 & 3	Workshop on field documentation and drafting for beginners, John Stevens & Wally Wheeler *(See announcement posted elsewhere in this newsletter)*
June 16	Tour in Garrison, Putnam County led by Ken Walton
July 14	Hurley Stone House Day and HVVA Picnic hosted by Jim Decker
July 21	Tour in East Haven, Connecticut led by John Stevens
August 18	Tour in Rhinebeck, Dutchess County ld by Nancy Kelly
September 15	Tour of Dutch frame houses in Great Barrington, Massachusetts led by Wally Wheeler
October 20	Tour in Feura Bush, Albany County led by Roberta Jeracka
November 17	Tour of Richmondtown Restoration in Staten Island by Bill McMillian
December 15	Holiday tour and luncheon in Kingston hosted by Rob Sweeney

For more information, please check www.HVVA.org