



The Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture

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Newsletter

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The Society for the Preservation of
Hudson Valley

Vernacular Architecture

is a not-for-profit corporation formed to study and preserve vernacular architecture and material culture.

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The First Thanksgiving – painting by **Jean Leon Gerome Ferris** (1863–1930)



Though the annual thanksgiving day in the Netherlands is October 3, to celebrate the relief of the siege of Leiden in 1574 (when the Protestant town was saved from capture and massacre by Spanish Catholic troops) there may have been a Leiden influence on the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving Day. The Calvinists in England also shared the idea that medieval saints' days should be replaced by specially called days either of fasting or thanksgiving. Because the English Calvinists did not dominate the Church of England, the Pilgrims first experienced this idea in practice in Leiden, where they lived for thirteen years before sailing to America. The City of Leiden declared other days of fasting, prayer, thanksgiving, or festivity from time to time.

From the Editor:

I love this time of year, but not only as many do for the autumn's brilliant foliage, but also strangely enough for the long winter nights. These darkest days of the year are the best for welcoming friends to gather around a blazing hearth, all snug with a glass of wine or warm cider. It also is that time of year when we collectively embrace our families and friends and give thanks. Thanksgiving Day is said to be America's favorite holiday – it is mine! It is that time of year when we can just take a break from calculating everything to our advantage and plotting the future. Thanksgiving gives us the opportunity to instead reflect on the past and also gives us an opportunity to appreciate what we have right now before us. As an organization, we often get caught up on the things we must be doing and the urgent need to keep ourselves moving forward with the times, but we also need to look at who we are as a group and how we got to be where we are today, taking time to reflect on the rich legacy we are building on. We can be thankful for people such as, Helen Reynolds, Rosalie Bailey, Franklin Roosevelt, and the men who served the WPA documenting many buildings for the very first time - leaving us with their exem-

plary records. We should be thankful also for the work of Myron Teller who was perhaps the first to recognize the intrinsic value of historic building in Ulster County and the writings of Loring McMillen who wrote so knowledgeably about structures on Staten Island, which now for the most part only exist in his writings. The research of Alice Kenney and the drawings of Albert Sonn, let us we gratefully receive. And let us not forget to be thankful for those many nameless builders who have blessed us with the very dwellings we are so anxious to preserve. May we also be thankful for those that do the little things that keep our familiar buildings standing firm, those that clean out leaves and debris from gutters and those who clear bush from encouraging upon abandoned barns, those who read this newsletter and those write it. We are a blessed little group of people doing the best we can. I encourage all our members to turn this season of darkness into a season of gratitude and be thankful for we are a blessed organization!

Gratefully,

Rob Sweeney – HVVA's sheepdog

Creation of List of Dutch-American Barn Citations in Eleven Years of HVVA Newsletters

By Gregory D. Huber

What is one of the greatest common denominators in the human world? In a word – it is convenience. In all our minds it is the most opportune state of affairs that we always ask ourselves in trying to accomplish any given or imagined task. We always wonder what the most facile manner might be in the completion of an assignment that we have at hand. At bottom, as a universal truth this is nature's way of conserving energy. Apply the word industriousness on the one hand or indolence on the other hand – ease of operation is forever and always sought by humans (relative to their own awareness) no matter where they may live or in what type of culture or civilization they may reside.

How does the above stated principle specifically apply to Dutch-American barns? In the case of HVVA many things have been written about Dutch related barns in its Newsletters since its inception in 1999. Technically, the group of historians dedicated to preserving the local architecture of the Hudson Valley was not called HVVA until June 2000 – nearly one and one half years after the initial meeting in January 1999. Some years later this writer wondered what kind of list could be made on all the citations of Dutch related barns included in all the years of newsletters. As time marched on the list that was developed grew longer and longer and longer. At the end of the project that required about four months of on again and off again work more than forty-three pages of details on barn citations were made. That was far more than was ever imagined.

Where to Place the List?

The thought occurred that such a list of forty-three plus pages of notes could potentially be useful to members of HVVA who want to ascertain in a quick manner what barns have been discussed on the pages of the newsletter. But what can actually be done with all these pages of notes? A quick call was made to HVVA editor Rob Sweeney. I told him of the project that I was committed to and we agreed that inclusion of the long list of citations in the newsletter (or even several succeeding newsletters) was impractical to say the least. Rob suggested "Let's put it on our



web site." That was a perfect solution. So, by the time this newsletter hits all the newsstands in the greater New York-New Jersey-Hudson Valley area, anyone interested in this topic can find it on the HVVA web site. Presto – all the information in "condensed form" on Dutch related barns is there for the taking. No great energy expenditure is asked of anyone. Viewing all the one hundred plus newsletters for such information would consume innumerable hours. As it is, the barn citations list is so long a full perusal of it would take perhaps one to two hours.

Content of Barn Citations List

What can actually be found in the barn citations list? Simply – a lot of Dutch barn stuff. And what accounts for the fact that all the pages of notes were generated? Any reference to any barn of Dutch-American relation or thought to be of Dutch type (some barn citations in the various newsletters are actually rather nebulous – not by this author of course) no matter how short or how long are included in the list. The list includes barn citations from the inception to the July-August-September 2010 newsletter issue. No barns other than of Dutch type were included in the list. This includes swing beam barns, English style barns or Americanized bank barns. However important these non-Dutch related barns are in the knowing of a more full expression of vernacular barns in the Hudson Valley, they won't be found.

The shortest citations to barns included in the list are very simple references to barns

that may serve as examples of certain traits that are seen in other barns where an entire article was originally written on a specific structure. Even barns are listed that were included on a barn tour where no traits at all were cited. In the list long citations to barns are seen in reference to articles where several pages were devoted in describing a particular barn. Many of the traits seen in the article will be found in the barn citation list. Many of the longest citations are of those barns that had many traits seen in the article.

HVVA members may wonder if a particular barn was ever written about in a HVVA Newsletter. This is one of the advantages of having such a barn citation list on the web site. The list can be "consulted" and it can be discerned if a reference to a barn appears in the list or an article was ever written about a specific barn.

Please know that a full hay barracks citation list may one day be made but was not included in the barn citation project. Nevertheless, a few hay barracks did "find" themselves into the list. It is also hoped that the barn citation list will be stimulus in the future for a Dutch-American house citation list to be made.

It is foreseen that the barn citation list will be up-dated periodically as more barns will be referred to or more specific in-depth articles are written on certain Dutch-American barns that will appear in future HVVA Newsletters. The work of HVVA continues on in its many facets of work, documentation and preservation. ■

Witch Hunts

By Joyce Berry

This is the transcript of the trial and conviction of a slave named Gitty who was accused of witchcraft in Tryon County, Town of Palatine, in the area of present day St. Johnsville. The people from the 18th century were unable to explain many events, and when bad things happened without explanation they looked for someone who was practicing witchcraft. In this day and age, we know why many things happen, science has explained much to us, but people in the past had no such help. Barns were very precious to the farmer, and without one, farming was greatly hampered. Many early settlers in the Mohawk Valley were Palatines. These people were very superstitious; they brought their superstitions with them from the old country. I'm sure everyone has seen the hex signs that have survived into our time. Palatines commonly owned slaves; slavery was legal in New York State until the early nineteenth century. The black slaves were known to be stronger, harder workers; they were preferred among slave owners. It's interesting to note the names of those who had a part in the justice of the slave Gitty, many were soon to be engaged in the Revolutionary War, some as Whigs (patriots) and some as Tories. Fonda, Nellis, Loux, Klock, Butler, Wemple, Walrath, and Visher all played a part in the coming conflict.

The spelling and grammar is that of the eighteenth century.

Tryon County

The examination of Gitty a Negroe Wench the property of Johannes Nellis taken before me Adam Loucks Esq., one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for said County relative to burning the barn of her said Master situate in Palatine

District in the County reference. This examinant confessed that she on the night of the fifth instant March set fire to the barn of her Master Johannes Nellis. That she went to bed on the night of the said fifth of March that after she had been in bed sometime a man, but whether Black or White she could not tell as it was dark, called to her to get up and set the said Barn on fire upon which she got up took a cole of fire out of the house with her and carried it to the Barn there put it on the Barn floor. After

Peter Hanson
James Pennett

The prisoner pleaded not guilty.

Witnesses

Johannes Nellis
Adam Loux
Jacob Klock
??? Negroe Man
belonging to
Johannes Nellis
James Clow (free Negroe)

At a special court held at Johns Town in and for the County of

The following Jurors were seated by Thos. Adams, one of the constables of said county and town.

James Bennet
John Thomson
Hermandus Smith
Peter Hanson
John Funda
Gilbert ???
Nathaniel Hilliard
Andrew Wemple
Wm. B. Bowen
Peter Bowen
John Visher
Christian Sheck

Evidence in behalf of Gitty.

Jun'r Gray
Hend'r Walrat
Jas. Watkins
William Smith?

The jury directed in to court and being called answered and said they find the prisoner guilty and agreeable to said verdict. Sentence was passed that she be carried to the place from whence she came and to be brout from there to the place of execution and there be burnt till she is dead.

Definition of wench (wnch) noun.

1. A young woman or girl, especially a peasant girl.
2. A woman servant.
3. A wanton woman.

A note says that on March 30, 1774, Negress Gitty burnt at Johnstown for firing her master's barn. Slave of Mr. Johannis Nellis of Palatine District. Crime committed 3/5. Costs 22-16-11 (22 pounds, 16 shillings, 11 pence).



Copies of the original documents are on file in the Montgomery County Department of History and Archives in Fonda, New York.



which returned and went to her bed again.

Taken before me this 7th March 1774.

Adam Loucks, Justice.

At a special court held at Johns Town the 11 March 1774, before John Butler, Joseph Claus and Ada Loucks, esqr, Justices one whereof is of the Quorum. The five following principal Freeholders being duly summoned appeared and were sworn.

John Thomson
Harmanus Smith
John Fonda

Tryon this twenty eighth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy four.

Present

John Butler
Jellis Funda
Joseph Chew
Adam Loucks
Peter Hansen
(All Esquires)

This being Gitty a Negroe Wench belonging to Johannes Nellis, following her burning her master's barn. The prisoner being called pled not guilty.

The Thomas Dodge House

58 Harbor Road, Port Washington, Nassau County, New York

By John R. Stevens



THOMAS DODGE HOUSE, C. 1900, FROM SOUTH

This house stands on the west side of the Cow Neck Peninsula, just north of the village center of Port Washington. It faces south, the common orientation of early Long Island houses. The old mill pond lies slightly southwest of the house, and beyond it, Manhasset Bay. It was built end-on into sloping ground so that there is a basement door on the north side of west foundation wall.

The ancestor of the builder of the house, Tristram Dodge, came to America at an early date and settled in New England. Thomas Dodge, born in 1684, came to Cow Neck in 1718 from Block Island. He purchased 200 (another source says 350) acres of land for farming. He died in 1775. It is commonly stated that he built the house in 1721, but an article in the *Port Washington News*, July 31, 1965 has coming to Cow Neck in 1709 and building a log cabin (!) which was later replaced by a small house north of the existing structure. The article states "...It is conjectured that the present house was built by Thomas's son Joseph around 1763..." The ascribed date for the house, 1721, in any event seems to be too early on the basis of its constructional details, and 1763 seems indeed feasible.

Seven generations of Dodges have lived in the house for about 228 years – or 270 years if one accepts the earlier construction date. In 1991, when in her 90s, Marie Dodge Ross – the last Dodge to occupy the house – moved to an assisted living facility. In 1993, the Port Washington Water Pollution District – which owns an adjacent property – purchased the Dodge house and the acre of land it sits on, as a buffer zone. This organization subsequently leased it to the Cow Neck Peninsular Historic Society to operate as a museum. Its second floor has been set up as an apartment for a resident caretaker.

The original part of the house measures 23 feet 7 inches across the (south) front, and is 18 feet 1 inch deep. It is built with 6 H-bents. The height, first floor to the underside of the second floor is 7 feet 8 inches (+-). The knee walls are 3 feet 8 inches in height. The roof pitch is about 46 degrees. There is a basement only under the original section of the house. The framing of the house is of oak.

At a date seemingly not much after the initial construction, an addition was built on the east end, 19 feet across the front and 15 feet deep, with 5 H-bents. The front

walls of the two sections are in line. The addition was built against the shingled east wall of the original section, and an area of these shingles survives – the full extent of them is not known. They are pine, and have an exposure of 12". Their corners are clipped; they are butt-nailed and applied to riven oak shingle lath.

The addition at some point in time had a narrow 'outshot' built on its north side flush with the east wall (see old photograph). In the present leanto attic, where this earlier outshot had been, the construction of the north wall of the addition is exposed. The wall below and above a wall plate set at the same height as the front one, is infilled between the wall posts and brace with horizontal riven sticks that hold clay bound with straw. Pieces of original riven oak shingle lath survive. About 3 feet 6 inches above this lower plate is an upper plate that carries the rear slope of the roof on the same plane as that of the original part of the house.

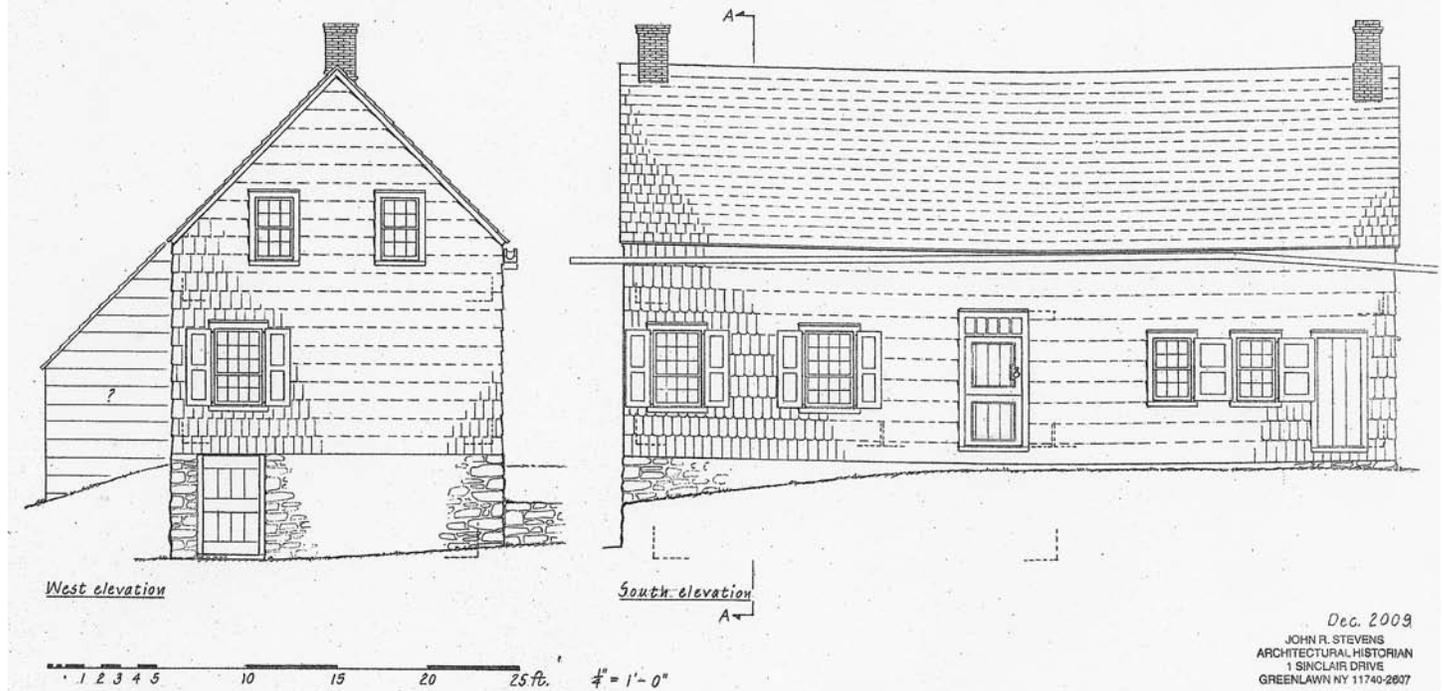
At the south-east corner of the extended house there had been a two-room building, the north half of which functioned as a bake house/out kitchen. It was replaced by the present 'ell' about 1902.

Fortunately we have good photographs of this structure from several aspects and two interior views showing a primitive jambless fireplace with a bake oven in its stone back wall. The dome of this oven protruded into the south room. Part of the foundation of this structure survives, it would seem. I estimate that this building



1. *Thomas Dodge house, Port Washington, Nassau Co., N.Y.*

Condition c. 1900



had been about 24 feet 6 inches wide (east-west) and about 28 feet long (north-south). There was a space of about 2 feet between the house's south wall and this building. On its west side, it overlapped the east end of the house about 11 feet.

Photographs of the house that were taken about 1900 show its major features. A view of the south elevation clearly shows that the house had settled in the middle about 5 or 6 inches. The wall shingles which appear to be survivors from the 18th century clearly show this settlement. It can be seen in the basement that a good part of the original first floor and its beams survive in the slanting state, and on top of this a level floor, the whole length of the house was built. However, the second floor in both the original section of the house and the addition still retain their slant towards the middle of the house (see longitudinal section).

The front wall shingles appear to have an exposure of about 13 inches. They had clipped corners and were butt-nailed, like the surviving original shingles on the east wall of the original section of the house, which, as previously noted have an exposure of 12 inches. Similar shingles are shown in old photographs showing the east wall of the addition and these extend

across the outshot. The west wall of the house is shown shingled with square-butt shingles of slightly less exposure than those of the south wall. The west wall of the house had been reclad in the 19th century with weatherboards having an exposure of about 9 inches. Much of this material survives within the lean-to addition constructed c. 1902 in its north-west room, and in the attic of the east part of the lean-to. They do not appear to have ever been painted.

The roof shingles shown in the old photographs on both the house and the bake house/out kitchen appear to have an expo-



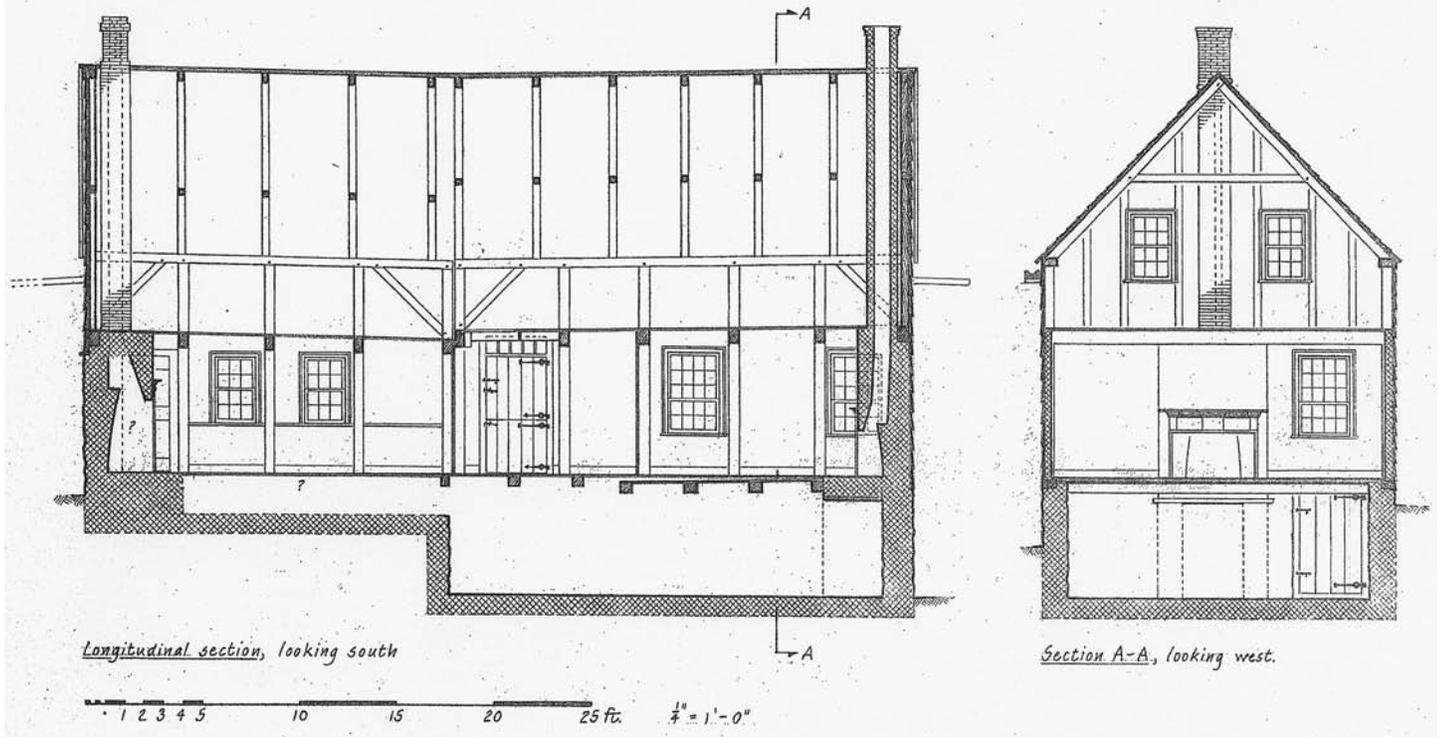
sure of about 8 inches. The ridge shingles are 'combed', to the south in the case of the house, and to the west in the case of the bake house/out kitchen. The chimneys of the house were obviously re-topped after the middle of the 19th century. The chimney of the bake house/out kitchen appears to have been large enough for fireplaces in both of its rooms, but we do not have evidence of the internal arrangement of its north room(s).

On the south elevation there are two windows on each side of the doorway. Those on the west side are 12 over 8, and those on the east side 6 over 6. They have 7" x 9" glass. The westernmost window is located unusually close to the west wall. The muntin section of the window sash is of the early 19th century. The windows are set level in contrast to the sloping lines of the shingles. I can suggest that when the floor was leveled, possibly in the early 19th century, the original window units were replaced. The fireplace mantel in the west room belongs to this time frame.

The front door is a divided, false panel door with the panels showing on the exterior as was typically done in the Dutch context after the middle of the 18th century. Its hinges and latches are typically Dutch and the whole aspect of the door is practi-

3. *Thomas Dodge house, Port Washington, Nassau Co., N.Y.*

Condition c. 1900.



cally identical to exterior doors in the whole area of Dutch settlement in the mid-18th century time-frame. The bottom rail of the door shows evidence of having been reduced in width, probably in connection with the leveling of the first floor. The doorway has a five light transom which appears to be original. The door opens into a fairly wide hall. It is located to the east side of the hall, and faces the staircase to the second floor. The door to the west room is missing, but that to the

east room (addition) is in place and like the exterior door is of false panel construction. It is hung on large H-L hinges and has a Suffolk latch with arrow cusps.

The original exterior door at the back of the hall was moved to the new rear wall line when the leanto was built c. 1902. It is a divided batten door with the battens on the exterior side. There are several early doors in the house that have obviously been relocated. One of them has a wooden

latch bar. The door at the top of the basement stair is illustrated.

As was noted earlier, the construction of the house is based on a series of transverse H-bents. The second floor beams (the crossbar of the 'H') were worked reasonably smooth in that most of the tool marks were removed. Those in the original part of the house are 10 inches in height, 6 1/2 inch thickness; the beams in the addition are 8 1/2 inches in height, 4 3/4 inch thickness. The interior faces of the wall posts are exposed in the rooms about 3/4 inch thickness. All rafter pairs have collar ties joined to the rafters with lap, half dovetails.

The chimney breast in the west room measures 5 feet 6 inches in width, and 2 feet 3 1/2 inches in depth. The fireplace opening is 4 feet 2 inches wide and 2 feet 4 inches in height. As previously noted, it has a 'Federal' style mantel from the early 19th century. The east room chimney breast is considerably larger and is offset towards the south side of the room. It is 7 feet 5 inches wide and has a depth of 3 feet 3 inches. The fireplace opening has been filled in, but I estimate its size to be 5 feet 11 inches in width and 3 feet 8 1/2 inches in height. The mantel is a late 18th

THOMAS DODGE HOUSE, c. 1900. FROM EAST.

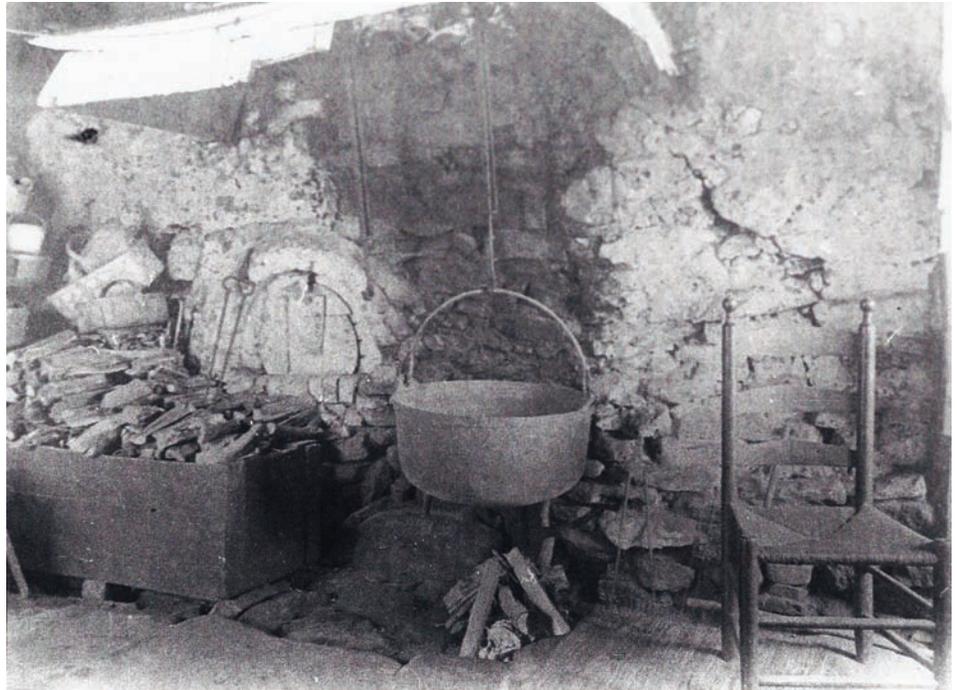


century style, with a pulvinated molding forming part of the frieze.

The early 19th century improvements would have been made by William Dodge, who was appointed coroner for Queens County (from which Nassau County was separated in 1899) by the Governor of New York State in 1805. Thereafter, little seems to have been done to the house until after 1900.

Around 1902, the house was taken in hand and an addition, 7 feet 10 inches wide at the west end was constructed across its north side. Its roof was continuous with the existing roof, but has a slightly flatter pitch. Several finished rooms were set up in this new space and the hallway was extended to the new north wall. The north-west room was left in an unfinished state. Exposed within it is the earlier weatherboarded north wall. This room has long been used for the display of farming implements and various other artifacts.

Two shed-roofed dormers were added to the south side of the roof, the westernmost of them being over the hallway. A single large gabled dormer was added on the north side of the roof, over the hallway. Gabled porches were added at the north and south doorways.

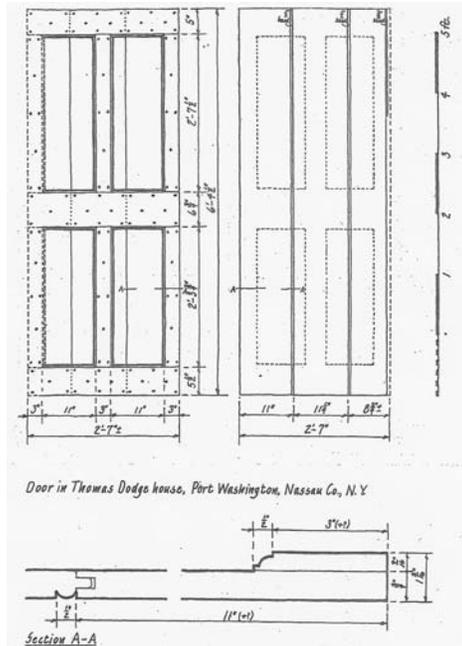
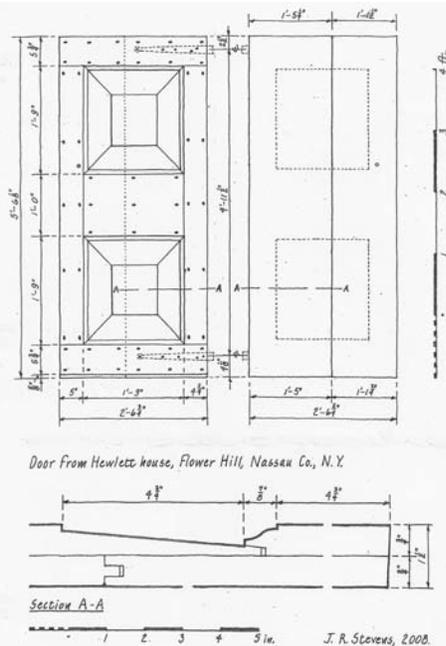


THOMAS DOGGE HOUSE - KITCHEN BUILDING - NORTH ROOM.

The bake house/out kitchen was demolished. An extension was added to the east end of the house forming an 'ell' that occupies part of the footprint of the demolished building. Its west elevation is gabled so the roof is parallel with that of the main part of the house. It overlaps the south east corner of the house by 6 feet, with a door-

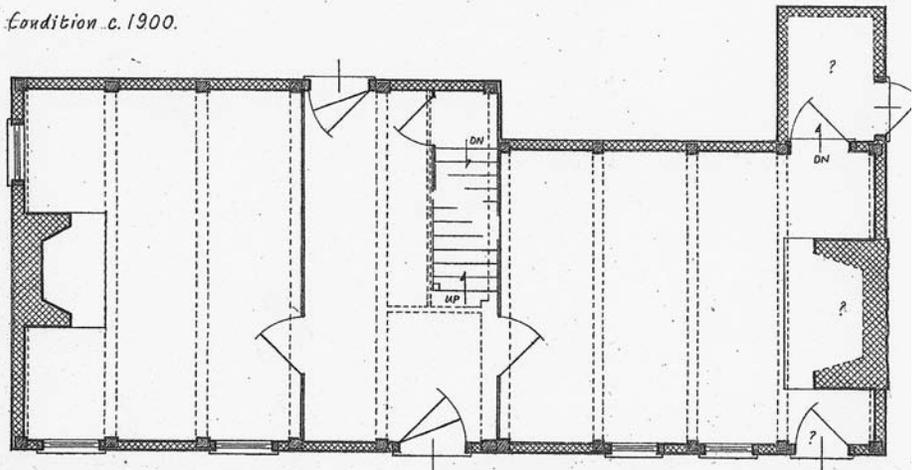
way between the two units. The west wall is 13 feet 8 inches wide, and the south wall 20 feet. The whole length of the 'ell' is 24 feet 4 inches, and its north wall is 14 feet. The main room was intended for use as the kitchen. There is a shed-roofed porch at the entry door on the west wall near its south side.



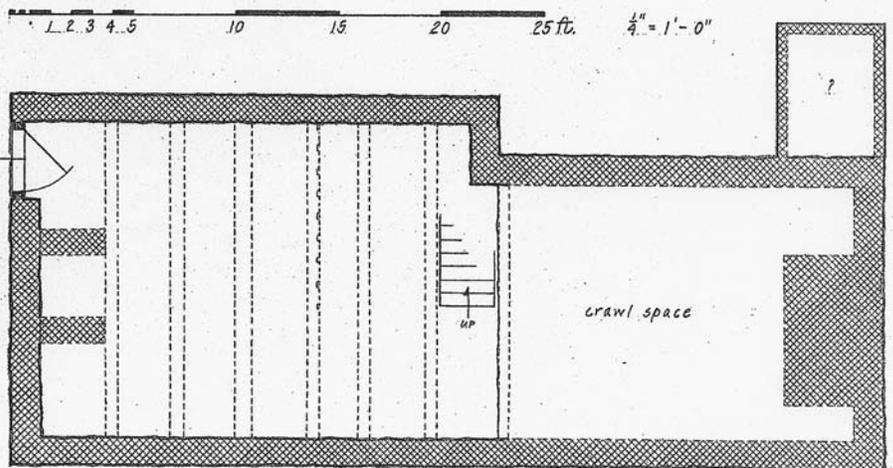


4. *Thomas Dodge house, Port Washington, Nassau Co., N.Y.*

Condition c. 1900.



First floor plan



Basement plan.

The old shingles were removed and the house re-shingled. The shingles of the east and west walls have a greater exposure than those of the north and south walls. Interestingly, the 'granary door' on the east wall that shows in early photographs was replicated in the new construction. Although house has been re-shingled again in the not distant past, it still looks very much the way it did in the early years of the 20th century. ■



I wish to thank Terry Hunt, who I knew at Old Bethpage Village Restoration, and his wife Linda who are the caretakers of the Dodge house for giving me access to it, and the Cow Neck Peninsular Historical Society who provided me with early photographs. The drawings show the condition of the house as it was at the beginning of the 20th century.

John R. Stevens, October 2010



Around the Neighborhood

By Ken Walton (photos by author unless otherwise noted)



The oldest known Hasbrouck house is credited to the New Paltz patentee, Abraham, although it was his son, Daniel, who constructed the center section in 1721.



Again, originally credited to the patentee and Abraham's brother, Jean, the house was constructed in 1722 by Jean's son, Jacob.



With a date stone marked 1755, Benjamin constructed his southern Dutchess County home to the likeness from whence he came from – the stone houses of Ulster County.

In this issue I going to take a different approach to the selection of houses. I am going to go through a list of all the existing houses known to me that were built by a member of the Hasbrouck family. Abraham and his younger brother Jean joined ten other Huguenots to become the original patentees of New Paltz. From these two brothers grew a family tree that spread densely throughout the valley and beyond. Many of their early houses still stand today, legacies to their perseverance in their struggle to strive for a better life for themselves and the future generations. By no means would I consider this list complete. In fact, if you know of a Hasbrouck house that you don't see mentioned here, please drop me a line and let me know. For means of presentation purposes only, I will list them in generally a chronological order in which they were built.

In the Neighborhood

We will first begin our journey on the well known Huguenot Street in New Paltz, where two of the earliest extant Hasbrouck houses are. The first house on my list is one of the original twelve patentees that created New Paltz – Abraham Hasbrouck. Although the house is credited to Abraham, it was his widow, Maria Deyo and son, Daniel that started construction of the center section of the house in 1721. The rooms on either side were added at later dates – the north room in 1728 and the south room in 1734. The house is currently closed to the public as it is undergoing restoration to its 1760's appearance and is scheduled to reopen in September of 2011. The other house on the street of Jean Hasbrouck and brother to Abraham, just

underwent a major restoration and reopened to the public in the fall of 2008. Again, although credited to Jean, the house we see today was completed in 1722, by his son, Jacob. Quite possibly, he incorporated a small stone cellar, fireplace and chimney from his father's earlier home on the site.

The Hasbrouck migrated to the east side of the Hudson River early on and settled in southern Dutchess County. At 326 Long Hill Road in the Wicopee area of the Town of East Fishkill, a timber frame house sitting on a high stone foundation banked into the northern slope of the

Hudson Highlands is claimed to be built by a Hasbrouck in the 1730's. By the mid-19th century the property was transferred to the Horton family where they built sleighs in the barn across the street to haul lumber out of the surrounding hills. The iron hardware for the sleighs was made from ore from a nearby surface mine. It is stated the original Dutch door still exists but has been moved to the garage. Helen Reynolds, in her book, *Dutch Houses of the Hudson Valley* before 1776, mentions Benjamin Hasbrouck came from Ulster County, but does not give his lineage. He built a stone house in the traditional style seen on the west side

One of the earliest Hasbrouck houses on the east side of the Hudson, this c.1730's bank house is nestled into the northern slope of the Hudson Highlands in the Wicopee region.





The farmhouse of Isaac (c.1750) off of Leggett Road in Stone Ridge.

of the river and is marked with a date stone of 1755. It sits on the south side of Route 52 in Hopewell Junction, between Route 376 and the Taconic Parkway.

Among the many of Kingston's stone houses in the downtown area, the one at 135 Green Street belonged to Colonel Abraham Hasbrouck, who served in the Revolutionary War and is credited to living in this house from 1735 to 1776. Colonel Abraham is Patentee Abraham's grandson and was Joseph's eldest son. In 1706, Joseph had located his stone house directly on the west shore of the Wallkill River in the Guilford Patent now within the town of Gardiner. Unfortunately, this house was destroyed when it burned in the 1860's. Most are familiar with the British burning of Kingston on October 16th, 1777, but just a year before on the 28th of October there was just as devastating a fire that originated in Colonel Abraham's home and spread throughout the neigh-

borhood as described in the diary of the Colonel:

"it crossed Green Street and destroyed the Van Keuren house and blacksmith shop; it crossed John Street and struck (ed) ... Abraham Low's house barn and barrack, Johannis Masten's house, Petrus Elting's house and barn, where David Cox then lived in a small house, where John Carman had his Silver Smith shop, Jacobus S Bruyn's house and barn all took fire and consumed, and several other houses in great danger. The loss was very great on the sufferers. Thank God no lives lost, nor any body hurt."

That most of the houses in this neighborhood were rebuilt twice a year apart attests to the perseverance of these people. Another Hasbrouck house that had a well documented and well known major role in the Revolutionary War, is Jonathan's house in Newburgh – Colonel

Abraham's brother and Joseph's youngest son. A fieldstone house built in 1725 by Burger Mynderse and 90 acres was acquired by Jonathan's mother, Elsje Schoonmaker Hasbrouck in 1749 with the intent of giving it to her youngest son. Jonathan moved there in 1750 and started immediately to expand the one room house for his new family. Over the course of the next twenty years, as the family continued to grow, he added on to the place until it appears as it does now and also when it became famously known as Washington's Headquarters from April 1782 to August 1783 – the longest duration Washington stayed in one place during the course of the Revolutionary War. Long enough in fact, that Martha joined her husband here for 12 months of this stay. In 1850, it was acquired by the State of New York and became the first publicly operated historic site in the country and can still be toured by the public today.

Of the same time period, other branches of the Hasbrouck family started spreading into other townships in the valley. One of many with the first name of Isaac and possibly the grandson of patentee Jean, started a farm around 1750 with a stone house built a fair distance off the road now called Legget Road in Stone Ridge. This house now sits on property owned by the Vivekananda Retreat at Ridgely. Nearby, on Route 209 in Stone Ridge is Mathew Hasbrouck, also known today as the Inn at Stone Ridge. Its modest beginnings of the 18th century was transformed in the 19th century into a massive stone mansion including its two story front porch. Over in the Town of Rochester at 482 Old Kings Highway, another Isaac built his stone house around 1750. Like many of the older stone houses, the roof was raised and eyebrow windows were added to the second story along with Greek Revival attributes. Also

This house was built by Colonel Abraham, a Revolutionary War veteran. After surviving two major fires only one year apart, it is the legacy of the owners' perseverance that it stands today.



Unquestionable the most famous Hasbrouck house is Jonathan's in Newburgh due to its use as General George Washington's Headquarters as the Revolutionary War neared its end.



Its modest beginnings as a 18th century stone house built by Mathew has been transformed into a 19th century massive stone mansion including its two story front porch.





On the Old Kings Highway in the Town of Rochester is this stone house built by yet another Isaac around 1750.



Petrus built his home in 1765 on the old road to Kingston from the Huguenot village, but hidden from sight of the road. The driveway meanders around the rock outcrops to reveal a stone house of classic Dutch style.



This Isaac is the brother of both Col. Abraham & Jonathan and built this wood frame house in 1766. He donated the land for the Shawangunk Dutch Reform Church and its parsonage, built in the early 1750's and still standing today.

a Victorian porch adorns the front façade. His son, John, built his stone house in 1769 nearby at 66 Rest Plaus Rd., but set off the south side of the road some distance. According to the book, *Early Architecture in Ulster Count* by the Junior League of Kingston, a 1767 grist mill still stands adjacent to the Dover Kill that runs through the family's property.

Back in New Paltz, in an area once called Middletown at 315 Old Kingston Road, Petrus Hasbrouck erected his stone home in 1765 and it was added onto in 1790. In what is now the Town of Gardiner on Albany Post Road, a third Isaac, this one the brother of both Colonel Abraham and Jonathan, built a wood frame house in 1766. Before the Town of Gardiner was formed, Isaac's property was considered in the Town of Shawangunk and he served as its supervisor in 1751 and 1752. During this time, he also donated the land upon which the Shawangunk Dutch Reform Church and its parsonage were built between 1751 and 1755. These stone structures still stand today on Hoagerburgh Road. Isaac also served in the 4th Regiment Ulster County Militia during the Revolutionary War. Unfortunately, this house had fallen on hard times and has been vacant for sometime and although a "For Sale" sign was still posted in front, vagrants had invaded the place and wreaked havoc to the property when I first spotted it about a year ago. Just after writing the first draft of this article, I drove by and the "For Sale" sign is gone, the front yard has been cleaned up, a new mailbox has been put up and a heating and air conditioning truck was parked in the driveway. Hopefully, these are signs of much needed TLC by a new owner.

Another Revolutionary War veteran, Major Jacob Hasbrouck Jr., grandson of the

Patentee Jean and had inherited the old homestead his father Jacob built in the village, but built this house in 1786 (now at 193 Huguenot Street in New Paltz) with the intent of passing it on to his son, Jacob J., the younger of his two sons. A descendant of his lives in the house today, and it is believed to be the only 18th century stone house in the New Paltz area continuously owned by the family that first built it. Before leaving the village of New Paltz again, across from the SUNY University at 88 South Manheim Road (which is also Route 32) is the elegantly kept stone house built in 1791 by one of the many Benjamins in the region.

In Clintondale at 74 Hurds Road, the small wing nearest the road of a now larger main section of an all wood frame house was built by Zachariah Hasbrouck in 1790. It was bought by Jerome Hurd and remains

Hurds Farm to this day. 442 South Ohioville Road, which is the Town of Lloyd side of the street, is the home of Josephat Hasbrouck. The stone portion is claimed to be built in 1797 and the wood addition to the west is thought to be pre-1800.

In High Falls at 2233 Lucas Turnpike, Jacobus B. Hasbrouck built a two room stone house in 1797 within earshot of the falls. A kitchen wing was added late, then it was expanded vertically and renovated in Greek Revival style in the 1840's. Below the falls he built and operated a grist mill, but it no longer exists. On Oct 4th, 2009, this house was opened for viewing on the "What's Dutch" Country Seats Tour presented in part by the HVVA.

Heading into the 19th century, the Hasbrouck family still had a strong presence in the region, however were starting

Revolutionary War veteran, Major Jacob Hasbrouck Jr. built this house in 1786 and has been continuously lived in by a descendant to this day.





The tenant house of Luther, nearby the Guilford Patent, constructed in 1800 as one of the last Hasbrouck stone houses.

The Nosy Neighbor

Again, this is far from being a complete listing of existing Hasbrouck houses. There are other houses built prior to 1815 in my very own hometown of Gardiner that I have yet to locate. For instance, there is the home of Joseph I. Hasbrouck, whose famous uncles were Colonel Abraham and Jonathan (of Newburgh), built of stone in 1787 and now a wing of a larger wood frame house near his father's (Isaac) house in close proximity to the Walkkill River. This should put it somewhere near Albany Post Road. Luther's brother, Philip built two houses on the Guilford Patent. The first around 1805 and a second house he built nearby in 1811 after his marriage to Esther Bevier. Neither of these have I been able to determine the location of. Photos of all three of these houses can be viewed in Ed Thompson's book, *The Road to Gardiner*.

Of course, I am interested in hearing from anyone who knows more about these houses mentioned or of ones 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.

For more information about most of these houses, go to www.HVVA.org and click on the "Mapping History" tab.

Anyone that can add more information to any of the houses mentioned there, 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!

to steer away from the traditional style homes. One of the last stone houses built by a Hasbrouck (around 1800) was credited to Luther – great grandson of Colonial Abraham and brother to Abner, the first supervisor of Town of Gardiner. The house is believed to have been built for tenants and is situated at 22 Marakill Lane in Gardiner, adjacent to what was known as Guilford Patent. DeWitt Hasbrouck also constructed a house in 1800 on the Old Mine Road now assigned the designation of 5868 Route 209 in the community once more commonly known as Pine Bush, just north of Kerhonkson. DeWitt, however, had shifted to the use of brick on three sides of his house with the rear wall being constructed of stone.

Not sure what branch of the Hasbrouck tree this Benjamin belongs to, but his house built in 1791 now sits across the street from the SUNY college in New Paltz.



Last, but not least and arguably one of the most influential Hasbroucks in the region is Josiah, the creator of the Locust Lawn estate right on Route 32 in the Town of Gardiner. Josiah is the son of Major Jacob Hasbrouck Jr. whose house was mentioned previously. The existing farmstead was purchased from the Terwilliger family in 1809. Josiah lived in the Evert Terwilliger stone house built in 1738 while it took five years for his Federal style mansion to be built a stone's throw away. Both houses were owned by Historic Huguenot Street until earlier this year, when the property containing the two homes were transferred to Locust Grove Foundation, the Samuel Morse Historic Site on Rt. 9 in Poughkeepsie. ■

Josephat's house has both a stone masonry and wood frame section to it and both are believed to pre-date the 19th century.



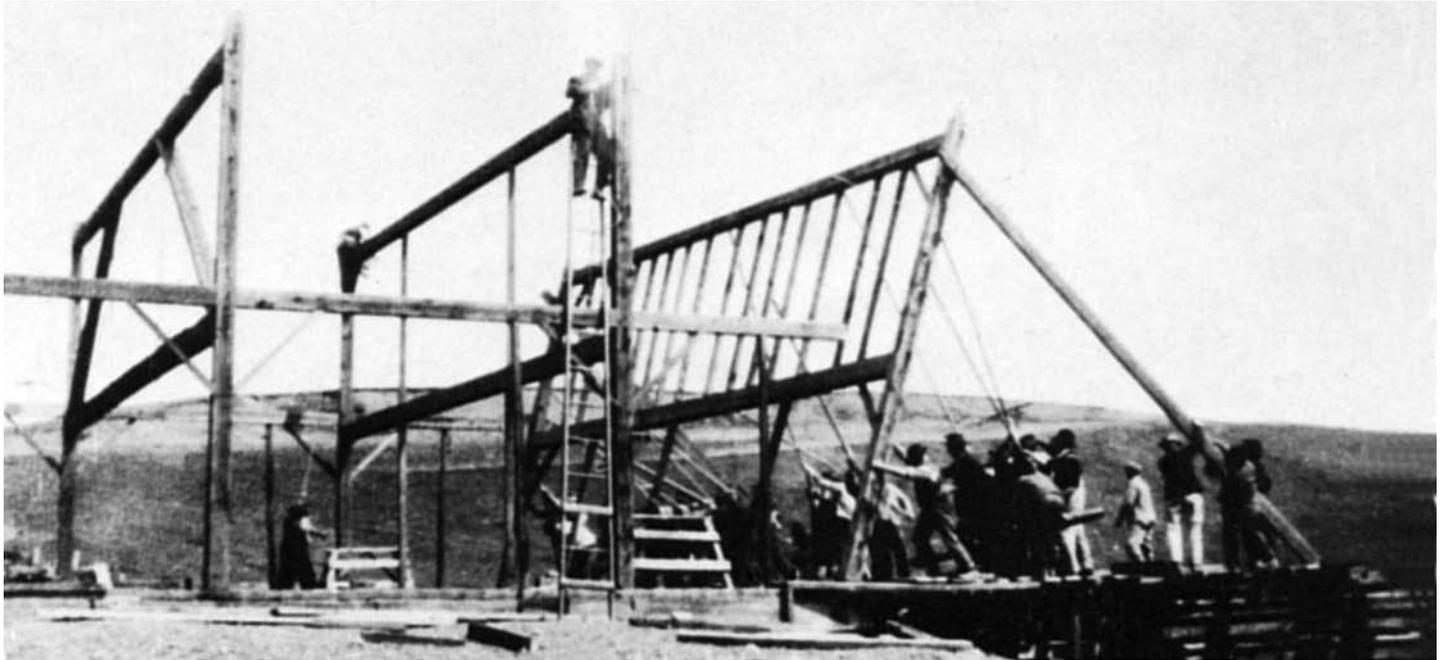
Jacobus B. built this house in 1797 in earshot of the High Falls where he operated a grist mill.



Vernacular Documents II

A “Melancholy Catastrophe”: Accidents at Construction Sites in the 19th Century

By *Walter Richard Wheeler*



Bents of the Phillips barn, East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, NY being raised c. 1890.

While somewhat macabre, the subject of accidents at construction sites is pertinent to the study of vernacular buildings, not in the least because some of our readers regularly participate in raisings themselves. Such accidents, if we can take news coverage of the period to be any indication, were not common. The dozen or so notices from the New York and New Jersey newspapers quoted here represent all of the items found in the press of the period up to 1851, together with a couple from the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Interestingly, one of the most frequently reported structural failures was the collapse of church frames; whether these were inspired by dissatisfaction on the part of the client, or due to carelessness on the part of the builders, I leave up to the reader.

The outline of a raising party, or ‘bee’ – a term that isn’t applied until the late nineteenth century, as far as I can tell – was fairly standardized by the early nineteenth century, and is likely to have remained unchanged from an earlier date. Participants were drawn from among neighbors, friends and relatives. Any able-bodied male was included, with participants’ ages ranging from seven to 70. The assembled raising crew, ranging in size from as few as five or six to over 100 participants (depending upon the size of the building), would be under the direction of a master carpenter. Female neighbors and relatives would help the lady of the house (in an era of gender-defined roles) cook food enough for the assembled crowd. Completion of a raising was frequently celebrated with a picnic and dance, which all of the participants were invited to attend.¹

The bee itself may have only lasted a day, or a few days. The construction of the building from foundation to shingles may

have taken as many as three to six months (if a barn) or one or two years, if a dwelling. The work crew would have been largest during the raising of the frame; thereafter, the trades arrived and departed the construction site in a well-orchestrated manner, timed to the seasons.²

Examination of notices of raising accidents in the newspapers give some hint both as to the practice of raising buildings, and the skills and tools used. The times of the year that raisings frequently happened can be guessed to have been in the warmer months, perhaps also designed to avoid planting or harvesting times, when possible. This is borne out by the evidence presented in these articles, documenting raisings between March and October as most common. Although outside our typical study area, an example of a raising bee thought remarkable for its speed – as well as timing – was recorded in a notice of a house frame assembled in Townsend, Vermont between 31 December 1824 and 2 January 1825:

On the 30th ult. the large dwelling house of Mr. Nurse... was entirely consumed by fire. On the day following a large number of the neighbors and friends of Mr. Nurse voluntarily collected – timber was felled, hewn and framed, and on the third day a house frame was erected forty feet in length and thirty feet in depth.³

The following notices record a range of accidents which occurred between 1808 and 1873. Earlier newspapers either didn’t record these events or knowledge of them wasn’t as widely circulated.

On Friday last, while a number of men were employed in erecting the frame of a large store, in this village (Troy,

Rensselaer County), for Messers. C. & J. D. Selden, under the direction of the Messrs. Kimberly's, about half of it (12 bents) fell suddenly to the ground, burying the workmen in its ruins. By which accident two men were instantly killed and fourteen others wounded – many of them dangerously, one since dead. The standing timber was left without any support, by the inadvertent knocking away of the stay laths on both sides of the frame at once, to get in the braces. Many other persons were about the frame who almost miraculously saved themselves.

Among the wounded were noted two African Americans, one named Peter Thompson.⁴ The relationship between the participants at the raising was not recorded.

On Saturday afternoon last, as a number of persons were engaged in raising a small frame in Milton, Mr. Abraham Thomas, aged 73, was unfortunately killed, by the falling of the whole building, which struck him on the back side of the neck, and put an almost instantaneous [sic] period to his existence. We understand that no blame can be attached to the workmen, as the accident was altogether unforeseen. The deceased was a respectable inhabitant, and was one of the first settlers of that town.⁵

In the phrase “no blame can be attached to the workmen” one can detect a subtext. What's really being said is that none of them were drunk at the time, and so the accident “was altogether unforeseen.” This type of statement – commenting on the temperance (or not) of the crew – typifies many of these notices. I'll take this subject up again later on in this article.

Sometimes structures fell because of lax building standards. The following notice gives the identities of the principal tradesmen on site at the time of the accident, and comments on the quality of work of the mason – libelous if not true, career-ending if so. In July of 1827...

A new brick building, three stories high, in Robinson-street, between Greenwich and Washington-streets (in New York), belonging to W. Barnes, Cabinet maker, fell down yesterday afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock, whilst the workmen were slating the roof, and engaged in other parts of it. An apprentice of Mr. Barnes, a lad 15 years of age, named Joseph N. Ashbury, who was working in the building, was crushed to death. Mr. J. Barnes, the owner, was injured; William Barnes had an arm broken, and his skull injured; Mr. Earl, a carpenter, was badly hurt; Mr. Stewart, a slater, do; William Walker, a mason, was also injured.

This building was erected between a small frame building and a new brick house. On the side next to the wooden building, the wall was eight inches thick, but only four on the side opposite. In front and rear it was twelve inches. The four inch wall gave way, and the whole structure instantaneously tumbled down, leaving, literally not one stone upon another, and no two bricks cohering. The bricks are perfectly clean, and the mortar does not appear to have possessed the slightest tenacity, crumbling between the fingers like ashes. The name of the mason is Walker. One of the chimneys fell on the roof of the frame building which was saved by the strength of a new brick chimney. The bricks, however, broke through, and fell in a room in the second story, in which there was, happily, no person at the time. Another of the sufferers has since expired.⁶

The article ends with a passage advocating for the institution of a formal set of building codes, something which would be adopted only later on in the nineteenth century. A few years later, in Amsterdam, Montgomery County, a church frame collapsed during raising.

On Friday last, while Mr. Erastus Thorp and twelve other persons, were engaged in raising the rafters of the new Presbyterian Church in Amsterdam, the beams on which they stood – those whereon it was intended to lay the joists to receive the lath for the upper ceiling – gave way, and precipitated them, together with most of the rafters, several plank, and the frame of the gallery, to the bottom of the basement story, a distance of 38 feet. All the persons who fell, except Darius Clizbee, were very seriously injured – one of them whose name we have not heard, but who is said to be a carpenter in the employ of Mr. Thorp, had his back broke, and is pronounced by the physicians past recovery. The wounds of the others, though severe, are not considered dangerous...⁷

From this article we learn the identities of the master carpenter and one of his helpers, and the size of a crew used to raise the rafters of a mid-sized church. In April 1833, Malcolm Campbell of Caledonia was killed “while assisting at the raising of a barn... by the falling of a bent.” He was described as being “about forty years of age, and a highly respectable citizen.”⁸ In March 1835, “Robert Proseus, of Copake, Columbia county [sic], was instantly killed at Hudson, on Tuesday last, by the falling of a bent, while assisting in raising a frame building.”⁹ In May 1845...

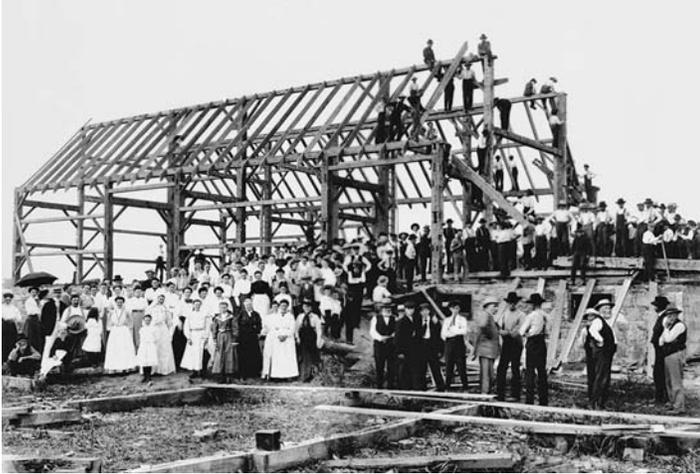
A fearful accident happened at the residence of Mr. Kelsey, in Acre's Hollow, Middleburgh, on the 21st inst... The neighbors of Mr. K had assembled for the purpose of assisting in raising a barn – On attempting to raise the third bent, the whole fell with a dreadful crash, injuring fifteen persons, who were either employed on or standing near the barn.

The names of the injured, and the extent of their injuries were mentioned in the article, including “Mr. Spoore, (carpenter)” who was “Seriously injured.”¹⁰ Another example of an accident that happened during raising of a bent in 1860, this time in western New York:

We learn that Franklin Thomas, a young man twenty-five years of age, was instantly killed yesterday afternoon while assisting at a barn raising on the premises of his father, Oliver Thomas, in Brighton. The buildings frame that was being put up was for a shed. There was some difficulty in raising one of the bents, and the foot of a post slipped from the control of the men [sic] who was holding it with a bar. The bent came down, and in the general scramble that ensued to get out of the way, young Thomas got in such a position that one of the timbers struck him in the forehead, crushing his skull.¹¹

It seems that the greatest proportion of these accidents occurred during the raising of bents, suggesting that this was the most hazardous part of the raising procedure.

Not all accidents ended so disastrously. An account of the construction of the Methodist Church in Oak Hill, Greene County in about 1859, provides much detail on the techniques used in the fabrication and raising of the frame for a church tower.



Circa 1900 barn raising in Lansing (now part of New York City).

After the main structure was up, the two front posts of the tower, seventy-five feet long, were framed together and, perhaps some forty feet from the foot of these posts was attached to each, what is called by builders a shear pole, some sixty feet long, by an iron bar run through the large end of the pole and post; and to keep the pole snug to the post an ox chain was wound around and hooked. One of the chains had been put on the wrong way and tightened instead of loosened as the bent went up. When the bent had reached an angle of perhaps forty degrees, the bent bound so that the chain could go no farther. The whole weight of the bent rested on these two poles. It was a fearful crisis. To let the bent come back was thought to be impossible without endangering many lives.

There was an awful suspense for a few moments, when one of the builders, Stephen Osterhout, seized a sharp narrow ax, and ran up the post to the binding-chain with the dexterity of a cat, and stood there and swung the ax, blow by blow, until he severed the cold iron links, which were more than a half an inch thick. When Mr. Selleck saw that daring deed, he felt cold shudders passing over him, as doubtless the others did also; but when the builder came down unharmed, such was the joy of the multitude at his almost miraculous escape from falling and death, and such their admiration of his coolness and skill, as well as daring, that they cheered him, and made the air ring with shouts of praise. It was felt that a merciful Providence had intervened for their good. This crisis passed, the raising was completed, and the building went forward, was finished and dedicated, free of debt, in the early fall.¹²

The frame of another church collapsed in September 1837, later on in the construction process. Ten workmen were “on the frame” suggesting that the raising had been safely completed, but that the structure was not yet enclosed.

While the workmen were busily engaged at work on the Methodist Episcopal Church at Minaville, in the town of Florida, in this county (Montgomery) on Thursday of last week, the frame gave way and precipitated the whole to the ground. There were something like eight or ten workmen on the frame at the time, who fell – some had their legs broken, others their skulls fractured badly – but we learn there were no lives lost.¹³

The following accounts make more explicit the connection made in the public imagination between intemperance and construction accidents during the nineteenth century. In September 1848...

A man named Jonathan Thomas, a man between forty and fifty years of age, a native of England though for many years a resident of Somers, met his death on Saturday last, 2d inst., according to the decision of the coroner’s jury, by a blow received from Robert Weeks, and the fall consequent upon the blow. The particulars are these: It appears that the parties, who were both intemperate, on the afternoon previous to the fatal affair, attended the raising of a barn at Teed Van Vore’s, where, as we are informed ardent spirits were freely distributed; some little difficulty occurred about a pair of mittens, which led to mutual contradictions, and ended in Thomas receiving a blow with the fist from Weeks.

The two met up the next day and continued their argument, which resulted in Thomas’ death.¹⁴ To the degree that this article makes a direct connection between construction accidents and drinking, so the following account seeks to separate responsibility for an accident from a temperate man:

During the raising yesterday, of a large barn, on the premises of Jacob Wyckoff, at Holmdell, N.J., a support gave way, and the frame fell, killing Henry Clay Taylor, a young and highly respected citizen; also a colored man. Seven other persons were seriously injured, two of them, it is feared, fatally.¹⁵

From the above accounts we can guess that the phrase “highly respected” or “respectable” likely meant that the individuals so-named were temperate, and thus innocent of wrongdoing. That is, they were not drinkers, and so the accidents were not their fault. Recall that temperance organizations were quite active during this period, and construction was closely allied with imbibing of intoxicating beverages from an early date. Only African-Americans were noted specifically by race in these accounts; a subtle articulation of the racism of the day.

Finally, we consider the curious case of the following accident:

We hear that at the raising of a house in Stephentown (Rensselaer County), the last week, five men were instantly killed, and fourteen badly wounded in consequence of an event in its nature alike distressing.

Two boys being scuffling in sport, one flung the other, and dislocated his neck, which killed him instantly. A brother of the boy killed, ran and told his father, who was guarding the foot of a post of the bent of a building then going up. The father forgetful of his trust, deserted his post and the bent fell instantly and killed and wounded the number above mentioned.¹⁶

Compare the above with the story related in a newspaper 14 years later, said to have occurred in another part of the state:

By a gentleman passing this place from Chenango, we learn the following melancholy circumstances, which he stated to have occurred last week in the town of Oteslic, in the above county.

A large number of men were employed in raising a barn; two young men were scuffling, and the neck of one was broken in the affray; in this situation he was carried to his father, who was holding a corner post of one of the bents

when (dreadful to relate!) the father, shocked at the horrid spectacle, left his hold, by which means the timbers fell and killed seven men on the spot!¹⁷

And a third newspaper article, covering an accident which was said to have occurred in 1848 – 26 years later:

We learn that at a raising in the town of Springfield a few days since, an accident occurred which resulted in a painful loss of life. Our informant states that whilst a number of men were engaged with pikes, in the act of raising a bent that two boys were wrestling near by and one of them was violently thrown to the ground. His father, who was engaged on the frame seeing his son prostrated and helpless went to his assistance, and upon taking him in his arms exclaimed, "My God, he's dead!" It was immediately ascertained that the boys neck was broken in the fall. The men, upon this shocking announcement, immediately relaxed their hold and the the frame fell, crushing six of them beneath its heavy timbers, not one of whom survived the injuries received. The father of the boy escaped uninjured. We regret that up to the time of going to press, we could obtain no further particulars of this shocking casualty, or the names of the unfortunate victims.¹⁸

And this, a riff on the above, printed in a New York City newspaper:

A few days ago, a party of men were [sic] engaged in raising the frame of a house near Spring Water, when two boys, one a son of one of the men engaged in raising the frame, was thrown in wrestling, and killed. The father of the boy, shocked at the death of his son, let go his hold of the frame, and others of the party going to his assistance, the frame fell, killing six of them on the spot. This happened at Spring Water, Livingston County, N.Y.¹⁹

It's certainly instructive to witness the recycling of outrageous news items during the course of the nineteenth century, and the morphing of the story in a way reminiscent of the game of 'telephone.' This was the only tale, however, which received such a treatment, and had a lifespan of more than 40 years at that. Chances are the story was considered to be particularly melancholy (and thus attractive to the maudlin sensibilities of the press); or perhaps its charm lay in its vague resemblance to the biblical story of Cain and Abel, and thus was to be seen as a metaphor. Perhaps the paucity of news pertaining to building failures inspired the regurgitation of this item over time. It's interesting to contemplate the fact that public awareness of construction accidents was at least in part the result of media hype.

In closing, here's a tale of an unlucky fellow; while not active within the Hudson Valley, the story is fuel for the superstitious, and so I'm delighted to share it.

At Gaines, in Ohio, Mr. Spencer Conant, a carpenter, who was employed in raising a frame church, and who had been singularly unfortunate on such occasions, requested to be excused going up to work on the steeple, which request was granted. The deceased was congratulating himself upon his fortunate escape from accident, which for him was rather unusual; when suddenly a chip from the axe of a workman came in contact with a mallet of about 4 lbs. weight, which was dislodged from its place on one of the timbers, and precipitating some sixty feet, struck Conant on the top of the head, and fractured the skull across the entire diameter and elsewhere. He died shortly after. Mr. Conant was about 30 years of age, and had no family. He has resided in Gaines the four or five last years – his relatives live at the east.²⁰

Something else the superstitious can gather from the above articles looked at as a whole: clearly, if your name was Thomas or Thompson, or some variant thereof, it was probably a bad idea to get into the building trades. ■

1 I am preparing an article, to appear in the Fall 2010 *Dutch Barn Preservation Society Newsletter*, on the work done for the conversion of the Dockstader barn in Montgomery County from a New World Dutch barn to a bank barn, in 1889. That piece will contain additional information on raising bees.

2 More on this in a future installment of Vernacular Documents.

3 *Weekly Commercial Advertiser*, 14 January 1825, p. 2.

4 "Shocking Accident," *Evening Post*, 1 September 1809, p. 3.

5 "Distressing Accident," *Ballston Spa Gazette*, 12 October 1824, p. 3.

6 "Melancholy Accident," *Commercial Advertiser* (New York), 28 July 1827, p. 2.

7 "Melancholy Accident," *Ithaca Journal*, 19 October 1831, p. 3. Reprinted from the *Johnstown Herald*.

8 "Fatal Accident," *Spectator*, 25 April 1833, p. 1.

9 "Accident," *Spectator*, 26 March 1835, p. 2.

10 "A Fearful Accident...", *Albany Evening Journal*, 29 May 1845, p. 2. Reprinted from the *Schoharie Republican*. Also reprinted in the *New York Herald* of 30 May 1845, p. 2.

11 "Fatal Accident," *Albany Evening Journal*, 3 September 1860, p. 2. Reprinted from the *Rochester Union*.

12 Ray Beecher, "Religion in Oak Hill," *Greene County Historical Journal* 15:2 (Summer 1991), p. 14.

The quotation is by Rev. A.F. Selleck, recalled in 1886. This account was brought to my attention by Bill Krattinger.

13 "Accident," *Spectator*, 29 June 1837, p. 4. Reprinted from the *Amsterdam Inquirer*.

14 "Manslaughter in Somers Westchester Co.," *Albany Evening Journal*, 7 September 1848, p. 2.

15 "Fatal Accident at a Barn Raising," *Commercial Advertiser*, 5 June 1873, p. 3. The barn was in the vicinity of Red Bank, New Jersey.

16 "Melancholy Catastrophe," *Guardian*, 25 June 1808, p. 127. Reprinted from the *Catskill Eagle*.

17 "Awful Calamity," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 1 October 1822, p. 3. Said to have been reprinted from an unidentified Little Falls newspaper.

18 "Sad Accident and Melancholy Loss of Life," *Albany Evening Journal*, 30 June 1848, p. 2. Reprinted from the *Ontario Repository*.

19 "Serious Accidents," *New York Herald*, 30 June 1848, said to have been copied from an Albany newspaper.

20 "Singular Accident," *Spectator*, 24 July 1834, 1.

HVVA Tour of Washington County

By William Krattinger

HVVA members met on August 21st in Battenville, Washington County, where the day's tour began. From Battenville, a hamlet developed in the early 19th century when the adjacent Battenkill's waters were harnessed for small-scale textile manufacturing, the group proceeded to the Hebron area and then on to Jackson, following a stopover for lunch in Salem. The tour route allowed those unfamiliar with this region of east-central New York the opportunity to briefly partake of its scenic qualities and its distinctive agrarian character, while surveying any number of historic buildings and farmsteads, if only in passing.

Among the buildings visited in Battenville was the tavern operated in 1817 by Thomas McLean and in the 1860s by proprietor Isaac Stoops (*Photo 1*). Evidence suggests it was built in the first years of the 19th century, perhaps as late as the establishment of the hamlet's first mill interests, ca. 1815. This frame building is located on the west side of State Route 29, which forms the spine upon which the hamlet's building stock was primarily developed. Gable-ended and two-stories in height, the tavern was built on a rectangular plan with dual entrances to the first floor from roadside, one leading into the original tap room that occupies the southern third of the first-story plan. In the opposite north room is visible the bent framing system employed to construct this section, if not all, of the building; whether the existing footprint represents a single

McLean tavern interior showing anchorbeams.



McLean Tavern – exterior.

or multiple building episodes is not yet definitively known (*Photo 2*). Evidence of an earlier partitioning arrangement was visible in the north room, while the anchor beams were finished in a manner suggesting they were meant to be exposed.

The second floor was largely given over to a rectangular-shaped room occupying most of the front of the plan, presumed to be the nineteenth century ballroom. Evidence of subsequent partitioning is discernible, with a range of smaller rooms and stair hall situated behind. This floor of the tavern currently serves the studio requirements of local painter and Battenville resident Robert Nunnolley.

A sawn rafter roof framing system without intermediate purlins can be seen in the attic. The rafters were pinned at their apex and originally had collar ties. The angle of the collar pockets indicated the rafters had been brought down from an earlier, and steeper, pitch, perhaps at the time neoclassic exterior treatments were adopted. It is possible their removal was necessitated in part by the need for greater freedom of mobility in the attic; an external hoist was installed at the south end of the attic at that time.

Immediately south of tavern is the two-story brick house built 1832-33 for Daniel Anthony, father of Susan B. Anthony, who resided here for a time in her youth (*Photo 3*). Susan's father, a principal partner in Battenville's textile mill and its principal overseer, contracted for the construction

of this square-plan house at the height of his economic fortunes. Though substantially renovated in the 1860s, it retains original Anthony-period Greek Revival-style woodwork in the northeast parlor of the first floor. Group members briefly deliberated over the house's original staircase configuration. The existing stair in the front hall was installed during the 1860s; it remains unclear whether a second stair toward the center of the plan, later closed off, was the house's only stair originally. Heating was exclusively by stoves, the associated chimneys built integrally with the brick envelope. Daniel Anthony lost

*Bellow: Anthony house.
Bottom: Folsom-McLean house barn.*





ownership of this house and the bulk of the family's possessions during the financial crisis of the later 1830s; shortly thereafter they removed from Battenville.

In addition to the tavern and Anthony house, group members viewed the frame of a three-bay English barn later expanded laterally with a fourth bay, located north of the ca. 1795 Folsom-McLean house (*Photo 4*). The barn, likely built ca. 1800, employed both smaller sawn and larger hewn framing components and square-rule joinery, including a sizeable though weathered hewn swing beam, which appeared to be fashioned from chestnut. The group stopped briefly to observe the ca. 1794 Alexander McNish house on County Route 30 northwest of Salem, a single-story gambrel-roofed dwelling of brick construction (*Photos 5 thru 7*).



Alexander's father James McNish arrived in the region with a contingent of Scots-Irish settlers in the 1760s, and the two were engaged in sheep farming. The family is credited with the introduction of Merinos to Washington County. The McNish house is one of two houses of this type identified in the Salem area, the other being that built for the Savage family south of Salem on Route 22. The primary floor features a through passage, double-pile plan with end wall hearths, with a basement kitchen occupying a part of the basement, accessible at grade from the east elevation. It appears the upper floor, within the lower part of the gambrel, was left as garret space until later in the 19th century. The basement kitchen was described in the 19th century by historian Asa Fitch as the "main abode of the household," and was one winter adapted to quarter young Merino sheep to ensure their survival.

Top: Alexander McNish house in a nineteenth century photograph.

Above: McNish house today.

Below: A nineteenth century photo of the Wilson house.



After leaving the McNish house the group proceeded to Chamberlain Mills Road in the Hebron area to visit with long-time Washington County historian and preservation advocate Sally Brillion, owner of the ca. 1786 James Wilson House (*Photos 8 and 9*). This frame house is representative of regional settlement by New Englanders in the last quarter of the 18th century, and is of the distinctive Connecticut River Valley center chimney type.

Plan-wise the primary floor consists of the characteristic arrangement, with entrance porch, hall and parlor occupying the front of the plan, a kitchen and smaller corner rooms, including a pantry, at the rear. The tour was limited to the first-floor rooms.



General view of the barns at the O'Donnell Hill farm

The Wilson family was among the first to settle Hebron, having come to Washington County from Rhode Island. After visiting the Wilson house, the group took the opportunity to avail itself of the Brillion's book store, which has recently been moved from Fort Ann to the adjacent barn. After lunch at Steiningers Restaurant in Salem, the group proceeded to the Coila vicinity to inspect the framing of the Hill-Pedersen house, a ca. 1800 two-story frame house built with a modified bent-framing system, further indication – along with the tavern – of the adoption of this framing solution near the turn of the nineteenth century in southern Washington County. The owner was unfortunately called away at the last minute, leaving the group to briefly ponder the house before moving on to the O'Donnell Hill Farm in Jackson (Photo 10). Here group members had the opportunity to view the farm's original English barn, which, like the McLean barn in Battenville, had been laterally expanded from its original three-bay form, in this case in both directions. It provided an excellent comparison with the McLean barn, given it was built with scribe-rule joinery techniques, the original exterior posts being of the flared "gunstock" type, the interior bents which defined the central threshing corridor being of the dropped tie type with diminished housings for the anchor beam (Photo 11). The junction of

Rear elevation of the McNish house.



the plate, girt and post at the building's four original corners was resolved with a traditional English tying joint. The corresponding tapered and hewn rafter pairs of this section, meanwhile, had originally been fitted with collar ties, later removed. Most if not all of the larger framing components had been hewn from oak. This barn shares some features with the eighteenth century barn at Nipmoose farm, which was recently seen during a Dutch Barn Preservation Society tour of Pittstown and adjacent areas. ■

Bellow: English barn at O'Donnell Hill farm.
Bottom: Interior detail showing flared posts.



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A look back



Although this photograph is not the traditional "a look back" vintage photograph, it features a fine vernacular building, which was, razed this past October. The house was located on Broadway (State Route 9W) in Port Ewen, New York. Locally it was know as the **Freeman House** and was for many years used as an office for the Pennsylvania Coal Company. This building was lost to make room for a new Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union. HVVA was not permitted to document the building.

Calendar

Holiday tour!

Saturday, December 11, 2010 – 10:00 AM
We'll gather in the parking lot behind the Kingston School District administrative offices on Green St. (Green St. is the first right off North Front Street if you are coming via Washington Avenue) This event is by far the most fun tour of the year. We visit houses, have a great lunch and enjoy a day of fellowship and good cheer. Cost of the lunch is \$20, payable on the day of the tour. RSVP is a MUST to attend this outing! Contact Rob Sweeney at 845-336-0232 or send e-mail to gallusguy@msn.com

Reception & Christmas Concert

Saturday, December 11, 2010
Reception: 6:00 PM at 43 Crown Street
Concert: 8:00 PM at Old Dutch Church
Christmas is coming and the goose won't be the only one getting fat. Your friends at Old Dutch Church are planning a combined reception and concert on Saturday, December 11. The reception will be held in one of the historic district's finest private home, where we'll fatten you up with wine,

cheeses and hearty hors d'oeuvres, afterwards we'll give you a chance to work off your libations as you climb into your reserved seat in the choir loft at Old Dutch Church for the best holiday concert in Kingston, the Mendelssohn Club's Christmas Concert. Tickets are \$35.00 with the entire amount to benefit the ODC restoration fund. To purchase your place at the very special event, please contact Rob Sweeney at 845-336-0232 or send e-mail to gallusguy@msn.com

HVVA Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 15, 2011 – 10:00 AM
Our annual meeting will be held in the Elmendorph Inn located at 7562 Route 9, Red Hook, NY. Election of officers and planning for 2011 will be the agenda of the day. All members are welcome. Bring something to "show and tell," it's a tradition! Coffee and doughnuts will be provided. Lunch out place to be announced.

Please check the www.HVVA.org for the February meeting location.

For more information, please check www.HVVA.org