The Society for the Preservation of
Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture

July – September 2011 **Newsletter** Vol. 14, No. 7-9

Drawing by Peter Sinclair

Are you being served? We want to know!

Included in this issue is a survey form to help guide the trustees of HVVA in ways our organization might be shaped. Your input matters to us! Please respond to the questionnaire and mail it back to HVVA. We'll be using your responses to help us in planning events for the future. While you're at it you may want to send in your dues. Dues are for one calendar year from the date of your payment. Please consult your mailing label to see when your membership expires. If you pay them early you're just buying time in the future of HVVA, nothing is lost! To all those members, who have remained faithful to the cause over these thirteen years, **THANK YOU!** The contribution of your membership has kept many good things going. Volunteers have done ALL that we have accomplished, but those who have worked the hardest have indeed received the greatest payment. We look forward to learning from you how we might use our resources to serve you and our mission in larger ways in 2012.

From the Editor:

Over the summer we have seen just how destructive earthly elements can be. Hurricane Irene and the torrential rain that followed caused a great deal of destruction previously unknown in the Hudson Valley region. I bring this up only as a reminder of the fragility of historic structures and the need to view all of our vernacular architecture as "at risk". Often we think of only buildings with bulldozers parked out front to be at risk and indeed they are, but no one knows when or where disaster will strike. We must remind ourselves that even those building which seem well cared for can in a flash be reduced to ruins. Irene woke us up to this fact!

It is for this reason alone documenting structures remains an important focus for HVVA. It not only plays a role in protecting buildings it becomes invaluable information if a building is lost all together.

Documentation allows a house to transcend time, even when it is lost to the ages, a record of its presence gives it a certain type of immortality. Good documentation is the essence of truth for the next generation who will only see these structures through our work. Documentation is the sacred distillation of a building's architectural attributes, and it indeed imparts immortality! Now there is no doubt in my mind that visiting historic buildings is far better than reading about them, but if all we are left with is the "record" we are indeed better for the knowledge than the lack there of. In visiting sites with fellow HVVA members we are not doubters of history but indeed become believers. As for those who have not witnessed for yourself how theses structure can change you, I encourage you to put yourself into one of theses holies of history and feel what words cannot express.

There is a reason so many people visit state and national historic sites, but for all the masses who miss out on the small shacks the broken barns and crumbling stone houses, and the half broken H-bents, we're here for you, so you will be not doubting but believing in our historic past to! HVVA will prevail in its work; photographing, mapping, drawing and writing with all the earnest hope that the future will indeed be able to learn from the past.

Rob Sweeney – *HVVA sheepdog*

From Carl's Scrapbook: The Cornelius Tymerson House

Town of Niskayuna, Schenectady County, New York

By Walter Richard Wheeler

Photo 1: *General exterior view (HABS photo).*

On a Sunday afternoon in September 1956 Carl Erickson and his parents drove out to the site of the Cornelius Tymerson house in Niskayuna. The house had been recorded, albeit only partially, by HABS photography sometime after 1933.[1] Six large-format photographs were taken at that time by HABS staff (Photos 1 thru 6). From these it can be seen that a portion of the house was fairly early, with the interior featuring corbelled anchorbeams and panels of plastered or whitewashed nogging between exposed posts.

Mohawk Valley historian John Vrooman wrote about the house in his *Forts and Firesides of the Mohawk Country.* He visited it in 1941:

> There is a cellar under the entire house and a main or ground floor with an attic above. The cellar is divided about equally into two rooms by a ponderous stone wall. Here are seen the unusually heavy floor beams, hand hewn to square fourteen inches and the heavy foundations

Photo 2: *General exterior view (HABS photo).*

and arches for the support of the large fireplaces above. These arch supports are typical of houses of a pre-Revolutionary date.

The ground floor consists of a central hall on each side of which is a single room with its old fashioned fireplace. The originally exposed beams in these rooms have been hidden by lath and plaster but this is not true in the hall where the beams have not been molested. Another note of interest is the horizontally divided front door after the Dutch manner, with its hand wrought hardware. The house was never "elegant" but must have been considered rather more than a "substantial" home in its day.

The attic discloses considerable carpentering of a date much later than that of the building. The entire house is in a poor state of repair and there is more than an even chance it will not stand many years longer unless greater care is given it (Photo 7).[2]

Carl wrote in 1956: "The Tymerson house was built by Cornelous [sic] Tymerson sometime before the Revolution. There is a reference by the Indians to a Cornelous Tymerson of Rosendale in 1701, Rosendale being a locality in Niskayuna. The once-rich farmland in the area has been condemned and flooded by the State of New York as

Photo 3: *One of the parlors, showing beams (HABS photo).*

Photo 4: *Stair hall (HABS photo).*

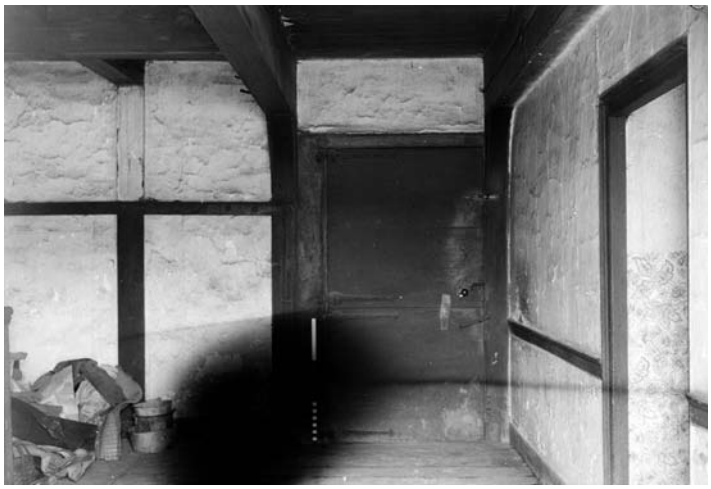


Photo 5: *Stair hall (HABS photo).*

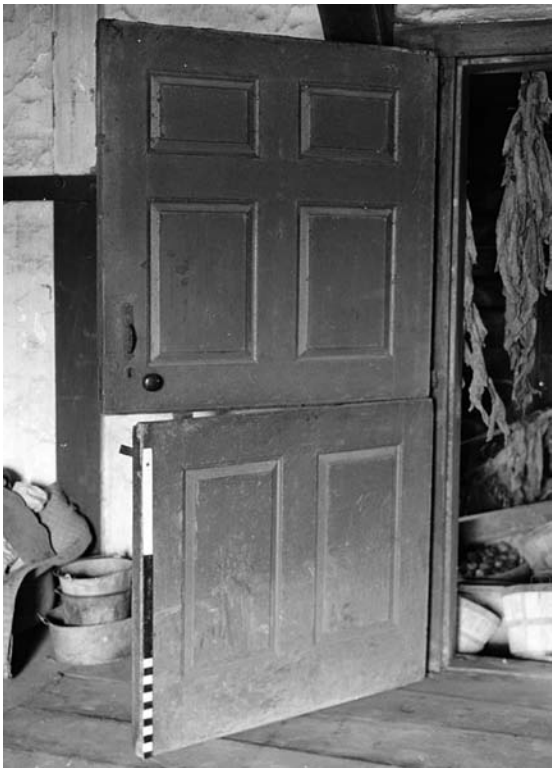


Photo 6: *Divided door, apparently looking into leanto (HABS photo).*

Photo 7: *"Tymerson House, Niskayuna" (Photo by John Vrooman, 1941).*

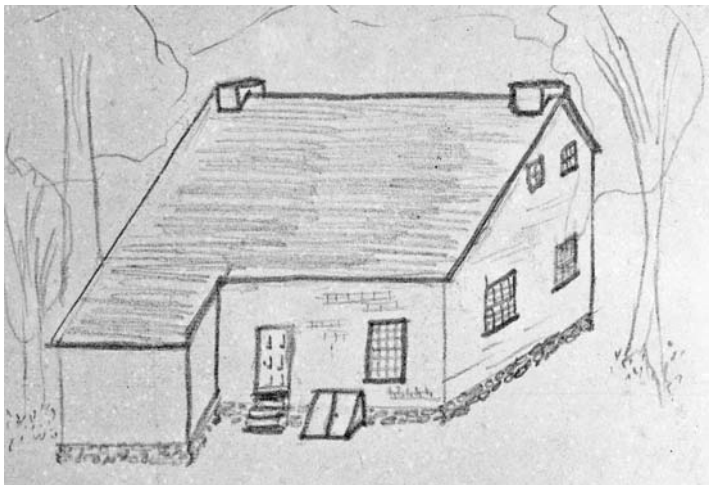
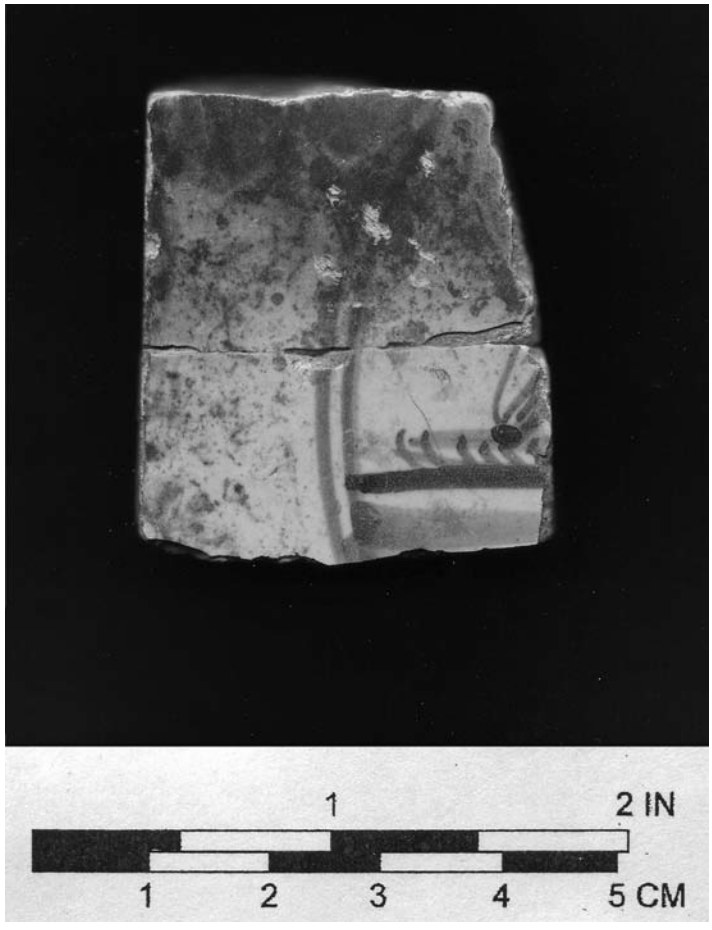


Photo 8: *"The Tymerson [house] as it originally appeared." (Drawing by Carl Erickson, 1956). Carl's reconstruction omits what may have been a later kitchen wing, and shows the location of a bulkhead door on the rear elevation.*

Photo 10: *"The Tymerson farmland" (Photo by Carl Erickson, 1956).*

Photo 9: *"One of the huge brick and stone arches supporting the fireplaces." (Photo by Carl Erickson, 1956).*

Photo 11: *Tile fragment from the Tymerson house (Collection Bobby Brustle).*



a floodwater storage basin; an adjunct of the State Barge Canal. The once-sturdy house is now a pile of rubble."

Vrooman's prediction had come true. The unoccupied house burned at an unknown date after his visit. Carl made an illustration of what he believed the house to have originally looked like (probably reconstructed using Vrooman's photograph, since it was in ruins by that time), and took two photographs (Photos 8 thru 10).

Excavations conducted at the site in the late 1970s recovered some of the construction debris, including a partial example of a delft fireplace tile (Photo 11). This tile depicts a land or waterscape, and dates to c.1750.[3]

[1] It was assigned HABS number NY-6125, and can be accessed on-line at http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query.

[2] John J. Vrooman, "The Tymerson House," in *Forts and Firesides of the Mohawk Country New York*. Philadelphia, PA: Elijah Ellsworth Brownell, 1943, p. 39. Vrooman provides much additional information on the family on pages 39-40 of his book.

[3] Walter Richard Wheeler, "*Once adorned with quaint Dutch tiles...*: A Preliminary Analysis of Delft Tiles Found in Archaeological Contexts and Historical Collections in the Upper Hudson Valley," in Penelope Ballard Drooker and John P. Hart, eds., *Soldiers, Cities and Landscapes: Papers in Honor of Charles L. Fisher. New York State Museum Bulletin 513*, 107-150. Albany, NY: New York State Museum, p.138.

Around the Neighborhood

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

It was at this time last year when I mentioned the topic of house tours. This year, an organization new to doing house tours presented a wonderfully historic tour in the town of Gardiner. The Wallkill Valley Land Trust is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1987. Their goal is to preserve open space in southern Ulster County for the benefit of present and future generations. This year, they decided to organize their first ever tour and made an excellent choice by selecting as their theme the historic Kettleborough District. By taking the tour and from their pamphlet comes the following information.

By the first couple of decades of the 18th century, most of the desirable farm land along the Wallkill River originally settled by the New Paltz patentees was already being used by the existing families. The latest generation had to stake their claims outside the New Paltz patent if they wished to stay along the river. Land to the south became timely available in 1709 when the English Crown voided the monstrous 300,000 Evans patent and soon the speculators rushed in for the land grab. A portion was acquired by Thomas Garland in 1721 and in turn was sold to Garret Kettletas in 1728. Neither gentlemen lived or developed the property in any way. In 1742, Jean LeFevre, son of the New Paltz pantentee Simon, purchased 1,000 acres from the heirs of Kettlelas for his two sons, Abraham and Andries. This land became known as Kettleborough and was farmed by the LeFevres for generations to come. In fact, some of the living generations still reside in the old district.

In the Neighborhood

The LeFevre land was split in equal halves of 500 acres each and the two brothers soon after began building their stone houses. Andries obtained the southern half of the land and built his house on the northern border. Abraham received the northern portion and built his house on the southern border, most likely in visual sight of one another. Unfortunately, Andries house does not exist anymore, but its fate will be mentioned later on. Abraham's house still survives at 56 Forest Glen Road and although expanded throughout the 18th century, little has been done to it that changes its character. It is the usual one and a half story Dutch stone house that

The Abraham LeFevre House, c.1742. The older of two brothers who were the first to settle in Kettleborough.

was expanded in a typical linear fashion where the original circa 1742 single room house is now incorporated as the center portion with remnants of the original jambless fireplace that can still be seen in the cellar. Around 1758, a large stone addition was added to the east side of the house with the new fireplace positioned so it is back-to-back with the original one. The house was expanded again around 1794.This time on the west end with a dedicated kitchen and is still used as such to this day with its fireplace positioned on the far west exterior wall. Throughout its history, the house had wooden lean-to additions added on at various times, but currently the house has been returned to its original stone footprint.

Abraham left the farmstead to his two youngest sons; Solomon, who never married and Philip, the youngest. Philip's grandson-in-law, Solomon Van Orden, eventually acquired the place. In 1878, he built a stately farmhouse on the drive between the stone house and the road and the stone house became a tenant house. In 1962, Van Orden's grandson, decided to sell the big house and return to the old stone house after modernization renovations took place such as installing an indoor bathroom, an updated kitchen with a rebuilt fireplace, etc. The Dutch barn associated with the house had burned down in the 1930s.

The houses of Abraham's two oldest sons also stand today. The eldest, John A. LeFevre, placed his house to the east of his father's farmstead on what became the Kingston / Goshen road, now known as State Route 208 (SR). The street number is 401. Tradition states in 1772, the same year he married his second cousin Maria LeFevre, John was assisted by his father and brothers plus four slaves in the construction of the house.. Originally a two room house, the front now faces Route 208 with the entry skewed from center to enter the north room. The fireplace in that room is surrounded with Federal styled wood paneling and cabinets. Expanding the house further north around 1790 – 1800, a kitchen was added. Retained in the original north end gable were two garret doors. A open stairway in the addition lead to the rear doorway to

Abraham's oldest son, John N., lived in this house erected about a mile due east of his father's place in 1772.

Abraham's second oldest son, Noah, lived in this house constructed about 1784 a short distance north of his brother John.

access the bedrooms on the second floor. The other is unused but left in place intact. In 1878, the house passed into the Hasbrouck family through marriage and eventually to Kenneth E. Hasbrouck, the renown area historian. In 1835, the LeFevre's donated property just south of their house for a red one room schoolhouse that was closed in 1932, but still stands today. The school as well as the house are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The house of Noah LeFevre, John's younger brother, sits in the northwest corner of the intersection of Forest Glen Road and SR 208. Thought to be completed circa 1784, it is possible construction had started in 1776 and was delayed due to the war. This house was probably constructed to be very similar to his older brother's place, but the structure is an excellent study a steady metamorphosis throughout its entire existence. There's evidence that the front of the house originally faced west with the front door immediately adjacent to the right of the cellar bulkhead. When the east side was converted into the front of the house the doorway was shifted to the left to create a centered entryway and a window installed in its original position to create symmetrical pairs of fenestration on both sides of the entryway. This house, too, had a kitchen addition added to the north side of the structure around the same time period as with the other houses mentioned above. It appears the roof was raised to a full second story in the 1930's and the dormers also seem of the same period. In the interior, somewhere around the 1960's or 70's the currently exposed beams were installed in the north room and addition. The south room had its beams concealed with a plastered ceiling. In the north room the beams are undersize and configured in a lattice pattern more in line with English construction. In the addition, massive reused beams that most likely came from an old barn were installed. One can tell they were obviously installed much later as the doorway created to allow access to the addition from the rest of the house was constructed with a rabbet in the framework that allowed a door to swing into the addition. One beam was placed about a foot away from the original north wall with the doorway and hangs so low as it would not allow clearance for the door to swing open. This property also had a couple interesting outbuildings. The 19th century barn first existed as an earlier Dutch barn for at the heart of the structure is two H-frame bents. A small shed about 25' x 12' directly behind the house was constructed as a miniature version of a Dutch barn that may date to around 1800. The interior is completely symmetrical with a loft originally on either side of the side entrance. Its original purpose is a mystery.

What I noted to be an interesting observation is the fact that when all above three stone houses were owned by the LeFevre brothers, they all decided to expand their places within the same time period with a new kitchen addition with the same characteristic features. All three kitchens were constructed without a cellar underneath them and at a lower floor level than that of the original homes with cruder looking masonry walls than the original structures.

Across SR 208 and just a little south from the Noah LeFevre house at the northeast corner with Jenkinstown Road are the remnants of the stone house Noah built for his son Jonas N. in 1817. When Noah died in 1827, Jonas moved back into his father's homestead and Jonas' three spinster sisters, Magdakeba, Catrina, and Rachel moved into the newer place, which became known as "Old Maids Corner." The house was taken down in 1947 and all that remains is the ruble of the cellar walls and the hearth support of one fireplace.

Philip, the youngest of Abraham's sons, inherited his father's place, but had this Federal style house built in 1816 just a few hundred yard due west of his brother Noah's place for his son, Andries P.

The houses for the next generation began to change dramatically. At 11 Forest Glen Road, is a house that is associated with Philip LeFevre. Philip continued to live at the original stone homestead of his father Abraham, but in 1816 built this house for his son Andries P., representing a major break from the prior local architecture. Constructed by design as a two and a half story, three bay, wood frame house with a right side entry hall, it was then called "the modern style". It featured the all new fangled Neoclassical ornaments, such as a sidelighted entry with a pair of grooved pilasters with simple capitals that support a molded cornice. These features are also repeated in the fireplace mantels inside, along with high ceilings, formal spaces and multiple bedrooms upstairs. Only the divided doors in the front and back continue a Dutch traditional feature. This new style became very popular with the new generation as the Jacobus LeFevre House (c.1815) at 457 SR 208 and Lewis LeFevre (c.1825) at 501 SR 208 are so similar that they may have been built by the same hands. Lewis' home stands on the site of his father's (Nathaniel) stone house built c.1769, but burned in 1825. Nathaniel and Jacobus were brothers and are the sons of Andries, Abraham's brother.

At 321 SR 208 is a place known as the Solomon Van Orden house. Although it is just outside the northern boundary of Kettleborough, it does have a connection to the LeFevre family, being that his mother was a LeFevre; Maria, Philip's daughter, and that Solomon himself also married a LeFevre, Sarah. Solomon also inherited the family's original homestead as well. The house, however, was built about 1830, by Henry Hornbeck, who married Jane DeWitt, the granddaughter of Leah Dubois; the family who originally owned this tract of land. Solomon Van Orden acquired it in 1892. Considered the most elegant house of its time in the region, it is an unusual combination of being a one and a half story, five bay central hall plan with a gambrel roof and a Greek Revival portico complete with Ionic columns supporting a pediment with finely detailed cornices with a Federal fanlight positioned within the pediment. Surprisingly, the interior features are remarkably similar to the Ten Broeck Mansion in Albany.

When the following generation comes of age, again, history repeats itself. As fathers build new houses for their sons in the early years of the 1850's decade, a new style become prevalent; 5 bay wood framed with a center hall with 2 rooms off each side of the hall, one and three-quarter story with eyebrow windows with a kitchen wing at the rear. Again, they are so similar in construction, one may conclude they were built by the same person. Andries P. had such a house built for his son Abraham at 69 Forest Glen Road. A cornerstone in the precisely dress rectangular stone foundation has the year 1851 incised. The farmstead is still owned by the direct descendants of Andries P. and even the pioneer settler, Abraham. Except for the updating of modern conveniences, such as the kitchen, bathrooms, etc., much of the original details still exist. A remarkable story is one where the present generation discovered the long forgotten family's kas stored for decades in a little used corner of the barn. Now restored, it stands at its rightful place at the end of the central foyer.

Up to this point all the houses on the tour follows Abraham's bloodline. Far fewer houses from his brother Andries branch survive today, but the last house on the tour belonged to his great grandson,

Technically not a Kettleborough nor LeFevre house per se, Solomon's mother was a LeFevre and his wife was one too. The house was built by Henry Hornbeck around 1830 and was acquired by Solomon in 1892.

Like his father Philip did for him, Andries P. LeFevre had this house built for his son Abraham in 1851. Direct descendants continue to reside in this house to this day.

Matthew N. At 45 Phillies Bridge Road, a near duplicate of the previously mentioned house stands. Matthew inherited his great grandfather's property, but the original c.1745 stone structure was in such poor condition, that in 1853, the decision was made to use its stones to construct the foundation for Matthew's new house. The farm still operates today as a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture). The overtly looking late 19th century Victorian barn convincingly disguises its Dutch origins. Like the Noah LeFevre barn, at its center there still exist two bays of H-frame construction incorporated into the much expanded edifice. Dubois LeFevre, Matthew's older brother, erected a like styled farmhouse just a little further west down the road at 105 Phillies Bridge Road around 1850.

There are still yet other LeFevre houses around the Kettleborough settlement; the Johannes LeFevre house (c.1816) at 430 SR 208 and John N. LeFevre house (c.1835) at 1564 Old Ford Road to mention two more, but they were not included on this year's tour. Being WVLT's first house tour, it was a wonderfully historic selection. I am looking forward to next year's tour.

Left: *This was the only house on the tour that is of descent from the younger LeFevre brother Andries, who first settled here. Tradition states that this house built for Matthew N. around 1853 used the stones of his great grandfather's house in the construction of the foundation.*

Below: *Disguised as a classic 19th century barn, the heart of this structure is literally Dutch. Two bays of H-frame construction of the original Matthew N. LeFevre Dutch barn were incorporated at the very center of this expanded edifice.*

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. Until next time … happy hunting.*

The Storefront Gallery
is pleased to present the
Drawings of Peter Sinclair
inspired by the vernacular architecture of the Hudson Valley.

Peter Sinclair founded the Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture in 1999 and was active for many years in the Timberframer's Guild and the Dutch Barn Preservation Society. Peter's work abruptly stopped when he suffered a stroke October 2006. While receiving therapy, he re-discovered his artistic side and began creating line drawings after encouragement from his friends. Now this has become part of the rehabilitation process. Peter is literally drawing his way back into the world he loves by making local vernacular architecture the predominant theme. Peter's previous work, in particular, has contributed significantly to the history of the Hudson Valley region through his research and the publishing of information on early structures. Peter continues to be a preservation activist through his drawings. Today he continues his advocacy for our cultural heritage through his art. This exhibit includes a number of Peter's ink drawings depicting historic structures and scenes.

The exhibition runs to September 24.
Gallery hours: Saturday 1-6 PM
(24/7 through the storefront windows)
Also by appointment
or visit www.TheStorefrontGallery.com

Monmouth County, New Jersey & its three-aisle barns

The First of Four Barns - Longstreet Farm

By Greg Huber

This is the first of four articles that discusses classic or three-aisle Dutch-American barns in Monmouth County, New Jersey. Each article addresses itself to a single barn. Monmouth County is rarely discussed in terms of its Dutch related barns, but the classic barn was a definite part of the eighteenth century vernacular landscape in the county. Three classic barns are extant; the fourth barn fell into ruins in the early part of the 1990s. The county certainly had other classic barns but apparently no others, except a late date one, survived past the early 1990s.

Fifth and sixth articles are planned to discuss the 13 side wall wagon entry Dutch-Anglo or hybrid barns residing in the county. A few of these barns seem to have been built originally as such. They all appear to date from the early nineteenth century.

The interest of the author in writing of these barns was stimulated by a recent (late May 2011) HVVA sponsored visit to four historic spots in Monmouth County. Eight members of HVVA toured three historic homesteads that included as many pre-Revolutionary War era frame houses in the Middletown-Holmdel area. Places seen were the Hartshorne, Marlpit and Holmes-Hendricksen houses. The last two houses were moved from their original sites.

The fourth visited place was Longstreet Farm, part of which includes a three-aisle or true-form Dutch-American barn. The author first visited this county farm museum in August 1991. All the while, the barn has been maintained in excellent condition. A number of its timbers were dendro-dated during three separate visits by a company specializing in the field in 1996. This last topic will be discussed toward the end of this article.

Photo 1: *Exterior of the Longstreet Farm three-aisle barn has medium height side walls and a normal height roof peak. Wagon door of two halves is centered on end wall.*

Some History of Monmouth County

The name of Monmouth might have come from a few different sources. One suggestion originates from Colonel Lewis Morris after Monmouthshire in Wales, Great Britain. It might have been named for James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth (1649–1685), who had many allies among East Jersey leadership. There have been other suggestions as to the origin of the name. In 1714, the first county government was established.

In June 1778, the Battle of Monmouth, near Freehold, was a scene of General George Washington's soldiers battling the British under Sir Henry Clinton, in the longest land battle of the American Revolutionary War. It was at Monmouth that tactics and training from Friedrich Wilhelm von Steubon that were developed at Valley Forge during the winter encampment were first implemented on a large scale.

The county is located just south of Staten Island and is the northern most county in the state adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean. There is a total area of 665 square miles, of which 472 square miles is land and 193 square miles is water. Much of Monmouth County remains flat and low-lying even far inland. However, there are some low hills in and around Holmdel Township, an area of fair Dutch settlement. Certain eastern portions of the county are very hilly. The lowest point is sea level.

Rosalie Fellows Bailey in her 1936 book – *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York* said that the first land purchase in the county was in 1663. There was a small migration of Englishmen from Gravesend on Long Island. Governor Nicoll issued the Monmouth Patent in April 1665 to the Long Island men for all of the present day county and parts of two neighboring counties.

The first two settlements were by Englishmen and Scotch, in the 1660s

and the 1680s respectively. The third settlement which most concerns us here was by the Dutch that commenced between 1690 and 1695 who migrated from New York City and Long Island. Among those were the Couwenhovens, Schenks and the Hendricksons. The Dutch occupied just a small area around Holmdel part of which was known as Pleasant Valley.

Remaining Dutch-American Barns in the County

Monmouth County is one of four main counties in New Jersey to have fair to considerable numbers of Dutch related barns on the landscape. Since the author began recording these barns in New Jersey in mid 1975, the following numbers of barns have been identified in each of the following counties – 58 barns in Somerset County, 25 barns in each of Bergen and Hunterdon Counties and 18 barns in Monmouth County. Of the few other counties in the state that harbor Dutch barns, only one to three or perhaps four barns have been seen in each county.

Other barns in the county may have been seen by other observers, such as The New Jersey Barn Company. In addition, Donald McTiernan of Dutchess County, New York around 1975 photographed a very wide three-aisle barn in Manalapan (Lenape word for land of good bread or good land to settle upon). This barn no longer stands.

Classic Three-Aisle barns

Of the 18 recorded Monmouth County barns, four of them have been three-aisle barns. Another one, a seemingly late constructed one, was seen and partially recorded in the early 1990s along Route 33 near Freehold. This barn will be briefly discussed in the fourth article.

Curiously, all four of the three-aisle barns were built as four-bay structures. Although a very small number, the percentage of three-aisle four-bay barns in the county in relation to the total number of the recorded classic barns is 100%. None of the three other counties as major areas populated with Dutch barns approaches this percentage. Three of the Dutch-Anglo barns, all non-original ones, are of also four-bay construction.

Dutch-Anglo Hybrid Barns

The other 13 barns in the county have been identified as Dutch-Anglo (hybrid) side wall wagon entry barns. These barns will be discussed in general in two future articles. One of the hybrid barns was moved in the 1970s to a museum setting in Smithville in the southern part of the state. A few of the hybrid barns seem to have been originally built as such. One of the hybrid barns (non-original) was the remarkable and massive timbered Schenck four-bay barn formerly on Holmdel Road in Holmdel. It burned to the ground in early October 1998. Fortunately, it was extensively documented in January 1992.

Other outstanding hybrid barns have been seen in the county. One was the Hendricksen four-bay barn that had anchor-beams over 20 inches in height and the largest hay-hole structure ever seen in the state. Another barn had the largest anchor-beam in any Dutch related barn in either New York or New Jersey. The beam is 25 inches in height.

Wood Species of Choice

Many of the Dutch barns, either the classic or the hybrid form, were of nearly pure oak *(Quercus spp.)* construction. A few of the barns including the barn that has the more than two-foot thick anchor-beam had tulipwood anchor-beams *(Liriodendron tulipifera)*. The Gallo three-bay Dutch-Anglo barn along Route 30 in Freehold dismantled in October 1991 by the New Jersey Barn Company had a softwood beam, the only one seen in New Jersey since about 1980. This barn had H-frames exclusively of oak.

Longstreet Three-Aisle Barn

The surname of Longstreet was Anglicized from the original Dutch name of Langstraat. The museum ground at the Historic Farm Park in Holmdel in north central Monmouth County is part of the 565 acre Holmdel Park. The land was acquired in 1962. The area where the three-aisle barn is located has a number of other farm out-buildings plus the main two-story frame homestead house. One out-building is an imposing post 1850 era side wall entrance one-level American barn.

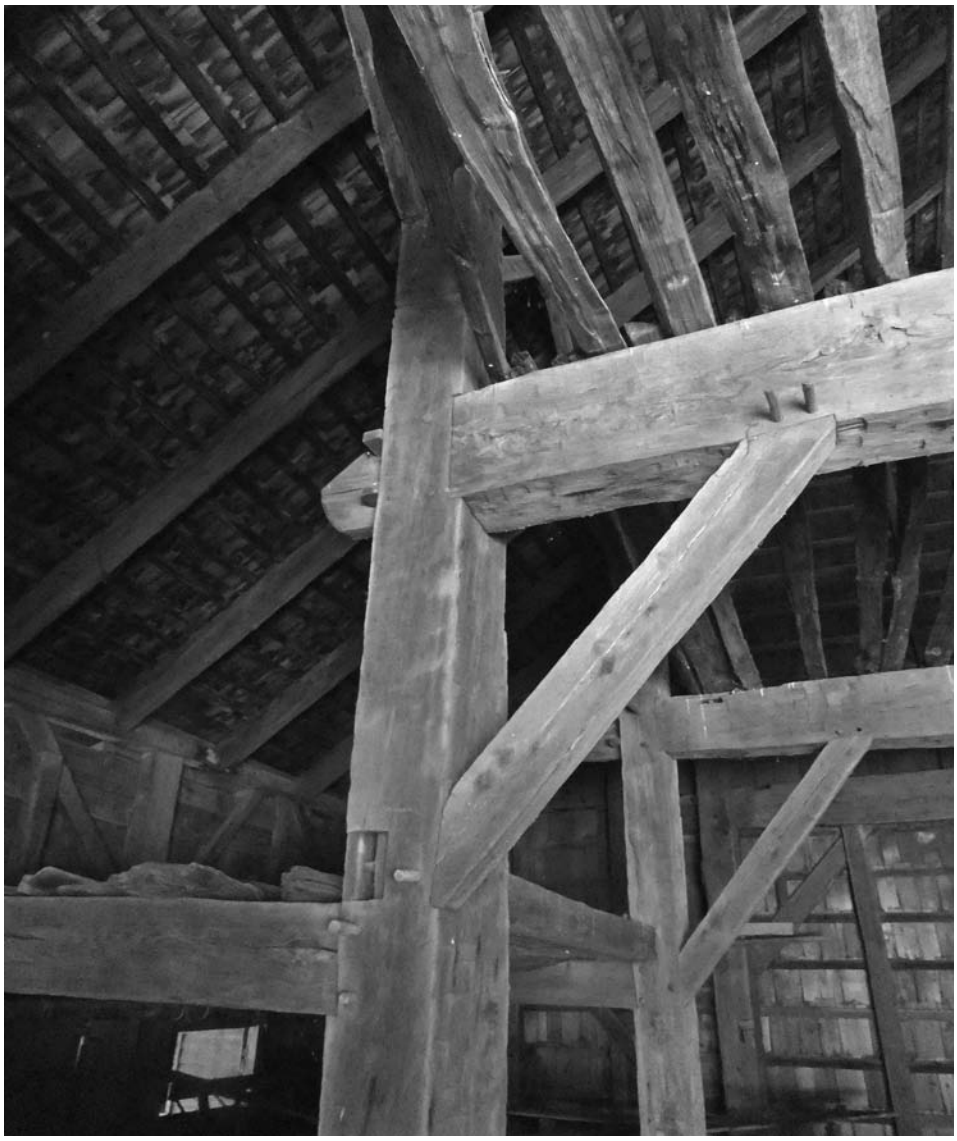
The Dutch three-aisle barn at the Longstreet Farm is a rather substantial structure. It is of four-bay construction and its exterior dimensions are the following – each end or gable wall is 50 feet 10 ½ inches and each side or eave wall is 40 feet 3 inches. Each bay averages about 10 feet in width.

Photo 2: *The one exterior side wall of the barn retains much of its original wood shakes. The use of these shakes is a broad regionalism in central New Jersey.*

Original Exterior Wood Shakes

One eave wall retains much of its original exterior wood shakes. The shakes, as expected, are considerably weather beaten. Wrought nails may be seen. The shakes are nailed onto narrow wood lath that can be seen in the barn interior. The lath is received into thin vertical wall studs. The one end wall also has shakes and they too may be original.

Photo 3: *This is an interior view of the one end wall with exterior wood shakes that are secured to thin wood lath. The lath in turn is secured to vertical wall posts or studs.*
Photo 4: *Here are two H-frames with anchor-beam to posts connections. Anchor-beam tenons are double wedged. H-frame braces are medium sized at best.*



o be sure, a number of other three-aisle barns and also hybrid barns in central New Jersey have been seen with exterior wood shake siding. At least a half dozen of these have been located in Somerset County. There may have been others. John Fitchen recognized wood shake siding in his book in Barn Number 69 – The John Van Doren barn in Millstone in Somerset County. As a unique case, one barn in Franklin Township in Somerset County had original wood shakes from the bottom of the one end wall up to the top edge of an end wall anchor-beam. Above the shakes was original horizontal siding. Several other barns in Monmouth County have also been seen with wood shakes. Wood shakes on some of the barns may not have been original.

Presence of exterior wood shake siding in a number of Dutch related barns in central New Jersey may be considered as a broad regionalism. No barn in up-State New York or in Bergen County, New Jersey has been located with wood shakes. A study could be done on the dynamics behind use of wood shakes as opposed to horizontal siding on Dutch barns (and other area barns). No such study has likely ever been attempted.

Interior Features

The timbers of the main framing units or H-frames and rafters are rather substantial. There are eleven pairs of rafters and they are fish-tailed into the wall plates. They average close to 7 by 7 inches in cross section at their bottom ends.

The nave is 26 feet 4 ½ inches wide. The side aisles average about 12 feet 3 inches in width.

H-Frames

Anchor-beams

The four-bay construction dictates the presence of five H-frames. The middle anchor-beam is 17 inches in height at its mid-point and is 10 ½ inches wide.

Anchor-beams are joined to the H-frame posts via square shoulders. Each timber union is secured with two pegs and the extended tenons are double wedged. Marriage marks formed by chisels are seen at each union. The tenons of the anchor-beams are variously contoured – some are somewhat rounded while a few are almost square. The tenons extend from about 7 to 15 inches depending on the anchor-beam.

Upper tie beams several inches below the tops of the H-frame posts are seen at each end wall. Such placement of ties is frequently seen in Dutch related barns. Upper ties in inner bents are not a common feature in many barns. Some barns have these ties in each bent. A few barns, of four-bay construction, have ties near the very top of their middle bents.

The H-frame braces are hewn as are all anchor-beams and H-frame posts in all the bents. The braces are each secured at their upper ends with two pegs and a single peg each at their bottom ends. The braces are not substantial in size as they are less than half the width of the posts.

H-Frame Posts

The H-frame posts are quite impressive at 11 ¼ inches by 16 inches wide (side parallel to the side wall). The bottom ends of the posts display a widely seen regionalism in Monmouth County. They have full post width two to three inch deep notches whose upper edges are angled. The upper edge is about 15 inches above the floor level. The notches face the nave. These notches that housed planks originally functioned as part of the manger areas for farm stock. The only known intact one in the county is in the four-bay Schenck barn in Holmdel.

These post notches have also been identified in a few barns in Somerset County. Fitchen Barn Number 64 formerly near Glen in Montgomery County, New York had these notches. They are unique in any New York State barn.

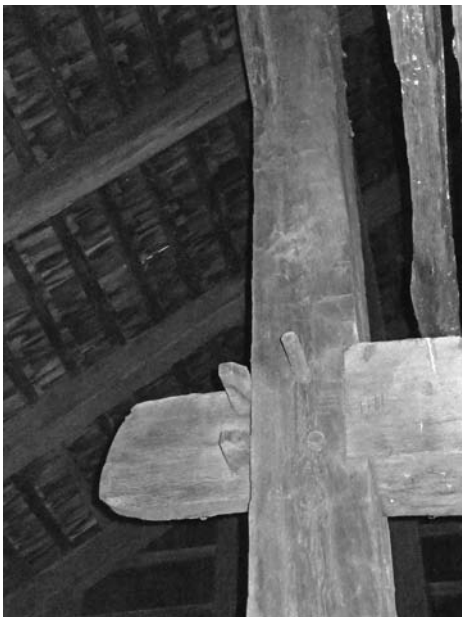


Photo 5: *Close up of an anchor-beam to H-frame post connection with the double pegged condition. The timber joint is square shouldered. Anchor-beam tenon contour is basically square.*
Photo 6: *Bottom of an H-frame post is seen with distinctive and prominent notch. Such notches that housed planks for animal mangers constitute a central New Jersey regionalism.*

The *verdiepingen* or extensions of the posts above the anchor-beams is of medium length or about eight feet (unmeasured). The purlin braces attach to the posts about mid-way between the purlin plate and the anchor-beam. The top of each post is secured to the purlin plate via two pegs. In a number of pre-Revolutionary War era barns such timber unions are often secured with one peg. In a number of barns both pre and post 1800 ones only one peg is seen at these timber unions at the end wall H-frames.

Each H-frame post has a single raising hole and on the east post range the holes are extremely off-set, that is, they are "pushed" considerably to one side. Why this aberration exists, as it does in certain other barns is not known. About half the 18 Monmouth County barns have raising holes.

Other Timbers

In the Longstreet barn there are only lower level transverse side-aisle ties. This is due to the fact that the side walls are of medium height, that is, not enough room was available to conveniently include upper ties.

The longitudinal ties that join adjacent H-frame posts in a post range at one side of the nave at about head height level appear at the same level at each side of the barn. In many barns these ties, one side compared to the other, are seen at distinctly different levels. There is usually a difference in heights that varies from about 8 to 12 inches or so, and sometimes more. These differences signify different framing, one for the higher or horse side and one for the lower or cow side.

The planking of the wagon floor does not survive.

Dating of the Longstreet Barn

The Longstreet barn was dendro-dated. Sixteen samples were variously taken – once in March 1996 and twice in May 1996. Fourteen were oak, one was chestnut and one was black gum. This was done under the supervision of Mike Devonshire of Jan Pokorny Architects and the staff of the Longstreet Farm Park. Once the samples were obtained they were sent to Lamont-Doherty Labs in Rockland County, New York. The computer program COFECHA was used. An internal cross-dating procedure was established. From this a 179 year-long chronology was developed.

Tree-ring dating of eleven of the samples was successful. Calendar dates were assigned to the outer rings of the samples by cross dating the ring widths measured from the cores with dated master chronologies from nearby sites. Five beams could not be dated because they had too few rings for a proper statistical analysis or they were not oak.

The majority of the "bark edge" dates suggested a cutting date of 1792 for five of the rafters. Most of the large beams (anchor-beams and H-frames) that were dated were shaped. That is, an indeterminate number of rings were removed from these timbers prior to construction. As a consequence, the outer rings on these timbers significantly pre-date the 1792 timber felling date for the rafters. Three of the timbers dated from 1694 to 1710. How this might be interpreted it can not be said. They could have originated from another Dutch barn in the county that was constructed in the very early eighteenth century.

From the dating of the timbers (rafters) it can be said, that, assuming the timbers were used the following year after the timbers were felled, the date of the construction of the Longstreet barn was 1793. Various elements of the internal construction of the barn generally agree with the dendro-date. They certainly do not contradict this date.

Summary and Conclusions

The Longstreet three-aisle barn is apparently just one of four three-aisle Dutch-American barns that have been examined fairly closely in the past several decades. Likely a hundred years ago or more there were several dozen true form barns left in Monmouth County. But forces of attrition always take its normal toll on timber framed vernacular barns in so many areas of North America and Monmouth County, New Jersey is no exception.

The Dutch-American barns in Monmouth County, New Jersey are very likely on average the largest timbered barns anywhere in the state. As a high end example, the genuinely massive timbered Dutch-Anglo barn formerly at 939 Holmdel Road in Holmdel had a few H-frame posts that were 20 (yes – twenty) inches across at their tops. No other barn in the Dutch-American realm in either state attains this size. Although still impressive, the timbers in the Longstreet barn are actually on the medium size scale.

It is suggested to readers that they look at the two articles on the Dutch-American barns located in Bergen County, New Jersey that was published by the Dutch Barn Preservation Society in 2007 – Volume 20 – Issues 1 and 2. Information in these articles on the 25 barns in Bergen County can provide a base of some comparison with the barns in Monmouth County. It will be realized that in most cases the barns in Monmouth County are considerably larger than those in Bergen County.

In one sense, it is fortunate that the Longstreet Farm three-aisle barn was not converted to a side wall entrance form as so many other true form barns were in the county. Having the three-aisle status maintained allows the original exterior dimensions and side wall height to be preserved. This permits an enhanced view of what was originally in the minds of builders and farmers to fulfill certain agricultural needs at a particular homestead at particular times. Many dynamics, as is the case in all structures, stand behind the choice of the dimensions of the barn.

Without discussing any of the possible reasons of the differences between two counties, it is interesting to note why so many more true form barns, about 30, survived into the early 1990s in Somerset County than what survived in Monmouth County. There are likely reasons other than the obvious one that Somerset County was more extensively settled by the Dutch than that seen in Monmouth County. More true form barns percentage wise were converted to hybrid form in Monmouth County than in Somerset County.
To be sure, Somerset County has lost several of its three-aisle barns in the past twenty years.

With the dendro-dating of the Longstreet barn, we know that another eighteenth century structure, albeit a late one, has survived into the 21st century. Basically complete eighteenth century Dutch related barns are presently not common anywhere. These early barns will assist in knowing some of the consciousness that existed in an area that was a part of Dutch-American building traditions.

Note

The author wishes to thank Gail Hunton who in the early to mid-1990s provided several locations of Dutch related barns in Monmouth County. The information on the dendro-dating of the barn was supplied by Edward Cook and Greg Wiles of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.

Vernacular Documents V

"Toys that Teach": Architectural Toys by the Embossing Company of Albany, New York[1]

By Walter Richard Wheeler

Reflections of our vernacular architecture can be found in the material culture of the region. Inasmuch as they are designed to convey shared values and support culturally-bound assumptions, children's building blocks have been a fertile territory for reflections of ideas about the built environment. While it is difficult to identify a regional approach evidenced in building toys produced today, those produced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were, because of their distribution, more likely to reflect regional culture. In the Hudson Valley the Embossing Company of Albany produced wood games beginning in 1870.

The firm prospered through the end of the nineteenth century and first quarter of the twentieth century, eventually becoming one of the nation's largest manufacturers of wood children's toys. The Embossing Company factory, located at Pruyn Street and along Liberty and Church streets, extended over a 150,000 square foot area at its greatest extent (in 1932), but had diminished in size to 100,000 square feet at the time of purchase by Halsam Products in December 1955. Similarly, in the 1920s, approximately 200 people were employed by the firm; by December 1955 that had been reduced to about 75 employees.

Halsam, a Chicago-based company that produced embossed wood toy products and which had been the chief national competitor of the Embossing Company, closed the Albany operation and consolidated the two firm's product lines. During the 1950s and into the early 1960s the Embossing Company name continued to appear on boxes of dominoes, chessmen and checkers which made use of dies originally generated by the

Figure 1. *A 1912 magazine advertisement for Meccano toys, distributed by the Embossing Company.*

firm. Halsam was itself purchased by Playskool in 1962. All are presently subsidiaries of Hasbro, Inc. Some of the Embossing Company dies, such as for Crown dominoes, are believed to remain in use.[2] Although checkers, dominoes and embossed toy blocks were the firm's chief productions, the Embossing Company also marketed several sets of building blocks during its long history.

Background

Probably the earliest architectural children's toy which was mass-produced was Friedrich Froebel's "Building Gifts", better known as Froebel blocks, which were in production by the 1840s and continue to be manufactured today. Artificial stone versions of these internationally-distributed toys, with many additional specialized pieces, were produced by Anker [Anchor] Stone Building Blocks in Rudolstadt, Thuringia by the 1880s and remain popular. Pirated versions of both of these sets were produced in the United States in wood and artificial stone.

Many of the construction sets familiar to those of us who grew up in the middle decades of the twentieth century were first patented and produced in the early twentieth century. Tinkertoys and the Erector set (the latter known as Meccano in England) both went into production in the US in 1913. Lincoln Logs, created by John L. Wright, son of architect Frank, were first produced in 1918. Of these, only the Lincoln Logs could be said to derive from a vernacular.

Construction Toys Produced by the Embossing Company

Given the popularity of building blocks it is not surprising that the Embossing Company entered into the field of architectural toys as early as 1907 and possibly earlier, making them a pioneer in the American market. Several different building sets are currently known to have been produced by the firm, in addition to their holding the original American rights of distribution for Meccano (aka Erector Set) toys (Figure 1). Given the company's home in the Hudson Valley and the family ties of its officers to the area (the firm was founded by several members of the Pruyn, Lansing and Hyatt families), it would not be surprising to see aspects of the region's vernacular architecture reflected in the building toys they produced.

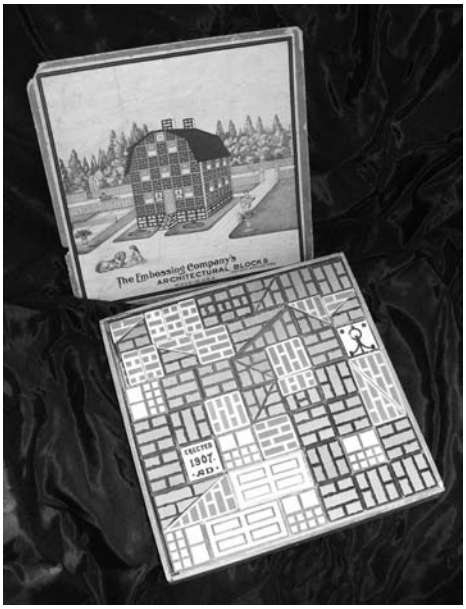
Architectural Blocks

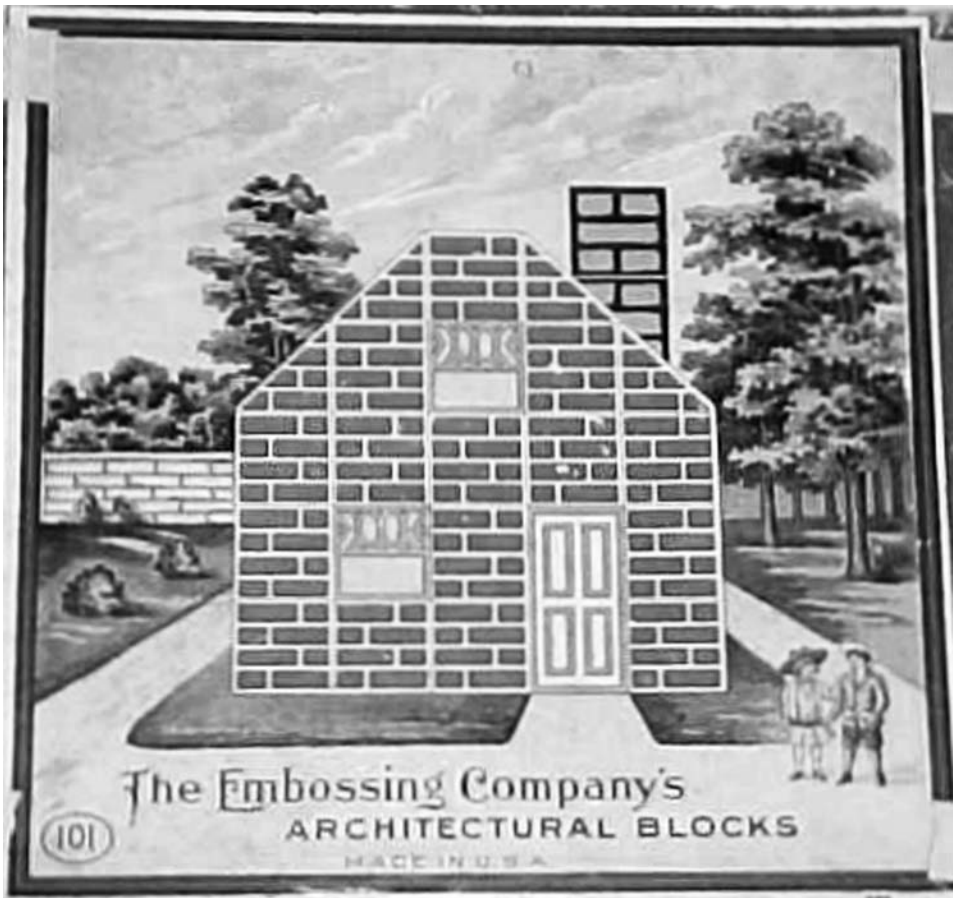
The earliest documented set of architectural blocks made by the company was "Architectural Blocks." This set was in production by 1907, if we can believe the date stone which comes with the larger set (Photo 1). The blocks

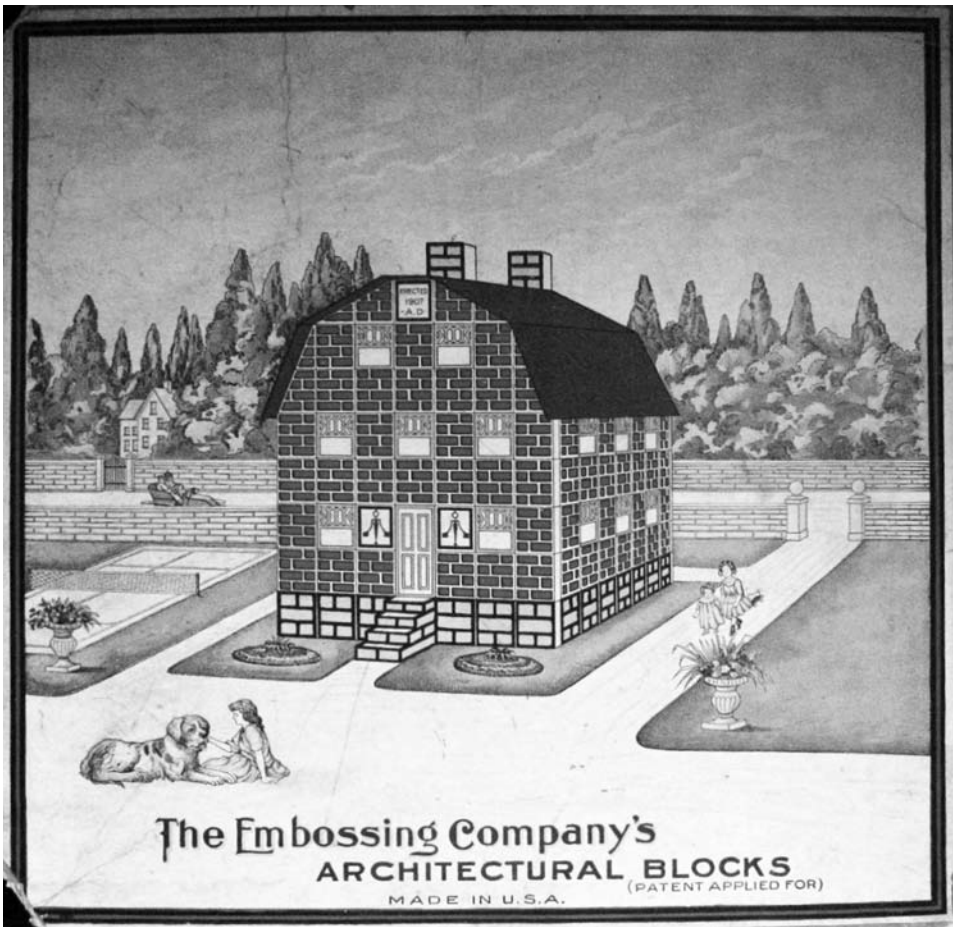
Photo 1 *(below) – The large set of Architectural Blocks, c.1907.*

Photo 2 *(right) – Cover of the smaller version of the Architectural Blocks set, c.1907.*

Photo 3 *(bottom right) – Cover of the large set of Architectural Blocks, c.1907. The date stone can be seen in the top of the gable.*







could be used to create brick or stone-faced dwellings, and both forms of the set were illustrated with finished buildings that owed at least a passing nod to the region's vernacular. The small set is illustrated with a gable-end, brick-faced dwelling with a stone chimney and leaded glass windows, all rendered in embossed wood blocks, stamped and painted in the same operation (Photo 2). The larger version of the set was illustrated with a two story gambrel-roofed dwelling raised on a high stone basement with stone chimneys, leaded glass and a date stone bearing the text "Erected/ 1907/ A. D." (Photo 3). Both illustrations depicted the houses in a suburban setting, the latter with a tennis court, high garden walls and fountains. Obviously the set which generated the larger house was intended for the upwardly mobile!

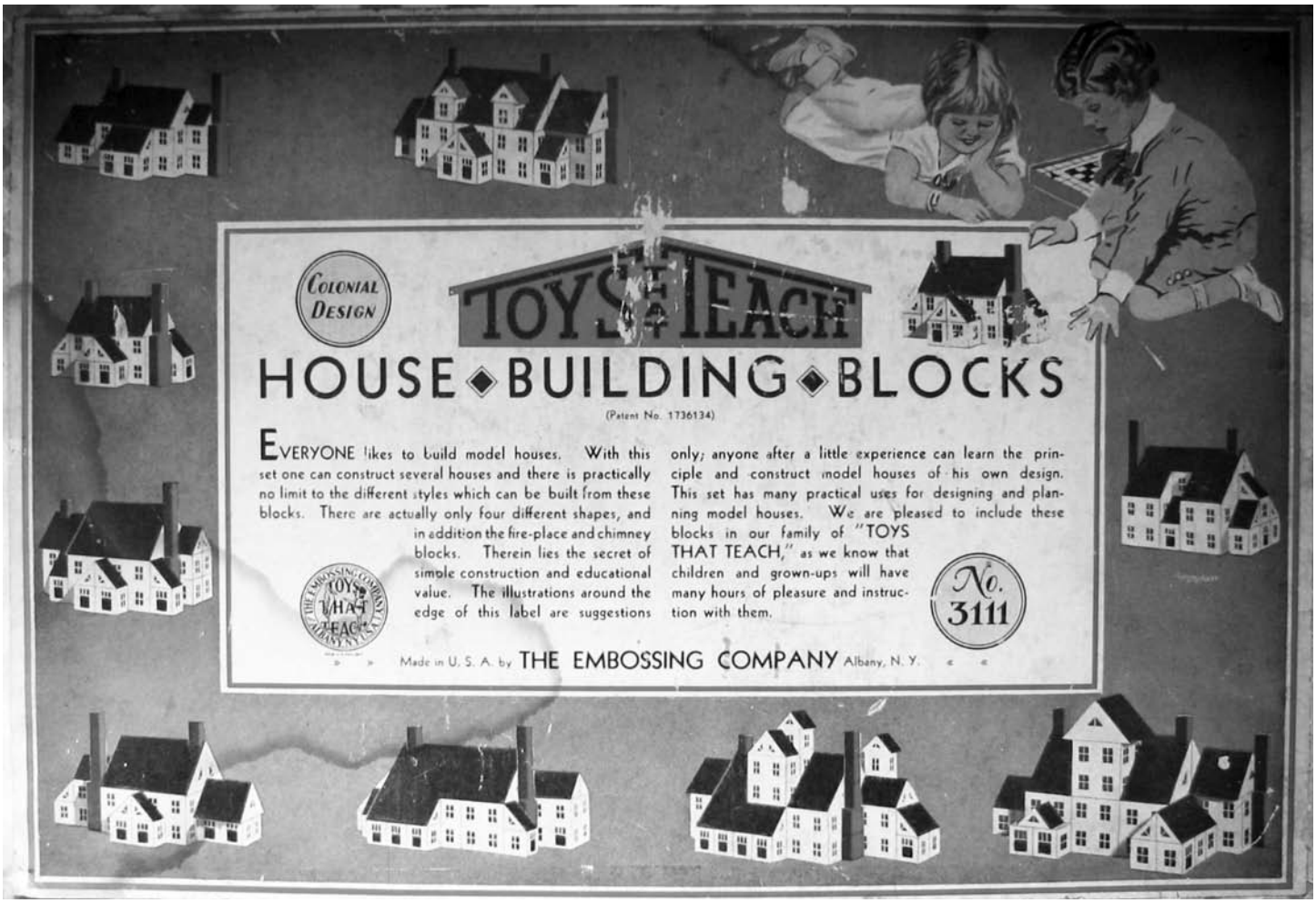
These two play sets exhibit a passing acquaintance with the brick urban and rural vernacular that would have been familiar to a resident of the upper Hudson Valley at the turn of the century. Although the details are general

ized and updated, I think the semblance is unmistakable. The choice to produce these sets in 1907 may have been connected with the (then) upcoming Hudson-Fulton celebration, and heightened public interest in regional history. It is not known how long this set remained in production; a 1926 advertisement depicts the larger set, with a round-dialed clock substituted for the datestone.[3]

House Building Blocks

"House Building Blocks" appear to have been originally offered by the 1920s, and may have replaced "Architectural Blocks" in the company's product line. Early versions of the set

Photo 4. *House Building Blocks, with box illustrated by Norman Price. The "patent pending" notice on the box lid indicates that this is the earliest version of this particular toy. It was probably produced in the mid-1920s.*
Photo 5. *House Building Blocks, 1931 version, featuring "Colonial Design."*



feature both printed and embossed designs, imitative of familiar elements of clapboarded domestic architecture (Photo 4). A later version, first produced in 1931, used an entirely different set of blocks, and constructs buildings of a smaller scale (Photo 5).

The 1930 catalog issued by the company described the "House Building Blocks" as having "Colonial Design," and indeed the blocks could be combined to assemble an unlikely array of miniature gable-roofed wood-framed dwellings of bewildering form – all based upon the repetition of basic elements: gable roofs, chimneys, triangular gable-end windows and chunks of building volume (Photo 6).[4] The evocation of the Colonial Revival, however popular in its sentiment, remained just that – in their design the blocks made no attempt to replicate details encountered in seventeenth or eighteenth century domestic architecture, let alone that of the 1920s and '30s. (Some contemporary building sets by competitors included turned columns, arches, and fan-light windows.) It could be said, however, that in their assembly the blocks combined to form gable roof blocks, lean-tos and prominent chimneys that bore a tenuous semblance to vernacular house forms commonly encountered in New England and parts of New York.

Johnnyville Blocks

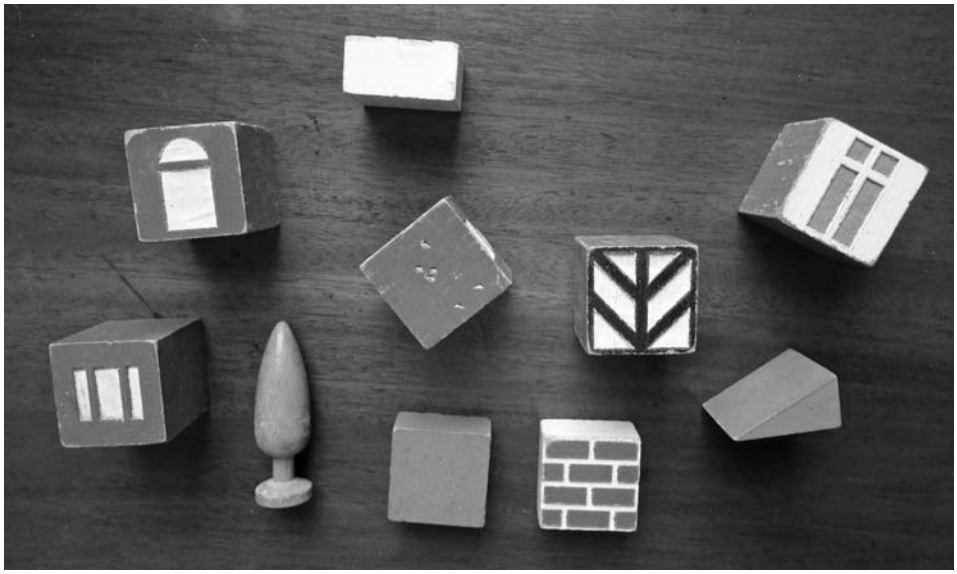
The "Johnnyville Blocks" set, which probably first went into production in the 1930s, is comprised of blocks similar in scale and form to those in the later versions of the House Building Blocks set. One difference, however, is that these blocks are molded to include panels of Elizabethan half-timbering and stucco. The set also includes turned trees similar in form to Lombardy poplars (Photo 7). It may be that the Johnnyville set was produced in response to the popularity of Elizabethan Revival half-timbered houses in the 1920s and 1930s, which were particularly fashionable in the Hudson Valley.

The cover suggested a wide array of rudimentary structures which could be fabricated from the set, and indicated that an entire village could be constructed from one set (Photo 8). An insert provided with the blocks contains numerous illustrations of additional buildings which could be fabricated including an "old Swiss tavern," a "hotel resort" and an "Old Virginia Homestead" (Photo 9). While the latter bears some semblance to eighteenth century vernacular models, it is clear that the general intent of the manufacturers was to provide a block set which could be utilized to construct generic models of built forms from many periods, including "modern" style buildings.

New England Bricks

"New England Bricks" were in production from about 1930 to 1950[5] (Photo 10). A catalog issued by the company in the 1930s describes them as follows: "New England Bricks make quaint little houses. Pile up the blocks – like real bricks – install doors and windows, lay the roof on top. Up with the chimney and you're set for a house warming.

Photo 6. Interior and detail of blocks from the 1931 version of House Building Blocks.
Photo 7. Block forms provided with the Johnnyville Blocks set.

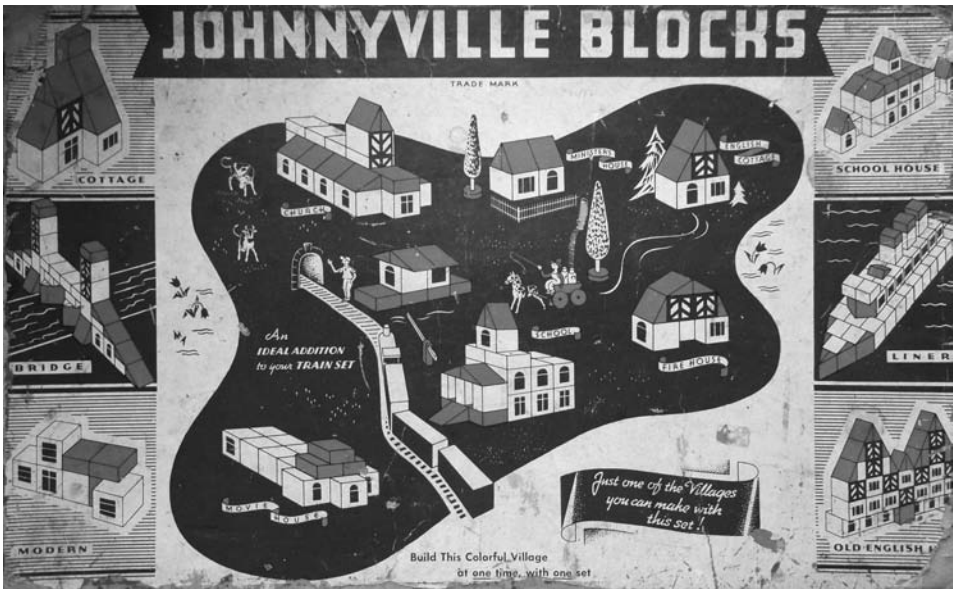


Grand for children 3 to 7."[6] It's clear that the marketing approach focused on the ability of this set to mimic (in whatever crude way) the construction process of a house, something that the abstract forms of the company's earlier blocks did not attempt. This may have been a reflection of popular interest in Lincoln Logs and (beginning in the 1940s) American Bricks, both of which consisted of components whose forms imitated the building materials they sought to evoke.

The house illustrated on the box containing this building set is a simple one-story gable-roofed building with end chimneys. Given the preponderance of the use of wood in New England, it seems an unlikely evocation of that region's vernacular. The form of the house illustrated doesn't have a clear precedent (at least none that I know of in New England – perhaps an English cottage?). It may be that the naming of this toy had more to do with a marketing strategy (were they intended for sale in New England?) than with anything else.

Conclusion

It is clear from this short survey that the evocation of specific regional and period house forms was a component of the marketing strategy utilized by the Embossing Company. However, in an approach common to the design of many building toys, each of these sets is a distillation of the salient features of its typology. Each was filtered through a reductive process, a kind of shorthand, to its most memorable features. The New World Dutch house was thus reduced to a brick-faced gable-entry dwelling with datestone; the "Colonial" New England house, a compilation of lean-tos, chimneys and roofs.



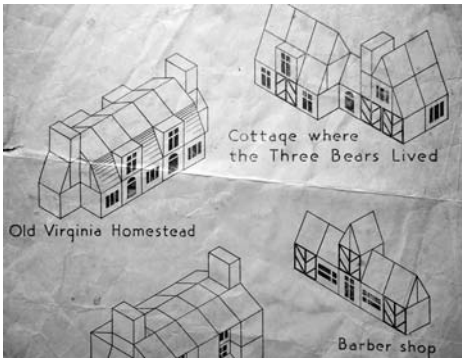


Photo 8 *(above) – Cover of the Johnnyville Blocks set, c.1935.*

Photo 9 *(left) – Detail of insert provided with the Johnnyville Blocks set.*

Photo 10 *(below) – Cover of the New England Bricks set, c.1935.*

[1] Portions of this text originated as copy for an exhibit I curated for the Albany County Historical Association entitled "Just Gaming: The Embossing Company of Albany, New York, 1870-1955," which was on display at the Ten Broeck Mansion in Albany during July and August 2009. The exhibit consisted of about 40 items from a collection of approximately 90 toys manufactured by the Embossing Company which I subsequently gifted to the Albany Institute of History and Art. About 20 toys from this collection were exhibited at the Institute from February to June of this year as part of a show on graphic design.

[2] http://www.toyhistory.com/Embossing.html, accessed on 11 August 2011.

[3] "A Complete Line of Toys that Increase Sales," advertisement placed in *Toys & Novelties* magazine, December 1926.

[4] *60th Anniversary Catalog, The Embossing Company, Albany, New York* [1930]. Private Collection.

[5] http://www.albanyinstitute.org/z-%20aiha%20website/4-exhibitions/exhibitions.main.htm, accessed on 11 August 2011.

[6] Undated Embossing Company catalog, c.1935, in the author's collection.

Witchcraft or Superstition?

By A. J. Berry

Witchcraft is one tradition that has generally fallen by the wayside so to speak. Or has it? Have you noticed some hex signs on the outside of a house, or indoors? Have you ever seen a Pennsylvania Dutch Quilt with all the good luck signs including one for fertility?

Perhaps now we put some of the good advice under folklore, but in the past it was attributed to witches, some evil and some good. A lot of old wisdom came from a witch. In the past, the good blessings were of course dealt by the heavens above, the bad events, well they perhaps came from a witch. This is another taboo subject among the folk who live in the valley now, but this again is part of the history of this special place.

The Palatines were very superstitious people and there is still evidence of the dark worries they had when they lived here almost 300 years ago. When a home is torn down, it will reveal secrets of the people who inhabited the house. Things were put in the walls of the home, things to keep the evil spirits away. Every person in the family put something in the wall, often it was a shoe, just one. If a person was very poor, perhaps a bottle of urine might be used and sealed in the wall. Anything personal from each person in the household was stored to ward off the evil eye.

This is a caution for those who have older homes, watch for the shoes. All across New England and New York shoes have been found in the walls. Why would shoes be deliberately built into a home or public building? Some have speculated that the tradition stems from the prehistoric custom of killing a person and placing the body in the foundation to insure that the building holds together. Could it be that later the shoes were used as a substitute for a human sacrifice? Shoes may have been chosen, because over time they take on and keep the shape of the wearer's foot. Shoes were hidden near openings in the home such as doors, windows, chimneys; these are the perceived weak places in the building that were thus protected from evil by the shoe owner's spirit. About half the shoes in the wall are children's shoes. Women's shoes are more common than men's. Shoes are almost invariably well worn, perhaps because the donor didn't want to waste an expensive new shoe on the project, or perhaps because a well-worn shoe is more likely

to retain the shape of the wearer's foot and hence his spirit. Though shoes are the common denominator, more than two hundred different personal possessions – coins, spoons, pots, goblets, food, knives, toys, gloves, pipes, even chicken and cat bones – have been found hidden with them and registered in the "shoes in the wall" research. Just type "shoes in the wall" in your web browser and you will find groups dedicated to researching this phenomenon.

I spent some time talking with men who tear down old homes and asked them if they ever found shoes in the walls. Several got a funny look on their face and said they thought they were just old shoes and bottles left there, garbage in other words. They didn't realize what they were looking at and that they had been left there deliberately. They said the shoes were worn, and they found women's and children's shoes, just one shoe, and there were bottles with them but they were empty. Of course they were empty, the urine has long since evaporated that the men left in the bottles. The shoes and bottles are found near an opening to the house, a ledge in the chimney or near an outside door entrance.

Considering how widespread and long lasting this folk belief has been, it is curious that nowhere was it described in writing until references began to appear in mid-twentieth century archaeology literature in scholarly journals. Some speculate the tradition of hiding shoes was a male superstition, kept secret almost out of fear that telling about it would reduce its effectiveness. Others feel contemporary writers did not describe it since superstition ran counter to prevailing religious beliefs and the Puritans punishment of witchcraft and magic was well-known.

When removing walls especially around windows and doors, under roof rafters and behind old chimney, homeowners should be aware of the possibility of turning up concealed shoes. While most are found in eighteenth and nineteenth century homes, a find hidden as late as 1935 has been reported. If shoes are found, they should be left exactly as they were discovered and photographed.

A local St. Johnsville man, David Collins, deals with recycling parts of old historic homes and he was the one who pointed out the phenomenon of the shoes. Of course he would be aware of this because of his work with old homes. He showed me an article from the United Kingdom regarding the shoes. According to the article, over 1200 examples have been recorded, with the earliest reference to the use of shoes comes the 14th century. One of England's unofficial saints, John Schorn from Buckinghamshire who was the rector of North Marston 1290-1314, is reputed to have cast the devil into a boot. The oldest concealed shoes date to about this time.

Witchcraft is the heritage of all humanity. Things, which could not be explained as a natural occurrence, were explained as from the devil or the angels. Since barbarian days, fear of the supernatural has been instilled into the souls of men. So it was in the isolated hills of the Mohawk Valley. Immigrants from Europe brought with them centuries of their own folklore, superstitions, ghost stories, and books of witchcraft. These tales were all handed down within families and communities, and very often, changed to suit the area. A hundred years ago storytellers flourished among the Schoharie hill people and, as late as 1920, witchcraft was still a thing to be reckoned with in the isolated hill hamlets.

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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Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture
Newsletter
From the Editor

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Designed by Jon Dogar-Marinesco www.pointblanq.com

A look back

An early postcard shows the "Oldest residence in Clintondale," Ulster County, New York – a stone house located along Basket Street. Today the Basket Street area is part of the northern portion of Crescent Avenue.

Calendar

Exploration – Eastfield

Saturday, Oct. 15, 2011 – 10:00 AM

A leisurely day of looking will be the rule of the day. Eastfield Village is the creation and life work of Don Carpentier, who has been collecting and reconstructing the stuff of everyday life between 1787 and 1840 since 1958. The village is called Eastfield because Don's father give him eight acres of woodlot near the east field of the family farm in 1971 for the first of his reconstructions: a blacksmith's shop (somebody's pigpen before Don dismantled and hauled it here). There are now more that 20 buildings, including the tavern *(below)* where our HVVA meeting will take place.

Ulster Update

Saturday, Nov. 19, 2011 – 10:00 AM

Starting point at the Benjamin Ten Broeck House (1019 Flatbush Road, Kingston), then off to the Oosterhoudt House in Lake Katrine, with additional sites pending – then off to Lunch.

Holiday Outing

Saturday, Dec. 10, 2011 – 10:00 AM

We'll gather in the parking lot behind the Kingston School District administrative offices on Green Street (Green Streert 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 in the historic Hoffman House Tavern 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

For more information, please check www.HVVA.org