



# Hudson-Mohawk Vernacular Architecture

April – June 2022

## Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 2

### Newly Discovered Painting Has Rare View of a Canawler's Dwelling

On June 18, the D&H Canal Historical Society hosted the grand opening of the D&H Canal Museum and Mid-Hudson Visitor Center in the historic DePuy Tavern. Built in 1797, this National Historic Landmark was at the center of canal-related activity in High Falls. The new museum features interactive exhibits and relevant artifacts that invite visitors to explore the significance of the canal. After a seven-year, \$2 million restoration, the Society hopes to return the building to its status as a hub for cultural and recreational tourism along the canal and in the Rondout Valley.

A modern wing (built for a commercial kitchen when the house functioned as chef John Novi's renowned eatery) has been repurposed as the Mid-Hudson Visitor's Center. It will provide visitors with an overview of regional attractions with interactive maps and guides and offer programs and events to enhance the tourist experience. The visitor center also has a gift shop featuring carefully selected books, branded gear and local products. Check out [www.canalmuseum.org](http://www.canalmuseum.org) for details.



Fig.1: "Canal Crew Wawarsing," oil painting by William Rikarby Miller, 1881. Collection of the D&H Canal Historical Society. Of interest here is the house documenting living conditions in 1881. The dwelling appears to have a stone end for a hearth and chimney inside. Clapboard walls are clearly delineated on the side and gable end. What looks to be a chute projects from the attic. The roof looks to be made up of clapboards with patches of thatch. In 1881!

# A Short History of Settlement Along the Hudson in Marlborough, New York

by Neil Larson<sup>1</sup>

The town of Marlborough is something of an anomaly in Ulster County, which is renowned for its Dutch stone house architecture. Such traditional buildings do not exist in Marlborough. Settlement in Ulster County, at least that part east of the Catskills, occurred with the small freeholds of Dutch, Palatine and Huguenot families spreading out along Hudson tributaries in the orbit of Kingston. The New Paltz Patent (1677), a proprietorship shared by twelve Huguenot families, anchored the southeast corner of this cultural zone. South of it was the enormous patent that extended along the Hudson from New Paltz to Stony Point and running 30 miles inland that had been granted in 1694 to Capt. John Evans by then-governor Benjamin Fletcher.<sup>2</sup> In 1698 Fletcher and Evans were recalled to England to defend themselves against accusations of conspiring with pirates, and Fletcher was charged with making excessive land grants. The following year, the Evans patent was revoked, and the land was broken up into smaller grants of 1000 to 3000 acres, which were acquired mostly by New York merchants. (Ironically, many of these merchants paid for their land with profits made from piracy.) From this point, development patterns followed the English plantation model as opposed to the Dutch, and settlers were attracted from the English domain in southern New York, northern New Jersey and Long Island.

Marlborough's Colonial land history relates to a few of these grants. John Barbarie, a successful fur trader, received a grant in 1709 for land in what became the northern section of the town.<sup>3</sup> Augustine Graham, son of flour exporter James Graham, and Alexander Griggs were partners in a 1712 grant that included Old Man's Creek, evidently planning an agricultural enterprise there. Grants were made in 1715 for land on either side of the Graham and Griggs patent to fur merchant Archibald Kennedy. Capt. William Bond's small patent between Kennedy and Barberie was granted in 1712, while merchant Hugh Wentworth acquired three smaller grants along the New Paltz line much later in 1750 (Fig.1).

Clearly, the first section of the town to be developed was the southern Kennedy tract, which New York merchant Lewis Gomez and his sons Jacob and Daniel purchased in 1716 along with land in customs official Francis Harrison's

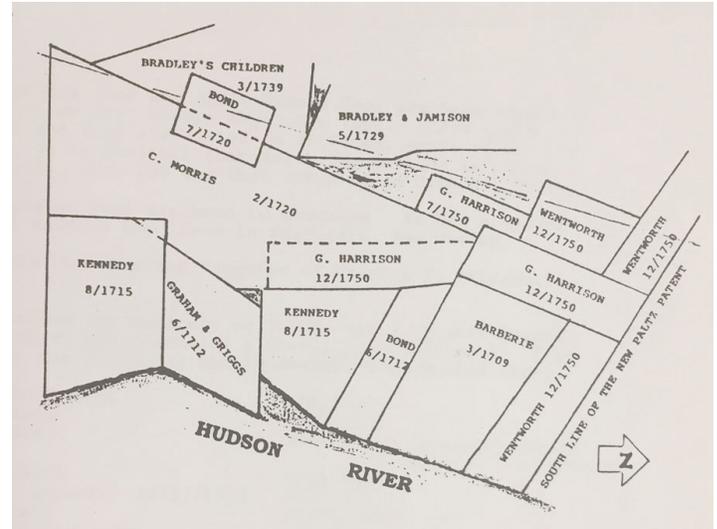


Fig.1: Map of land grants made in the Town of Marlborough from the Evans patent after its revocation in 1799. From a copy in the Marlboro Public Library.

adjoining tract comprising in total 1200 acres.<sup>4</sup> The land straddles the Marlborough/Ulster-Newburgh/Orange line, with the Gomez manor house on the Newburgh side; by 1723 Gomez and his sons had expanded the holding to 3000 acres. The story of "Gomez the Jew" is now well-known, particularly in Marlborough history. Luis Moses Gomez (1666-1740) was scion of a prestigious Sephardic family, which was forced to flee first from Spain and then France to England to escape religious persecution. Luis arrived in New York in 1696 with his wife, Esther Marquez, who he married enroute in Jamaica. Anglicizing his name to Lewis, Gomez opened a small general-merchandise store in lower Manhattan. Recognizing the profits to be made in New York's expanding wheat trade, by 1706 he was buying grain from farms and plantations in the region and exporting it and flour to the West Indies and Madeira returning with rum and southern European wine. Lewis was soon able to write to his father in London that he was trading wheat "on an enormous scale" and becoming a wealthy man.<sup>5</sup>

Lewis never built a great house typical of successful city merchants or owned ships outright. Only in the next generation did the family gain noticeable stature among city merchants.<sup>6</sup> Daniel, the third of Lewis's six sons, joined



Fig.2: Gomez Mill House, Town of Newburgh, Orange County, ca. 1740. What likely was a wood frame upper story was replaced with brick by Wolfert Acker in 1772. Photo from Wikipedia.

his father in the wheat and sugar trades when he was fourteen, and he went on to expand the reach of trade to London and Dublin, returning with domestic wares. Although his father's business concentrated on wheat, Daniel branched out into the trade of commodities. According to historian Cathy Matson,

Daniel Gomez built his far-flung reputation with an amazing array of goods and correspondents. From 1739 to 1765, Gomez imported every conceivable kind of dry goods, including stockings, metal wares, earthenware, pottery, linen, silks and farm implements; and he exported a long list of local produce, including preserves, salted meats, tanned hides, grain and flour, whale fins and oil, cheese and straw wares, which made their way to markets in the West Indies, Amsterdam, London, southern Europe, Madeira, Charles Town and throughout New England.<sup>7</sup>

However, by 1710 Daniel Gomez shifted his attention to what he saw as an even more lucrative trade in furs. It was

to this end that the father and sons established a presence upriver where the fur trade with Native tribes was intense. It is probably no coincidence that the land and the trading post they set up there was in proximity to a significant Native gathering place that early Dutch explorers named *Duyvell's Danskammer* or Devil's Dance Chamber.

It seems that while Daniel Gomez was focused on the fur trade, his father and brother developed a wheat plantation complete with a flour mill and river landing. These features, along with an enslaved workforce, are characteristic of the plantations created by New York's landed gentry and city merchants in the 18th century.<sup>8</sup> (Further production would have been made by tenant farmers, possibly Palatine pensioners coming out of Newburgh.) In addition, they would have harvested natural resources, such as timber and lime burned in kilns on the river, raised cattle, swine and sheep, produced butter and cheese, grown garden produce, planted orchards and cut hay, to sell in the city. As their property improved, they built a country house commensurate with the family's genteel lifestyle. A lower,



Fig.3: Lewis DuBois House, 1406 Rt.9W, ca. 1757. Photo by John Ham, 2021.

embanked stone portion likely supported a timber-frame upper story, giving the house the appearance of other early plantation houses (Fig.2).<sup>9</sup>

The extent to which Graham and Griggs cultivated the 3000 acres they acquired in 1712 in the center of the town is unknown, but based on an early tax list for the Newburgh Precinct, Alexander Griggs's real property was assessed for the highest amount there in 1714. Exactly when Nathaniel DuBois (1703-1763) of New Paltz purchased all or part of the tract has yet to be determined, but he cited the previous Graham and Griggs patent for the land he devised it to his son, Lewis DuBois, which he described as a plantation. Nathaniel DuBois lived in New Paltz, and unless his son was living in a pre-existing dwelling built for Griggs, Lewis DuBois's extant house may predate 1763, perhaps as early as 1757 when he married his cousin Rachel DuBois (1739-67) or at the latest by 1761 when the birth of their son Wilhemus was recorded in Newburgh.<sup>10</sup>

Although he was a descendant of a New Paltz patentee, not a New York merchant, Lewis DuBois developed his Marlborough holding as a plantation with much of its improved land devoted to growing wheat and produce for the New York trade and included mills and a landing. The eight enslaved Africans he owned in 1790 were of a number indicating it was a full-scale commercial enterprise.

The large wood frame house has little in common with the traditional Ulster County farmhouses built by Lewis's kin. Rather, it was designed in the manner of other plantation houses in the region, which positioned it in the highest realm of 18th-century rural domestic architecture (Fig.3). A low story-and-a-half profile, characteristic of rural house forms, disguised a two-story plan two-rooms deep with a center passage, providing a luxury of rooms compared to common dwellings. (Only manor houses of the Hudson Valley aristocracy had a full second story reflecting the class hierarchy that structured 18th-century New York society.) The bilateral symmetry of the front facade and the floor plan

was the distinguishing design feature of better houses in the 18th century, and the DuBois house presents the customary five-bay front with a center entrance on axis. Above a tall half-story, the eave is decorated with a bracketed cornice. Over the years, the house has acquired a piazza over the entrance and various wings on the sides. The voluminous roof encapsulated both an upper story of chambers, with a garret above, perhaps serving as storage space for grains and other farm produce as was done in lesser farmhouses. Unusual double windows on the ends may have originally contained casements whereas the front rooms had sash windows current with elite taste in the mid-1700s.

The distinctive clipped gables are unusual, and previous histories have linked it to the earlier stages of the roof on the Jonathan Hasbrouck House (Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site) in the city of Newburgh, which was a contemporaneous large house built for another New Paltz family. (Lewis DuBois and Jonathan Hasbrouck were married to sisters. Jonathan Hasbrouck and his brother Jacob, who built the so-called Jean Hasbrouck House in New Paltz in 1720, modeled their dwellings after large plantation houses.) Evidence for clipped gables has been found in 18th-century stone houses, now with gable roofs and clapboarded ends, and research is ongoing to determine their frequency. The clipped gable portion of Jonathan Hasbrouck's House was built for a Palatine settler before he bought the Newburgh property.

As with many patents granted at the turn of the 18th century in Ulster and Dutchess counties, the absence of infrastructure delayed development, often for generations. New York merchants would take title to a lot pictured on a map of a vague survey knowing little of its actual conditions. These were investments handed down to heirs or sold to others sight-unseen. Riverfront tracts containing the confluence of fast creeks were most desirable, as illustrated by the Gomez plantation on Jew's Creek and the DuBois plantation on Old Man's Creek.

Two small unnamed creeks north of Lewis DuBois's land were acquired by two families from Long Island in the 1760s. Edward Hallock (1717-1809), a ship captain who lost several vessels to the French during the Seven Years War, bought a part of William Bond's 600-acre patent in 1760. Sea captain William Bond obtained the patent in 1712, which was valued highly on the tax list compiled that year indicating

the potential presented by its location at the mouth of a creek on the Hudson River. Little is known about the patentee, but he is believed to have settled there, leaving his daughter Sukie alone in a small dwelling for long periods while he was at sea. Suki Bond sold a portion of the tract to Edward Hallock who went on to build grist and saw mills and a landing from which to ship his products. Hallock's settlement does not meet all the criteria for a plantation. The absence of his house makes his status in the trade society difficult to assess. (Edward's son James inherited the homestead and "built anew" in 1806; that house was demolished in the late 20th century.)

The property does not appear to have supported wheat production on a large-scale. Perhaps the small size and riverside terrain did not lend it to agricultural development, and it seems that the focus of Hallock's enterprise relied more on contract milling for other settlers moving into western areas of the town. There was no enslaved labor involved; Edward Hallock and his family were members of the Society of Friends, which was anti-slavery and abolitionist. Hallock is remembered as a "Friends preacher," and his father Rev. John Hallock (1679-1765) was the leader of a Friends meeting in Brookhaven, Long Island. Many Quakers from New England and Long Island, where they continued to experience prejudice, relocated to the Hudson Valley creating one of the largest networks of Quaker meetings in the nation.

Conjecturally, Edward Hallock's house may have resembled Micajah Lewis's house, which was built about the same time in the neighborhood. (Lewis owned a small lot carved out of the Bond Patent and operated a tavern in his house on the Old Post Road that George Washington reputedly visited.) It is a story-and-a-half wood frame, gable-roof dwelling with a center chimney plan in the New England tradition, which had carried over to English areas of Long Island and, thence, up into the Hudson Valley (Fig.4). Although similar in scale, these were not Dutch houses in plan or construction methods, which illustrate the continued separation of the two cultural groups in the mid-18th century.

Edward's brother Samuel Hallock (1724-82) is said to have obtained 1000 acres north of his tract, probably from James Barberie or his assigns. It bounded on the Hudson where a landing was established, but it had no creek to support industries. The land appears to have extended



Fig.4: Micajah Lewis House, 24 Old Indian Rd., center section ca. 1750. Photo by John Ham, 2021.

south to include the area now covering the hamlet of Milton. An inventory taken after his death contained an extensive collection of farm implements, including English and Dutch plows; a list of cows, steers, heifers and calves suggesting he operated a stock farm; carpenter tools and a ferry boat and canoe. Two pages of the inventory contained a record of all the notes he held for loans made to his neighbors indicating a certain level of wealth.

The old, decaying house north of Milton long associated with Samuel Hallock was more probably built for Benjamin Sands in the late 1700s. Cochran asserts this in his history of the town, and the design of the house indicates that it more likely associated with Sands' generation (he married Hallock's daughter Amy) than with Hallock's.<sup>11</sup> It is an iconic example of the domestic architecture that flourished in English cultural areas of the Hudson Valley in the decades following the Revolutionary War: a two-story wood frame building with a side-passage plan and a story-and-a-half kitchen wing. The wing displays earlier 18th-century framing methods that suggest it was modified from

Samuel Hallock's original house. Even in its current poor condition, the house is a distinctive landmark of the English cultural group that settled in Marlborough, although it cannot be considered a plantation house (Fig.5).

A creek north of the Hallocks' land, apparently on Hugh Wentworth's 1750 patent abutting the southern boundary of New Paltz, was developed by the Smith family of Long Island. Late in life, Leonard Smith (1718-87) purchased 1500 acres of land in 1762, which would have overlapped the boundary between the Barberie and Wentworth patents. His son, Anning Smith (1742-1802) capitalized on the commercial potential of the property by impounding Smith's Pond above 120-foot Buttermilk Falls, and following the conventional 18th-century development model, he went on to erect saw, grist and woolen mills below the falls and built a dock, boat yard and storehouse on the river. In addition, the acreage in the immediate vicinity of the homestead was cultivated for agriculture. Notably, this included an existing Native American burial ground. At the time of his death little of the tract west of the Post Road

had been cultivated. Anning Smith built a core part of the existing two-story wood frame house on the property soon after settling on the property, probably by 1764 when he married Elinor Clark (1746-1835). As is often the case, the old two-story, three-bay dwelling has been enveloped in a larger, later house.

None of these later tracts developed by people of British heritage from Long Island, as large as they were, can be considered to have been plantations in the colonial sense. Migrants from established (and overpopulated) communities from Long Island and Connecticut flooded into the vacant spaces within these speculative patents and fueling the transition from the traditional New York wheat and provisions trade to a more democratic modern river economy with localized industry, now supplied by hundreds of independent farmers, and commerce with regular shipments to and from the city. Marlborough's history contains some of each, which is still discernible



Fig.5: Hallock-Sands House, 152 North Rd., ca. 1790.  
Photo by John Ham, 2021.

along its riverfront. It also clearly illustrates the different patterns of development followed by British and Dutch communities.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This history is derived from a broader study of Marlborough's cultural resources in a reconnaissance survey of its river hamlets completed in 2021, sponsored by the Town of Marlborough with a grant from the Preservation League of New York State. A second phase covering farms on the interior of the town will commence this year.

<sup>2</sup> During Governor Benjamin Fletcher's term of service (1692-98), Evans and his ship "Richmond" were assigned to protect New York from privateers and pirates. But Evans's mission was something of a joke, according to Richard Ritchie in *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (Harvard University Press, 1989), for "pirate ships came regularly to the city to disgorge their booty and as the "Jacob" [Kidd's ship] returned full of loot and was turned over to Governor Fletcher. The governor found nothing strange in all of this, and the merchants certainly never looked askance at their gold. Captain Evans closed his eyes to everything, and probably profited from his blindness... Evans typified the navy of his day. Captains used their ships for trade to supplement low wages and, like Evans, saw nothing wrong with this."

<sup>3</sup> As his fur supplies diminished in the 1690s, Barbarie and his sons invested in the sugar trade. See Cathy Matson, *Merchants & Empire, Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 109, 125, 154.

<sup>4</sup> Gomez was assessed on a 1717 tax roll.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Birmingham, *The Jews in America Trilogy* (Open Road Media, 2016), on-line preview, n.p. Matson, *Merchants & Empire*, 138.

<sup>6</sup> Matson, *Merchants & Empire*, 138.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>8</sup> Neil Larson, "Plantations in the Hudson Valley." *HWA Newsletter*, vol. 20 nos. 2 & 4 (2017). <http://hmvarch.org/hmvanews.html>

<sup>9</sup> The house no longer has such an appearance.

<sup>10</sup> In his 1908 *History of Marlborough*, C.M. Woolsey relates that Graham and Griggs sold their shares of the parcel to Zacharias Hoffman, Lewis DuBois's maternal grandfather, and it was through his mother that the land came to him (42-43).

<sup>11</sup> *History of Marlborough*, 174. "He resided north of where the Presbyterian Church now stands, and the old house is still in existence, being occupied by Mrs. Conklin."

# Vansyckelville, Union Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey

by Carla Cielo



Fig.1: View of Vansyckelville showing the Greek Revival-style store, tavern (right) and Joseph Van Syckel farmhouse (left) as depicted in a vignette on the *Farm Map of Union Township* (1860) vignette from *Farm Map of Union Township* (Michael Hughes, 1860).

A small hamlet once called Vansyckelville was the second stop on the HMVA April 2022 tour. It has a tavern-house with a 1763 date-stone and two later additions, a fashionable farmhouse from 1839 with a barn complex and a three-seater outhouse, an icehouse (ca.1875) and a few stone-lined wells all of which are owned by Mr. Douglas Martin who is in his 80s (Fig.1). Mr. Martin once envisioned Vansyckelville as an open-air museum but sadly, no longer thinks that will happen. This mini-village has been in his family for 230 years and the tavern-house is packed with family heirlooms, old maps and antiques. One wonders what will happen to it after he passes.

The tavern was purchased by Mr. Martin's great-great-grandfather Aaron Van Syckel (1764-1838) in 1795. The 1860 farm map shows the family's land holdings exceeding 230 acres (Fig.2). Aaron was the 15th child of Reinier Van Syckel III (1723-1803) and Mercy Longstreet (1730-1815). According to Rosalie Fellows Bailey, Reinier's ancestor Ferdinand Van Sycklin or Van Syckelen emigrated to North America in or about 1652 and settled in Brooklyn New York. Reiner's parents settled in Hunterdon County before 1723, the year he was baptized in the Dutch Church of Readington. Reinier and Mercy had 18 children in total, most of whom lived to adulthood and were successful. Peter Van Syckel, who was the 16th child also became a tavern owner and built the nearby Hickery Tavern.



Fig.2: Detail from *Farm Map of Union Township* (1860) showing plan of Vansyckelville.

Prior to the Van Syckels' ownership period, the tavern was operated by David Reynolds. According to Mr. Martin, the tavern originally consisted of a one-story stone structure with a three room first floor plan: a large tavern room on the east end with front and rear entries and a fireplace centered on the end wall and two parlors or chambers with corner fireplaces on the west end. If the second story was added, the only possible horizontal seam in the stonework aligns with the second story window sills suggesting that the original tavern had a loft with quarter-story knee walls (Figs.3).



Fig.3: Reynolds-Van Syckel Tavern as pictured in Rosalie Fellows Bailey's *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York* (1936).

The architecture of the tavern has not been studied in a scholarly manner and the tour was limited to the first floor of the tavern (Fig.5). However, the parlor finishes reflect the period associated with the 1763 datestone ( Fig.6). Both corner fireplaces have plastered fireboxes simply adorned by a molded mantel shelves (with no pilasters on the sides). Robust chair rail moldings line both rooms. The parlor doors were originally quite short.

The tavern room was remodeled in the Greek Revival style ca. 1840, according to Mr. Martin, to improve the clientele (Fig.7). The large fireplace in this room acquired a stylish mantelpiece of the period. The short parlor doorways were increased in height by cutting into the frames at that time. There are wind-er stairs in the northeast corner leading to the upper story.



Fig.4: Reynolds-VanSyckel Tavern, 1763 date stone on front wall. Photo by Carla Cielo.

Several perplexing issues remain unanswered. The tavern is built over a crawlspace and does not have a cooking hearth. Mr. Martin said that there once was an out-kitchen near the tavern to the north meaning that tavern meals were carried to the tavern in all weather? Or perhaps the parlor-size fireplace in the tavern room may have replaced an original

cooking hearth in that room. And the absence of a basement raises the question of where food was stored; there is no known root cellar on the property.

According to Mr. Martin, Aaron Van Syckel had the tavern enlarged ca. 1795, shortly after his purchase, with the addition of a second story constructed of matching stone (Fig.3). Several features support this claim: The first-floor windows have arched brick headers and the second-floor windows have flat brick lintels about a foot below the wall plates. The different construction styles suggest different builders. The 1763 date-stone is in the first-floor front wall, not at the peak (Fig.4). The cornice of the stone second story and the addition built on the east end align, and there is no seam at the junction.

The single-bay, two-story, timber-frame addition is only about 9-feet wide and, according to Mr. Martin, is also built over a crawlspace. It has weatherboard siding planed with a bead

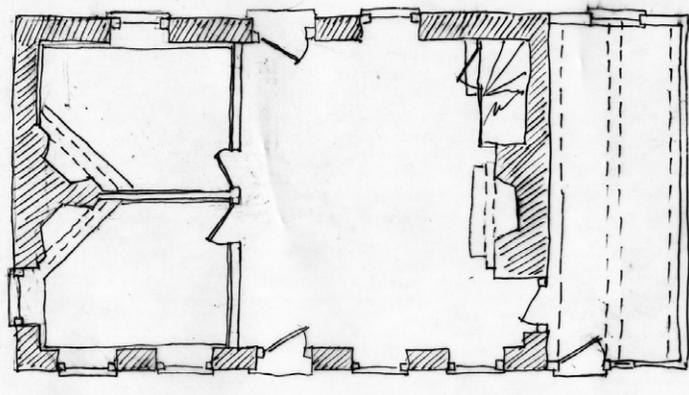


Fig.5: Reynolds-Van Syckel Tavern, first floor plan, no scale. Sketch by Carla Cielo.



Fig.6: Reynolds-Van Syckel Tavern, view of SW parlor with corner fireplace. Photo by Walter R. Wheeler.



Fig.7: Reynolds-Van Syckel Tavern, view of tavern room and fireplace. Photo by Walter R. Wheeler.



Fig.8: Joseph Van Syckel House, ca. 1839. Photo by Carla Cielo.

along the bottom edges with an entrance and window on the first story and two windows on the second. The second-floor windows are a post-width away from each end. The narrow interior has oversized hand-planed ceiling beams that span front to back. Oddly, no fireplace appears to have existed, and as access was restricted, no investigation could be made. The addition now contains a modern kitchen, but its purpose in 1795 is a mystery. Did it relate to the tavern business or was it a family space? Did the out-kitchen continue to serve as the only kitchen associated with the tavern? No evidence of a staircase was seen. Did the small winder staircase in the tavern serve as the only access to the upper story? A more thorough study of the building is needed to understand how these new spaces were used, particularly in the living patterns of Aaron Van Syckel Sr. and his family.

Aaron Van Syckel and his son Aaron Van Syckel Jr. (1793-1874) were apparently quite successful and Van Syckelville grew. According to Mr. Martin, Aaron Sr. financed the construction of a farmstead ca. 1810 for his son Aaron Van Syckel Jr. directly across the street (now privately owned). It included a timber-frame barn complex (demolished), a two-section frame farmhouse and a stone smokehouse (Figs.1 & 8). A store with a two-story temple front was built next to the tavern and a cobbler's shop was built across the street (Fig.1). The tavern is filled with items that were saved from the store when it was demolished in the early 20th century. Aaron Van Syckel Jr. took over the tavern business after his father's death in 1838. A second farmstead was created behind the tavern ca. 1839 for Joseph Van Syckel (1818-1904) who was a son of Aaron

Jr. It includes a two-story, five-bay Greek Revival-style farmhouse with a kitchen wing and a timber-framed barn complex (mentioned above and owned by Mr. Martin). The tavern was enlarged a second time circa 1840 for a new kitchen. Lastly, an icehouse was built near Joseph's house after the Civil War (Fig.9).

The ca. 1840 tavern addition is two stories in height and has a lower roof line. The first-floor kitchen has a cooking hearth—perhaps the first to be built within the tavern. Winder stairs lead to the second-floor chambers. Its association with the tavern was short lived. Both the tavern and store closed by the end of the 1850s. It was noted that the tavern was “occupied by tenants” in the 1898 county history, and Rosalie Fellows Bailey found it “unoccupied” when she visited in 1936.

Mr. Martin's grandfather, Joseph Van Syckel was a gentleman farmer and bank president, who, according to Mr. Martin, “never really worked.” His icehouse is built on grade with brick cavity wall construction with a 4-inch air space vented to the exterior and small gaps in the brickwork at the base of the wall (Fig.9). Mr. Martin said that the icehouse did not work well, no doubt because of the gaps which would have worked in the winter to bring cold air into the cavity, would have done the opposite in the summer.

The need for the icehouse circa 1875 is also of interest. Van-Syckelville is traversed by two streams but lacked a spring and therefore lacked proper means to chill milk. According to the 1880 agricultural census, Joseph Van Syckel had

## Membership info

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

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

Membership dues remains at a low \$25 per year (\$15 for Students). So if you haven't sent in your dues or given a tax deductible donation to the HMVA mission, **please consider doing so now.**

You can join or renew online at [HMVArch.org](http://HMVArch.org) using PayPal.



Yes, I would like to renew my membership in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to help in preserving the architectural heritage of the Hudson and Mohawk valleys. Enclosed find my donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail checks to:

**HMVA**

90 Cty. Rte. 42, Coxsackie, NY 12051



Fig.9: Brick icehouse, ca. 1875. Photo by Carla Cielo.

4 “milch” cows and produced 140 pounds of butter in 1879. None of the milk was sold or sent to a creamery. The icehouse appears to have been built to chill the milk used to make the butter. Mr. Martin described the use of an “ice chest” which kept milk cans chilled with chopped ice placed around the cans. According to Mr. Martin, an ice box was not purchased until the 1920s and by that time the icehouse was used as a garden shed. Ice was purchased in Clinton and transported on the bumper of his parent’s car.

The story of Vansyckelville told through the lens of the remaining buildings, is the story of a successful family that spans five generations and should be preserved. Can this rural section of Hunterdon County sustain such a vast museum complex? Each building has been meticulously maintained by Mr. Martin and very little restoration would be required. The hamlet is an ideal representation of Hunterdon County and is much loved by everyone who knows it.