

Roslyn Landmark Society
Annual House Tour Guide.



June 4, 1977
10:00-4:00

The Van Nostrand-Starkins House, ca. 1680

***HOUSES ON TOUR**

VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE

221 Main Street, Roslyn

Pages 11 to 23

OAKLEY-EASTMAN HOUSE

75 Main Street, Roslyn

Pages 25 to 34

"HILLSIDE"

THE VALENTINE-POLLITZ FARM

West side of Main Street between #36 and #60

Pages 37 to 39

AUGUSTUS WILLIAM LEGGETT TENANT HOUSE

25 Glen Avenue, Roslyn

Pages 41 to 43

THOMAS P. HOWARD HOUSE

30 Glen Avenue, Roslyn

Pages 45 to 98

JOHN ROBESON-JEREMIAH WILLIAMS GRIST MILL

Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn

Pages 51 to 59

JOHN ROGERS HOUSE

95 East Broadway, Roslyn

Pages 61 to 65

VALENTINE-ROBBINS HOUSE

1535 Northern Blvd., Roslyn

Pages 67 to 75

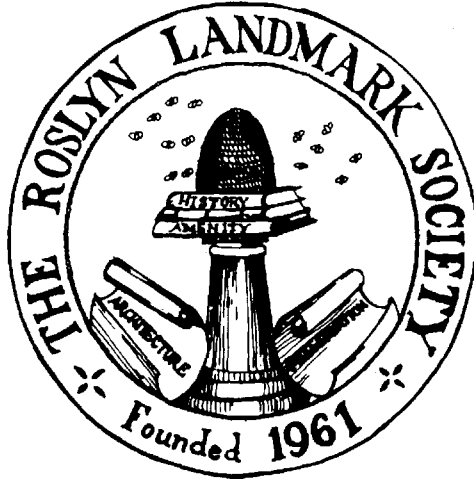
EAST TOLL-GATE HOUSE

Roslyn Cemetery, Northern Blvd., Greenvale

Pages 77 to 80

***PLEASE**

***NO CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE
NO SPIKED HEELS (PINE FLOORS)
NO SMOKING WHEN IN HOUSES***



The Editorial Board wishes to express its most sincere thanks to Julia S. Berrall for her comments on the Van Nostrand-Starkins landscape plan and to Bruce Kelly of the Central Park Task Force for his description of the rural cemetery movement.

Editorial Board

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REFERENCES

The following is by no means a list of all the reference material available. However, most of the publications included are more or less easily obtainable and, between them, include much of the known information concerning Roslyn's architectural past. Most of these references are available in the Department of Local History, Bryant Library, Roslyn.

ARCHITECTURAL SOURCES:

- Benjamin Asher: *The Practical House Carpenter* (Boston 1830; Pub. by DeCapo Press, New York, 1972.)
Ranlett, William H.: *The Architect*, vols. I & II, (DeWitt & Davenport, New York 1849).
Downing, Andrew J.: *The Architecture of Country Houses*, (D. Appleton & Co., New York 1854).
Vaux, Calvert: *Villas & Cottages* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1864).

MAPS:

- Walling, H.F.: *Topographical Map of the Counties of Kings and Queens, New York* (published by W.E. & A.A. Baker, New York, 1859). Includes insert map of Village of Roslyn.
Beers, Frederick W.: *Atlas of Long Island, New York*, (Beers, Comstock & Cline, N.Y. 1873).

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS:

- Onderdonk, Benjamin Tredwell (Bishop): Holographic letter to Mrs. Eliza Leggett written on Feb. 3, 1851. The original manuscript is on file in the Morton Pennypacker Collection of the East Hampton Free Library and describes life in Roslyn between 1796 and 1811. Bishop Onderdonck's letter was printed in *The Roslyn News* for July 3, 1903.
Valentine, T.W.: *The Valentines in America: 1644-1874*, (Clark & Maynard, New York, 1874).
Munsell, W.W.: *History of Queens County, New York*, (W.W. Munsell & Co., New York, 1882).
Wilson, James G. & Fiske, John: *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, (D. Appleton & Co., New York 1887).
Skillman, Francis: Letter to *The Roslyn News* in 1895. We have had access to typescript copies only and have never seen either the original manuscript or the original printed text. For this reason copy errors should be suspected, i.e. "east" for "west" and vice versa. The letter describes life in Roslyn between 1829 and 1879. Additional Skillman material, mostly referring to the present Village of Roslyn Harbor, is available in the Bryant Library.
Chapman Publishing Co.: *Portrait & Biographical Records of Queens County, New York*, (New York & Chicago, 1896).
Hicks, Benjamin D.: *Records of the Town of Hempstead and South Hempstead*, Vol. I thru 8. (Published by the Town Board of North Hempstead, New York, 1896).

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS

- The Plaindealer*: Published in Roslyn by Leggett & Eastman, weekly, from July 12, 1850 thru July 9, 1852. All issues have been reviewed and relevant items abstracted.
Once-A-Week or the *Roslyn Tablet*: Published by the Keeler Brothers. Vol. I was published elsewhere and is unrelated to Roslyn. Vol. II commenced with the issue for Oct. 12, 1876,

the first Roslyn issue, and continued (Vol. III) thru the issue for Oct. 19, 1877, at which time publication was suspended. All issues published in Roslyn have been reviewed and the relevant items abstracted.

The Roslyn News: Vol. I (1878) thru Vol. 18 (1896). Selected issues have been reviewed.

UNPUBLISHED HISTORIES:

Brewer, Clifton H. (Rev.): *The History of Trinity Church, Roslyn, 1785-1909* written circa 1910.

Radigan, John J.: *History of St. Mary's Church, Roslyn* 1943 and 1948.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

Gerry, Peggy & Roger: *Old Roslyn* I (1953) and II (1954), published by Bryant Library, Roslyn.

Moger, Roy W.: *Roslyn—Then & Now* published by the Roslyn Public Schools, 1964.

Fahnestock, Catherine B.: *The Story of Sycamore Lodge*, published by C.B. Fahnestock, Port Washington, 1964.

Gerry, Roger: *The Roslyn Historic District*, The Nassau County Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, Winter-Spring 1967.

Withey, H.F. & R.: *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (deceased)*, (Published by Hennessey & Ingalls, Los Angeles, 1970).

Goddard, Conrad G.: *The Early History of Roslyn Harbor*, C.G. Goddard, 1972.

Genevose, C; Rosebrock, E.F.; York, C.D.: *Historic Roslyn—A Book To Walk With*, published by the Roslyn Savings Bank, Roslyn, 1975.

ROSLYN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Roslyn is of architectural interest because of the high survival of buildings dating from mid-19th century and earlier. A significant group of architecturally consequential buildings date from the second half of the 19th century. Apparently the earliest known published record identifying locations and owners is the Walling Map of 1859 which probably was surveyed a year or two earlier. A large percentage of the houses and commercial buildings found on this map still stand.

Historic knowledge concerning individual houses, originally quite sketchy, has been expanding as the result of recent research. Sufficient has been learned to accomplish the inclusion of the Main Street Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Preparation of data to support registration of additional Historic Districts is being undertaken by Ellen Rosebrock, a professional architectural historian. In addition, quite a lot has been learned about individual construction detail, largely as a result of exploratory and recording procedures used in the preparation of the Tour Guides (TG) as well as from stripping techniques used in the examination of the Van Nostrand-Starkins House (TG 1975-1976) and the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill (TG 1976) by John Stevens.

Fifty buildings exhibited on Landmark Society Tours since 1961 have been examined carefully and much useful architectural information has been gained. Some of this study has been conducted under the direction of professional architectural historians as Daniel M. C. Hopping and John Stevens. In addition, much can be conjectured by evaluating architectural concepts, construction techniques, and decorative details of the houses already studied and applying these criteria to the examination of other houses. Careful historic investigation of one house, as the study into the origins of the Van Nostrand-Starkins house by genealogist Rosalie Fellowes Bailey, has revealed data concerning the histories of other houses. Careful review of the early newspapers, i.e. The Roslyn Plain Dealer, published 1851-52, and the Roslyn Tablet, 1876-1877, has disclosed much detailed information concerning individual local buildings. In addition, a letter written to Mrs. Eliza Leggett in 1851 by Bishop Benjamin Treadwell Onderdonk, describing his boyhood in Roslyn during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, has been most useful in identifying structures standing at that time. In a similar manner a letter written by Francis Skillman to The Roslyn News (1895) describes the history of many houses standing in Roslyn during the period 1829-1879. In general, each building or house is exhibited for two consecutive years with the result that approximately half the buildings on each tour are being shown for the second time. One of the benefits of this system is that data brought to light after the first showing may be included in the description of the second showing.

The preparation of the 1976 Tour Guide produced at least two interesting conjectures of major consequence. It now seems obvious that Roslyn, long considered unique for its large content of early and mid-19th century houses, includes at least four major Federal Houses, i.e. the Anderis Onderdonk House (TG 1970-1971) known to have been built between 1794 and 1797; the Federal part of the William M. Valentine House (TG 1963), which almost certainly was standing in 1801 and possibly even three or four years earlier; the fire damaged Francis Skillman House, now the Blue Spruce Inn, and the Federal part of the Valentine Robbins House (TG 1976) which can at present be dated only architecturally but which certainly was built within a few years of the other two. It seems reasonable at the time of writing to assume that the Onderdonk House was built first, then the Robbins House and finally the Valentine House although future investigation may alter this tentative sequence. What is more important

is that it seems almost certain that all three were built by the same carpenter-builder whose identity at this time cannot be even conjectured. Additional early Federal houses, possibly by the same hand, may yet be identified. The gambrel-roofed Francis Skillman House (not studied), badly damaged by fire, may be a future member of this group. In addition there may be one or two more houses which so far have eluded notice. In addition to the discovery of an unknown Federal carpenter-builder of talent we were amazed to identify the number of early buildings which included kitchen dependencies. It is now certain that a number of local houses at one time had kitchen dependencies and that a significant number of these have survived. Most of these appear to date from the first half of the 19th century although further study may establish that some are even earlier. The practice certainly continued as late as Vaux & Withers' enlargement of "Montrose" in 1869. The Van Nostrand-Starkins House (TG 1975-76) and William Hicks' original "Montrose" both had kitchen dependencies which no longer survive. The kitchen dependencies of the John Valentine House (TG 1976), the John Rogers House (TG 1976) and of the 1869 alteration of "Montrose" all are standing. While the existence of kitchen dependencies in other Long Island villages has not been studied, so far as we know it seems obvious that the local group was extremely large in comparison to the numbers in other places.

Apart from the large "summer seats" in Roslyn Harbor, only a few of the early Roslyn houses actually were designed by individual architects. Nevertheless, each house had an architectural concept which determined its appearance and function. The concept was frequently strongly influenced by the various published architectural works of the period, as Benjamin, Ranlett, Downing and Vaux, and, in other cases, was simply the result of a discussion between the owner and the carpenter-builder. One early carpenter-builder, Thomas Wood, is known. He probably was Roslyn's principal carpenter-builder between 1825-1875. An article in the Roslyn News for September 20, 1878, describing life in Roslyn fifty years earlier, states "Probably no builder erected as many of the existing dwelling houses, barns, etc., in this town as Mr. Wood." Thomas Wood is indicated on the Walling Map as the then owner of the Wilson Williams House at 150 Main Street which he purchased in 1827, according to an interview with his grandson Monroe Wood which appeared in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle for Sunday, August 17, 1913. In all probability he built the later (1827) half of it, as well as several other local houses which seem related to it. Later carpenter-builders were John Wood, Thomas' son, and Stephen Speedling. Both worked during the second half of the 19th century. Thomas Wood's account book for the year 1871 has just (January 1977) been donated to the Society. Its analysis may establish Wood's connection with other Roslyn buildings.

Architectural concepts of Roslyn houses were usually quite reactionary as might be expected in a small country village. In general the more ambitious the house at the time of building, the more likely it was to have been built in a contemporary style. Less important houses, in which owners were more likely to be interested in shelter than flourishes, frequently reflected the designs of an earlier period. Even in the stylish houses, secondary rooms appear retarded stylistically. In some houses the upper story trim was added as much as 10 years after the main floor trim and obviously appears to be later work.

Construction techniques are another important device in the dating of homes. Workmen trained in a country village were likely to use techniques of their apprenticeships. In sufficiently isolated communities, a workman might continue in techniques of the early working years of the elderly man who taught him. Reactionary techniques in one trade may appear side by side with relatively modern techniques in others, depending on the training of the man who did the

work. In situations of this sort, the date of the house cannot be earlier than the introduction of the latest construction technique used, provided it may be accepted the work is part of the original structure. In general, framing of Roslyn houses conforms to contemporary standards. However, the plastering techniques of clamshells and horsehair continued into the late 1800's even though these techniques had been discontinued in cities like Boston by 1750. Early masonry, also, was likely to be reactionary, but improved markedly after the arrival of Samuel Dugan I, an Irish-trained mason, circa 1855. The brickwork in at least one house built in the second quarter of the 19th century was laid in Flemish bond, a style which had disappeared elsewhere at least a century earlier. It is worthy of comment that prior to about 1860, foundations of Roslyn houses were built of large stones, arranged in such a manner that the exposed inside surfaces of the cellar were smooth while the outer surfaces, covered by earth below grade, were irregular and thereby bonded together by the earth back-fill. After about 1835 the exposed parts of foundations, i.e., from grade to sill, were brick. From about 1870, the entire foundation walls were brick. The latter practice continued until about 1900.

Decorative details, as hardware, stair railings, mouldings, etc., are also of great value in establishing the age of a house. In Roslyn the concept and construction details, and even the hardware, may antedate moulding styles by many years. In such a case, the date of the house cannot be earlier than the date of earliest appearance of the specific moulding style. Mouldings usually were stylish, probably because the presence of two lumber yards in the Village made it more convenient for carpenters to buy many mouldings ready-made. William Hicks started his sawmill in Roslyn Harbor in 1832 and may have operated another mill yard earlier. For the same reason mantels and doorframes were usually in style and executed with contemporary detail. On the other hand, metal hardware frequently was retarded in style, as result of availability of out-of-date stock or re-use of earlier materials. "H" and "H-L" hinges and oval keyholes were used long after their use had been discontinued in metropolitan centers. Prior to about 1825 door locks were imported from England. After that date they were of local manufacture, some by A. Searing of Jamaica. Willowmere, a mid-18th century house, has locks installed circa 1830 made by Mackrell & Richardson of New York, and at least two more survive in the Wilson Williams house and the John Mott house.

The foregoing is only the briefest of resumes. Additional information will be given, when feasible, in descriptions of individual houses. In all cases, estimates of construction dates have been evaluated on the basis of architectural characteristics as described above. In some instances an individual house may have been built earlier than the attributed date, but alterations have given it the characteristics of a later period.

As noted above, most of the early Roslyn buildings were designed by local carpenter-builders who, in some instances, worked from architectural pattern books. By the mid-19th century, however, the larger, more fashionable houses being built along the harbor must have been designed by architects, even though in some instances the quality of the building provides the only evidence for an architectural attribution. The earliest building designed by a known firm of professional architects was Christ Church Chapel (later the first Trinity Church, Roslyn) which was designed by McDonald & Clinton in 1862. An earlier suggestion had been made that the Roslyn Presbyterian Church be designed by an architect but this proposal was not accepted by the congregation. The earliest known published work is Frederick Copley's design for the Jerusha Dewey house built in 1862 by William Cullen Bryant and published in Woodward's Country Houses (published by the authors, George E. and F. W. Woodward, New York, 1865, Pg. 40). Copley also published the design for Sycamore Lodge, still standing

in Roslyn Harbor (TG 1961-62), in *The Horticulturist*, Vol. XX, 1865 Pg. 7 to Pg. 11. Copley did not consider himself an architect but signed himself "artist". He is known to have painted at least one Roslyn landscape which, hopefully, will one day be identified. The earliest major work by a prominent architect is Jacob Wrey Mould's design for Thomas Clapham's "Stonehouse", now "Wenlo", in 1868. A contemporary newspaper clipping in the possession of the present owner identifies Mould as the architect. Plate #61 of Bicknell's *"Brick and Wood Architecture"* (1875) illustrates a house very similar to "Stonehouse" in facade design and floor plan. Bicknell credits the design to J. Wrey Mould and identifies the owner as Thomas Clapham of Roslyn. Mould designed many churches in New York, including the All Souls' Unitarian Church and Parsonage (1853-1855). In 1859 he became Associate Architect of the New York City Department of Public Parks and, in 1870-1871, the Architect-in-Chief. In these capacities he designed most of the buildings and other structures in Central Park including the bandstand (1862), the terrace (1858-1864) and the casino (1871). (See Van Zanten, David T.; "Jacob Wrey Mould, Echoes of Owen Jones and The High Victorian Styles in New York, 1853-1865", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. XXVIII, #1, March, 1969, pgs. 41-57).

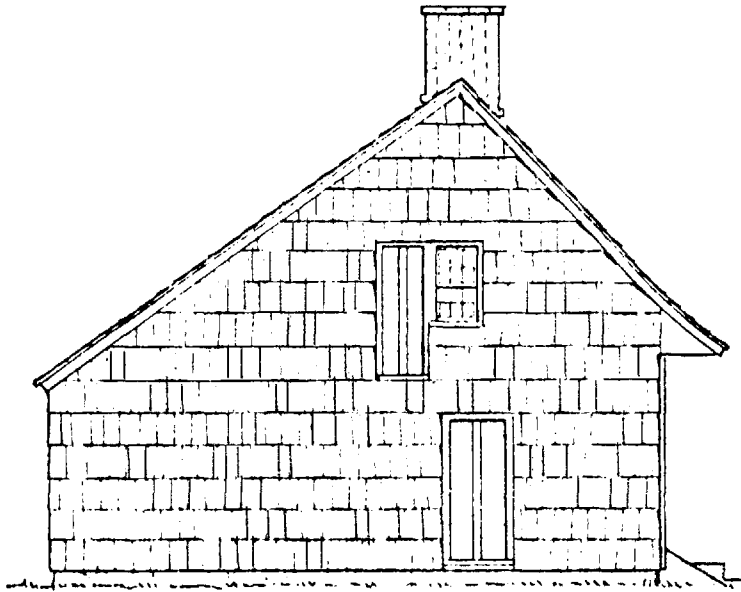
In 1869 Calvert Vaux, one of the most prominent architects of his day and the author of a number of books on architectural subjects, did the design for the enlargement of "Clovercroft" (now "Montrose") to the order of Mrs. Parke Godwin. The drawings and elevations for the Vaux design survive and bear the imprint of Vaux, Withers & Co., 110 Broadway, New York. In 1874 Thomas Wisedell, of New York, prepared drawings for the enlargement of "Cedar Mere" for William Cullen Bryant. Other buildings in Roslyn Harbor which must represent the work of competent professional architects are "Sycamore Lodge", "Locust Knoll", now "May knoll" (1854-1855), the Gothic Mill at "Cedar Mere" which, apparently, was not included in the Wisedell design and St. Mary's Church (1871-1876). Samuel Adams Warner, (1822-1897) was a New York architect who lived in Roslyn during the third quarter of the 19th century. A Swiss Cottage built on his estate circa 1875 survives on Railroad Avenue and almost certainly must have been built to Warner's design. A letter from Warner's great-grandson Captain Harry W. Baltazzi, USN, dated September 7, 1965 (Bryant Library) states "My father told me that his grandfather, S. A. Warner, had given land to the Long Island Railroad with the provision that the station was to be built upon it". The Railroad Station is very close to the site of the former Warner house. Could the station also have been built in Warner's design? Warner may have designed some of the Roslyn Harbor houses for which architectural attributions have not yet been made. Warner designed major buildings in New York. These included the Marble Collegiate Church as well as a number of buildings. 13 of these built between 1879 and 1895 survive in the "Soho Cast Iron Historic District" of which all but one have cast iron fronts.

Actually the impact of William Cullen Bryant and his circle must be considered in developing the architectural attributions of the great mid-19th century houses in Roslyn Harbor. Frederick Law Olmstead, a close friend, is credited with the landscape design of "Cedar Mere" and later was the landscape architect of Central Park, a project strongly supported by Bryant. Calvert Vaux was closely associated with Olmstead and was officially charged, with him, with control of the designs for Central Park. Vaux is known to have worked for Mrs. Parke Godwin, a Bryant daughter, and probably designed other local buildings including possibly the Gothic Mill at "Cedar Mere". These local connections of Olmstead and Vaux may also have been responsible for bringing Mould, a Central Park associate, commissions in this area. It is certainly to be hoped that, ultimately, the mystery surrounding the origins of this important group of buildings will be solved. Near the turn of the century

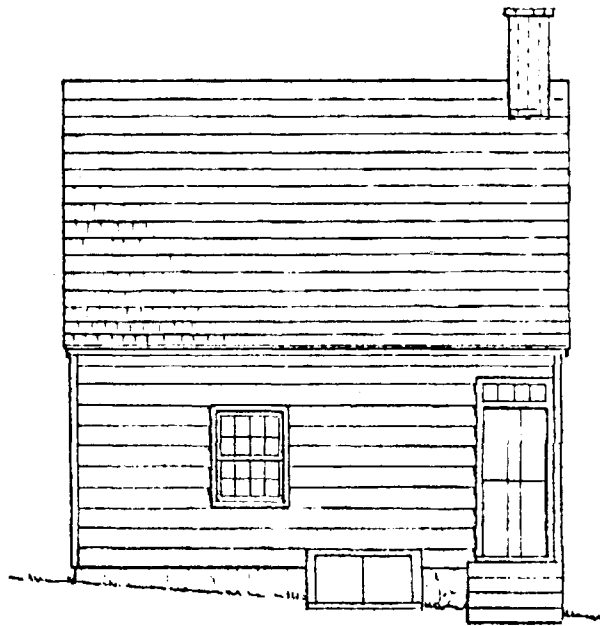
architectural attributions may be made with stronger authority. In 1893, or shortly thereafter, Ogden Codman, Jr., designed a house for Lloyd Bryce which later was acquired by the late Childs Frick, named "Clayton" and substantially altered. The design of the Ellen Ward Memorial Clock Tower (1895) can definitely be credited to Lamb & Rich, 265 Broadway, New York. Clarence Mackay's "Harbor Hill" was designed by McKim, Meade & White during 1902-1904, most of the design having been executed by Stanford White. Most of "Harbor Hill's" important buildings have been demolished, but the Stanford White gatehouse survives at the intersection of Harbor Hill and Roslyn Road. The same architects did the designs for Trinity Church Parish House (1905) and Trinity Church, Roslyn (1906).

Architects of national reputation continued to work in Roslyn almost until the present day. William Bunker Tubby, who was related to a prominent local family, did most of his important work in Brooklyn where he designed the Charles Pratt House, now known as the Bishop's House, in 1893, Wallabout Market and Tower, in 1896, and the library for the Pratt Institute, also in 1896. He also designed a group of five Brooklyn Carnegie Libraries in 1904. His activity was not limited to Brooklyn, as he was the architect of the Newark City Hall in 1901, the Nassau County Court House in 1899 and its addition in 1916. He designed three major buildings in Roslyn, all in the Colonial Revival Style. These are the Roslyn Presbyterian Church, 1928, the Roslyn National Bank and Trust Co., 1931, and the Roslyn High School, 1926. Unfortunately the latter was recently demolished to make way for the new high school. The Roslyn Presbyterian Church survives with some additions. The Roslyn National Bank and Trust Co. has recently been restored, using Tubby's original plans and elevations. The completed restoration serves as the office of Paul L. Geiringer Associates and represents an outstandingly sympathetic restoration of an early 20th century building. The architect was Guy Ladd Frost, AIA.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the buildings on exhibit have been selected to demonstrate the continuing story of Roslyn architecture, and to indicate various interesting inconsistencies of architectural concept, construction methods and decorative detail. Many more equally interesting buildings remain — it is hoped they will be exhibited on future tours. It should also be mentioned that since 1971, the Landmark Society has received grants from the New York State Council on The Arts to defray the publication costs for the annual Tour Guide. In the same year, the Society was the recipient of the National Award of Merit of the American Association for State and Local History for, among other achievements, the accuracy of its research and the quality of its annual Tour Guides.



Western elevation



Southern elevation

VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE, as it appeared about 1790.

THE VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE (Circa 1680)
Owned by the Incorporated Village of Roslyn and
leased by the Roslyn Landmark Society

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: Before the end of the 18th century the history of the Van Nostrand-Starkins house is only conjecture. By the 1790 Federal Census, William Van Nostrand was the head of the household there; his neighbor to the south was William Valentine. Van Nostrand and his wife Sarah sold their house and land to Joseph Starkins, a blacksmith, in 1795. There is no deed recording William Van Nostrand's acquisition of the land; no early Town record of a Van Nostrand land grant at Hempstead Harbour. Two early clues, though not clear in their reference, may someday lead to new knowledge:

First: in 1755 a William Van Nostrand, blacksmith, and his wife Phebe, conveyed an 18-acre parcel of land in Hempstead's "south woods" to Frederick Van Nostrand, Sr., and Frederick Van Nostrand, Jr.. Whether or not William Van Nostrand was the same person who later lived in Hempstead Harbour is not known.

Second: An Aaron Van Nostrand, turner, who was neighbor to Ephraim Valentine in 1747 along a road running north and south somewhere in this vicinity, died in Jamaica in 1764, leaving his estate to two of his sons, Aaron and Isaac. He could have had additional sons who had been given their portions during his lifetime. One of these sons could have been named William Van Nostrand. Amos Denton was the executor. Aaron Van Nostrand had formerly lived in what is now North Hempstead, as he was assigned an earmark for his livestock in 1714.

In 1700 Abraham Denton bought a three-acre parcel of land with a house on it from Richard Valentine, to whom it had been given, house and all, in 1686 as his wife's dower portion from her father Timothy Halstead. It was adjacent to land on which Valentine lived.

Richard Valentine, in his own turn, was a member of a group of "planters" who joined together in 1668 to "take up land" on "the north side of the town". Timothy Halstead, too, was a member of that group.

This collection of facts may be only coincidentally related. But if Richard Valentine's land was the same, or in part the same, as Ephraim Valentine's and later William Valentine's; and if Amos Denton inherited from Abraham Denton; then it would be fairly logical to guess that Aaron Van Nostrand, having moved on to Jamaica later in his life, drew on a neighbor's friendship in making Denton his executor. If these relationships are valid, which we do not know, then they tell us something about the earliest settlement here at Hempstead Harbour.

After 1790, though, the Van Nostrand-Starkins house history is clear and easy to follow. On March 21, 1795, Van Nostrand conveyed his four-acre plot to blacksmith Joseph Starkins and Ann Elizabeth, his wife, for £120. (Queens County, Liber 65 of Deeds, Pg. 291). In 1801 the Starkins bought more land, south and north adjoining the house lot, from William Valentine. Starkins' oven house and his blacksmith shop are both mentioned in 1824 highway records. (North and South Hempstead Records, vol. 7, Pg. 43). Joseph Starkins was born around 1769 and he died in the Town of North Hempstead in 1844.

In 1847 Joseph Starkins, presumably the blacksmith's son, mortgaged the four-acre property, and in 1850 he and his wife, whose name was Ann Elizabeth, sold it to William Verity. (Queens County, Liber 85 of Deeds, Pg. 486). Two years later Verity sold it to merchant Jacob M. Kirby (Queens County, Liber 101, Pg. 142) who was acquiring the land all

around the Main Street—East Broadway intersection forming the locality then known, and still today, as “Kirby’s Corners”. Kirby owned a fleet of ships—early in his career he sailed them—market sloops that ran between Roslyn and New York, trading farm produce and lumber for fertilizer, dry goods and agricultural implements, which he sold in his Main Street store, still standing near the Corner.

Jacob Kirby died in 1880, leaving his property (his temple-front house on the eastern side of the road south of the Corners; the store, houses and barn within the Corners triangle; the Van Nostrand house and its neighbor to the north, with his little office in the back), to his wife Elizabeth, who conveyed it all the next year to her son, the Reverend William Wallace Kirby.

William Wallace Kirby served as pastor for the Roslyn Presbyterian Church for a year (1870-71) and later was Justice of the Peace for the Town of North Hempstead. As an attorney he was a younger contemporary of Henry W. Eastman, and many of his legal papers survive in the collections of the Nassau County Museum and the Roslyn Landmark Society. W. W. Kirby transferred title to Ernest and Henrietta Schuman on the first of November, 1887 (Liber 771, Pg. 186) but two days later the Schumans transferred it to Susan Eliza Kirby, William Wallace’s wife (Queens County, Liber 771, Pg. 189).

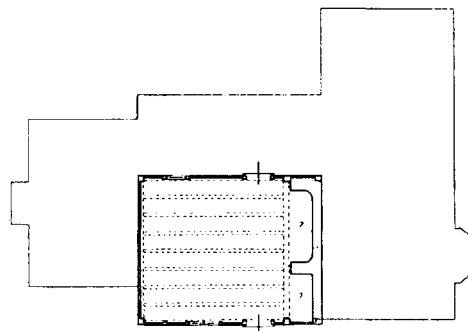
From Susan Kirby the house passed to her son Ralph in 1918, who retained it until his death in 1935. His brother, Isaac Henry Kirby, who was resident in the Van Nostrand-Starkins House, had probably been living there even before title passed to Ralph from his mother. He willed it, with other family property, to his cousin Virginia Applegate who, after his death, lived in the tiny house within the Kirby’s Corners Triangle.

In 1937 Mrs. Applegate sold the Van Nostrand-Starkins House to Mr. and Mrs. George J. G. Nicholson, who lived there until 1945, when the Nicholsons sold it to Mr. and Mrs. John G. Tarrant. In 1966 the Incorporated Village of Roslyn acquired the property from a holding company who had owned it for three years.

Through about three centuries, from the early days of Hempstead Harbour until about 1970, the house was continuously in use as a residence. The Roslyn Landmark Society, with funds matched by a grant from New York State, has restored the house to its appearance at the time it was the home of Joseph Starkins and William Van Nostrand. After furnishing and the completion of a period garden designed by Julia S. Berrall it will be opened by the Landmark Society as a “house museum”.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS REPORT

STAGE I c. 1680-c. 1740



It cannot now be determined if the original part of this house has always stood on its present site. Although it may have done so, it is also possible that it could have been moved in Stage II, from which time the present foundation may date.

The original unit measured slightly over 20 feet in length, and 16 feet in width. The front and rear walls measured 10 feet 9 inches in height, from the underside of the sills to the tops of the plates. There were knee walls, 3 feet 2 inches in height.

The main elevation faced south. There is evidence for a doorway east of the center of the wall, and of a mullioned casement window to the west of the center. A doorway was also located in the north wall, opposite that in the front wall. There had also apparently been a single casement window in the north wall. No evidence could be found for a window in the west end wall. The east end wall, between the corner posts and at least as high as the plates, was either of stone or brick.

A major part of the original framing has survived. It is entirely of oak. The original north and west sills exist, although a short piece of the north sill at the east end is missing. There is a rabbet in the west sill to receive the ends of the floor boards. The floor joists are set the thickness of the floor boards below the top surface of the north sill. Two of four original joists survive. They measure 9 inches in width by 6 inches in depth. Their tenons are flush with the top surfaces, but nailed in the rabbet of the west sill. The four main posts are about 8 inches square, without any taper. They are connected in pairs by end girts and chimney girts that measure 7 inches in thickness by 13 inches in depth. These two bents are connected at a distance of 15 feet 6 inches by front and rear girts that are 4½ inches in thickness by 8 inches in depth. The inner, lower corners of the girts are chamfered, as also are the inner corners of the posts. The chamfers of the end girt and the posts are terminated by lamb's tongue stops; the chimney girt has a more elaborate treatment with a decorative notch at each end. The chamfer of the front girt is interrupted at the positions of the door posts. There are seven second floor joists, equi-distantly spaced between the front and rear girts, and lodged in notches in the end and chimney girts. The middle joist is made with dovetailed ends. They measure 4½ inches in thickness and 5½ inches in depth. They are numbered at the chimney girt end, with corresponding numbers on the girt. The original flooring of the second floor between the end and chimney girts has survived. It is of mill-sawn pine, 1 inch thick, the saw marks showing on the upper surface. The lower surface, which formed the ceiling in the first floor room, is planed. The widths are fairly uniform, being about 10 inches wide. The boards were laid in two lengths, with the joints coming on a line on the first joist in from the south wall. The joints between the boards were tongue and grooved. The boards were nailed with 2 inch rose head nails.

No original studs now survive in any of the walls. It would appear that originally there were no studs except at door and window positions. This is determined from the existence of mortices that relate to the original construction period. Later mortices or gains for studs are clearly distinguishable. There have never been any studs in the north knee wall, which became an interior wall in Stage II. It would therefore appear that the exterior of the house had originally been vertically boarded, and that the inside of this boarding formed the interior wall surface of the house. This is born out by the presence of whitewash on the underside of the front, rear, and end girts which could only have been applied prior to the construction of studded lath and plaster walls in Stage II. In Rhode Island, where this type of construction is known, the boarding was most often covered on the exterior with riven clapboards. This may also have been the case with the Van Nostrand-Starkins house, but it is possible that the exterior may have been shingled.

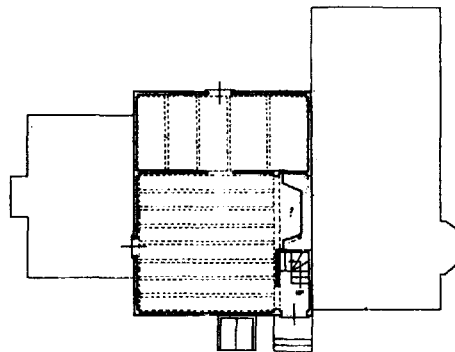
At the east end wall position, there are corner posts measuring about 6 inches that had no transverse timber connecting them. There had been horizontal timbers between them and the main posts measuring 3 inches by 4 inches. That in the front wall was located 2 feet 4 inches below the plate while that in the rear wall was 5 feet below the plate. The function of these timbers has not been determined. The plates measure 4½ inches in thickness and 6½ inches in width. They once extended beyond the corner posts. There are 2 inch by 4 inch braces between the main posts and the plates, and also between the upper ends of the main posts, running down to the end and chimney girts. Two braces at the chimney girt are missing.

There were five pairs of rafters, of which the inner three pair survive in place, in a mutilated condition. The roof pitch is 13 inches: 12 inches. Shingle lath notches, 1 inch by 3 inch are spaced on 16 inch centers. The collar beams are made with half-dovetail ends and let into the west side of the rafters and pinned. The upper ends of the rafters are morticed and pinned. The feet of the rafters are made with a transverse cog that bears against a corresponding notch in the plate. The rafters' feet are pinned through the plate. It appears that the east gable had overhung that wall by a few inches, while the west gable had about one foot overhang. The overhangs were removed in Stage II, at which time the gable rafters were converted into studs. Both original west gable rafters survive in this re-used condition in the present west gable. One of them is almost complete, short pieces only being missing from each end. In addition to the standard roof shingle lath notches, it has a series of gains in what had been the outside face, for lath for shingles that formerly covered the gable end. The collar beam was set lower in the gable than for the other rafters, apparently to make the head of a window.

The east wall, as noted previously, was of masonry between the corner posts, and was at least as high as the plate. Whether the masonry was of brick or stone cannot now be determined, although stone is the most probable. Most of this wall was occupied by a fireplace. The stairway to the loft was probably located at the south side, as there is evidence of a door location at the south end of the chimney girt, consisting of a mortice for a door post, and in the adjacent main post there are rabbets for the battens of a door. It cannot be ascertained positively whether these door clues are from Stage I or Stage II.

There is a possibility that a north lean-to of some kind existed in Stage I. The evidence for this is a notch in the rear plate, to the east of the central rafter, that would seem to relate to a lean-to rafter. As sections of this plate are missing, the evidence had been removed of any other notches. In addition, there is a cellar wall about 18 inches inside (south) of the present (Stage II) north lean-to foundation wall. No structure of any sort rests upon this inner wall, which may have been the north foundation wall of the original, smaller lean-to. If this conjecture is correct and an earlier, Stage I, lean-to did exist, the present foundation may date from Stage I also.

Stage II c. 1740—c. 1810



Some time around the middle of the 18th century, and possibly as early as the beginning of the second quarter, the house underwent a major transformation. It is possible that it may have been moved to its present site from another location. The original structure would appear to have been stripped to the frame. A lean-to addition was built on the north side, 9 feet wide.

The present foundation may date from this time. It is of rubble masonry, generally about 1 foot 6 inches thick, except at the east end where there is a foundation for the fireplace and hearth, 5 feet 6 inches wide, and, along the north wall to the lean-to, that was added at this time, there are inner and outer foundation walls as mentioned above. An areaway is located on the south elevation, partly under the position of the Stage I door. This location of the areaway suggests that the foundation may date from Stage II.

Extensive changes were made to the structure of the house. The south sill was replaced, along the two joists and the floor boards. The siding (clapboards or shingles?) was removed along with the vertical boarding to which it was applied. New studs were placed in the south elevation, two of them using original mortices in the girt. The others (3) were gained into the girt. The doorway was eliminated. A window, somewhat narrower than the original one, occupied the old location. One stud for it survives in place, on its east side. Gains in it indicate the size of the window frame. It was of 8 over 8 configuration with 7 inch by 9 inch glass. The other stud survives out of place and turned around so that its exterior face can be seen, with plain marks of weatherboard siding. In the south knee wall, four studs were placed, spaced more or less equi-distant between the main posts. They were morticed into the front girt and gained into the plate. Their lower ends are numbered, from the east side.

The north wall of the building became an interior wall with the construction of the lean-to addition. None of the original studs were retained in this wall, and while several of the original mortices were used for the replacement studs, most of these were gained into the rear girt. A stud from this period survives in place at the west side of the former window location. The only other surviving stud stands to the east of this one. The other Stage II studs were removed in the 19th century, when two were re-used out of place in the wall. One had pintle holes.

Six studs were erected in the west wall, some of them evidently being reused pieces, but their former situation has yet to be determined. Four of them appear to have been studs. They have chamfered interior corners and show whitewash on three surfaces. Several of these have clear marks on one side from shingle lath, spaced on 15 inch centers. The upper ends of these pieces were gained into the end girts. Between the middle pair of these studs there was a door, not more than 26 inches wide, the jamb-ends of which went into the end girt with square gains. These door jambs were removed in the 19th century.

The overhanging west gable was cut back flush with the lower part of the wall. The new gable end was given six studs, four of which were former rafters; the pair in the middle being the former rafters of the overhang gable. Very little had been cut off the ends of these to make them fit their new situation. Between these two there had always been a window. To the north of the window there remained the lower portion of an 18th century batten door together with one of its stops.

The "stone end" east wall was removed and replaced by a stone wall that ended short of the south wall, and extended up only as high as a girt inserted at this time. The top surface of this girt was on the same level as the original girts. Its ends are gained into the corner posts. There are seven more or less equi-distantly spaced studs above the girt, most of which have survived. Below it there were three studs toward the south side, only one of which survives, out

of position. That the back of the fireplace was exposed to the exterior is confirmed by a corner board from Stage III, still in place, that had been scribed to the stone wall, which was itself later removed.

The three interior pairs of rafters were not disturbed. The original gable rafters of the projecting gables were removed, and, as noted, made into studs. The new gable rafters were not notched for shingle lath, but were set with their outside surfaces on the same plane as the original rafters. This indicates that the original shingle lath were removed. The nailing pattern on the rafters shows that boarding was applied. Either at the beginning of Stage II or subsequently, extension pieces were applied to the rafters of the front slope, to make an overhang, perhaps 2 feet 6 inches wide. Notches occur in the plate beside each rafter for such a construction, and also in the posts and studs, for a soffit that would have been 2 feet below the top of the plate.

The lean-to was very simply framed. Its first floor joists were attached to the north sill of the original part by being let into it with a dovetail end joint. None of the joints survive, nor does the north sill, although the west sill still exists, made from a former rafter. The second floor joists are rather carefully finished, but spaced rather irregularly. There are six, including two end ones. The end ones are gained into, and nailed to, the north corner posts. The intermediate joists lay on top of the original Stage I north wall girt. The outer ends of these joists are morticed into the lean-to plate. The lean-to corner posts are 5½ square. They are braced to the plate. There are seven somewhat irregularly spaced studs in the north wall. A pair in the middle of the wall are spaced 2 feet 11 inches apart for a doorway. A head piece is gained into these. No evidence could be found for early windows in this wall. Apparently there were none. The west end wall framing shows evidence of an incomplete window-frame that was apparently never used. It does, however, seem to have functioned as a shallow cupboard until some time in the 19th century when it was covered over with lath and plaster. One original stud and the upper parts of two others survive in the east wall of the lean-to. No original first floor boards survive in the lean-to, but nearly all of the original second floor boards are in place. Their under surfaces, which show as the first floor ceiling, are planed. They are about 12 inches in width. During restoration the deteriorating second floor boards were replaced using identical boards set in the original pattern. Except in the west gable the lean-to rafters were cut on a bevel at their upper ends to lie on the original rafters. In the west gable the rear main rafter was omitted.

A large part of the Stage II riven oak shingle lath, set on 16 inch centers, and a good-sized area of clipped-butt shingles as well, survive on the west end wall and on a portion of the east gable. While the shingles of the north wall (lean-to) are 19th century in date, they perpetuate the original arrangement, as there are scribe marks on the studs for the shingle lath positions.

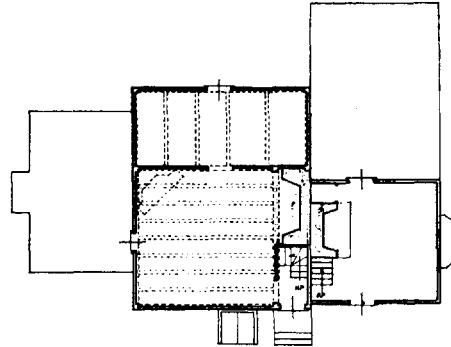
On the east gable, an area of beaded, ship-lapped weatherboards has survived within the roof of the Stage III wing. Other weatherboards from this gable were re-used as boarding for shingles above the roof of the wing. The weatherboards have an exposure of about 10 inches. Nail holes in the southeast corner post and the original studs indicate that the south facade of the house was weatherboarded.

A fireplace was located at the east end of the house, smaller than the one that had existed in Stage I, but still of generous proportions. On its south side there had been a staircase, the top step of which survives, cut out of the east side of the chimney girt. Facing the stair, in the south wall, was the main doorway. That this had a horizontally divided door is known by the four

pintle holes in the corner post.

The interior walls were plastered on riven oak lath. Areas of the original lath, and small areas of the original plaster, survive on the north and east walls of the lean-to and on the walls of the main room behind the Stage III or Stage IV corner fireplace in the northwest corner of that room. Sections of original base board also have survived behind the corner fireplace.

STAGE III c. 1810



The construction of the east wing is conservatively dated at c. 1810, but it could date as early as 1800. This estimate is based on the use of forged nails in the interior woodwork, and an early form of cut lath nails. The only surviving interior trim moulding is of quirked ovolo with astragal form, that came into common use at the beginning of the 19th century.

The wing is 14 feet in length, and 14 feet 2 inches in width. The side walls are 13 feet in height from the floor to the top of the plate. There are knee walls, 2 feet, 3 inches high. The front wall of the wing is set back about 6 inches from the front wall of the main unit. The frame of the wing does not come against that of the original section, but there is a 6 inch space between them.

The frame of the wing is of mill-sawn oak. The posts are 4 inches square, and are framed as bents with the second floor joists, which measure 4 inches by 6 inches. The bents are spaced about 3 feet, 6 inches on centers. The plates measure 3 inches by 5 inches. The front and rear walls have 7 foot long braces between the corner posts and the plates. The end walls have shorter braces between the corner posts and the end girts. Part of the west girt has been cut out, and both of its braces are missing. The three intermediate floor joists were replaced in the recent past. The outside walls were originally covered with beaded weatherboards having an exposure of 9½ inches. Three pieces of this material survive at the top of the north wall, along with the corner board at its west end which, as mentioned previously, was scribed to fit against a stone wall. These pieces show almost no indication of weathering, and have their original red paint. This was matched and its entire exterior painted in 1975 on the basis it represented the earliest exterior paint ever applied to the house.

The second floor boards have survived, and indicate that there was originally a staircase in the southwest corner, coming up over the side of the fireplace. The roof has a pitch of 11½ inches: 12 inches. The rafters are spaced to come over the wall posts. There are no collar beams. One of the original studs has survived in place in the east gable, and parts of the other two exist, out of place. There were no studs in the west wall. At the junction between the wing and the main unit, the ends of the shingle lath had survived, showing that the original shingle exposure had been 10½ inches.

There is a fireplace at the west end of the wing, set off center towards the north wall. It had an opening that was 4 feet, 3 inches in width and 4 feet in height, although the opening was later reduced in width, height and depth. Most of the original whitewashed plaster of the jambs and back survived under the later brickwork. The original lintel is missing, but the crane irons are still in place.

There was a door and window in the south elevation. The existing window and its sash are possibly original, but had been taken out and re-set when the present square-edged siding was installed, probably in Stage V. The extant door is a late replacement. Its jambs would seem to date to Stage V. The original door had been horizontally divided, as is evidenced by the four surviving pintle holes which had been covered by Stage V trim. There had been a window in the east elevation, towards the south side. Clear indications of its former presence were found when a bay window, added in Stage V, was removed. These two windows had 6 over 6 lights that were 8 inches by 10 inches in size. It was not possible to determine if there had been a window in the east gable originally.

There is an original door in the north wall, opposite that in the south wall. It is outward opening, and hung on strap hinges with driven pintles. This door is of batten construction with false applied stiles to make it appear as a two-panel door from the inside. The middle batten rail is in two parts, as if it had been intended to make a divided door. The door has its original cast-iron latch. The casings of this doorway originally had backbands on both sides, but only the exterior ones survive. It is of quirked ovolo with astragal section.

The casing of a closet door on the north side of the fireplace survives, although the door itself had been replaced. The top casing had originally extended up to the second floor boards, and only the lower part of it survives. It was determined from nail holes that the original door had been hung on H-L hinges. The board-and-batten door now in use was found as wall sheathing inside the closet. Since it is of the correct period and originally fitted with H-L hinges it was assumed to be the original closet door. The other walls have a board dado, most of which survives. The projecting part of the chair rail had been cut off. Above the chair rail, the walls had been plastered on riven oak lath applied with early cut nails. Only fragments of this lathing survive. The second floor beams and the underside of the floor boards were exposed originally, and had a base coat of red paint which had later been whitewashed over.

The loft had originally been left unfinished; the inside of the roof and gable were whitewashed. The beaded ship-lapped weatherboards of the original unit formed the west wall of the wing's loft.

There was apparently no communication between the wing and the main unit for some time after the wing was constructed. Access between the two sections would seem to have been made in Stage V.

The existing structure of the lean-to of the wing evidently dates to the latter part of the 19th century. However, the unweathered condition of the original weatherboards on the north wall of the wing would indicate that they had always been protected. Also, the outward opening door from the wing into the lean-to space shows no sign of ever having means of securing it from the wing side. It would therefore appear as if there had been a lean-to on the wing from the time it was constructed, and that this feature was subsequently totally replaced.

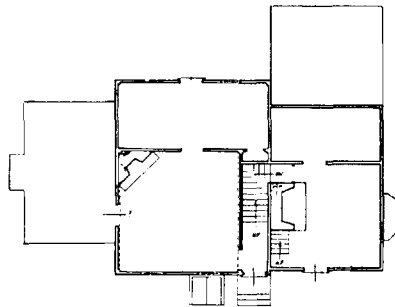
It would seem that at least at the beginning of Stage III, the main unit remained unaltered. A question that remains unanswered relates to the date of the corner fireplace in the main unit.

It is quite definite that the east wall fireplace existed at the time that the wing was constructed. The scribed corner board confirms this, as also does the fact that the chimney flue of the wing fireplace was joined with that of the main unit within the roof of the wing, as can clearly be seen from the cut-out area of weatherboards of the main unit's gable, where the wing flue had slanted through the wall. The construction of the corner fireplace appears to be very old. The brick is laid up with clay. There is a wrought iron lintel bar suspended by means of a bolt from a wooden lintel, set in the brick work three courses above the opening. It is unlikely that the corner fireplace and the east end one co-existed. That it was built at some time in Stage III tends to be confirmed by the fact that the floor beams and the underside of the second floor boards in the main and lean-to rooms of the main unit were painted after the construction of the corner fireplace. Only one thin coat of paint is present, and there is no paint in the area covered by the fireplace.

With the removal of the east end fireplace, the tight, winding stair to the loft was replaced by a straight run of stairs between the chimney and the end girts. A board partition was erected under the chimney girt, extending to the north wall of the main room. Although this boarding was later removed, pieces of it survive with the paint outline of the stair. A corresponding paint outline survives on the east face of the chimney girt. A new chimney for the wing fireplace was constructed, extending straight up through the roof of the wing.

There is evidence of the existence of a transverse board partition in the loft that extended at least part of the way across the space, as can be seen from the absence of whitewash on the west face of the second rafter and collar beam from the west end. The loft had been whitewashed as high as the collar beams and much of this survives.

STAGE IV c. 1840



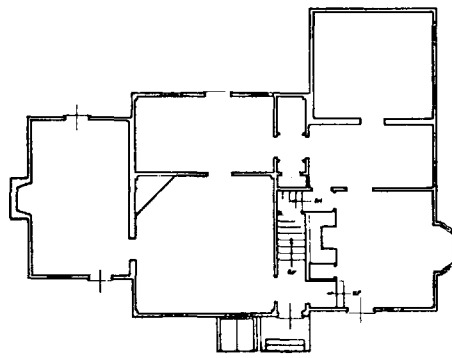
The principal change made in this period was the remodeling of the facade of the main unit in the Greek Revival style. To accommodate two large windows that had 6 over 6 lights of 10 inch by 12 inch glass, the studs of the front wall were shifted. Only two remain in their original locations. Additional sawn fir studs were inserted supplementing several Stage II studs that were shifted out of their original locations. The short studs between the girt and the plate were also shifted to allow the insertion of two 3-light windows. The overhang was removed.

The front wall was given square edge weatherboards, applied directly on the frame, with a flush-boarded frieze starting at the bottom of the second floor windows. A two-panel door with a three-light transom replaced the Stage II doorway. The door panels are flush-beaded on the inside, while the exterior has applied panel mouldings of ovolo with astragal section. A porch roof was probably built at this time, as old photographs show one with a shed roof. The

first floor windows have three-panelled shutters.

Owing to the height of the new windows and the lowness of the front girt, the window stools are very close to the floor. There are panels under the windows. It is difficult to determine internal changes made at this time, as further changes made in Stage V obliterated most of the evidence. It would seem though, that plaster ceilings were installed in the first floor rooms of the main unit, if not the wing also. The two windows in the north wall of the lean-to of the main unit would seem to have been inserted at this time. These windows are similar to that in the south wall of the wing, being 6 over 6 and having 8 inch by 10 inch glass, but they have parting strips, which the other window does not. The frames of the two windows are slightly different and may be re-used units. The doorway was apparently altered at this time, judging from the casings and drip cap that have survived under Stage V trim. These pieces show that the door had been outward opening and hung on strap hinges with driven pintles.

STAGE V c. 1875



Added at this time was a shed addition across the west end of the main unit, 12 feet, 4 inches wide. The lean-to of the wing, as it presently exists, was built, probably replacing earlier construction. A bay window was added on the east elevation of the wing, replacing an original window. A small dormer window was constructed in the front slope of the roof. Part of the middle rafter was cut out for it. The square-edged weatherboarding of the wing and the lean-to date from this time, as probably does the hipped porch roof that extended over the door and window of the south wall of the wing, and which is known only from photographs. Following soon after this, a separate structure, the Kirby Cottage, was moved against the wing lean-to and joined to it. This building, 12 by 14 feet; one and a half storeys in height, which originally had raked eaves, appears to date to the 1860's.

Nearly all of the surviving interior finish dates from this time. Most wall surfaces were replastered on new lath, and new door and window trim applied. The openings of both fireplaces were reduced in size. The floor boards of the first floor of the wing were replaced, and additional joists inset.

The board partition for the stairway in the main unit was replaced by studded framing, lath and plaster being applied on the room side, and the old boarding with the pieces out of order on the stair side. The stair itself was reconstructed with a landing at the level of the second floor of the wing, with a door to the wing loft. Most of the wall between the main, and lean-to rooms of the main unit was replaced except for a section at the west end. An interior cellar stairway was built, leading from the closet on the north side of the wing fireplace. The

access between the main unit and the wing at the south side of this fireplace, as it now exists, was constructed at this time. The original stair to the wing loft was removed.

20th CENTURY ALTERATIONS: Most of the 20th century work involved the second floor of the main unit. On the first floor, the only significant change was the replacement of the flooring. In the main room, the original joists were retained, but short joists were installed between them so that the new flooring ran from north to south. In the lean-to, the joists were replaced, but the flooring continued to run from east to west.

At the rear, a dormer was constructed, almost the full length of the main unit. Except at the gables, sections were cut out of the Stage I and Stage II rafters. Sections were also cut out of the Stage I rear plate, and the top of the north main post at the chimney girt was cut off, level with the floor. The removed sections of the rear Stage I rafters were built into the front slope of the roof, as reinforcing. The new rooms on the second floor were lathed and plastered, as was the loft space of the wing.

EPILOGUE: The foregoing structural analysis of the Van Nostrand-Starkins house was prepared by John Stevens, Architectural Historian-in-Charge of the Old Bethpage Village Restoration and an authority on early Dutch Colonial architecture. Mr. Stevens also is the Architectural Historian for the Van Nostrand-Starkins House restoration project and, in this capacity, established the structural history of the house and developed the plans for its restoration. The chimney and fireplace design and construction were accomplished under the direction of Colonel Frederic N. Whitley, Jr., U.S. Army Engineers, Ret'd, who has rendered similar service in connection with most Roslyn restoration projects. Most of the carpentry was accomplished by Steve Tlockowski and Edward Soukup who previously had worked on the Smith-Hegeman and James Sexton houses. The interior color analysis was completed by Frank Welch, and the interior painting was accomplished under the direction of Kenneth Rosevear.

The analysis presented here describes the structure of the house as it was immediately prior to the restoration procedure. In developing a restoration program, it was necessary to decide which stage of the development of the house should be restored. To restore it to Stage I, circa 1680, would have involved the destruction of a large amount of original 18th century work. Restoration to Stage IV was contra-indicated because almost all the interesting early work would have been concealed. In addition, the Stage IV modifications were not particularly impressive, especially in view of Roslyn's wealth of surviving buildings of this period. It was decided to restore the house to the very beginning of Stage III, circa 1800. At this time the original house (circa 1680) with its early 18th century lean-to (circa 1730) had remained virtually unchanged for well over half a century. The only modification which Stage III actually involved was the construction of the East Wing (circa 1800) of which there was an extensive survival. To accomplish this project the only notable structure which would be lost was the late Stage III corner fireplace of which the chimney was missing and the fireplace itself badly damaged and in poor repair. The reward for the loss of this corner fireplace was the exposure of a Stage II early 18th century plaster wall with its original baseboards. There was sufficient evidence to accomplish the contemplated restoration without conjecture, apart from the reconstruction of the Stage II fireplace and chimney. In this case, considerable information was available in the surviving chimney foundation, Stage III scribed corner board, etc., all of which Mr. Stevens describes in his text.

At the time of writing, March 1977, the restoration of the Van Nostrand-Starkins house has been completed and the furnishing of its interior is well under way. So far as possible an effort has been made to limit the furnishings to objects having a Long Island or New York State history. No known Van Nostrand or Starkins artifacts have survived. However, a few Kirby, or other local, kitchen items were available and, when feasible, these have been used. The most important piece of furniture available to us is the Long Island type gumwood kas which descended from Adam and Phoebe Mott of Cow Neck, which apparently was made between 1741 and 1749. Almost equally important is the two-panel two-drawer cherry blanket chest whose history is not known but which unquestionably is of Long Island origin.

Since the 1976 House Tour the general site grading has been completed and a rubble retaining wall constructed along the north boundary line where there is a significant difference in grade. In addition, a free standing, dry stone wall is being constructed along the street front, not only because it is appropriate but to provide protection from straying automobiles. The end posts of this wall are locust logs from an old tree on the Van Nostrand-Starkins site. The stones employed in the wall were either found in Roslyn or were quarried in Cow Neck and donated by the McCormack Sand and Gravel Company. The rubble walls were fabricated in the traditional manner by Frank Tiberia. This site development program has been made possible by means of a Community Development Grant awarded by the Town of North Hempstead American Revolutionary BiCentennial Commission.

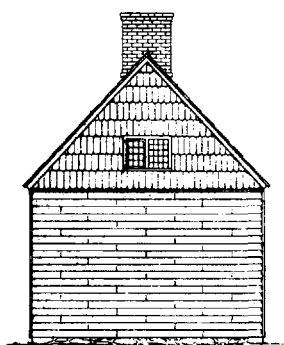
In addition to the foregoing, an appropriate garden plan has been developed for the Van Nostrand-Starkins House with the assistance of a grant from the Roslyn Heights Garden Club, by Julia S. Berrall, author of *The Garden* and an authority on garden history. Mrs. Berrall's description of her project follows: "The small gardens planned for the Van Nostrand-Starkins House fall into two categories. Close-by will be the housewife's beds of medicinal and culinary herbs, and at the far end of the garden space will be rows of root vegetables and other food crops.

The herb gardens will be small and compact with paths making all parts easily accessible to a housewife. Beds will be slightly raised and edged with six inch boards, a common practice for good drainage. Plants will be more or less grouped according to their uses: cooking, healing, dyeing, etc. Since many of the useful plants produce handsome flowers (peonies, roses, hollyhocks, tansy and calendulas, to name but a few) there should be some floral color from May into October. A few old-time favorites which had no special uses, as well as a few bulbs, can be tucked in for added beauty and interest. The varying greens and textures of the herb foliage will be attractive.

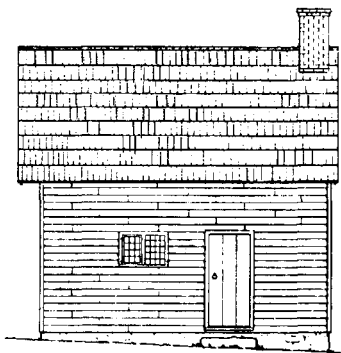
Separating the herb gardens from the vegetable plot will be small berry bushes: currant and gooseberry. A simple picket fence of unpainted palings will surround the entire garden area.

A simulated cart track running between the property and the neighboring Kirby Cottage is projected. Since the period of each house and garden is widely spaced in time it is proposed to plant an evergreen hedge in front of the Kirby Cottage, of either yew or privet. This, plus the fencing around the Van Nostrand-Starkins gardens should emphasize the feeling of a country lane."

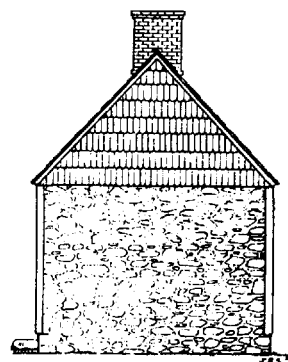
Later this year the Van Nostrand-Starkins House will be opened to the public as a House Museum. In effect, the exhibition of the house on the Society's tour will serve in the capacity of a members' preview.



West elevation

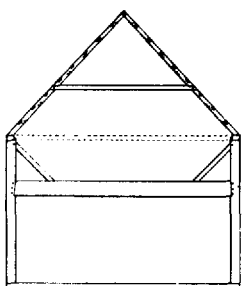


South elevation

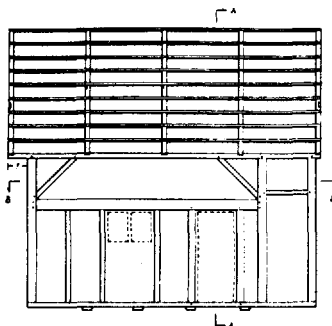


East elevation

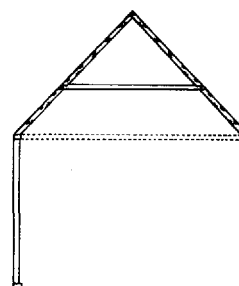
VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE
 STAGE I — circa 1680
 Framing details



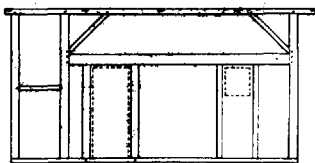
West elevation



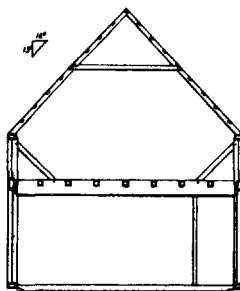
South elevation



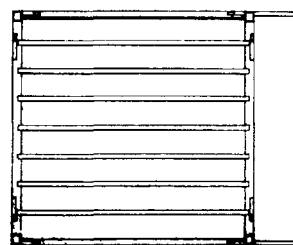
East elevation



North elevation



Section A-A



Section B-B

VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE
 Reconstructed elevations
 Stage I, c. 1680—c. 1740



Oakley-Eastman House
As it appeared circa 1860

THE OAKLEY-EASTMAN HOUSE
75 Main Street
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Gerard F. Binder

HISTORY: Benjamin Tredwell Onderdonk, in his 1851 letter of Eliza Leggett, described his boyhood recollections of Roslyn, then Hempstead Harbor, between 1795 and 1811. He recalled no houses on the east side of what is now Main Street.

CHRONOLOGY

1836: Epenetus Oakley, wheelwright, of Hempstead Harbor, purchased a lot from George Davis and his wife Jane (Queens Co. Liber 60 of Deeds, pg. 192, 7/25/1836). The sale price was \$350.00, too low to have included a house. Oakley had purchased another building lot, diagonally across the road, three months earlier (76 Main Street, TG 1973-74). Both houses were built at approximately the same time. It is not known which was Epenetus Oakley's residence. During his ownership of 75 Main Street he took out a mortgage for 800.00. This may have been used to finance the building.

1850: Epenetus Oakley, then living in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, deeded 75 Main Street to his son, Brewster K. Oakley, also of Brooklyn. The lot had frontage of 109 feet on Main Street. It was bounded on the north by property owned by William Valentine, on the south and east by land owned by James J.M. Valentine (Queens Co., Liber 95 of Deeds, pg. 340, 2/1/1850).

1854: Henry Western Eastman bought the house and lot for 1400.00 from Brewster Oakley (Queens Co., Liber 117 of Deeds, pg. 287, 5/1/1854).

Henry Western Eastman's family descended from one of the founders of Salisbury, Massachusetts. Later generations were established in New Hampshire, from which state Jacob C. Eastman, his father, moved to Hempstead Harbor. Henry Western was born there on May 8, 1826. At the age of 14 or 15 he entered the law offices of Pierpont Potter in Jamaica, studied later with Henry M. Western in New York, and Horatio G. Onderdonk in Manhasset. He was admitted to the bar in 1847 at the age of twenty one. He then returned to Roslyn to establish his own law practice. Eastman (called "Professor Henry Eastman" in a letter written by M. A. Leggett to the *Roslyn News* in 1903) was teaching at the Locust Hill Academy (thought to have been located in the Hendrickson-Ely house (TG 1962 and 1964) at 110 Main Street) to supplement the income from his law practice. He sold his share of the Locust Hill Academy to E.A. Hyde, and co-founded the *Roslyn Plaindealer* with Augustus William Leggett, who was William Cullen Bryant's associate on the *New York Evening Post*. (The *Plaindealer* was sold, and moved to Glen Cove in 1852). Eastman maintained a law practice of his own in a building called Roslyn Hall (demolished, date not known) on Main Street. Eastman's residence prior to 1854 is not known, but he owned the Epenetus Oakley house at 76 Main Street from an unknown date until 1855. His oldest son, Henry M. W. Eastman, was born in 1854 and a second son, George W. Eastman, was born in 1856.

1859: Henry W. Eastman purchased a lot with two buildings, a barn and a carpentry shop, from George Allen (Queens Co., Liber 146 of Deeds, pg. 408, 10/20/1856). The lot had a 55' 6" frontage on Main Street and later was known as "Eastman's stable lot", and was not connected to the house lot.

1863: William M. Valentine sold Eastman a lot immediately north of the house lot for 1000.00. It had 36' 8" of street frontage (Queens Co., Liber 204 of Deeds, pg. 124, 4/28/1863). The high price suggests that a building was on the lot, probably 55 Main Street (Eastman law offices). Since that building seems to be indicated as a "store" on the Walling Map of 1859, and since William M. Valentine built his new brick store facing Tower Street in 1862 or 1863, the Eastman law office may have been William M. Valentine's first store.

1866: Myers Valentine sold Eastman a large plot of land to the rear of the house (Queens Co., Liber 246 of Deeds, pg. 229, 10/1/1866).

1867: William M. Valentine sold Eastman the lot that lay between his office lot and his stable lot. This fifth purchase gave H.W. Eastman a street frontage of 400 feet and completed his estate.

1876: Henry Western Eastman founded the Roslyn Savings Bank at 55 Main Street with a group of prominent local citizens. The house is shown on the Walling Map of 1873 as belonging to Henry W. Eastman. It was the first Savings Bank in Queen's County.

1882: H.W. Eastman died in 1882. After his death his family was presented with a "Resolution of Esteem" by the Bar Association of Queens County, the text of which was recorded in the minutes of the circuit court. The certificate, in its original frame, can be seen in the William M. Valentine House (gift of George Latham). Eastman's wife, Lydia Macy, survived until 1920. 65 Main Street was perhaps built as a "dower cottage" for her when her son, Henry M.W. Eastman, took over the main house. He also possibly added the northernmost extension to 75 Main Street.

1887: Lydia Eastman, jointly with the heirs of Henry W. Eastman, deeded the house, office, and stable lots to Henry M.W. Eastman, who resided at 75 Main Street with his wife, Emily Rushmore Eastman (Queens Co., Liber 739 of Deeds, pg. 176, 3/25/1887).

1946: Charles Wolgast and Dorothy Shafer purchased 75 Main Street from Susan L. Batchelder (Nassau Co., Liber 3185 of Deeds, pg. 521, 9/11/1946) and Mary G. Eastman (wife of Henry W. Eastman, living at 148 Main Street) who relinquished a dower right to the property (Nassau Co., Liber 5136 of Deeds, pg. 451, 1/21/1953) to E. Wolgast and D. Shafer, residents of 75 Main Street. They established a nursing home on the premises.

1955: Charles Wolgast sold the house to Helene Guillemain (Nassau Co., Liber 587 of Deeds, pg. 391, 9/11/1946).

1956: Helene Guillemain Moskowitz deeded the house, dower cottages and law office to Ann Blum and William Crain (Nassau Co., Liber 7527 of Deeds, pg. 89, 8/18/1965).

1966: Mr. and Mrs. Carl Holtzschue bought 75 Main Street in 1966 (Nassau Co., Liber 7527 of Deeds, pg. 89, 6/27/1946).

1974: Mr. and Mrs. Gerard F. Binder purchased 75 Main Street (Nassau Co., Liber 8717 of Deeds, pg. 343, 8/27/1974).

BACKGROUND: The Oakley-Eastman house had at least three separate major periods of development; circa 1830, 1860, 1890: a period of decay while it served as a nursing home and a recent period of partial restoration which was undertaken by Mr. and Mrs. Karl Holtzschue, whose modifications to the house have been described in the tour guides for 1967 and 1968. A subsequent restoration program has been carried on in much greater depth by the present owners who bought the house in 1975.

At the height of its maturity, the Henry W. Eastman "estate" included over two acres on the east side of Main Street; extended down to the Mill Pond and included a small boat house in the Gothic style, which stood until about 1955. There were, and are, three houses on the place. These included the family residence, which was built in three distinct parts and required most of the 19th century for its construction; an office in which Mr. Eastman practiced law and which was, for many years, the headquarters of the Roslyn Savings Bank, whose brick vault in the Gothic style still survives; and a delightful "Victorian" cottage which was used as a sort of small "dower" house. In addition, there was a very large stable and carriage house, board-and-batten with "Hamburg" edged verge boards and a cupola, near the north boundary of the property, which blew down in 1960. During Mr. Eastman's life, the place was one of the sights of Roslyn. In a long letter about Roslyn, written to the editor of the *New York Leader* and

reprinted in the *Roslyn Plaindealer*, Vol, 2 #12, for 26th September 1851, the writer refers to the "singularly rural position of Mr. Eastman's house". The grounds were carefully landscaped from Main Street down to the Mill pond, and photographs of the garden survive in the Landmark Society's collection.

During the 20th century the place was sold out of the Eastman family and the property divided. The northerly half passed thru the hands of a number of owners and, during the late 1960's, was acquired by the Town of North Hempstead as a Roslyn Park reserve. The southerly residue, with its three buildings, became a nursing home, or rather a series of nursing homes as three changes in ownership were involved. During this period the grounds and buildings were increasingly neglected even though certain efforts at maintenance and even "improvement" were exercised. These included covering the two larger houses with pink asbestos shingles; stripping all the interior and much of the exterior architectural detail from the "office", and constructing at least two unsightly additions to the large residence in order to accommodate more patients. During this period a part of the third storey of the residence was gutted, and numerous partitions, some of glass brick, were inserted into various areas of the house. There remained scarcely a surface which was not covered with linoleum, wall board, or acoustic tile. In 1965 the property was acquired by Ann Blum, a member of the Landmark Society who, in 1966, divided the property and sold the office and cottage to one purchaser and the Eastman family residence to Mr. and Mrs. Karl B. Holtzschue.

The earliest part of the house was a conventional side-hall cottage, in the Federal style, which was two rooms deep, three bays wide, and three storeys in height. The ground floor, in the manner of many Roslyn houses, is below grade on the higher side and, therefore, not visible from the street. The three other sides are all above grade. The gables are at the north and south ends of the house, at right angles to the street. The early part of the house had the eaves clipped in the manner of the first part of the 19th century. The rubble foundation walls extended to the sills. The large, square brick chimney, characteristic of very early 19th century work, survives. The original window-sash were all 6/6, but the original sash survived only in part on the east facade. The original clapboarding is present. The builder of the house probably was Epenetus Oakley (TG 1973-74). Based on architectural characteristics, the house may be assumed to have been built in the 1830's. This part of the house and the adjoining "office" are both indicated on the Walling Map (1859) as belonging to Henry W. Eastman, who bought the house in 1854.

About the time of the Civil War (perhaps a few years earlier) two additional bays were added to the north side of the now central hall. This addition appears to be indicated on the Beers-Comstock Map (1873), as is the small cottage to the rear, and the large stable. The foundation of this addition is an unusual one for its period, at first comparison with other local houses. The entire street (west) wall is of rubble construction to the sills, while the north wall, which is all above grade, is brick, as are the interior "bearing" walls. The first floor south and east walls, both of which are above grade, are clapboarded in the same manner as the upper stories. The clapboards have a 7½ inch exposure on the west front. Those sheathing the remaining walls have an exposure of 9 inches to the weather, a device to reduce costs in less visible areas. Actually, this type of foundation construction is merely a variant of the 1835-1875 practice of building the buried parts of the foundation of rubble while the above-grade components were of brick. The structure of rubble wall construction may still be seen in the surviving retaining wall at the north end of the house. Unlike similar local enlargements of the same period, i.e. the William M. Valentine house and the Myers Valentine house next door, no

effort was made to achieve a symmetrical relationship between the original house and its addition. In support of this conjecture the original north cornerboard survives on the west front to delineate the clapboards of the original house from those of the Civil War addition. The original water table has not survived but was replaced by the present owners in an appropriate style, i.e. rectangular in cross section with the upper surface chamfered to slope down to the weather, in 1976. The street floor windows of the addition, while also 6/6, are much larger than those of the early part of the house, as their dimensions are constricted by the lower roof of the newer (1860) end. Incidentally, these smaller windows originally were fitted with sash which somewhere along the line were replaced with the present casements. These were of the 3/3 type and represented a somewhat advanced style of conventional "eyebrow" window. All this asymmetry appears to be the result of a conscious effort to achieve the characteristically picturesque effect of the period of the enlargement. This effect was enhanced significantly by the fabrication of a large facade gable on the garden (east) wall of the 1860 enlargement, which was enriched at its apex by an interesting, diamond-shaped grill, which served as an attic ventilator. A similar grill was eccentrically placed, at the same time, near the gable peak of the north attic wall of the earliest part of the house. At this time a gallery was built across the garden side of the house, although a two-storey porch may have existed at the earlier end. These were reached from inside through a range of French windows which extended across the rear of the new addition, and which replaced the earlier sash windows of the 1830's end.

The construction of the 1860 addition probably also preceeded the fabrication of the present small entry porch with its arched gable-ended roof. A similar small entry porch of the same date but with open porch columns survives at the south end of the ground floor and another similar entry porch was used on the Henry Eastman law office immediately to the north, during the years it served as the Roslyn Savings Bank. The square piers of the present main house porch were designed by John Stevens in 1976 from a photo taken in 1890. This photo shows lattice work along the north and south fronts of the porch. At the time the porch was constructed the originally horizontally panelled, 5-panel front door was modified to provide space for a window in place of its three upper panels. This window was then protected on its street side by an elaborate cast iron grill of the period which was painted to imitate verdigris. It may be assumed that Henry W. Eastman was responsible for the entire Civil War era alteration. The earliest part of the house originally had paneled shutters, some of which have survived in mutilated form in the cellar. The louvered shutters now in use, date from the Civil War period or later.

In the original description in Tour Guides of 1967-68, the earliest part of the house was labeled "Federal" and dated circa 1815, principally because of the early 19th century type kitchen fireplace with its surviving bake oven on the first floor. During the 1976-77 restoration by the present owners it has been possible to study the principal floor joists which are circular sawn and measure 8 inches by 3½ inches and are set on 25½ inch centers. Framing timbers of other Roslyn Federal houses of the late 18th-early 19th century, i.e., Anderis Onderdonk (TG 1970-71), William M. Valentine (TG 1963) and Valentine Robbins (TG 1976-77) are more or less of the same dimensions but are in all cases adze-dressed on two surfaces and pit-sawn on the remaining two. The presence of circular saw marks on all four surfaces of the earliest Eastman house framing confirms the slightly later date, about 1830, used in the present description. This opinion is supported by the use of horizontally panelled doors with back-banded mouldings in the earliest part of the house. Similarly moulded, horizontally panelled

doors appear in Roslyn only in the Hendrickson-Ely House (TG 1962 & 64) and the James and William Smith house (TG 1973-74), both of which were built in 1836. In addition, the mantels and interior mouldings of the earliest part of the house have now become sufficiently familiar to the writer (RGG) to be able to place them in the "Roslyn Late Federal Style" of the 1830-40 period.

Conversely, the second part of the house, the two bay wide addition to the north, has been moved back in date from approximately 1870 to circa 1860. Several reasons have been employed for doing this, all of them somewhat conjectural. First of all, the lack of an attempt to achieve a harmonious relationship as was so successfully done in the case of the William M. Valentine house (TG 1963) and the Myers Valentine house (TG 1963-64) next door suggests that this enlargement was the earliest of the three. In addition, the principal floor joists of the Civil War period addition are circular sawn and are almost identical to those of the earliest part of the house, i.e. 8 inches by 3 inches in cross-section, set upon 24 inch centers. Also, the ground floor window opening dimensions of the earliest and Civil War parts are almost the same, 27 inches by 44 inches as compared to 28 inches by 44 inches. One gets the impression that the addition to the house was built not very long after the original late Federal house was constructed. This concept would have even more validity if the sawn brackets now trimming the extended eaves had been added at a later date (circa 1870) as they probably were. The south bay windows with their chamfered, lamb's tongued inner facing angles probably were added at this time.

[The third part of the house, at its north end, was built more or less about 1890 and after Henry W. Eastman's death but while the house still remained in the possession of the Eastman family. A photo taken in 1890 shows the north wing, with its bay windows in place, as a single storey structure. Obviously, the upper storey with its east-west ridge was added somewhat later.] This photo also shows the third floor dormer windows of the middle section in position as well as the two-storey bay window with the 2/2 sash at the south end of the late Federal house. This 1890 wing originally had no basement but was supported almost entirely by exterior brick piers and locust posts. The present concrete block foundation was installed by the Holtzschues about 1972. After the north wing was completed in its two-storey form, the Civil War gallery was continued across the garden front of the new wing and then continued across its north wall.

During the nursing home period, the porch on the garden side of the 1830 house was enclosed, and extended, to provide an additional room on each of the three floors. In addition, a large dormer structure was built over the east slope of the 1830's roof. Finally a fire escape was added to the northernmost wall of the house, and the entire structure was covered with pink asbestos shingles. A mauve-colored variant covered three sides of the ground floor.

During the Holtzschue ownership the fire escape was removed as was the earlier, rotting gallery which it supported. In addition, the three-storey porch on the east wall of the 1830's house was demolished down to its foundation level and converted into a sundeck. This concrete block foundation is the only one of the numerous "nursing home" exterior changes not corrected by the Holtzschues. The sundeck conversion exposed once again the east facade of the two upper stories. In doing this revision the french windows opening to the gallery were removed. The most significant change, however, was the removal of the asbestos shingles to expose the original clapboards. Subsequently the exterior was repainted, and the house had once again, even at this early stage in its restoration, regained something of its dignity and elegance of 75 years ago.

In the interior of the house, each of the three chronologic sections will be described, beginning in the basement and proceeding upward. Almost all of the original flooring has survived in all three periods of the house.

The Federal House (first period circa 1836): The early kitchen occupies much of the basement of the first period house and survives in significant part. No effort has been made at restoring the early kitchen except for the removal of some interior walls which were installed during the nursing home period. The most interesting feature of the room is the very large kitchen fireplace, with a bake-oven, and symmetrically flanked by recessed board-and-batten doors. The battens of the latter have beautifully moulded edges in the local Federal manner, of the type employed throughout the early house. Some of the pine boards in the doors are a full fourteen inches in width. The fireplace opening is very large, 46 inches by 55 inches, and is one of the largest in Roslyn. The mantel is very plain and is complete except for the missing shelf. The wooden door to the oven-opening is on the right side of the fireplace and is undecorated, except for beading on the vertical edges of the door. The remains of the brick oven may best be seen from behind the fireplace. The heavy wooden platform on which the oven rests is relatively modern, but basically the same type of structure on which it stood originally. Since few early ovens have survived in Roslyn, it is hoped this one will be restored as part of the total restoration effort. Possibly only one oven, in the John Rogers House (TG 1976-77) is earlier than this one. During the restoration by the present owners in 1976-77, the kitchen overhead joists could be examined and measured. These are circular sawn 8 inches by 3½ inches in cross section and are set on 25½ inch centers. The original 6/6 windows survive. The combined sash dimensions are 27 inches by 44 inches. During the 1976-77 restoration the hearth girt was found to be unsupported and was reinforced with a metal bracket.

The Stairway leading to the street level floor is fully enclosed and retains its original pine sheathing, which is vertical on the kitchen side and horizontal on the two other sides.

The Entrance hall, at street level, retains its original flooring and front door, although the three upper panels of the door have been replaced with a window and cast-iron grill of the second (circa 1860) period, in order to admit more light than that provided by the original five-light over-door window which still survives. The two remaining panels are moulded on both surfaces with back-banded late Federal mouldings. The exterior panels are of the "raised" type and use mildly concave surfaces for the bevels. Actually, both door and over-door window had deteriorated badly and were extensively reconstructed during the Binder restoration of 1976-77. However, all replaced parts were carefully contoured to conform to the original work. The original front door box lock of American-wrought, early 19th century manufacture, was found in the cellar in 1976. The knobs, etc. survive but the interior working parts were missing. It is the intention of the present owners that this lock be restored to working condition and returned to its original location. The originally five-panelled door at the east end of the entry hall also has been modified. In this case the panels are Tuscan moulded—a device to save money in a secondary location. The door to the front parlor includes five horizontal, flat panels which are symmetrically moulded on both sides, employing the characteristic Federal back-banded mouldings. All the surviving second and third storey Federal doors are of this type. The one to the front parlor (present dining room) retains its original lock hardware. All the door and window surrounds of the street and upper stories of the late Federal house utilized characteristically late Federal mouldings. Included in this group are the door surrounds opening into the Civil War addition which must have been installed as copies when this wing was built. However, the doors themselves opening to the Civil War addition from the

hall all are of the 4-panel ogee-moulded type. The doorway to the rear parlor (present kitchen) in like manner is original, although the door itself has not survived. The stair-rail, also, dates from the second period and uses a turned mahogany newel and oval-moulded rail. The balusters are mahogany and are a variant of the slender, urn-turned type seen in local houses from about 1830 to about 1870. The stairway itself probably is original. Because the stairway is not panelled underneath, at street floor level, a horizontal run of stair-rail was required. To accommodate this, it was necessary to raise the flat cap of the heavy stock mahogany newel, and interpose a turned section of a non-matching wood. The horizontal run of railing had been removed during the nursing home period and replaced with a glass brick wall. The latter had been removed by the Holtzschues and an appropriate rail and collateral newel were supplied by the Landmark Society. The balusters are modern, but resemble those of the principal railing.

The Front Parlor (present dining room, Federal, first period - circa 1830) is located on the street floor, to the right of the entrance hall. It has been mentioned that the door and doorway are original (first period). The local Federal-style (originally painted black) mantel also is original and utilizes the characteristic mouldings found throughout the early part of the house. Projecting, panelled pilasters are finished with matching mouldings and support the mantel shelf. The chimney breast, beneath the shelf, consists of a central projecting panel, flanked by a pair of recessed panels. The mantel is identical to the mantel of the chamber directly overhead. The fireplace opening accommodated a coal grate of the second period (circa 1860) while the bay window and its arch date from about 1870. The cast iron coal grate was removed by the present owners in 1976 and the fire box opened to be used as a wood burning fireplace. The present slate facings were inserted at this time. The cupboard to the north of the fireplace is original to the room although the early door had been lost. This has been replaced by the present owners who also replaced the badly deteriorated cupboard door surrounds. Until the recent 1976-77 restoration, there also was a filled in wooden arch which originally opened to the back parlor. This, from its Tuscan mouldings, dates from about 1845. The present doorway was installed in 1976. The nursing home period 1/1 windows on the west wall were replaced with 6/6 sash similar to the original in 1976.

The Back Parlor (Federal: first period - circa 1836) retains little of its original detail except for its doorway. During the Holtzschue ownership the room was re-designed to serve as a kitchen, the third room in the house to be used for this purpose. The large bay window probably was constructed about 1870. The brick fireplace dates from the original house (first period, circa 1830's), but was plastered over and closed up for many years. The original mantel has been lost. The fireplace was discovered and re-opened during the Holtzschue ownership. The original nailing strip for the missing mantel remains, as does the iron fittings for the early crane. The unsupported brick arch which supports the roof of the fireplace opening is an interesting structural feature. Because of the presence of equipment for warming food, i.e. the fireplace crane; the absence of a dining room on the ground floor; and the proximity of this room to the short stairway leading to the early kitchen directly below, it may be assumed that the Back Parlor served as the dining room of the house, at least on formal occasions. The panelled ceiling in this room is one of the few survivals of the nursing home period.

The Upstairs Hall (Federal: first period - circa 1830) is contemporary with the entrance hall and continues its characteristics. It retains its original flooring, but contains the stair-rail of the second period (1860). The same type five-panel doors are on the south wall, moulded on both surfaces. Those of the north wall are ogee-moulded and date from the second period

(circa 1860). However, as noted above, the doorways on the north side of the hall which opened to the second period are trimmed with the late Federal mouldings of the first period. The rear window frame is one of the few which retains its original (first period) 6/6 sash.

The Back Chamber (Federal: first period - circa 1830) retains its early 6/6 sash, flooring, and a simple mantel with the characteristic Federal moulding of the house. However, the arched, double doorway to the front chamber dates from the third period (1890).

The Front Chamber (Federal: first period - circa 1830). This is the most ambitious of the Federal rooms in the house. The early 6/6 sash have been lost, but small, elegantly moulded panels survive under each moulded window frame. The mantel is identical in design to the one in the front parlor, immediately beneath. The chimney breast is composed of three panels, of which the central one projects. The pilasters utilize the characteristic Federal moulding of the house, separated by a projected "V" shaped rib. The fireplace opening was probably reduced in size during the second period (circa 1860) to accommodate an iron coal grate. The cupboard alongside the mantel is ogee-moulded and probably dates from the same period. The bay window, with its small arched entrance, dates from the third period (circa 1890) and probably was meant to be used as a small conservatory. It is the intention of the present owners to replace the front chamber 1/1 sash with appropriate 6/6 sash as they have already done in the front parlor.

There is an enclosed stairway extending from the front of the upstairs hall to the attic above. This dates from the original construction of the house. The presence of an easily accessible stairway of this type suggests the attic was intended for frequent use, perhaps as the sleeping quarters for a servant. The roof framing demonstrates the usual local absence of a ridge member. The fitting of the roof sheathing of the 1860 house into the clapboards of the north wall of the early house employs similar techniques to those used in the fitting of the late 18th century wing roof in the Van Nostrand-Starkins House (TG 1975-76-77) and in connecting the wing roof of the A. Onderdonk House (TG 1970-71).

The Victorian House (circa 1860 - second period)

The Victorian Kitchen (second period - circa 1860) is entered through the early (Federal) kitchen. The framing of the room was exposed in 1976 pending restoration which has already been described. The Civil War section of the house projects slightly further to the east than does the Federal section, leaving enough space in the south wall for a doorway to the garden. All the door and window facings are flat and untrimmed. The garden door has five horizontal panels, as in the Federal part of the house, but is trimmed with Tuscan mouldings as is the east door of the hallway above. This door may represent a retarded use of Greek Revival mouldings which appear elsewhere in the Civil War house, or this kitchen door may have been relocated from the Federal Period house. In any event, both Tuscan moulded doors were made at the same time. There is a chair-rail height dado capped with a bull-nosed moulding which extends almost completely around the room. The dado itself is made up of four inch beaded boards, vertically placed. There is a small segment at the south end of the room which obviously is later. This is about four feet in height and made up of 2½ inch beaded boards. This section probably was added later for a specific purpose.

The two doors flanking the brick stove embrasure are board-and-batten and made of beaded 4 inch strips identical to those of the dado. The north door has been altered, probably to let in a window. However, the remaining two lower panels are feather-edged and raised and the entire door as it was before alteration dates from the late 18th or very early 19th century

depending upon its origin. This probably was reused from another house as raised panelling rarely appears in Roslyn after the mid-18th century. The original second period (circa 1860) clapboards survive on the exterior of the north wall. The exterior facing of this doorway is trimmed with a simple drip-cap and back-banded Tuscan moulded facings. These probably represent the last gasp of the Greek Revival during the Civil War era.

The Drawing Room (second period: circa 1860) is located on the street floor and is the most ambitious room in the house. The original flooring survives, and was originally carpeted. Each corner of the room has been chamfered by means of an ogee-moulded closet door, in a manner reminiscent of the entrance hall and small parlor of the George W. Denton House (TG 1966-67). All the doorways, either opening to closets or other living spaces, are faced with stepped ogee moulded surrounds. Like the doorways, the window frames in the drawing room are stepped and finished with standard ogee mouldings and also have ogee-moulded panels beneath. "Standard" merely implies that the doors were bought "made-up" from the lumber yard, as might be expected during this period. The mouldings of the door surrounds, however, while of the ogee type, are richer and heavier as they were selected and applied by the carpenter. This practice has been followed throughout the second and third periods of the house. All the doors in the second period (circa 1860) part of the house originally had white porcelain hardware, some of which survives. During the nursing home period, the ceiling was "dropped" and covered with colored acoustic tiles. These were removed and most of the gesso cornice exposed by the Holtzschues. However, all the plaster was badly cracked and was knocked down and replaced, and the original cornice reconstructed by the present owners in 1977. The fireplace was rebuilt, during the nursing home period, and projects further into the room than originally. The mantel is a replacement from Vermont of about 1860. There are symmetrically-placed, ogee-moulded doors on each side of the fireplace which provide access to the conservatory in the rear.

The Conservatory (second period: circa 1860) originally was as long as the drawing room and almost as wide. It always has had access to both the entrance hall and the drawing room through ogee-moulded doors. Similarly moulded french doors provided access to the gallery and dated from the period of the room. There were, in addition, projecting closets in the corners also with ogee-moulded doorways. Those were balanced by the centrally-located, projecting chimney which is deep enough to suggest it may have once contained a fireplace, now covered over. A low, covered-over, flue opening for a small parlor stove remains. During the nursing home period the conservatory was divided into several small compartments. All of these have been removed except for a bath, a closet and an east-west wall which divides the room. The wooden arch at the north end of the room dates from the third period (circa 1890) and represents the original end of the conservatory. The cornice in the north end of the original conservatory was added by the Binders in 1977.

Third Storey (second period: circa 1860). The third storey of the Civil War house, over the drawing room and conservatory, was much altered, mostly during the nursing home period, and will not be described.

The Music Room (third period: circa 1890) is located beyond the arch at the north end of the conservatory, of which it was designed to be an extension. The wide, open arch was intended to create a feeling of continuity between the two rooms. Every reasonable effort was made to duplicate the design and detail of the conservatory—by the employment of matching mouldings and symmetrical wall planning. A closet, flanked by a recessed door, projected into

the room in the same manner as the conservatory and represented an effort to achieve an undulating interior wall plan in which all closets and chimneys project and all entrance doorways are recessed. In a similar manner, the french windows which open to the gallery were carefully matched to those in the conservatory. This room is the first to be described in which there has been no provision made for fireplace or parlor stove. Obviously it was built when central heating facilities had reached a stage of development which made these old-fashioned appurtenances no longer a necessity.

The Library (third period: circa 1890) occupies the remainder of the ground floor. Its doors, door surrounds, and ogee-moulded trim were carefully matched to those of the Victorian house. The west end of the library is completely filled by a large bay window which faces Main Street. The paired windows on the north wall are narrower than those of the second period and employ 4/4 sash. There is an eccentrically placed angular doorway in one corner which appears to open to a closet, but which actually enters a small hallway which provides access to a closet and the music room, and collateral access to the drawing room. As in the music room, the library includes no provision for heating other than of the central variety. The doorway to the music room was closed in by the Binders in 1977.

Upper Storey (third period): Actually this part of the house should be called "fourth period" as it was built after the one-storey period addition and probably dates from the World War I era. Its interior trim and 1/1 windows are characteristic of the early 20th century. Originally it probably provided space for one or more bedrooms. Like the upper storey of the Civil War period addition it has been substantially altered and will not be described.

EPILOGUE: During 1976 and 1977 Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Binder have begun a program to correct all the serious difficulties of the house both structural and stylistic. Basically they lowered the grade in front of the house so that the lower courses of clapboards and completely rotted water table would no longer be under ground. They then repaired the rubble foundation and restored the rotted sills and deteriorated framing. This permitted the house to be jacked up more or less to level. The rotted exterior lower clapboards were replaced and the missing water table restored. The small east entry was reconstructed in part from an 1890 photograph. So far as the interior is concerned most of their effort has been concentrated on the street level floor (piano nobile) and the upper level of the third period house although it is their intention to continue their efforts until the entire project has been completed. On the street floor level all the old plaster has been knocked down and the entire storey replastered except for the Federal back parlor which is now used as a kitchen. All the plaster cornices in the second and third period house have been carefully restored. All the trim and some of the doors have been carefully stripped of paint, sanded, and missing or damaged mouldings carefully matched and replaced. The 1/1 windows in the Federal front parlor have been replaced with the original 6/6 type. All exposed steam and water pipes of the nursing home period have been removed and concealed.

All this effort condenses down to a few sentences. The implementation of a project of this sort has taken many months and much enthusiasm. The Binders have indeed rendered a significant architectural service to Roslyn in the stabilization of this very important house.

NOTES:

“HILLSIDE”
The Valentine-Pollitz Farm
West Side of Main Street between #36 and #60

This account does not describe a house but itemizes the common history of the Leggett and Howard houses, descriptions of which follow. It also provides the opportunity to insert the Caleb Valentine House into the historical record.

The land on which the two Glen Avenue houses stand, high above the rooftops of the houses on Main Street, has a long and rich history that relates closely to the Grist Mill, the paper mill, and the houses on the west side of Main Street from No. 110 north to the George Allan house at 36 Main Street.

According to Francis Skillman, Caleb Valentine built a house on the west side of Main Street around 1800-1810. Caleb Valentine, born in 1767, was the brother of the William Valentine for whom the William M. Valentine House (Roslyn Village Hall) was built around 1800. According to recurring local tradition, mentioned by Benjamin Tredwell Onderdonk, Francis Skillman, and the *Roslyn News* in the 1880's, Caleb Valentine's house stood below the two houses shown on the tour. It burned down in a spectacular blaze early in February 1887. The likelihood is that Caleb Valentine's house (which is known to have been three stories high and “forty feet square” according to an advertisement in the *Roslyn Plaindealer* for July 11, 1851) was a building of comparable quality to the William Valentine house, and it may have been one of the group of local early Federal houses (including the William M. Valentine house, the Anderis Onderdonk House, the Valentine-Robbins house, and possibly the Robbins-Skillman house (Blue Spruce Inn) tentatively attributed to a single unidentified builder.

It is not quite clear how Caleb Valentine assembled his property, though he did purchase tracts of land in this vicinity from Hendrick Onderdonk, John M. Smith and John H. Williams, in 1801, 1812 and 1815. Francis Skillman says Valentine spent around \$5000.00 in grading his site—a princely sum which would be worth more than ten times as much today. Valentine's purchase from John M. Smith included a grist mill—perhaps the Robeson-Williams mill, whose title has a gap between 1801 and 1828. However, the mill ledgers from 1803-1832 survive when the mill was operated and presumably owned by Hoogland, Coles and Underhill. There was another grist mill in the Village, somewhere in today's park, which was mentioned by Benjamin Tredwell Onderdonk in his 1851 letter to Eliza Leggett. This second mill may have been the one operated by Caleb Valentine.

Another local tradition recorded by Francis Skillman is that Caleb Valentine built a “tenant house” for his millwright. Skillman notes that the tenant house was “now” owned by George Allen, in which case it would probably be the Allen house at 36 Main Street, recently damaged by fire and now being restored by Dr. and Mrs. Roger G. Gerry. Skillman, whose descriptions of local traditions still remembered by Roslynians in the 19th century usually turn out to be true, wrote that John Willis later lived in Caleb Valentine's house, which, if true, strengthens the case for its having been just south of No. 36 Main Street. The exact location of the Caleb Valentine house has not been determined. The Beers-Comstock Atlas of 1873 shows a hillside house belonging to O.W. Pollitz between and behind Nos. 36 and 60 Main Street. The Walling Map of 1859 indicates it in a slightly different place. There exists, today, a stone stairway on the west side of Main Street that leads to a plateau supported by a stone retaining wall about 150 feet long. This is apparently the site of the house shown as O.W. Pollitz on the 1873 Atlas; and it may well be the site of the Caleb Valentine house.

Benjamin Allen was the next known owner of the Caleb Valentine property on Main Street. Tantalizingly, neither Allen's deed of purchase for this site, nor for the Robeson-Williams grist mill, which he owned from an unknown date after 1801 through 1828, has been discovered. It is just possible that the deeds are one and the same, and that Caleb Valentine did in fact own the Robeson-Williams grist mill for a time.

At any rate, on November 15, 1828, Allen sold half-interest in the grist mill, together with the Caleb Valentine house and lands, to John Willis (Queens Co., Liber X or Deeds, pgs. 425 and 428), who was shortly to become the developer of Main Street's late-Federal period west side.

In 1835 Willis, who lived in the Caleb Valentine house, began to sell off Main Street building lots south of his dwelling house to James Smith, Epenetus Oakley, John Mott, Moses Rogers and probably others. In 1839 he sold the Caleb Valentine house to John Sampson (Queens Co., Liber ZZ of Deeds, pg. 356, 5/1/1839).

Augustus William Leggett*—William Cullen Bryant's associate on the *Evening Post*, co-founder of the *Roslyn Plaindealer*, and Eliza Leggett's husband—purchased the Valentine house from Sampson in 1841 (Queens Co., Liber 98 of Deeds, pg. 378) and it presumably was his residence until he sold it to Sherman Stevens of Pontiac, Michigan, in 1852 (Queens Co., Liber 98 of Deeds, pg. 378, 5/1/1852). Leggett's name for the house was "Hillside". The Leggetts had moved to Michigan after the sale of the *Plaindealer* in 1852. An advertisement in the *Plaindealer* July 11, 1851, mentions the existence of "two good tenant houses" on the "Hillside" property. Presumably one of them is the house at 25 Glen Avenue.

Four years later Stevens sold his land to Mary Margaret Pollitz, wife of Otto William Pollitz of Brooklyn (Queens Co., Liber 156 of Deeds, pg. 72, 5/1/1856). A few months later Mrs. Pollitz added an adjacent tract purchased from Henry Western Eastman (Queens Co., Liber 156 of Deeds, pg. 70, 11/3/1856) and the "farm" thus assembled was 70 acres of land that ran behind Main Street. The tract had a frontage of about 120 feet on Main Street in front of the Caleb Valentine House, but the lane now named Glen Avenue afforded the house an approach that could be used by horses and wheeled traffic.

John Codman Pollitz, a member of the family, was active in fund raising for the original Trinity Episcopal Church (for which a cornerstone had been laid in 1835 but which remained unbuilt until 1862). Pollitz, who enlisted in the Union Army just before the Civil War, presented his accumulated Army pay to Trinity's congregation as a contribution for the purchase of a bell for the new church. Ironically, Pollitz died at New Bern, North Carolina before the end of the war and according to tradition his funeral was the first occasion on which the bell was rung. (TG 1969-1970).

The house at 25 Glen Avenue, whose architectural characteristics are described below, was probably built during the time that Augustus W. Leggett owned the property and lived in the Caleb Valentine house. The Pollitz family also lived long in Caleb Valentine's house—were, in fact, probably the last owner-residents it had. Though they sold their farm in 1882, it had so long been known as "the Pollitz place" that even today a few people still use that name for the area.

***FOOTNOTE:** Augustus William Leggett probably was the individual who named Roslyn in 1844. It has long been known that a committee which included William Cullen Bryant, Parke Godwin, Augustus William Leggett and others met to select a new name for the Village of Hempstead Harbor. According to a letter to the *Roslyn News* by M.A. Leggett, Augustus William Leggett's son, dated March 1, 1920, this meeting was held at his father's house and he, as a small boy, was present. He specifically states that it was "Augustus William Leggett who suggested the name". I know of no other account in the many descriptions of this renaming procedure in which the suggestion of the name "Roslyn" is attributed to a single individual. (RGG)

Mary M. and Otto W. Pollitz sold the entire 70 acre farm to Colonel Aaron A. DeGrauw of Jamaica in 1882. (Queens Co., Liber 597 of Deeds, pg. 234). Two newspaper notices of DeGrauw's purchase add that there were at the time "large buildings" standing on it, and that DeGrauw had immediately proceeded to have a New York landscape gardener lay out the entire farm to include a site for a public park, and lots for "several handsome cottages" which were to be built "in the near future", (*Roslyn News*, 7/15/1882). The Thomas P. Howard house may have been one of them. If so, it was the only one to be built.

As early as 1886 social notices appear in the *Roslyn News* announcing the arrival or departure of tenants who rented apartments in the Caleb Valentine house which continued to be called "the Pollitz place." Among the tenants were a Mr. C.C. Little, and a Mrs. J.B. Robedee.

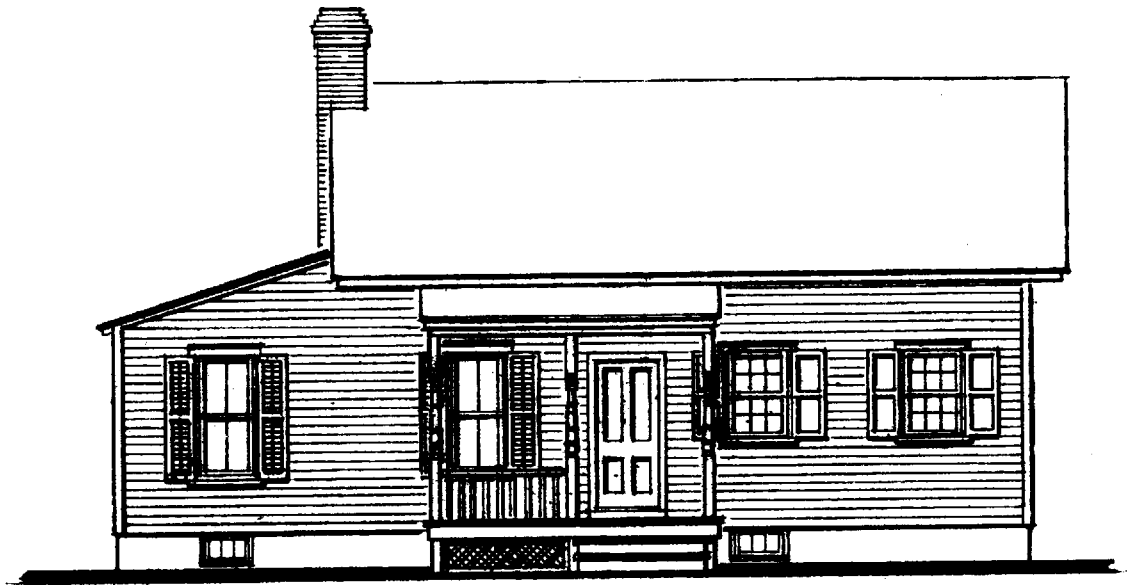
Early in February 1887, the *Roslyn News* recorded the destruction by fire of the old house (2/5/1887). According to the paper, the blaze began in the third floor apartment occupied by Mrs. Robedee. Firemen from the Rescue Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, then located nearby, saw at once that the Pollitz house was beyond saving, and concentrated their efforts on adjacent Main Street buildings, all of which survived.

In the spring of 1889 the Roslyn Heights Land and Improvement Company published a real estate map, drawn by surveyor William Hawxhurst, showing a proposed layout which included not only the neighborhood bisected by Warner Avenue, Garden and Willow Streets today; but Glen Avenue intersected by a network of little curving lanes with building lots laid out upon them that got no further than the mapping—with one exception. (A copy of this map is in the Local History Collection of the Bryant Library).

In August 1889, the Roslyn Heights Company sold an acre-and-a-half parcel to Thomas P. Howard of Roslyn, (Queens Co., Liber 791 of Deeds, pg. 114, 8/30/1889). The cottage at 25 Glen Avenue (Pollitz I House) was standing when Howard bought this land; and it is most likely that Howard built the taller, newer house at No. 30 Glen Avenue shortly after he bought the parcel.

During the 1890's Howard's acre and a half was purchased by Lewis H. West, and by 1906 West advertised it, with two dwellings and "excellent building sites", for sale, *Roslyn News* 3/5/1906). He did not sell it at that time though and the dwellings were apparently rented separately. An advertisement clipped from a newspaper of 1908 or 1909 mentions the tenancy there of Dr. William Miles, and of Mr. and Mrs. Henry H. Wikel. Mrs. Wikel, under the name of Anna Hamlin Weikel, was the author of a series of novels for girls called the "Betty Baird books", published by the Boston firm of Little, Brown & Co.

In 1913 Lewis West died intestate, and the property passed to his widow Eliza K. West, (Nassau Co., Liber 354 of Deeds, pg. 1, 10/2/1913). She sold it in 1920 to William M. and Etta A. McGee (Nassau Co., Liber 593 of Deeds, pg. 250, 4/30/1920), who sold it two years later to John and Helga Anderson (Nassau Co., Liber 732 of Deeds, pg. 246, 8/1/1922).



A. W. Leggett Tenant House
(1840-1850) as it appeared circa 1880

AUGUSTUS WILLIAM LEGGETT TENANT HOUSE
25 Glen Avenue
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Ogle

This house was built before 1851 as a small cottage, and called a tenant house by Augustus William Leggett, who advertised his estate, "Hillside", for sale in July of 1851. At that time Hillside's main house was the Caleb Valentine house, which burned down in 1887.

The Leggett cottage and the Howard house were in common ownership until 1942, when John and Helga Anderson sold this building to Albert and Mary Pagnotta (Nassau Co., Liber 2519 of Deeds, pag. 168, 7/1/1942). From the Pagnottas it passed in 1956 to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ogle, its present owners (Nassau Co., Liber 6084 of Deeds, pg. 427, 9/6/1956).

The house is superbly sited at the sound end of Glen Avenue on a hilltop overlooking the Village and the entire Hempstead Harbor. Actually one has the feeling that time has been forgotten here and that few changes have taken place during the past century.

Actually, the architectural history of the Leggett Tenant House is extremely difficult to evaluate. The entire interior is covered with 20th century sheathing and the tiny attic is not accessible. In addition, the exterior has been extensively, perhaps entirely, resheathed. However, with all the many changes it is a delightful house and well worth the climb up the hillside to visit.

At first glance the house is a one and a half story gable-ended building with a ridge that extends from north to south. It is four bays wide and one bay deep and is sheathed with novelty siding. There is a 2/2 roundheaded window in the north gable field and a pair of interesting looking gable-ended dormer windows with round-headed 6/6 sash in the east slope of the steeply pitched (90-100°) roof which has overhanging eaves with the rafter ends exposed under the east and west slopes. There is an exterior brick chimney with a decorative cap, obviously of late 19th century work, which crosses the ridge of the south gable field. This appears to be original construction as a small eccentric gable window is located to the east of the chimney. There is a large shed-roofed lean-to connected to the south end of the house. A smaller shed-roofed addition is attached to this which appears to date from the mid-20th century, as does the small west addition near the back door.

To the aforementioned architectural characteristics simple exterior trim has been applied around the outer faces of the door and window openings. There also are undecorated cornerboards approximately 3" in width. There is no water table although there may have been at one time. Part of the foundation viewed from the exterior is brick but most is concrete block dating from the mid-20th century. There is a simple 3-light cellar window in the east front and a similar 3-light "eyebrow" window, partially concealed by a modern exterior brick chimney beneath the roof overhang of the west wall. There is a small shed-roofed (east) porch, the roof of which is supported by three turned columns of the late 19th century.

When one looks closely, however, it is apparent that, while the sash of the two small ground floor windows north of the east (front) doorway are of the 6/6 type, the much larger window south of the doorway has 2/2 sash. There is a similar 2/2 window in the east wall of the south lean-to. More difficult to find are the remains of the south cornerboard in the west wall now partially buried by the small mid-20th century west wing. These clues suggest that the original house was very small; actually 15 feet 4 inches from north to south and 15 feet 7 inches

from east to west. The 6/6 windows obviously date from the original house and the 2/2 from a later alteration. Since the novelty siding is continuous across the east front this must have been applied since the house was enlarged. The missing water table suggests resheathing not only of the east front but also of the remaining exterior walls. Since the round-headed east dormer windows are sited in both the old and new parts of the east roof slope they could not date from the original house. Their "Colonial Revival" flavor also rules out their dating from the building of the south addition so they must represent an early 20th century alteration.

Examination of the cellar substantiates these findings. An early cellar bulkhead survives in the modern (most southern) of the two lean-tos. The west wall of the bulkhead is of rubble construction and is a continuation of the west cellar wall. However, the foundation stones of this fully excavated part of the cellar are very small and cemented together. This construction technique actually resembles a large "aggregate" type of construction rather than the true rubble of the mid-19th century. The sawn floor joists apparent in this part of the cellar extend from east to west, are 1¾ inches by 7¾ inches in cross section and are set on 18½ inch centers. The flooring above is modern. This fully excavated portion of the cellar occupies the entire area beneath the south end of the gable-ended house including the front doorway site and the entire large south lean-to, all constructed as a single unit. The area north of the cellar foundation is not excavated and only a shallow crawl space survives. The east, north and west walls of this foundation are of characteristically mid-19th century construction, i.e. relatively large stones which have been carefully fitted utilizing a minimum of mortar. The rubble originally extended up to the grade only and the area between the grade and the sills was brick filled. Some of this brickwork apparently deteriorated and was replaced by concrete blocks set atop the original rubble. The entire south wall of this foundation is now missing and not even the south sill remains. Since the 1¾ inch by 7¾ inch sawn floor joists set on 18½ inch centers extend from east to west it was possible to remove the south sill and the exterior wall above. The flooring above dates from the mid-20th century. Careful examination of the crawl space and all three surviving early foundation walls fails to disclose the foundation of the chimney or of a hearth so these structures must have been located in the now missing south wall.

These findings confirm those identified above. The original house which probably dated from the second quarter of the 19th century was very small, i.e. 15 feet 4 inches by 15 feet 7 inches. It falls squarely within the A. W. Leggett period of ownership (1841-1852). It had main storey windows of the 6/6 type and apparently was two bays wide by one bay deep. The chimney probably was set inside the south exterior wall. The location of the original doorway is unknown as is the location of the original stairway which probably was little more than a ladder wrapped around the chimney. Presumably there were 3-light "eyebrow" windows in the east and west fronts, one of which has survived. The round-headed window opening in the north gable field probably dates from the original house although the sash has been changed. Originally there probably was a duplicate in the south gable field. In many ways this small "copyhold" resembles the even smaller Captain Jacob Kirby Cottage (TG 1974-75) which was only 14¼ feet square. With its 6/6 principal sash and evidence of "eyebrow" windows the early part of the Leggett house probably is the earlier of the two and most likely dates from the 1840's.

This small house was almost certainly one of the two Augustus William Leggett tenant houses mentioned in the *Roslyn Plaindealer* advertisement for July 11, 1851 (Vol. 2, #1) in which Mr. Leggett offers the principal house, "Hillside", and land for sale. The surviving small tenant house probably was built during Mr. Leggett's ownership.

Probably about 25 or 30 years after the original "copyhold" house was built it was enlarged by two bays (the present front doorway and window south of it) and the roof extended southward continuing the original ridge. In addition a large shed-roofed wing was constructed in the south end of the new extension. This work probably was completed during the final quarter of the 19th century. It may represent the work of Thomas P. Howard, who bought it during the right period (1889) and built the house next door which utilizes similar interior trim. All the original windows in the late 19th century addition are of the 2/2 type including those in the shed-roofed wing. A new brick chimney with a cap of the period was constructed outside the new south wall but, obviously, inside the wing. To get daylight into the upper floor of the new addition a small window was inserted in the south gable field east of the chimney. This late 19th century addition with its shed-roofed wing more than doubled the floor area of the original "copyhold" house.

There is little to write about the interior of the house because of the many 20th century changes. However, all the door and window surrounds in the late 19th century addition and wing are faced with the same characteristic late 19th century mouldings having rondel corner blocks. The trim in the main living room, the principal interior space of the early "copyhold" house, dates from the early 20th century. Oddly enough, the bedroom over it is trimmed with moulding similar to that used in the late 19th century part of the house. This has rondel type corner blocks but otherwise is not identical to the trim of the late 19th century employed elsewhere. Probably it is later in date than the addition and wing trim. Incidentally, the knee walls in the upper storey are shallower than in the Captain Jacob Kirby Cottage and the rooms created are less commodious even though the floor area is greater. The two attractive round-headed dormer windows are a 20th century effort to admit more light into these rooms and create a feeling of greater space. Originally, of course, there were eyebrow windows in the simple loft which admitted light but which because of the shallow knee walls, may have rested on the flooring. Most of the baseboards throughout the house have been replaced with heating units. However, those which survived are untrimmed pine boards 6 inches in height.



Thomas P. Howard House
circa 1889

THOMAS P. HOWARD HOUSE
30 Glen Avenue
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Emmanuel

This simplified Queen Anne house is believed to have been built by Thomas P. Howard shortly after he purchased an acre-and-a-half parcel from the Roslyn Heights Land and Improvement Company in August, 1889, (Queens Co., Liber 791 of Deeds, pg. 114, 8/30/1889). The parcel included the Leggett cottage (25 Glen Avenue) which, at that time, was a much smaller house than it is today. Perhaps Howard lived there while his new house was under construction.

The Howard house and the Leggett cottage continued under common ownership until 1942. John and Helga Anderson, who had purchased both houses in 1922, sold the Leggett cottage 20 years later, keeping the Howard house for themselves until 1956. It was then bought by Alfred B. and Jeanne Edwards (Nassau Co., Liber 6107 of Deeds, pg. 86, 10/9/1956). In 1972 it was inherited by Alberta E. Parker (Nassau Co., Liber 8457 of Deeds, pg. 9) and in 1976 the house was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Emmanuel (Nassau Co., Liber 8918 of Deeds, pg. 50, 4/21/1976) after having been owned for a short period (8/21/75 to 4/21/76) as part of a larger holding, by Floyd Lyon and Roger Gerry.

The Thomas P. Howard house is a 2½ storey clapboarded house on a high brick foundation, the ridge of which extends from north to south. It is located near the top of a steep hillside overlooking Roslyn and is so sited that the rear (west) section of the first floor is below grade while the front (east) rooms are entirely above the grade. It probably was built by Thomas P. Howard in 1889 after he purchased the property. There is a facade gable which faces the east and a gable-ended ell which extends to the west. The house is three bays wide and essentially one bay in depth. It has a two-storey porch on the principle (east) front. The Howard house apparently was built in 1889 and has survived in a very largely unaltered state. A previous owner used the original kitchen as a furnace room when central heating was first installed. A small one-storey second storey (on grade) addition was constructed in the angle formed by the west front of the house and the west wing by Alfred Edwards about 1960. Apart from these and a few very minor changes in the floor plan over the years the house has survived intact and still retains most of its original siding, trim and flooring although considerable framing deterioration had occurred which has been corrected by the present owners.

EXTERIOR: The entire first floor, only part of which is above grade, is constructed of brick laid in American bond. The first storey windows are of the 2/2 type and conform to those of the rest of the house except for the double windows in the facade gable which are 1/1. There are brick arches set over the first floor window openings. All of the doors, interior and exterior, are the original and are of the four-panel, ogee-moulded type. The second storey front door has been modified and some of the panels replaced with glass. The first floor front door was glazed in its upper part originally. When the house was acquired by the present owners the first floor door opened outward and was hung on blacksmith-made strap hinges. These have been placed on a contemporary storm door and the panelled door rehung to open inward. Both the front (east) doorways open to a two-storey shed-roofed porch which is supported by square piers below and turned columns above. The porch had deteriorated badly and has been completely rebuilt, slightly deeper than the original, using the original porch columns and railing. Originally, as today, the upper porch could be entered only from the house. However, for many years there was an exterior stairway at the north end of the porch which provided access to the

upper level from the ground. This was removed by the present owners. Originally, both levels of the porch ceiling were enclosed with narrow strip wainscot. It is the intention of the present owners to replace this.

The central brick chimney has a characteristic cap of the period. This had deteriorated badly and has been restored by the present owners. The west exterior chimney was constructed in 1976. The second storey is clapboarded on all four walls up to the gable fields. The west wall is partially sheathed with novelty siding which may have originally sheathed the entire wall. The clapboards are trimmed with undecorated corner boards and a plain water table. Above the second storey all the gable fields are sheathed with chamfered butt wood shingles to simulate hung tiles in the so-called Queen Anne Revival Style. These are capped by an overhanging roof, the soffits of which are sheathed with strip wainscotting. This roof had deteriorated badly and much of the overhang was missing and many of the rafters badly rotted when the present owners purchased the house in April 1976. All this damage has been painstakingly and accurately restored. The four-panel ogee moulded door which provides access to the second storey level in the north wall of the ell is the only outside door which retains all its wooden panels. The house apparently never had shutters.

INTERIOR: Originally the entire house had virtually the same floor plan on each of the three floors, i.e., a narrow central hallway almost entirely filled with a boxed-in stairway and a landing at each level; a large chamber north and south of the stairway, each of which was entered by a doorway from a landing, and an additional small chamber on each floor of the west ell. Most of this original floor plan has survived although there has been an addition at the second storey level and some of the third floor spaces have been slightly modified.

The interior trim is quite elaborate but characteristic of the period. All the unstepped baseboards have survived. These are capped with a modified ogee moulding. All the door and window surrounds are trimmed with the same moulded facings which are capped in their upper corners by turned rondels. All the door facings are based upon simple plinths, the height of the unmoulded part of the baseboards. The windows in the principal rooms all are panelled beneath utilizing quarter round mouldings around the panels. In secondary areas there is a strip of moulded window facing set horizontally beneath the window sills. Most of the original decorated cast iron window latches have survived and replacements are being collected to replace those which have been lost. Except for the first storey all the original five inch yellow pine flooring has survived. The original black porcelain door knobs have survived in large part. Most of the decorated embossed copper backplates have survived in their original locations.

DINING ROOM: This room probably was the original kitchen and had been converted to a furnace room by a former owner. The present owners excavated a new space for the furnace by increasing the area beneath the west ell. Since the former kitchen was badly deteriorated as the result of rot and oil spills the only salvagable architectural characteristics are the deep window reveals. The chimney breast was widened in 1976 to accommodate the oak "Colonial Revival" mantel and over-mantel (ca. 1890) donated by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation. Oak panelling of the same source and date as the mantel also was made available by Roslyn Preservation and will be installed during the current year. A brick-lined fire box has been created for use with this Colonial Revival mantel even though no "open" fireplaces existed in the original house. The mantel, over-mantel and panelling all were found stored in the Wilson Williams house when the latter was purchased by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation.

Presumably they descended in the Eastman family and may have come from the house of the late George Eastman in Garden City. The pine flooring in the dining room was installed in 1976.

KITCHEN: The kitchen is located across the hall from the dining room. This room had been divided into two small rooms by a previous owner. These later additions were removed in 1976 and, again, the chimney breast widened to create an open fireplace. In this case the very simple pine Tuscan moulded mantel (circa 1850) was obtained from the Landmark Society's stockpile. It originally came from the Golden Farm in Southold, now demolished.

LIBRARY: This room, on the north side of the stairway on the second storey, was the original living room. The pine mantel has fluted colonettes which support consoles upon which the moulded edge, square cornered mantel shelf rests. There are meandering designs in the Eastlake style carved in the mantelbreast. This mantel is original to the house. However, it never had a hearth and actually did not surround a fireplace. Originally a small cast iron coal stove stood in front of it. The original fireplace cupboard survives next to the mantel. The entrance to the upper porch is located between the library and the living room.

LIVING ROOM: This room is located on the south side of the stairway on the second floor. It retains its original chimney contour which projects into the room but which has not been fitted with a mantel. A free standing coal stove originally stood in front of the chimney. Most likely this room was the original master bedroom. At the west end of the original room the ceiling has been dropped to permit the insertion of a steel I-beam which extends north and south at the site of the original exterior wall of the house. The area to the west which has a lowered ceiling is the interior of a small wing added during the mid-20th century by Alfred Edwards. The present owners installed the I-beam and removed the wall to provide for a continuous large room. Work in this room has not been finished at the time of writing (April 1977).

SECOND STOREY WING CHAMBER: Originally this room occupied the entire floor area of the ell. Its original purpose is not known but it was, for a time, used as a kitchen when the house was divided into two apartments. It is the only second storey room which is not panelled beneath the windows. It retains all its original trim and was divided into an entrance hall and powder room in 1976.

THIRD STOREY: All the original baseboards, flooring and four-panel ogee moulded doors have survived. The windows on this level are not panelled beneath the sash but are trimmed by a matching facing strip set horizontally beneath the window sills.

NORTH CHAMBER: The north chamber, now the master bedroom, was the most damaged room in the house when the present owners acquired it in April 1976. Much of the major roof framing had rotted and collapsed as the result of a leaky roof valley. This damage was repaired in 1976. Originally this room was rectangular in floor plan. During 1976, the small hallway at the base of the enclosed attic stairway was opened at its north end and closed at its south to bring the paired windows in the facade gable field into the master bedroom.

ATTIC STAIRWAY: The attic stairway is boxed in in the same manner as the two lower stairways. However, there is no decorative stringer running along the walls. In this case there is a triangular wooden block filling the wall angle of each tread-riser-joining. The north and south chimneys form a corbelled arch over the attic stairway to become a single central chimney. This architectural treat is unique in Roslyn. Small north, south and west attics, each with a tiny window in its gable field, may be seen beyond the chimney arch.

THE SOUTHWEST CHAMBER: The southwest chamber is smaller in size today than it was originally, when it was even larger than the present master bedroom. As mentioned above, the small hallway at the base of the attic stairway originally was included in this room. In addition, the bath beyond it probably was part of this chamber originally. Incidentally, the window facings in the bath are identical to those in the rest of the house. However, this is a 20th century modification and the facings probably were taken from elsewhere.

WEST WING CHAMBER: There is a small bedroom in the west wing at the third storey level. This served as a kitchen during the time the house was divided into two apartments. It has been restored to its original function by the present owners and retains all its original architectural characteristics except for the closet which was added in 1976.

EPILOGUE: Sharon and Paul Emmanuel have owned the Thomas P. Howard house for barely a year (April 1976). When they bought the house it was a rotted derelict with a collapsed roof which had not been lived in for a dozen years or more. Since their purchase the decayed framing has been repaired, the roof and two storey porch reconstructed and the entire interior of the house restored with a remarkably high level of accuracy. One or two minor partitions have been relocated and the interior of the small wing, added by Alfred Edwards about 1960, has been included in the living room. The decayed plaster throughout the house has been replaced with sheetrock. The small cellar under the west wing has been dug out and additional cellar area excavated under Mr. Edward's small wing to provide an area into which the heating equipment could be relocated from the original kitchen. A new exterior chimney has been constructed to provide a flue from this new location. Everything else has been rebuilt as it was originally. Each moulding and corner block is either the original or a precisely fabricated duplicate. Most of the work apart from the chimneys and porch and roof rebuilding, has been done by the Emmanuels with a substantial muscular assist from Sharon's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Lyon. The restoration will not be complete by House Tour Day but it will be well on its way. It's a long hard climb up the hillside to the Howard house but it is well worth the effort. The decayed carriage shed below the house gives some idea of how the Howard house looked when the Emmanuels bought it. In 1978 the carriage shed will look as well as the house does today.

NOTES:



Robeson - Williams Grist Mill
circa 1715
(restoration rendering with conjectural mill wheel)

JOHN ROBESON - JEREMIAH WILLIAMS GRIST MILL
Old Northern Blvd., Roslyn
Property of Nassau County Museum

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The grist mill at the head of Hempstead Harbor has been the focus of the village that is Roslyn today from the earliest days of settlement in the north part of Hempstead. The mill that stands on Old Northern Boulevard today is probably not the first one built on the site, but it is a 17th century type "Dutch" mill, and it is the only surviving commercial building of Dutch origin known to be standing in the United States.

Its beginnings are recorded in the minutes of a Hempstead town meeting held on April 2, 1698, when John Robeson "had lierti (liberty) granted to set up a grist mill and a fulling mill on ye streame at the hed of yt harbour..." providing that he have the mill in operation within two years. (Benjamin Hicks ed., North & South Hempstead Town Records, Jamaica, 1897, Vol II, Pgs. 131-132.) Robeson (whose name was sometimes spelled Robison, and later spelled Robinson) was first mentioned in the Town Records in February 1691-92. (Vol. II, Pgs. 110-111).

The mill should have opened early in 1700, but it apparently did not, as at Town Meeting on April 1, 1701, a committee declared that the 1698 agreement was made void by Robeson's default. By 1706, however, mention was made of a road leading from Robison's Mill Dam (Town Records, Vol. III, Pg. 77) and in 1709 John Robeson and his son Joseph Robison (sic) sold to Charles Mott "one sartain grist Mill with ye dam and stream...: a small frame of a house and one Iron croo (crow? ed.) with some other Instruments, belonging to ye said...Mill." (Town Records, Vol. III, Pg. 56).

When Charles Mott sold the mill for £120 to Jeremiah Williams on July 2, 1715, the deed's language stated explicitly that "John Robinson Builded a Grist Mill" on the stream of water "that Leadeth Down to ye head of Hempstead Harbour". (Town Records, Vol. III, Pgs. 353-355). That mill, together with its iron crow and all other ye instruments," was deeded to Jeremiah Williams.

The language of the next deed, 26 years later, strongly suggests that Jeremiah Williams, merchant, sold his grist mill to Thomas Pearsall of Cedar Swamp. (Town Records, Vol. III, Pg. 370) This deed is of great interest, as it describes Williams' purchase of several pieces of land lying to the westward of the mill and its swamp which included two dwelling houses and a barn. In regard to the grist mill itself, the deed states: "And whereas the said Jeremiah Williams hath greatly Augmented ye Improvements on ye sd Stream of Water and Dam by Erecting A Large and Specias Mill Upon (it) and Greatly Advanced ye Said Mill Dam...as well as Built Severall Dwelling Houses with a Barn and other Edifices Upon ye land...". The sale price of the grist mill and its lands in 1741 was £1050, and the purchase included the mill and mill house, stones, running gear, the two bolting mills standing within the mill together with the utensils used with them.

It is not possible to know when the "Large and Specias Mill" was built, but it was evidently done between 1715 and 1741, and the likelihood is that its owner built it early rather than late in his tenancy.

On April 12, 1742, Thomas Pearsall Jr. (now of Hempstead Harbour) sold the mill and its adjacent lands and buildings to his son-in-law Richard Mott for £1050, the price for which he had purchased it 10 months earlier. However, the Pearsall-Mott conveyance mentions "three

Bolting Mills” instead of two. (Town Records, Vol. III, Pg. 375). Richard Mott, who had been called a “yeoman” in earlier Town Records, now changed his stated occupation to “bolter”, and entered the trade that did more than any other to build up the exports of New York port. Just prior to his purchase of the mill, Richard Mott had bought from Adam Mott a 122-acre farm west of the road “that is on ye west Side of ye Swamp that Thomas Pearsall’s Mill stands on”.

Prior to the revolution, New England had its fisheries and lumber and rum distilleries to provide an exportable commodity. Virginia had tobacco and South Carolina had indigo and rice. But New York’s fur trade, for which it was settled, could not support its consumption of imports. The answer was found in flour. Hundreds of small operations like the Robeson-Williams grist mill, located near waterways with access to New York, were established to grind flour from farmers’ grain. The flour went to New York where it was exchanged for goods; then, inspected and graded, it was shipped out to the West Indies, whose sugar products and cash were the basis of many a New York fortune.

Richard Mott died in 1743, and his executors sold the grist mill to John Pine on March 30, 1744. (Deed mentioned in Town Records, Vol. IV, Pg. 305). Pine further purchased from Thomas Pearsall the swamp at the head of Hempstead Harbor, the majority of which was under water in Pine’s mill pond.

On March 30, 1758, John Pine sold the grist mill to Hendrick Onderdonk, “merchant”, who may have been the first of its owners to run a store as well. Onderdonk owned the grist mill through the Revolution, and it was to his house (which is said to have been built by John Pine) that President George Washington came for breakfast on April 24, 1790.

Daniel Hoogland and Abraham Coles bought the grist mill on February 18, 1801 (Queens County, Liber H of Deeds, Pg. 13) together with extensive tracts of land, one on the west side of Main Street from the Clock Tower site south to Wilson Williams’ land, one on the east side of upper Main Street that included the mill dam, and one north of the Clock Tower site and along Shore Road to the place once known as Appleby’s Landing. In all, the lands purchased with the grist mill by Coles and Hoogland amounted to about 90 acres. This interesting deed mentions the Onderdonks’ “new paper mill”, the Great Setling Spring now in the north yard of the James & William Smith house (TG 1973-74), at 106 Main Street, and the sand bank in back of the Smith house from which the paper mill dam was built.

Several Coles & Hoogland account books, the first of which begins in March 1803, give an idea of the business of the mill and its related country store. The record appears to have been kept in New York, and “received of Grist Mill” at intervals were bushels of bran and barrels of flour of various types. Presumably the mill’s flour, vended, provided some of the capital for the “sundries” sent to the “concern at Hempstead Harbour”, which appears to have been Coles & Hoogland’s store. The purchases of local residents who shopped there were recorded in the book. James W. Smith, for example, bought an iron shovel during April 1807 as well as an assortment of threads and fabrics (he was a tailor), molasses, tea, flour, butter and spirits. Richard Valentine (who lost his property and “lay drunk in the mill creek” after the Revolution) bought pork, spirits, molasses, spirits, tea, candles and spirits!

The next owner of the grist mill was Benjamin Allen, although his deed of purchase has not yet been found.

On November 15, 1828, Allen sold a half interest in the mill to John Willis, Jr. (Queens

County, Liber X of Deeds, Pg. 425), and at the same time sold Willis 31 acres on the west side of Main Street (Liber X, Pg. 428) as far south as land then owned by James Smith (near the driveway of No. 110 Main Street). Francis Skillman states, and earlier Tour Guide research confirms, that John Willis sold this land off in building plots, with the greatest concentration of sales during the spring of 1835. Francis Skillman writes that Jeremiah Reynolds actually ran the grist mill from 1828 until the arrival of Leonard Thorne nine years later. Reynolds, he says, also kept a tavern in “the yellow front house” (which may have been the Washington Manor, or a house on today’s Tower Street) and then he went to the Red Mill in Port Washington.

Leonard Thorne bought a half interest in the mill from John Willis on June 25, 1838 for \$5,000 (Queens County, Liber 54 of Deeds, Pg. 20) and 11 years later Thorne sold his half interest in the grist mill to Joseph Hicks of Westbury on August 2, 1849. (Queens County, Liber 80 of Deeds, Pg. 314).

It is not yet known how or when the Hicks family acquired the remaining half-interest in the mill, which was presumably still held by the heirs of Coles & Hoogland, or Benjamin Allen. But Isaac Hicks, Joseph’s youngest son, was its last private owner. In 1916 he transferred it to a board of trustees who were to administer it “for the benefit of the town of Roslyn”. At the same time the building, which was falling into decay, was repaired and stabilized by Harold Godwin. The Robeson-Williams Grist Mill was thus one of this area’s earliest projects in historic preservation.

PRELIMINARY ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS: The existing building, on the north side of Old Northern Boulevard in the village of Roslyn would appear to be that built by Jeremiah Williams some time during or after 1715. The existing building was constructed in one stage, as can be determined by the framing, and does not have incorporated in it any major timbers from an earlier structure. It would therefore appear that an earlier mill, built by or for John Robinson in the first years of the 18th century, and sold in 1709 to Charles Mott, was in turn sold in 1715 to Jeremiah Williams, who replaced it with the present structure.

The mill building measures 25 feet in width, and 50 feet 6 inches in length, to the outside of the framing. It contains two full storeys and an attic. The side walls originally measured about 19 feet from the underside of the sills to the top of the plate. This measurement is somewhat in doubt due to the fact that none of the original sills survive, and none of the posts survive to their full length. Most are missing several feet from their lower ends, and only one has survived that is nearly its full length. The mill has a gable roof with a pitch of 10 inches; 12 inches.

The main axis of the building is north-south, with the south end abutting the mill dam. Originally, the height of the second floor coincided with the top of the mill dam, which was occupied by a roadway—now called Old Northern Boulevard. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the level of the road has been raised so that now the level of the sidewalk is 3 feet, 6 inches above the second floor of the mill.

CONSTRUCTION: The frame of the mill is entirely of oak. It has Dutch structural antecedents. Very little effort was expended by the builders in hewing the timbers to a relatively smooth surface, although the joints throughout are skillfully made. The structure consists of 15 bents, each consisting of a pair of wall posts and two anchor beams, except that in the way of machinery at the southeast corner, the second floor beams were framed into a trimmer. The bents are numbered from north to south, on their north faces. The posts measure 8½ by 10 inches, and the anchor beams are 10 by 13 inches, with minor variations. The beams of alter-

nate bents (bents II, III, VI, VIII, etc.) have heavy braces, 9 inches square and almost 4 feet in length, measured in the soffit from beam to post. All of the surviving braces with one exception are straight (several of the braces are missing). The exception, which is located in post II, second floor, at the east wall, has a curved soffit, like similar braces found in a number of Dutch-American houses. Geographically, the nearest example is in the Jan Martense Schenck house, preserved in the Brooklyn Museum. The end walls had braces measuring 3 by 5 inches, and 5 feet, 3 inches in length. None of these are now present. Those for which evidence survives, in the form of the mortices, were located on the second floor and ran from the corner posts both up to the third floor beams and down to those of the second floor. No clear evidence has so far been found that braces occurred on the first floor level, between the corner posts and the second floor beams. Braces were used in the side walls, between the corner posts and the plates and also at bent VIII. Only the corner braces of the west wall survive. The wall posts extend 8 inches above the third floor beams. The plates are 7 inches by 9 inches in section and originally ran in one piece for the full length of the building, as the east one would appear yet to do. The west plate has been repaired, with new material inserted between posts V and VII. No original end wall studs survive. There are 15 pairs of rafters, all but the gable rafters being located immediately to the north of the corresponding wall posts. At the rafter feet, there was a projection 6 inches in length and 2 inches in depth, beyond the plate. While these projections have been removed on the west side of the building, some still survive on the east side. Collar beams were fitted to all rafters, all except the north gable collar beam being let into the south side of the rafters with a half-dovetail end. Most of the original collar beams are missing. Original ones survive on rafters III, V, VIII, XII and XIII.

The most unusual feature of the building, and one that bears a direct relationship with Dutch Old World examples is the manner in which the wall posts and gable rafters have slanted notches cut in them for the reception of the weatherboards, so that the weatherboards had a continuous bearing against the frame. At the corner posts, and at door and window locations the weatherboard notches are interrupted; about 4 inches of the post being left in full section. These portions of the posts presumably were covered with cornerboards, or door and window casings, as applicable. The weatherboards were 14 inches in width, with exceptions that were somewhat wider or narrower. Because of the absence of siding notches adjacent to openings, it has been possible to determine the original arrangement of openings on the side walls.

On the east wall, there were doors on the first and second floors between posts II and III. Windows occurred between posts V and VI, and XII and XIII on the second floor; the evidence for first floor windows has been destroyed. Post II retains batten notches and pintle holes for divided doors on both floors. Corresponding notches exist on Post III, but above the second floor, the outside face of this post has deteriorated considerably; the portion of the post below the second floor has been replaced. The west wall had windows opposite those of the east wall. Positive evidence, in the form of gains for head and sill members is visible on the second floor; on the first floor, an original head timber survives, morticed and pinned into posts V and VI. Immediately below the window sill level on all four walls and on both first and second floors, a deeper notch cut into the weatherboard notches indicates the former presence of horizontal members that were about 1½ by 4 inches. The function of these elements cannot be determined.

No original flooring has survived on the first and second floors. At the time of writing, the third floor boards have not been completely uncovered, but it would appear that a large part of them are of original material. This flooring shows marks on its underside to reveal that it was produced by power-driven saw. The boards are in widths of 14-17 inches and have slip-tongued

joints. They are face-nailed with rose headed, hand forged nails.

The mill stones have always been located at the south end of the building, on the second floor at the east side. The existing drive is not original although it is very old. Second floor beam X is deeper than the others, and originally extended across the full width of the building. At the time that the frame for the present drive was installed, a section at the east end was cut out in the way of the replacement drive.

The present machinery may date to the late 18th century or, more possibly, to the early 19th. The frame housing the drive measures 10 feet 6 inches in width by 17 feet 3 inches in length (north-south). The timbers are in general 12 inches square. Each end has cross braces, halved into one another at the crossing, and there are also braces between the corner posts and the top plate of the west side. On the east side there were braces between the posts that carry the ends of the tentering beams and the top plate. The top plate on the west side has a ledger spiked to it, to support the ends of floor beams X to XIV. As noted previously, beam X originally extended across the full width of the building. The other beams formerly were probably framed into a trimmer that ran from beam X to beam XV. Such a trimmer may have been a part of the machinery frame.

Nothing remains of the wheel and wheel shaft, and the pit wheel is gone. The main vertical shaft is probably the original for this rebuilt machinery. Its end bearing is mounted on a 12 inch square beam running from north to south, which in turn is supported at each end on transverse timbers set close to the end frames and morticed into the sills of the machinery frame. At the lower end of the main vertical shaft there is a cast iron bevel gear, the "wallower".

The "great spur wheel" is of all wooden construction. The teeth are secured with wedges except at the positions of the spokes, where wooden pins are used. The top of the shaft extends to the second floor level, where a coupling protrudes above floor level. This coupling formerly drove a secondary vertical shaft that powered elevators, bolting machinery, etc. The form of the present coupling—a circular plate with bolt holes—suggests that it is of mid-19th century date.

The two bed stones which are located on a north-south axis, slightly off-center to the west of the axis of the main vertical shaft, are supported on 3 inch thick planks spanning the top members of the machinery frame, which in turn lie on 9 inch square transverse timbers morticed into the plates of the frame. The runner stones are driven by cast iron pinions keyed to iron shafts. The pinions cannot be disengaged from the spur wheel by being raised out of mesh with the teeth of the spur wheel, as in the case of the Saddle Rock grist mill. Originally, the pinions were undoubtedly wooden, as also would have been the wallower. As the 19th century progressed and cast iron became readily available, it is logical that the smaller gears, such as the wallower and the pinions would be replaced in that material. Millwrights did, however, avoid the use of iron-to-iron gearing. The runner stone has to rotate with a controlled distance between it and the bed stone. The stones would be damaged if they rubbed together, and the degree of fineness or coarseness of grinding is controlled by the interval between the faces of the stones. This control or "tentering" is achieved by the spindle of each stone working in a bearing mounted on a transverse tentering beam. The east end of each beam is made with a tenon that is pinned as a pivot, in a post which is part of the machinery frame. At the west side of the frame there are two pairs of guides for the tentering beams. The west ends of the tentering beams lie upon longitudinal timbers 3 by 11 inches in size which are pivoted on the pair of posts towards the middle of the west side of the machinery frame. The other ends work

in slots cut in the cornerposts with 9 inches of the north beam extending beyond the corner post. The outer ends of these timbers lie on the ends of a third set of levers, lying transversely; that on the north side being on the outside of the frame, the south one being within the frame. These work in guides bolted to the frame, and are pivoted at their east ends. The free ends extend 6 inches past the west face of the frame, and are slotted for an iron strap, 4 feet 2 inches in length, and $7/16$ inches in thickness that extends upward, with a 90 degree twist, to go through a slot in the end of a hand lever by means of which the tentering adjustment is made. The upper end of the strap is pierced with a series of holes, through one of which an iron pin is placed, to bear on the top of the lever. The lever is pivoted on a shouldered and braced iron bar driven into the corner post at about 6 inches below the underside of the plate. The levers are 5 feet, 5 inches long, and taper from $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches square at the strap end, to $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The corners are chamfered, except for $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches of the length at the large end. A hole through the small end of the lever is used to retain it in position.

The mill stones are French burr stones made of a number of pieces skillfully fitted together, the joints cemented, and bound with iron bands. The backs of the stones are levelled off with plaster of Paris. The stones are 42 inches in diameter, and the "eye" of the runner stones is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches. In the eye of each runner stone, a square iron bar is fitted. This engages a slot in the upper end of the drive spindle.

The millstone enclosures (called "vats") are circular, 4 feet $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height from the floor to the top of the covers. The frames that support the hoppers for the grain being fed to the stones (called "horses") are nicely made, with turned legs of typical early 18th century character. The vats, horses and hoppers may belong to the earliest period of the building. Also possibly original to it is the crane used to raise the runner stones off the bed stones for dressing. The crane had to be shifted to be used on each run of stones. Calipers engage holes in the edges of the stones, the curvature of the calipers allowing the stones to be rotated through 180 degrees. The lift is by means of an iron screw, working through the end of the crane.

Holes occur in the attic floor for grain elevators, and parts of the bolting equipment survive. The arrangement of this secondary equipment remains to be investigated.

When the exterior of the building was done over with shingles cannot now be determined, as none of the 19th century cladding has survived. The oldest photographs of the mill, dating to about 1880, show the shingling to be in a very weathered condition. A lean-to on the west side of the mill would appear to date from the same period as the shingles. Its roof line was continuous with the main unit, but had a slightly flatter pitch. A fieldstone foundation, apparently laid up dry, extended across the full width of the north end of the building, including the lean-to.

A feature added in the 19th century which still survives, is the extension of the south gable above the attic floor level, 3 feet beyond the original wall line. The fact that this extension is framed with sawn timber indicated a post-1850 date for it. At the top of the north gable, the roof was extended several feet to provide shelter for hoisting equipment. A Brainard photograph of the north end of the building, taken c. 1880, shows a windlass-like affair mounted in the gable.

There were loading doors on all three floors, those on the second floor and attic being horizontally divided. The only windows in the end were on the second floor, one on either side

of the door, and one in the lean-to. The Brainard photograph also shows a further addition to the lean-to, doubling its width, and making it a full two storeys in height. This part was of board-and-batten construction, and there was no foundation under it. It appeared to be of recent construction when the picture was taken. A lean-to on the west wall is shown in late 19th century photographs. This would appear to have been about one quarter the length of the side wall, and located with its south wall at about the center of the main wall, Its roof had a slightly flatter pitch than the main roof, but was not continuous with the main unit, being dropped about 1 foot below it.

Several undated photographs show the south elevation of the mill. The earliest of these would appear to be contemporary with the c. 1880 Brainard view of the north side. The projecting south gable is covered with board-and-batten siding like that on the addition to the west lean-to. There is a hoisting beam at the peak of the roof with a small shuttered opening beneath it. To the west side of this opening there is a pole fastened to the wall with most of its length projecting above the ridge. It has a turned ball finial, and, near the top, an insulator for a telegraph wire is attached. There is a door on the third floor level, and on its west side a shuttered window-sized opening. The second storey elevation is weatherboarded, with a double door set in the middle.

An addition to the mill on the west side is shown in one of the photographs. This addition served as a feed store. It has a flat roof that extended over the south wall by about 3 feet. Its front wall was weatherboarded and had three doorways, one of them with a double door. The farthest west portion of this structure extended beyond the board-and-batten addition that was mentioned previously, shown in photographs of the north side of the mill. Whether the addition on the north side was built earlier or later than that on the south side cannot be determined; both are certainly after 1860 or thereabouts.

Through gradual deterioration over a long period of time, caused by foundation failure and the decay of the sills and lower wall posts, the walls settled unevenly. As a result of this settling, the upper floors and the roof are considerably out of level. In 1916 the building was extensively repaired but apparently little effort was made to correct the alignment of the frame. A concrete floor slab was installed on the first floor level. On the north and west sides, concrete footings were installed above the level of the floor to support the wall posts, which had been shortened by varying amounts through the removal of the decayed portions of them. At the south end, a concrete retaining wall was constructed up to the second floor level. The date 1916 was inscribed on the inside surface of this. On the east side, all but one of the wall posts below the second floor level was decayed. The survivor, on bent II, has supplied the evidence for an original door location. As only a small portion of its lower end is missing, this post was the most nearly complete of any. New oak was supplied for the missing post sections, but no effort was made to replace the braces. The only surviving brace on the east wall is on bent II.

The second floor boards were discarded, and except in the southeast corner where the mill stones are located, a concrete floor was installed. A fireplace was constructed on the west wall, near the north end. A lean-to was constructed along most of the east wall to accommodate kitchen facilities when the building began to be used as a restaurant, under the name of the Roslyn Mill Tea House. "The Story of the Roslyn Grist Mill" states that at the time of the 1916 restoration, an overshot wheel existed. Nothing now survives of it, or of the main shaft and the pit wheel. For a period in the present century the mill wheel drove an electric generator which remains in place.

The exterior of the building was stripped, new window units installed and the exterior was given a concrete cladding, moulded on the north, east and west walls, and the south wall below the overhang. This was done to give the appearance of weatherboards. The overhanging south gable was treated to look like board-and-batten siding. The main entrance, at the south end of the second floor, was given a fine late 18th century divided door. It is panelled on the exterior and has original, beaded lining. The original hardware was retained with this door.

The March 1976 meeting of the Roslyn Landmark Society was devoted to a discussion of the Nassau County plans for the Robinson-Williams Grist Mill. At that time it seemed evident that funds would be available for the restoration of the mill in May 1976 and that the actual restoration procedure would begin shortly thereafter. It is obvious from John Steven's description of the mill that its restoration will be a long and difficult procedure, requiring much study and careful consideration. The members of the Landmark Society and the residents of Roslyn are deeply grateful to Ed Smits and to the Nassau County Museum for their willingness to undertake a project of this magnitude.

EPILOGUE: It was the intention of Director Edward J. Smits of the Nassau County Museum to begin the restoration of the Mill to its original appearance during 1976. However, as the result of Nassau County's freeze on capital expenditures in 1976 this plan had to be deferred. The County Museum did file application with the Committee on The Registers, New York State Division on Historic Preservation, to recommend to the Department of the Interior that the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill be included in the National Register of Historic Places. Late in 1976 the Committee on The Registers announced its refusal to recommend the Mill for registration. The principal reason for the Committee's decision was the County Museum's intention to restore the Mill to its original appearance by, among other procedures, removing the concrete cladding which had been applied in 1916. The Committee's reason for reaching this decision was that the Mill might be changed too much in appearance and might even look like a new building after restoration. The Committee informally suggested that the County Museum might wish to have the Mill considered for nomination to the National Register as an example of an early 20th century restoration project and that the concrete cladding be permitted to remain intact.

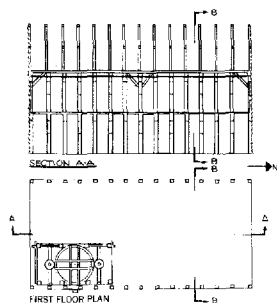
It was the concensus of Mr. Smits, John Stevens, the architectural historian in charge of the Mill's restoration, and of the Landmark Society that this suggestion not be considered. It was our feeling that most of the Mill's highly unusual Dutch framing had survived intact and that the original positions of the door and window openings and every piece of siding was known. Actually, the fact that no 19th century exterior fabric remained provided a unique opportunity to return this building to its earliest, and most interesting, exterior appearance. In addition, cracks in the cement cladding had caused water to accumulate inside it with resultant rotting of some portions of the original studs, a condition which obviously requires correction. In addition, the fact that the Mill is one of four surviving structures built in the Dutch tradition which are two or more storeys in height and is probably the largest of even this group made it desirable for visitors to be able to view it in its original form.

The possibility existed, however, that local people might have a mote in the eye and might be more impressed with the Mill's qualities than actually was justified. On this basis, we invited Charles Peterson, for many years the Director of the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Program, the founder of the Historic American Building Survey, Past-President of the Society of Architectural Historians and the "Dean of American Preservationists" to examine the Mill and give his opinion concerning its importance and the proposed restoration

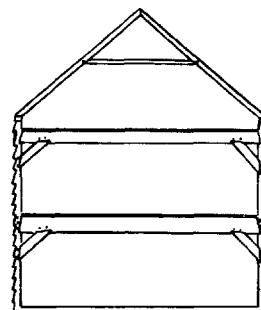
plan. Professor Peterson visited the Mill in January, 1977 and described it as "a rare and apparently unique artifact". He compared its framing with that of Dutch houses in Zanse Schanz and further commented, "It would not be expected that a layman would quickly grasp the significance of this ancient artifact in its present condition. When a reconstruction advance rendered perspective of this structure is produced, it will be possible to visualize the building as it once looked and can be made to look again." This perspective rendering has been prepared by John Collins of the Nassau County Museum based upon data and sketches supplied by John Stevens. It appears for the first time in print in this Tour Guide. Based upon Professor Peterson's recommendation, data has been submitted to the Historic American Building Survey for inclusion in their archives. John Poppeliers, Chief of the H.A.B.S. has described the Mill as "a very unusual survival of heavy timber framing showing the influence of Dutch settlement on Long Island", so this recording should be accomplished readily when the requested data has been submitted.

Subsequently Charles Howell, the Miller at Phillipse Manor and probably the only working millwright in the United States, wrote at length about the remarkable survival of the Mill's machinery and described the Mill as "a delight to historians, industrial archeologists and especially to students of the history of technology" and expressed his desire to "stress my views on the importance of the preservation of the Roslyn (sic) Grist Mill as an historic landmark".

During March 1977 the Mill was visited by Dr. Abbott Cummings, Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, the group which has been responsible for the preservation of more ancient American buildings than any other. Dr. Cummings concurred strongly in the opinions of the other experts that the Mill is a unique structure which is outstandingly worthy of inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and of restoration to its original appearance. Dr. Cummings has a long familiarity with the Mill dating back to the years when he was on the Staff of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, during which period he was a frequent visitor to Roslyn and to the Mill. As a matter of fact, Dr. Cummings felt then and still feels that the entire Village is eminently worthy of preservation. It should be noted that, in 1953-1954, when the Bryant Library conducted tours of early Roslyn houses, Dr. Cummings wrote the introduction to the guide book, "Old Roslyn". Along with the foregoing Mr. Stevens has prepared a preliminary restoration program for the Mill. It is the intention of the Landmark Society to re-submit the application for registration, via Mr. Smits and the Nassau County Museum, to the New York State Committee on The Registers. We are hopeful that upon review of the new data their recommendation for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Plces will ensue and that restoration, in accordance with John Steven's plan, will commence shortly thereafter.



Longitudinal Section of Building



Transverse Section
Alternate frame bents do not have braces.



JOHN ROGERS HOUSE
Conjectured Appearance Circa 1800

JOHN ROGERS HOUSE
95 East Broadway, Roslyn
Residence of Mrs. Sydney Fairbanks

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: It is Francis Skillman's narrative that identifies this 18th century house as the house of John Rogers, a blacksmith. John Rogers and Richard Valentine, who had signed a patriot petition of allegiance in 1776, were among the men of Long Island who emigrated to Connecticut in 1776 to escape punishment at the hands of their Tory neighbors. This flight indicates that their rebel sympathies were pronounced, and that their lives so near the loyalist lines at New York would not have been easy during the seven-year occupation.

No record exists of John Rogers or his house before the Revolution, but since a house and a blacksmith shop were mentioned shortly after the peace, and Rogers was away during the war, it is thought that this house was built before he left in 1776.

In the Town Records for 1786, mention was made of a blacksmith shop John Rogers had built on land being sold by John Carman to John Golden (N.H. Town Records, Vol. VI, pg. 340). And on May 31, 1793 John and Elizabeth Rogers sold a house and blacksmith shop to Andrew, Henry and William Onderdonk. (N.H. Town Records, Vol. VI, pg. 347). This deed, however, locates the house on the west side of the road, with the blacksmith shop on the east. As the house is presumably standing on its original foundations on the east side of East Broadway, the possibilities are that the course of East Broadway has been changed since 1793, or the language of the deed was transcribed or typeset incorrectly for the Town Records. The third possibility, that this house is not John Rogers' house, discredits Skillman's narrative, and gives us an 18th century house not mentioned by him or anyone else.

At this point there is a hiatus in the known deeds for the Rogers house until December 20, 1830 when Robert Seaman purchased a five-acre parcel south of John R. Schenck's land from Stephen Weeks. (Queens County Liber AA of Deeds, pg. 468). Though no house was mentioned, this five-acre parcel seems to have included the Rogers house. It was Seaman who occupied the house when the Walling Map was surveyed just before 1859, and Seaman whom Skillman identified with the John Rogers house in his narrative.

In 1865 the Seamans sold off a parcel of land north of the house of Benjamin Hicks. (Queens County Liber 250 of Deeds, pg. 94).

After having been put up for public auction, the Rogers house passed next to Benjamin D. Hicks of Westbury and Henry W. Eastman of Roslyn, on November 21, 1870. That deed, which is very specific, refers to "Wilkey's burying ground" (probably the old Roslyn Cemetery on the hillside above East Broadway), and it further refers to a Seaman family burying ground 32 feet wide on its north and south ends and 82' 4" on east and west sides. It was at the northeasterly corner of the Seaman land, and thus may have abutted directly on the Wilkey Burying Ground already established. The land conveyed was just under 4½ acres (Queens County Liber 334 of Deeds, pg. 418).

In 1906 and 1914 the house belonged to Mrs. H. Browne.

The original John Rogers House was much smaller than it is today and, in its early state, had a strong resemblance to the earliest section of the Wilson Williams House, (Tour Guide 1975-76) although considerably smaller than the latter. Both probably date from the third

quarter of the 18th century although it is impossible, in the light of present knowledge, to determine which house was built first. The Wilson Williams is larger and the more sophisticated of the two houses.

EXTERIOR: In its present form the John Rogers house is six bays wide across its principal (south) front. The easterly three of these are later insertions of indeterminate date. The steeply pitched, gable-ended roof ridge extends from east to west at right angles to the road. The ridge angle is approximately 90 degrees. The original roof almost certainly was shingled as it is today but the shingling had a greater exposure to the weather, and would have included a "combed" ridge. The house now has overhanging, bracketed eaves, and an extension forming a roof over the doorway, both of which were added at the same time during the second half of the 19th century. The original eaves were clipped. The present house is sheathed with heavy weatherboards having exposure of 9 to 10 inches. These probably date from the second quarter of the 19th century. There is an early, but undateable, chimney protruding through the roof somewhat to the east of the mid-point of the ridge. The chimney indicates the east end of the original 18th century house. Examination of the weather boards indicates that these end on a line with the east face of the chimney and that later each clapboard course was extended to the east to form an addition. This evidence, because of the weatherboards suggests that the east addition dates from after the mid-point of the 19th century.

The entire foundation is constructed of rubble to the sills as is the foundation of the kitchen dependency to the north. The rubble foundation at the east end of the house extends to the 2nd storey floor level. This dates from the construction of the east addition and is not a part of the 18th century house. The cellar areaway remains in its original site although the cellar bulkhead is 20th century work. The Victorian scrolled board over the bulkhead was relocated here sometime after the bulkhead was built.

SOUTH FRONT: Like the Wilson Williams House the original front "south" door was flanked by windows and this early arrangement more or less survived with some modification. The present doorway has been rebuilt and the present front door, while old, does not originate with the house and was installed by Mrs. Frances Storey during the late 1950's. The flanking 6/6 windows have Federal trim and probably date from the early 19th century. The present flanking windows are slightly eccentrically positioned with respect to the doorway, probably as the result of enlargement of the latter during one of its alterations. The notch in the weatherboard over the doorway indicates its original width. The long window near the east end of the original house was installed at the same time as the present front door in the position of an earlier vitrine window of more or less the same dimensions. Beyond the east end of the early house there is an original exterior doorway to the easterly addition which is no longer in use.

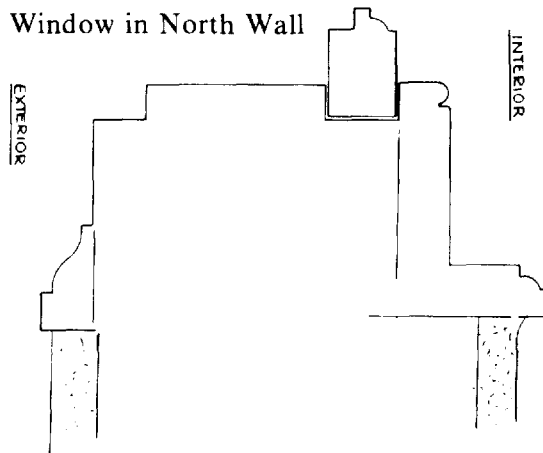
WEST FACADE: The large bay window is later than the original house and dates from the 2nd half of the 19th century at the time the eaves were extended and bracketed. It is rectangular in floor plan and resembles those in the Wm. M. Valentine House (Tour Guide 1963) and the Epenetus Oakley House (Tour Guide 1973-1974). The double-hung window in the west gable field dates from the same time. The marks of the earlier, taller and narrower window are still evident where the weatherboards have been patched.

NORTH FACADE: The two 6/6 windows have casings with backbands dating from the 18th century that may be presumed to be original to the house. A "driven" shutter pintle of the same date survives in relation to one of these. The easterly window in the north facade is located in

the late 19th century addition but is 20th century work. It may represent the site of an earlier exterior doorway.

JOHN ROGERS HOUSE

Cross Section of 18th Century Window in North Wall



KITCHEN DEPENDENCY: Like the main house the kitchen dependency has a rubble foundation to the sills and the 19th century clapboards have an exposure of 11" to the weather. It has a gable-ended roof the ridge of which extends north and south and is parallel to the road. There is a late 19th century brick chimney which probably was built for use with a wood-burning kitchen stove. The dependency originally was completely separate from the main house and the present covered passage dates from the late 19th or early 20th century. The date of the kitchen dependency is difficult to establish as no original, exposed, architectural detail survives and both the exterior and interior surfaces are fully sheathed so that no framing is accessible for examination. There is a 19th century 6/6 window in the west wall of the kitchen dependency. The steeply pitched roof suggests that the dependency may be contemporary with the original house although most likely it is somewhat later in date. Its location to the east of the house's original east wall suggests that it may be contemporary with the mid 19th century eastern addition.

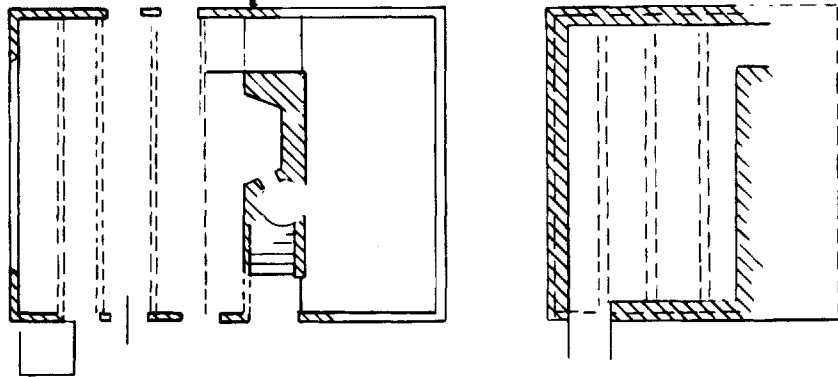
INTERIOR

CELLAR: The rubble-walled cellar survives with substantial level of its original fabric. It occupies the entire foundation area of the early house although it was intended to serve only as a root cellar. Almost the entire original east cellar wall served as the base for the chimney fireplace, bake-oven and hearth. The west rubble foundation walls continue to the south to form the west wall of the cellar areaway. The original north and south oriented floor joists survive. These are adze-dressed on one or more sides and bear the marks of pit-sawing on the other surfaces. The primary growth logs were dressed with an adze after which the squared-off logs could be placed on a saw mill carriage. The remainder of the job of cutting timbers was completed with a saw. This practice, using a circular saw in its final days, continued well into the 1830's in the case of very large timbers. The original board cellar ceiling which forms the first storey flooring also survives. These boards are yellow pine and are 12 or more inches in width.

18th CENTURY HALL AND CHAMBER: The present living room includes the original hall and north chamber and thus encompasses the entire first floor plan of the 18th century house. Only the hall had a fireplace which was used for cooking as well as for heat. A boxed-in

JOHN ROGERS HOUSE
Ground Floor and Framing Plan

KITCHEN BUILDING NOT PLOTTED



stairway extended over the fireplace to the attic above. It is the existence of this floor plan as well as the survival of the window-flanked doorway and strongly pitched roof which serves to relate the John Rogers House to the Wilson Williams' House.

The four ceiling joists extend, unbroken, from north to south. They are lightly chamfered along their lower corners but the chamfering stops a short distance before the north and south walls. There is a large "boxed-in" I-beam which extends east and west just north of the center of the room. This framing member was added by Mrs. Frances Storey during the early 1950's to support the four original floor joists. It replaced an earlier wooden girder located somewhat to the north of the I-beam. This earlier wooden beam was in turn supported by turned Victorian porch posts which possibly were installed during the late 19th century. The east end of this earlier girder survives as a "console" in the east wall. A matching "console" south of the I-beam was placed there for symmetry by Mrs. Storey when the present I-beam was installed and the wooden girder removed. The board ceiling of the hall and chamber area is original. The boards themselves extend from east to west. It is difficult to establish just where the wall which divided the hall from the chamber was located. It may be assumed it was located at the site of the early wooden girder, which has survived only as a console north of the fireplace. There are no mortises or gains indicating a location of studs, although there are nail marks and other scars at this point in each beam, which may indicate the location of this early dividing wall. It is possible there may always have been a girder at this point and the dividing wall framed beneath it.

The principal feature of the present room is the fireplace and vertically sheathed fireplace wall. Both fireplace and paneled walls have been substantially altered. The original fireplace probably was larger although its south jamb is original. The installation of a "Heatolater" unit during the 20th century has made careful evaluation of most of the fire box and chimney base impossible at the present time. Survival of a brick oven with a sealed opening to the south jamb (visible from the dining room) establishes this fireplace as the only known survivor in Roslyn of an oven with a jamb opening. All other survivors have the later type of separately built oven, alongside the firebox, which have their own individual openings in the face of the fireplace wall.

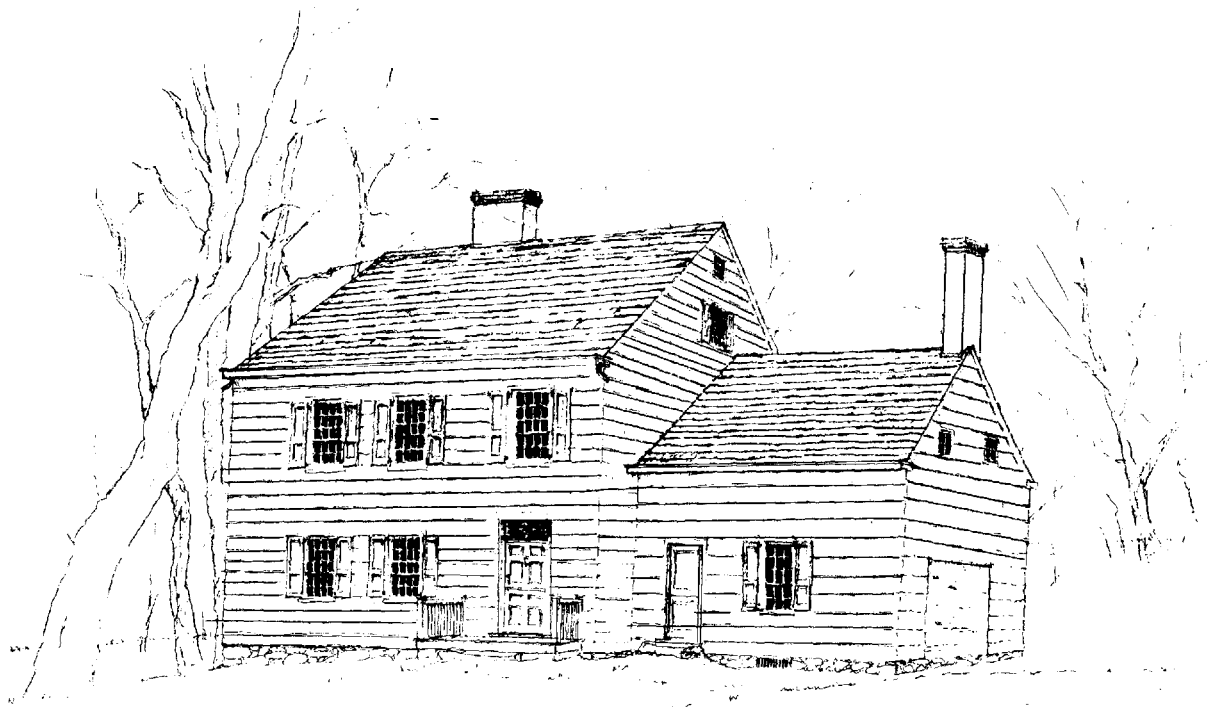
The mantel itself and the vertical, "V"-grooved sheathing above it date from the early 1950's. The vertical, butt-jointed sheathing to the north of this is earlier but not original to the wall. Originally there probably was an embrasure or a cupboard north of the fireplace. The vertical sheathing to the south of the fireplace has a beaded joint and forms the west wall of the enclosed stairway. This section is original to the house. There is a horizontal dado which also has beaded joints and is capped with a 1" torus molding around the three remaining walls of the combined hall and chamber. This thick cap suggests that the dado, or at least its cap moulding, dates from the 19th century and probably originally the dado was only in the early hall. The windows in the combined hall and chamber date from a variety of periods. It has already been mentioned that the south windows are trimmed with Federal mouldings of the very early 19th century. The bay window, in the west wall, dates from the 3rd quarter of the 19th century. The two north windows date from the 18th century and with their sash are original to the house. Their simple but prominent casings are set at right angles to the sashstops and include a plain cyma moulding planed into the inner corner of the back-bands.

The original east end of the house is located just east of the doorway to the enclosed stair. The original board-and-batten door to the latter survives on its original "H" hinges and an imported iron Norfolk latch of about 1830. The vertical board sheathing along the west wall of the stairway dates from the original house. The four-light horizontal window in the east stair wall was relocated, probably from another part of the house. It may be the original front door transom. It has very thick muntins and dates from near the mid-18th century.

DINING ROOM: The present dining room is located entirely within the later, east addition to the house. The doors and window surrounds with flat, untrimmed facings and dado of 6" wide, vertically placed, beaded boards all suggest a construction date in the 3rd quarter of the 19th century. The board-and-batten closet door with its ¼ inch beaded joints and fragments of "H" hinges; the similar south exterior door with an inserted later window, and the early 19th century 6/6 sash at the south end of the room all antedate the dining room and were reused, probably from the early part of the house.

The most interesting feature of the dining room is the fireplace which actually is not a fireplace at all but the exposed bee-hive oven of the 18th century hall fireplace. The bricked-up opening in the south jamb of the hall fireplace is clearly evident from the inside of the former oven. The opening into the bee-hive oven from the dining room originally was bricked-up. Mrs. Storey thought the oven could be used as a fireplace and broke away the dome to create the present opening into the dining room in the early 1950's. The oven was unsuccessful as a fireplace but the opening has never been closed.

ATTIC: The attic was sheathed for the most part and there is little opportunity for the examination of early framing. All visible flooring represents a second, later, layer. The unbeaded horizontal board sheathing which forms the east and west walls of the stairtop chamber probably dates from the 18th or early 19th century. The west chamber retains its early plastered ceiling over the original hand-rived wooden lathing. This chamber was the only plastered attic room in the original house. A heavy original rafter may be seen in the closet at the north end of the room. An "out-looker" for the 19th century overhanging eaves may be seen beside it.



JOHN COLLINS
3/76

VALENTINE-ROBBINS HOUSE
Conjectured Appearance Circa 1800

VALENTINE-ROBBINS HOUSE
1535 Northern Blvd., Roslyn
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Novak

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Valentine-Robbins house was built in two sections; the easterly portion of it is one of the earliest Valentine houses in this vicinity to which the family came late in the 17th century. The earliest recorded mention of a house on Richard Valentine's hundred acre tract on the east side of Hempstead Harbor, "near ye head thereof", was made in a will proved August 6, 1709 (Town Records, North and South Hempstead, Vol. III, pg. 317), when Richard Valentine left the entire tract to his oldest son, also named Richard. It is impossible to tell from that document whether the house transferred in 1709 is the oldest segment of the house standing there today. In 1728 the younger Richard Valentine added 6¼ acres to his landholdings with a purchase from William Willis. That deed refers to "Richard Valentine's House", to which a road ran from the grist mill. Since the Valentines had more than one house, it is not known whether this is the one referred to there.

In 1753 Richard Valentine II gave his youngest son, Richard Valentine III, half of his lands and meadows, including "the farm and plantation where I now dwell with my East Dwelling House, Leanto, Upper Room and the Equal Half of the Cellars and the Equal Half of my Barn, Stables and out Houses, Orchard, Timber, trees, fences..." It is very likely that that farm and plantation included the old wing of the Valentine-Robbins house.

In 1766 Richard Valentine III's will directed that the lands he held jointly with his father be divided. (New York Historical Society, Collections, Abstracts of Wills, Vol. VIII, Pg. 4). Certain parts of Richard III's holdings were to be sold to pay his debts. "Only I would not have my house, where my father now lives, sold," he stipulated, "and I would have my executors set apart so much of my movable estate as will be sufficient for my wife and children to keep house and carry on farming". He left his wife Phebe many of their household goods, including two beds, six sitting chairs, £2 worth of pewter, one "high Bilstede Chest valued at 1.8s, and a riding chaise and horse worth £25.2s.6d. His son, Richard IV, was to have his house after Phebe died, and a double share of his estate. Richard Valentine III's sister had married Benjamin Robbins, who was named as an executor. Richard Valentine II died two years after his son, in 1768. His will (N-YHS Collections, Vol. VIII, Pg. 183) makes it clear that there were by then a number of houses owned by this branch of the Valentine family. One, which he left to the use of his sister Ann Pearsall, was called his "west dwelling house", and probably is not standing today. With it he left her the right to firewood to support one fire, the privilege of gathering apples, two barrels of cider yearly, a cow and a black horse—until she married.

Richard Valentine IV continued in possession of the Valentine lands until 1776, when in the revolutionary difficulties of the late summer he fled with his neighbor John Rogers to Connecticut for safety. On October 6, 1778, fearful that his property would be confiscated by the Crown because of his avowed patriot stand, he sold "the whole Real Estate (his Grandfather Richard Valentine bequeathed (him))" to his uncle Jeremiah Robbins, who had lived in Oyster Bay. (Town Records, Vol. V, pg. 81). According to Francis Skillman, who later owned the south part of the farm, Jeremiah had agreed that Richard was to have his property back, "should the times become safe for him to hold it". Skillman wrote in his reminiscences of Hempstead Harbor that Richard Valentine, unable to get his house and lands back at the end of the war, took to drink, and "lay drunk in the mill creek and the tide rose over him." This apparently did not occasion his death, as Skillman further reported that Valentine afterward built the structure that later became the Mansion House, and lived there for the rest of his life.

It may have been Jeremiah Robbins who added the great early Federal wing on the west side of the Valentine house around 1790. In 1795 a dispute about the highway that later became School Street and Bryant Avenue (Town Records, Vol. VI, pg. 360) mentioned a "line fence" separating Robbins' land from that of Andrew (Andries, Anderis) Onderdonk (TG 1970-1971). The same year, Jeremiah Robbins registered his claim to the ashes that were burnt in the Hempstead Harbor school house, which stood on a lot carved from his land where the Roslyn Rescue Hook & Ladder house stands today. (Town Records, Vol. VI, pg. 464-65). And in 1805 another highway proceeding (Town Records, Vol. VI, pg. 435) mentioned the boundary shared by Robbins and Richard Valentine III's grandson Richard Kirk, who owned the land that later became, in substantial part, the Cedarmere and Montrose estates of William Cullen Bryant's property. All of these landmarks: the Anderis Onderdonk land, the Hempstead Harbor school, and the Richard Kirk land, verify the fact that the Valentine-Robbins farm comprised the lands that were later owned by John Tatterson (the Valentine-Robbins house), and Francis Skillman (The Blue Spruce Inn today).

On February 14, 1814, John and Daniel Robbins, possibly Jeremiah's sons or grandsons, made a deed of partition dividing the old farm into north and south halves. (Mentioned in Queens County Liber 70 of Deeds, pg. 316). The Valentine-Robbins house went with the north half to Daniel Robbins. Whether John and Daniel inherited directly from Jeremiah Robbins, or purchased the property after his death, is not yet known.

Richard Tatterson was the next owner of the house, purchasing it on May 28, 1823 (Queens County, Liber S of Deeds, pg. 109) from the estate of Daniel Robbins. The land by then contained about a hundred acres, and it ran west to the high water mark of Hempstead Harbor. A fulling mill, its press house and its stream were reserved from the sale. John Tatterson, presumably Richard's son, acquired the farm on May 6, 1835 (Queens County, Liber JJ of Deeds, pg. 482) and it was he who opened, in 1847, the small road that runs before the house (Witte's Lane) connecting Bryant Avenue with the Flushing-North Hempstead Turnpike. (Queens County, Liber 81 of Deeds, pg. 289).

Valentine Mott (see footnote*), from New York City, bought the Valentine-Robbins house and farm from John Tatterson on February 16, 1857 (Queens County, Liber 158 of Deeds, pg. 410) and his successor Stephen Mott sold it to Nathaniel M. Terry on April 23, 1863.

* This probably was Dr. Valentine Mott (1785-1865), the world's foremost surgeon during the mid-19th century. He was awarded his M.D. from Columbia in 1806 and subsequently spent three years in London and Edinburgh observing the great British anatomists and surgeons. He was appointed Professor of Surgery at Columbia in 1810. Subsequently, in 1841, he was the principal founder of the New York University School of Medicine and served there as Professor of Surgery and President of the Faculty. He simultaneously served as Chief of Surgery at the New York Hospital. For about 15 years subsequent to 1850 he served as Senior Consultant in Surgery to Bellevue, St. Luke's, Hebrew (now Mount Sinai), St. Vincent's and Women's hospitals. Throughout his life he was a surgical innovator and was the first to perform a number of procedures which are challenging even today. He was the first to ligate the innominate artery (1818) for the treatment of an aneurysm of the right subclavian artery. In 1821 he performed a hemimandibulectomy after having first ligated the common carotid artery to control hemorrhage. Altogether he ligated the common carotid artery 46 times. In 1828 he removed the right clavicle in the treatment of a large sarcomatous (sic) tumor, which involved the ligation of a large number of major vessels. The patient recovered but more than 30 years passed before another surgeon attempted the same procedure. His spectrum of surgical operations was tremendous ranging from vascular orthopedic and abdominal surgery to oral surgery and oto-laryngology. He was deeply interested in the role of general anesthesia in surgery and was largely responsible for the early acceptance of anesthesiology as a surgical adjunct. In 1862 he prepared a monograph, at the request of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, on the use of general anesthetics in Army hospitals. Sir Astley Cooper, the great 19th century English surgeon and anatomist, wrote that Mott had completed "more of the great operations than any man living, or that ever did live". However, notwithstanding his considerable surgical zeal he was a friend and advocate of conservative surgery and never performed an operation without weighing the question of its necessity with great deliberation. In his later years he was the recipient of honorary degrees from most of the world's major medical faculties including an honorary M.D. from the University of Edinburgh and an honorary L.L.D. from the University of the State of New York. He was the President of the New York Academy of Medicine for many years and his extensive medical library is housed there today. While it cannot be established with certainty that the Valentine Mott who owned the Valentine-Robbins House actually was Dr. Valentine Mott, it is unlikely there were two

Later owners have included William J. Witte in 1906: Merritt Lund, who owned the house for about six years after 1907, making changes in the Colonial Revival style; and a family named Lowe who bought it in 1914 and sold the house in 1926 to Edmund Durkin. Following Mr. Durkin's death the house was acquired by a man named Gomper, who sold it to Frank B. Hendl, a retired State Senator, in 1951. Senator Hendl sold the house to the present owners in 1973.

EXTERIOR: To the passerby today the Jeremiah Robbins House appears to be a fine example of an early 20th century "Colonial Revival" house. It is worthy of study from that viewpoint alone as, apart from later sheathing with aluminum clapboards and the inclusion of an unfortunate view window in its south front, the exterior of the house has survived unchanged since Merritt Lund created his "Colonial Revival" masterpiece between 1907 and 1913. The Dutch overhang of the south roof slope, the impressive veranda, the doorway, the monumental brick wall on Church Street to assure privacy from Trinity Church on Sunday morning and the stable court with its contents all are part of the Lund project and certainly are worth a walk around the property to view. The stable court with its romantic well house, small stable and brick wall laid in Flemish bond with burnt headers is unique in Roslyn. The cottage which is partially within the stable court, may also be a part of the Lund project. It was a servants' quarters and garage at the time the present owners purchased the house. However, it is lacking in the romantic quality and flair of the remainder of the stable court and most likely antedates it. Possibly it was an outbuilding of the original house.

Beneath the Lund exterior changes are, in fact, two connected houses, a small 1½ storey 18th century house to the east, which has been so extensively altered that little of it can be seen today without considerable effort, and a much larger 2½ storey, side hall, 3-bay wide, Federal house, the interior of which has survived almost unchanged since the time it was built. Both houses, or to be more precise, the Federal house with its earlier east wing, have gable-ended roofs with their ridges extending from east to west and both are built on rubble foundation walls to the sills and include full cellars. Prior to the application of the aluminum siding both parts of the house were sheathed with butt-nailed shingles having an exposure of 13" to the weather. Examples of these are visible in the attic and cellar areaway. It cannot be established at this time whether the early house was shingled originally or the shingles applied for conformity when the Federal house was built.

The Federal house obviously is a part of the group which includes the Anderis Onderdonk House (TG 1970-1971) and the Federal part of the William M. Valentine House (TG 1963). Its monumental attic is similar in scale to that of the gambrel-roofed Onderdonk House and its stairrail, main storey floor plan and door panel mouldings are very close to those of the William M. Valentine House. The Federal house retains its original 12/8 windows in its north front. Those in the south front and the west facade are 6/6 and, at first thought, insertions of the second quarter of the 19th century. However, since they are set in their original frames and have fixed upper sash and retain the same dimensions, 36 x 55", as the 12/8 north windows, it is possible they may represent original construction. This view is supported by the survival of original 6/6 sash in both the Valentine and Onderdonk houses. The latter was built between

people named Valentine Mott living in New York in 1855, the year in which the house was purchased. As a matter of fact, Dr. Valentine Mott's son, Dr. Valentine Mott, Jr., died in New Orleans in 1854. Dr. Mott was born in Glen Cove and was familiar with the local area. By 1855 he was advanced in years and it seems likely that he would purchase a summer retreat in the fashionable Hempstead Harbor area. He owned a town house which still stands at #1 Gramercy Park West (N.Y. Times, 9/24/41) but the Roslyn house would not have been considered a year-round residence in any case. (R.G.G.)

1794 and 1797 and the former no later than 1801. It is hard to decide upon architectural evidence just where the Federal Robbins House stands in relation to the other two. The surviving 12/8 windows may indicate that it antedates them both. All of the attic windows including the quadrant windows date from the early 20th century.

INTERIOR

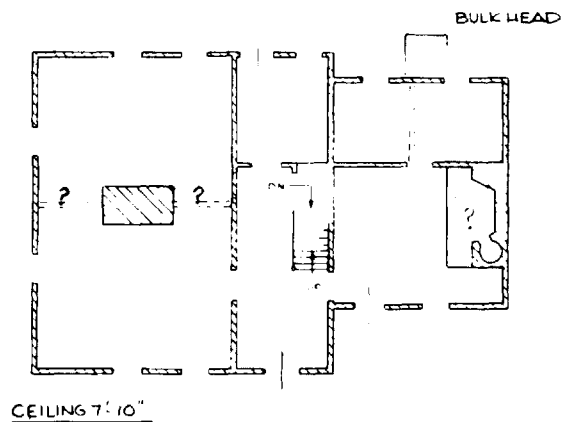
CELLARS: The Federal cellar and the cellar of the earlier house both are continuous and of rubble wall construction throughout although the early cellar is smaller in both dimensions than the Federal cellar. The early cellar is 15' north to south by 20½' east to west. The north-south oriented floor joists of the early cellar are adze-dressed throughout and are 5 x 7" in cross section and set on 32" centers. The placement of the greater dimension of a beam in the horizontal position is also followed in the 1743 John Valentine House (TG 1976). The intact rubble foundation piers for the early fireplace hearth and oven survive, projecting from the east wall of the early cellar. There are east-west oriented adze-dressed trimmer joists, 6 x 7" in cross section, at each end of the fireplace tiers to tie the now missing timber and brick fireplace base and framing together. This structure provides no support for the present modern fireplace and chimney above which are much smaller than the original. The early cellar ended just east of the present cellar stairwell and the west sill of the early house still remains visible in this location. A small patch of early shingling may be seen in the cellar areaway in the north wall of the early house. An example of the exterior foundation wall finish of the early house, a very rare survival showing the use of mortar pointing to provide a smooth exterior surface, may be seen in the southeast cellar areaway of the Federal house.

The Federal cellar is larger from north to south and the floor joists may be seen through the modern insulation in some areas. These are partially adzed, partially pit sawn timbers, 3½ x 10" in cross section and are set on 24" centers. So far as can be determined from both cellars the original yellow pine flooring survives above in good condition in both parts of the house. The massive rubble pier which supports the back-to-back fireplaces and center chimney above survives as do the concave brick hearth supports placed north and south of the pier. The use of a central chimney in a Federal house usually suggests an early construction date. The Anderis Onderdonk House includes a similar center chimney base while the Federal part of the William M. Valentine House has two side-by-side end wall chimneys. The small brick walled store room in the southwest corner of the Federal cellar dates from the 20th century.

The enclosed interior cellar stairway is located entirely within the Federal house. There is horizontal sheathing along the east side of the cellar stairway with sawn lath and plaster above which formed the west wall of the earlier house after the Federal house was built. Although the sawn lath is later this modification suggests that at least some of the studs of the early house were removed when the Federal house was built. Hand-rived lathing may be seen at the north end of the cellar stairway which provides an interesting opportunity for comparison. The west wall of the stairway is sheathed with vertical yellow pine boards 21" wide. These are now covered on the hall side with plaster-board or masonite but almost certainly were part of the stairway paneling originally. Interestingly, the wall beneath the William M. Valentine house stairway was found covered with later plaster at the time of its restoration and the original paneling was found beneath (TG 1963).

EARLY HOUSE — GROUND FLOOR: The present dining room, east of the Federal side hall, occupies almost all the ground floor area of the early house. The dining room detail which dates from the Merritt Lund alteration represents an attempt to achieve the then fashionable

VALENTINE-ROBBINS HOUSE
Ground Floor Plan



16-17th century European farmhouse interior using some modern materials. The "side board" is mid-19th century "revival" style which incorporates some earlier fabric, as the linen-fold panels. The extremely low fully plastered ceiling strongly suggests that in the original house the ceiling beams were intended to be exposed. Fragments of these beams are exposed in two locations, i.e. in the later pantry and upstairs bathroom floor, and in both cases evidence of early whitewash survives. In both places the beams are 5 x 8" in cross-section, are unchamfered, extend from north to south, and are set on 40" centers. The present dining room extends somewhat further to the south than did the early house. The south wall of the latter was located just to the south of the present doorway to the Federal side-hall. The east wall of the early house corresponds to the east wall of the present dining room and the north wall of the early house is the north wall of the small bar and pantry to the north of the present dining room. The interior dimensions of this space are 17½' north to south and 23' east to west. Considering the thickness of the rubble cellar walls these conform to the interior cellar dimensions of 15' x 20½'. In all likelihood this space was divided into two chambers, a larger "hall" to the south, which included a brick fireplace and oven along its east wall, and a smaller unheated chamber, or chambers, to the north. After the Federal house was built the early "hall" probably survived as the kitchen. This floor plan conforms to the early 18th century floor plan of the Van Nostrand-Starkins House (TG 1975-76). Like the Van Nostrand-Starkins House, there apparently was only one window centrally located in the south wall. This wall is now missing but the present surviving cellar window confirms its location in the original wall. The dividing wall probably stood at or near its present location where it divides the present dining room from the bar and pantry. Obviously, somewhere in this area there was a stairway or ladder to the loft above but its location cannot be determined at this time.

EARLY HOUSE — SECOND FLOOR: In the original house the present second storey, which has been achieved by the use of large shed dormers, was part of a simple loft. This probably had knee-walls at the north and south with sloping ceilings above. Examination of existing rafters indicates that the early ridge had an angle of about 100 degrees. This space has been so much altered that no further observation should be made without exploratory stripping. No conjectures are feasible concerning the original stairway location, room division, if any, or whether or not the loft was plastered or otherwise sheathed.

EARLY HOUSE — ATTIC: The unfinished portion of the attic of the early house is a very small space which can be reached only through an opening in the east wall of the Federal house. It has no flooring but the sawn lathing of the late plastered ceiling below. Examination is very difficult. The roof framing consists of 3½ x 3½" adzed rafters set on 40" centers and apparently roughly notched for purlins. As mentioned above the ridge angle is approximately 100 degrees. Early shingles of the Federal house may be seen lining a part of the west wall of the early attic.

FEDERAL HOUSE — INTERIOR: Unlike the remainder of the house the Federal house has been little altered, especially on the main floor. Later hardwood strip flooring has been imposed but the original yellow pine flooring has survived beneath in apparently good condition. Although no evidence remains for substantiation all the fireplaces may have been changed in a mid to late 19th century modernization. All three Federal fireplaces and mantels were replaced during the early 20th century and it is difficult to understand why this alteration alone was made in the Federal part of the house. If the Federal fireplaces had been replaced with second half of the 19th century Victorian fireplaces they would have been considered most unsuitable by the Lunds and removed. The survival of the altered late 19th century front door, from which the glass is missing, in an ogee-moulded (circa 1870) colonial revival doorway, adds some substance to this conjecture.

FEDERAL HOUSE — INTERIOR TRIM: Three types of original door and window surrounds survive in the Federal house. All have the same back-bands with cavetto and bead-and-fillet mouldings, an 18th century form not previously found in Roslyn. All have a bead at the inner corner. The most elaborate includes a step which is moulded with a bead-and-cyma which matches the door panel mouldings. The same casing-step and door-panel mouldings are employed in the William M. Valentine House (TG 1963). All of the aforementioned mouldings are standard early Federal types. The second type of facing includes the same back-band moulding but the step is not moulded. The simplest version includes the back-band moulding as above and the inner bead, but has no step. In addition to these there are several doorways simple faced with flat surrounds. Ordinarily these are considered to be late 19th century but in this house they sometimes appear with characteristically Federal facings on the other side of the doorway. It is possible that the flat facings are later replacements but this seems like a lot of nuisance to no purpose and it is likely they are simply original to the house and the least expensive type of facing available. In addition there are a number of doorways trimmed with ogee mouldings. Some of these date from the early 20th century Lund alteration but some are more vigorous, i.e. the front doorway surrounds, and date from about 1870. Their presence suggests that at least some of the alterations to the house took place at that time. Most of the baseboards, except for the first floor hallway, appear to be the original. These are not stepped and are capped by an ovolo (quarter-round and fillet) moulding. These have survived all over the Federal house including along the stairway where it is unlikely the baseboard would have been changed.

FEDERAL HOUSE — FIRST FLOOR: The side hall extends through the house from south to north to an exterior doorway at each end. The north door is modern but surviving pintle marks in the frame indicate the original was a two part "Dutch" door. There is a dividing wall just beyond the bend in the stairway which forms a separate back hall as in the William M. Valentine House (TG 1963). The front hall forms a room 9½' wide by 20½' long which served as a cool summer sitting room when the front and back doors were open. The doorways to the present dining room, to the east; the front parlor, to the west; and the rear hall, to the north, all

include 6-panel doors with delicate Federal mouldings similar to those of the William M. Valentine House interior doors. Like the Valentine house the two upper panels are much shorter than the four lower ones. All are flush paneled and beaded on the reverse. The door casings of the front west and north walls of the principal side hall are stepped and moulded as described above. The two doorways along the east wall are not stepped and probably were relocated from other parts of the house; most likely from the two casings of the now-closed up doorway which originally led from the back hall to the back parlour. The doorway surrounds in the back hall are not stepped but are moulded in the early Federal manner. Originally there was an additional doorway with moulded back-bands and beaded inner corners, probably from the back hall, which gave access to the back parlour. This doorway has been removed and its opening closed—most likely during the early 20th century. The modified four panel ogee-moulded door in the east wall, to the powder room, was inserted during the Lund alteration and represents an effort to match the existing Federal doors.

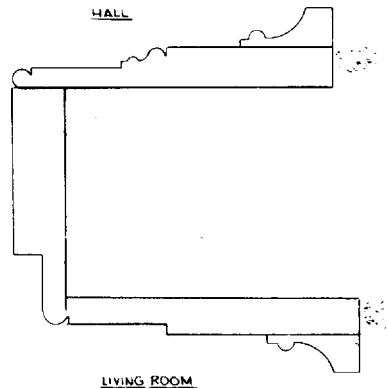
The side hall wallpaper has been recently removed to disclose stenciled wall painting dating from the early 20th century. There is a dado made up of horizontal boards 12" wide, lining both front and back sections of the hall. This is capped by a projecting torus moulding 1" thick. The latter probably replaces the original cap and served as a chair rail after the hall had been papered and 20th century baseboards applied. As mentioned earlier, the wall surface beneath the stairs probably is paneled and the panels concealed under later plaster or wallboard.

The stairway in the characteristically local Federal style is quite imposing. The treads are 44" in length as compared with 34" in the William M. Valentine house. Like the Valentine house stairway and the remaining remnants of the Anderis Onderdonk stairway, its rail, which is probably mahogany or cherry, is circular in cross-section and oversails the typical, square-tapered newel. The straight balusters are rectangular in cross section and set with their greater dimension parallel to the length of the treads. The short eastward extension at the top of the stairway dates from the time the original stairway of the early house was removed. It is not a part of the original Federal stairway. Since the door it approaches is of the four-panel, ogee-moulded type it may be conjectured to date from the late 19th or even the early 20th century. The stair rail becomes somewhat awkward as it approaches the second floor. Ordinarily, the stair well is wider than the stairway at this point so that the hand can pass along from the ascending to the horizontal rail without interference. In this instance the flooring extends almost to the ascending rail. The bend between the ascending and horizontal rails is accomplished by the use of two awkward newels. Obviously the carpenter originally planned to have the east-west segment of the rail extend obliquely downward and sawed the easterly newel diagonally to achieve this. When this arrangement did not work out he extended the newel but the saw-marks remain. This problem is so beautifully worked out in the William M. Valentine house one feels that the carpenter must have learned on the Robbins stair-rail. Unfortunately this part of the stair-rail has been replaced in the Anderis Onderdonk house so that a comparison cannot be made.

FEDERAL HOUSE — FRONT PARLOUR: The front parlour remains as the originally conceived room except for 20th century hardwood strip flooring which has been superimposed on the original, the south view window which dates from the mid-20th century and a 20th century mantel. The latter appears to date from after the Lund alteration of 1907-1913. The paired arches at each side of the fireplace, which open to the back parlour, possibly date from the 20th century. Without further investigation it cannot be conjectured what originally stood

VALENTINE-ROBBINS HOUSE

Cross Section of First Floor Federal Door Casing



in their places, perhaps paneling, cupboards, or embrasures for prized pieces of furniture. The doorway surround is moulded and stepped but unlike the side-hall casings the step is not moulded. The west window surround is moulded but not stepped. There is no chair rail today but it is likely there was a chair rail originally. The simple baseboards are capped by an ovolo moulding.

FEDERAL HOUSE — BACK PARLOUR: The Federal back parlour has suffered essentially the same changes as has the front, i.e. flooring, mantel and archways. In addition, as mentioned earlier, at one time there was almost certainly a doorway from this room to the back hall. The window surrounds are moulded but not stepped. The matching doorway surround is missing but probably has been relocated to the dining room or powder room doorway. It should be noted here, as already mentioned, that the north windows are 12/8 with 8 x 10" glazing, while the west is 6/6. However, since both types are of the same dimensions, 36 x 53", and both have fixed upper sash, it may be assumed that both types may be original to the house. The baseboard is the characteristic one already described. As in the case of the living room there is no chair rail today.

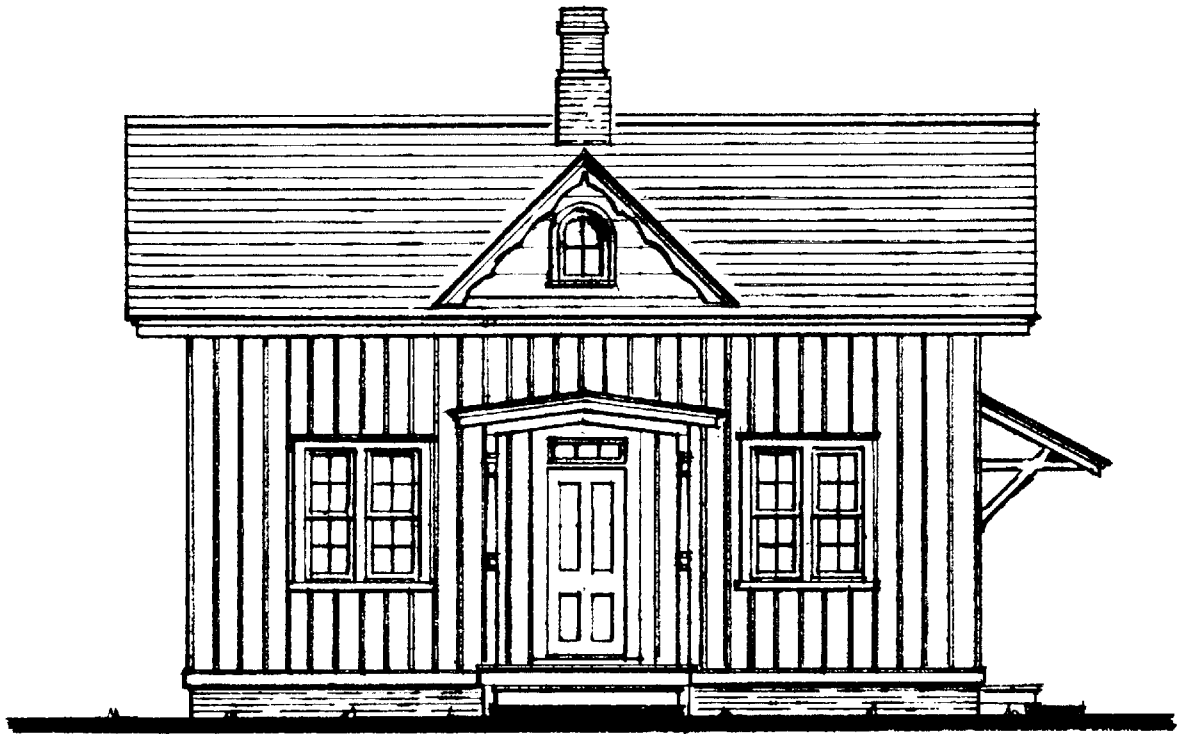
SECOND STOREY — SIDE HALL: The second storey side-hall occupies the same space as does the first floor hall and like it includes a small chamber at its rear. Except for the 20th century hardwood strip flooring all the architectural features are original, except for the east wall, four-panel, ogee-moulded door which opens to a bath. It should be recalled that this bath and the powder room below it are located in the 20th century addition to the original early house. The chair rail appears to be the original Federal period work. The door and window facings are not stepped and employ the same back-bands with cavetto and bead-and-fillet mouldings found elsewhere in the house. The 6-panel Federal flush-back doors are identical to those below. The doorway to the small chamber at the north end of the hall has matching detail which appears to be the original. The window facings in this bedroom match those of the hall. This window retains its original 12/8 sash with 7 x 9" glazings. The interior door facings are devoid of any mouldings.

FEDERAL HOUSE — SOUTHWEST CHAMBER: The southwest chamber occupies the same area as the front parlour below. It is in somewhat more original condition than the other second floor rooms as, while it includes modern strip hardwood flooring and an impressive

early 20th century Colonial Revival mantel, it retains its early south 6/6 windows and original closets flanking the fireplace. The east closet is intact and has paired doors. The west closet has had its opening partially filled in and a later single door inserted. However the original openings of both closets were the same. The classically moulded casings are simply stepped. The window surrounds are not stepped although the back-bands are moulded. The chair rail which forms the window sills is the same as that in the second storey side hall. Actually all this trim may be as much as a decade later than the first floor work.

FEDERAL HOUSE — NORTHWEST CHAMBER: The northwest chamber on the second floor has been changed considerably from the original floor plan and a single room has been converted into an accessory hallway and two small rooms. The window surrounds and chair rails are the original Federal fabric and utilize moulded back-bands, but are not stepped. Everything else, including the ogee-moulded door-facings, appears to date from the early 20th century.

FEDERAL HOUSE — ATTIC: The enclosed attic stairway is located in the second storey side hall. The board-and-batten door to the stairway is constructed of two pine boards, one of them 18" in width, having ¼" beaded joints. The door retains its original spring lock and finely moulded battens. The stairway itself is original and its upper stairwell is enclosed by a Federal railing identical to the principal stair-rail below. The attic itself was romanticized during the Lund alteration but with few actual changes to the fabric. The rafters are 3¼ x 6" in cross-section. They are both adzed and sawn on different surfaces and are set on 33" centers. The original north and south wall plates are clearly evident and form the tops of very low knee walls. As usual in early Roslyn houses, there is no actual ridge member. However, there are large purlin plates, 6 x 4½" in cross-section, which connect the east and west gable fields midway between the ridge and the north and south wall plates. The rafters rest on these purlin plates which in turn are carried by 6 x 4½" posts set vertically in each gable field, and at intermediate positions these posts are braced to purlin plates. The posts are tied together, north to south, by tie-beams of the same dimensions. The large ornately sheathed tie-beam connecting the north and south roof slopes just east of the chimney serves no structural function. It is purely decorative and dates from the Lund restoration. The 8" yellow pine flooring may be the original. It has been already mentioned that the gable-field windows are 20th century work and that there is a small door in the east attic wall, at the head of the stairway, which provides access to the small attic of the early house.



EAST TOLL GATE HOUSE Circa 1860

EAST TOLL-GATE HOUSE
Roslyn Cemetery, Greenvale
Property of the Roslyn Presbyterian Church

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: During the second quarter of the 19th century the Flushing-North Hempstead Toll Road Company was organized to improve the highway which is today known as Northern Boulevard and to keep it passable throughout the year. The Company was free of debt by 1850 and it continued to prosper until the extensive development of the railroads during the 1870's provided a level of speed and dependability with which the Toll Road could not compete. However, during the half century or so of its operation the availability of the Toll Road was a most important link between North Hempstead and New York and was a major factor in the growth and development of North Hempstead. During the period of the operation of the Toll Road, toll-gate houses were erected at suitable intervals to collect the tolls from the wagoners. Originally there were two toll-gate houses in Roslyn, the West Toll-Gate House near the intersection of Old Northern Boulevard and West Shore Road and the East Toll-Gate House which still stands in the Roslyn Cemetery just north of Northern Boulevard in Greenvale. The earliest positive record of its existence is in December of 1860, when "the new toll gate east of the village" was mentioned in a deed (Queens Co., Liber 185 of Deeds, pg. 119). Of all the large number of 19th century Long Island toll-gate houses it is the sole survivor, probably as the result of the relocation of Northern Boulevard some yards to the south and the subsequent inclusion of the East Toll-Gate House within the precincts of the Roslyn Cemetery, where it still stands facing a short strip of the early toll-road. John Radigan, whose reminiscences cover the last quarter of the 19th century, briefly described its use. The toll collector, Mrs. Noon, lived in the building and she watched the turnpike from its west windows. A long pole that extended over the roadway was moved up and down to stop vehicles and let them pass after their toll was paid.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION: The East Toll-Gate House is a 1½ storey, board-and-batten building having a gable-ended roof, the ridge of which extends from north to south and is at right angles to the road. The original roof was shingled and the shingles had a 7¼ inch exposure to the weather. The building is 27¼ feet long by 17½ feet deep and has a facade gable on its principal (west) front. The original 4/4 windows survive. These are paired, have flat surrounds, and simple drip caps. No evidence of shutters survives. The two door surrounds, in the west and south fronts, conform to the window surrounds. The front (west) doorway includes a three-light overdoor window. There is a small, round-headed, 2/2 window in the facade gable field. All three gables have simple, sawn, curvilinear verge-boards. Originally there was a small gable-roofed porch in the west front beneath the facade gable; a simple, bracketted shed-roof over the south doorway and a wooden cellar bulkhead which opened to the south end of the cellar. These are missing but their shapes and dimensions could be determined from the survival of original flashing, framing scars, etc. The water-table is rectilinear in cross section except that its upper surface is chamfered. The wooden sheathing battens form double, back-to-back ogees in cross section. The building has a full cellar and rests upon a foundation which is rubble-constructed to the grade and brick laid in common bond from the grade to the sills. The original chimney-cap has a projecting band of brick, two courses in height, two courses beneath the chimney top. This is matched by a similar projection, one brick high, which rests upon an even wider plinth which extends up from the roof line.

PRESENT CONDITION: At the time the restoration procedure started, the East Toll-Gate House was in a badly deteriorated state even though almost all of the building had survived in unaltered condition. The east rubble foundation wall had sagged badly causing virtual collapse of the brick foundation wall above it. The only cellar window, at the north, had been removed and its opening bricked in. The mortar of the north, south, and west brick foundation walls had washed out in part although the bricks had not shifted much from their original positions. The east sill was very badly rotted. The remaining sills all were rotted in part. The lower ends of some of the studs which form the balloon frame had rotted. The east water-table was badly rotted and required replacement. The chimney was in very poor repair within the roof structure and some of the bricks were missing so that the flue was exposed to view. The attic floor joists rested upon brick projections built into the chimney stack. This arrangement represented original design but was dangerous if the one brick thick chimney was ever to be used. The original roof had been covered with a layer of asbestos strip-shingles which were badly deteriorated. The wooden shingles beneath were so badly rotted they would not retain nails. As noted above, the original small front (west) porch and the shed roof over the south doorway both were missing. The original south and west doors had been replaced with modern substitutes and the cellar bulkhead had been replaced with a metal Biltco door.

THE RESTORATION: The restoration of the East Toll-Gate House began with the announcement by Bird & Co. of Massachusetts of a nation-wide competition for twenty matching restoration grants of \$5,000 each for the exterior restoration of buildings included in the National Register of Historic Places or eligible for inclusion in it. In a combined effort by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation, a non-profit revolving restoration fund, and the Roslyn Presbyterian Church, which owns the Roslyn Cemetery, the National Register nomination forms were completed and the necessary documentation for the Bird and Co. competition prepared. The Town of North Hempstead American Revolution Bicentennial Commission agreed to supply the matching \$5,000 from Community Development funds available to it.

As a result of the overwhelming number of applicants for Bird and Company grants, 120 national awards were made, instead of the 20 originally contemplated. On this basis, the grant to the East Toll-Gate House Project was only \$500, instead of the \$5,000 sought. Nevertheless, work started during the fall of 1975 using the Bird and Company grant, approximately \$3,000 in contributions and a similar amount from borrowed funds. The Town of North Hempstead American Revolution Bicentennial Commission agreed to donate \$6,000 instead of the \$5,000 it had promised originally. However, the availability of the Town of North Hempstead grant depended upon environmental clearance and actual certification of worthiness for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places by the Secretary of the Interior. Satisfying these procedures involved several months, so work had to be stopped during the winter of 1975-1976 because of lack of funds. Prior to the cessation of work, the stone and brick portions of the foundation were repaired or rebuilt as required, and the rotted sills replaced. Deteriorated framing members also were repaired or replaced. The badly deteriorated chimney was carefully measured, drawn and photographed, and the portion extending above the roofline taken down. The rotting roof was then removed, deteriorated shingle-lath replaced, and the entire roof resingled to duplicate the original roof.

With the availability of the Town of North Hempstead Community Development Fund grant during the spring of 1976 work started once again. The board-and-batten siding and window casings were repaired or replaced as required. The Biltco metal cellar door was replaced with an appropriate wooden cellar bulkhead which conformed to the flashing marks

on the original siding. A badly deteriorated, but definitely identifiable, original exterior door, of the four-panel, ogee-moulded type, was found in the loft. This was carefully reproduced to fit both exterior doorways. A turn of the century photo found in the Bryant Library showed part of the south front of the East Toll-Gate House together with a profile of the west porch. This tiny detail, no more than a half inch square, was carefully enlarged to provide as much information as possible. This photo established definitely the use of two slender turned porch columns. From the photo and the surviving framing marks on the siding, John Stevens, the architectural historian in charge of the restoration of Old Bethpage Village, as well as the Van Nostrand Starkins and the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill locally, was able to prepare working drawings for the flat gable-roofed front porch as well as the bracketted shed-roofed south entry. A pair of appropriate turned porch posts added to the A. Nostrand house (circa 1830) in about 1855 (TG 1974-75), but not used in its recent restoration, were used in the reconstruction of the Toll Gate front porch. At this point the chimney was carefully restored, working from detailed photos and measured drawings prepared by Colonel Frederic N. Whitley Jr. prior to the dismantling of the original hopelessly deteriorated chimney. During the reconstruction of the chimney into its safe flu-lined form metal brackets were fitted to support the ends of the attic floor joists which originally had been bonded to the chimney wall, to further reduce the risk of fire. In addition, deteriorated lath and plaster was removed to permit the installation of adequate wind bracing to prevent future deformity of the framing which had permitted the south gable peak to shift 3" out of line. At this point the entire exterior of the building was carefully scraped and sanded in preparation for painting. All the carpentry and preparation was completed by Edward Soukup and Steve Tlockowski, the carpenters who had worked on the Smith-Hegeman, James Sexton and Van Nostrand-Starkins restoration projects.

While the restoration of the building was proceeding, careful paint analysis was completed by Frank Welch of Ardmore, Pa. As the result of microscopic studies, Mr. Welch determined that the original ground color of the building had been "sauterne" and that the trim, including the moulded battens, had originally been painted a rich brown. Mr. Welch also pointed out that the window sash had originally been painted off-white and that the interior face of the surviving exterior door originally was grained to simulate mahogany. Exterior painting was completed to conform with Mr. Welch's specifications under the direction of Ken Rosevear.

With the completion of the exterior painting the commitment of the Roslyn Preservation Corporation toward the restoration of the East Toll-Gate House was completed. The total cost of the restoration was approximately \$16,000, of which \$500 had come from the Bird and Company grant and \$6,000 from the Town of North Hempstead American Revolution BiCentennial Commission. Apart from the cost of exterior painting which had been defrayed by the Roslyn Rotary Club and the Roslyn Landmark Society, all the remaining funds had been raised by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation in the form of contributions. The future use of the East Toll-Gate House has not yet been determined. Since the completion of its restoration it has been used with much pride by the Roslyn Cemetery Association as a workshop and for other cemetery functions. Much credit should be extended to Mr. Richard Stoeltzing, Roslyn Cemetery manager, who provided fiscal guidance for the entire project and who was responsible for clearing up the deteriorating landscape around the East Toll-Gate House, grading the site and otherwise providing a more appropriate setting. It is the hope of the Roslyn Preservation Corporation that the interior restoration be completed and the

building rented for use as a residence as it had been for so many years in the past. Whether or not this aspiration will be accomplished is a matter for future determination.

While visiting the East Toll-Gate House one should leave time for a walk around the Roslyn Cemetery, a romantic sight of rare beauty, which was founded as a part of the Rural Cemetery Movement in 1860. This concept has been well summarized by Bruce Kelly of the Central Park Task Force for this tour guide:

“In 19th century England impetus was given to creating burial places in the styles of Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton by three factors. First, church yards had run out of space. Second, the demand for more open space for health reasons became prevalent and, third, the Victorians were Romantics. Their fixation on the deaths of Princess Charlotte and her children and subsequent young mothers and children deaths may have been the romantic stimulus. Anyways, thoughts of death were highly popular.

In America the man to adopt this notion was Andrew Jackson Downing. He influenced the creation of the Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston which was the first example of the rural cemetery style in this country. These cemeteries were characterized by typically Capability Brown-like groupings, particularly the more somber types like the columnar cypress, poplars, and weeping willows”.

In Roslyn, the lovely cemetery setting obviously was meant to serve as a sort of park as well as a burial place. Villagers could come out on pleasant Sunday afternoons not only to visit the graves of their kin but also to enjoy the romantic setting, especially in spring in a cloud burst of dogwood blossoms. In addition to its park like setting, the cemetery contains a number of interesting monuments. William Cullen Bryant and his family are buried here along with Christopher Morley and many of the 19th century owners of the houses described in these tour guides. Frances Hodgson Burnett’s grave is marked by a statue of “Lionel” who must have been the prototype of Cedric Errol, “little Lord Fauntleroy”. The Grand Army of the Republic monument supplies a proper note of somber dignity to the whole and, for those with special interests, there are a collection of White Russian graves as well as a choice collection of 19th century cast zinc tomb stones. What a beautiful place in which to spend eternity.

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