

Roslyn Landmark Society  
Annual House Tour Guide.



35th Annual Tour

June 3, 1995

10:00-4:00

Cover Illustration by John Collins— 1976.

*The Van Nostrand-Starkins House*

The Van Nostrand-Starkins House was built circa 1680 and probably is the earliest surviving house in Nassau County. Originally it was nine feet shorter, from front to back, than it is today and had symmetrical roof slopes. It also had an over-hang in its west gable-field. Early in the 18th century the house was extended to the north to its present dimension and the north roof slope was raised. At that time the west over-hang was removed and the present concave south roof projection was added. These changes were accomplished by a Dutch-oriented joiner, probably the same one who built the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill (TG 1976-77). The present 1½-storey east wing was added late in the 18th century. The Van Nostrand-Starkins House was restored by the Roslyn Landmark Society and is operated as a house museum. It is open to the public, for which admission is charged, from May through October.

The friends of historic Roslyn dedicate this, the 35th anniversary edition of the Roslyn Tour Guide, to the memory of Dr. Roger G. Gerry, its author and creator.

Unlimited in patience, and unstinting of his time, Dr. Gerry set a precedent in preservation, and was unfailingly generous in sharing the extensive knowledge and experience he'd acquired in his field. With enthusiasm, with dedication, and with indomitable optimism, he created, for his neighbors and himself, this rare, idyllic 19th Century community; an exemplar and model for all such efforts, in all eras. His loss leaves an aching void at the heart of historic Roslyn, his "child" and his abiding love.

Leader and builder, teacher and friend, he will be sorely and profoundly missed.



**35TH ANNUAL HOUSE TOUR**

**\*HOUSES ON TOUR**

VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE (ca. 1680)  
221 Main Street, Roslyn  
*Pages 884 to 900*

HENRICKSON-ELY-BROWER HOUSE (1836)  
110 Main Street, Roslyn  
*Pages 902 to 918*

ELLEN E. WARD MEMORIAL CLOCK TOWER (1895)  
Tower Place, Roslyn  
*Pages 920 to 926*

WILLIAM J. STRONG HOUSE (1830-1840)  
1100 Old Northern Boulevard, Roslyn  
*Pages 927 to 945*

EDGAR STRONG BUNGALOW (1923)  
71 Mott Street, Roslyn  
*Pages 946 to 950*

G.W. DENTON HOUSE (ca. 1875)  
57 West Shore Road, Flower Hill, Roslyn  
*Pages 952 to 963*

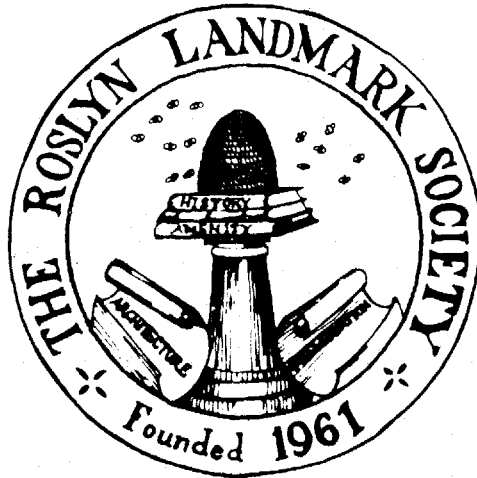
CORNELIUS HOUSE (ca. 1886)  
64 Bryant Avenue, Roslyn Harbor  
*Pages 964 to 969*

STONE HOUSE (1871)  
35 Post Drive, Roslyn Harbor  
*Pages 970 to 973*

THOMAS CLAPHAM ESTATE (1868)  
48 Glenwood Road, Roslyn Harbor  
*Pages 975 to 985*

**\*PLEASE**

**NO CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE YEARS OF AGE  
NO SPIKE HEELS (PINE FLOORS)  
NO SMOKING WHEN IN HOUSES  
NO INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY ALLOWED**



#### Editorial Board

Architectural Text	Roger Gerry, Alison Cornish, Peggy Gerry, John R. Stevens, Jim Kahn, Walter Sedovic
Historical Text	Roger Gerry, Alison Cornish, Andrew Scott Dolkart, Frank Harrington, Donna Ottusch-Kianka, Jim Kahn
Editing and Layout	Alexandra Modica
Plates	John Collins, Guy Ladd Frost, John R. Stevens, Walter Sedovic Jim Kahn

*The Roslyn Landmark Society expresses  
its sincere thanks to the Roslyn Savings  
Bank whose substantial gift has made  
publication of this book possible.*

*Vol. VI, No. 5: Copyright, June 1969 by Roslyn Landmark Society  
Rev: June 1970 through '79; May 1980; June 1980 through 1995*

## 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, (De Witt & 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, 1857).
- Woodward, Geo. E. & F.W.: "Woodward's Country Homes" (The Horticulturist, New York, 1865)
- Woodward, Geo. E., & F.W.: "Woodward's Architecture" (The Horticulturist, New York, 1867)

### MAPS:

- Bicknell, A.J. "Wooden & Brick Buildings with Details" A.J. Bicknell, N.Y., 1875
- 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)
- Belcher-Hyde, E.: *Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, New York* (E. Belcher-Hyde, Brooklyn, 1906 and 1914).
- Sanborn Map Publishing Co., 117 and 119 Broadway, New York City: *Sanborn's Atlas of Roslyn* for 1886, 1893, 1902, 1908, 1920, 1931 and 1941.
- Skillman, Francis: Holographic map of Roslyn showing buildings. Probably 1895.
- Wolverton, Chester: *Atlas of Queens County, Long Island, N.Y., New York, 1891 Plate 26.*

### BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS:

- Onderdonk, Benjamin Tredwell (Bishop): Holographic letter to Mrs. Eliza Seaman 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 Onderdonk'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).

Darlington, Oscar C.: "Diary of Eliza Seaman Leggett," written in the 1880's for her granddaughter, Ellarose A. Randall. Bryant Library Local History Department.

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. 1 thru 8 (Published by the Town Board of North Hempstead, New York, 1896).

*The Federal Census*, published every decade, beginning in 1790.

#### 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.

"The Roslyn Sun," a weekly published by A.C. Marvin & Co. of Roslyn. Only four issues of Vol. 1 have been seen. The Roslyn Sun started publication with the issue for April 22, 1898. Possibly it remained in publication for only one or two years

#### 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; Rev. 1990, published by the Bryant Library.

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.



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

Wanzor, Leonard, Jr.: *Patriots of the North Shore*, published by the author, 1976.

Gerry, Roger: "The Roslyn Preservation Corporation—A Village Revolving Fund," *Preservation Notes*, Society for The Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, October 1976 and June 1978.

Gerry, Roger: *Roslyn Saved*, published by the Roslyn Landmark Society, 1980 and 1989.

## ROSLYN'S ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Roslyn is of architectural interest because of the high survival of buildings dating from mid-19th century and earlier. The earliest, the Van Nostrand Starkins House, dates from about 1680. A significant group of architecturally consequential buildings date from the second half of the 18th 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. However, a number were lost, even in modern times. In 1955, during a hurricane, the Henry Western Eastman Carriage House on Main Street, the major accessory building in Roslyn, collapsed. Early in the 1960's, during an expansion of the Roslyn Savings Bank parking lot, the J.W. De Grauw House, the only Gothic Revival House in Roslyn, was demolished.

Historic knowledge concerning individual houses, originally quite sketchy, has been expanding as the result of research connected with the publication of these annual Tour Guides. Sufficient has been learned to accomplish the inclusion of the Main Street Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, and the East Toll Gate House in 1977. The East Broadway Historic District together with Trinity Church and Parish House, the Roslyn National Bank & Trust Company, the Willet Titus House, the Roslyn Savings Bank, the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill, the Henry Western Eastman Tenant Cottage, the Hicks Lumber Company Store, the Samuel Adams Warner Chalet and the unregistered parts of Roslyn Park, including both mill ponds, were admitted to the National Register in 1986. Altogether, more than 100 structures in Roslyn Village have been included in the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the Society, together with the Incorporated Village of Roslyn Harbor, has sponsored the nomination of a number of buildings in Roslyn Harbor for inclusion in the National Register. These include the "Summit Avenue Historic District" which includes ten buildings including St. Mary's Church and its Rectory, the Captain James Muttee House. The Roslyn Harbor National Register group also includes a number of individual nominations including "Clifton," "Montrose," the "Thomas Pearsall House," the "Henry A. Tailer Estate," and "Thomas Clapham Estate," William Cullen Bryant's "Stone House," the "Arthur Williams House," and the "Michael & Daniel Mudge Farmhouse." Data for the nomination of John Warmuth's "The Roslyn House," in Roslyn Heights, was assembled in 1985, in which year the "George Washington Denton House," in Flower Hill, actually was admitted to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1990, the National Register nominations of John Warmuth's "The Roslyn House," the Gate House, Water Tower and Dairyman's House of Clarence Mackay's "Harbor Hill," and Rescue Hook and Ladder Company #1, all were admitted to the National Register of Historic Places. In the same year it was established that Guy Lowell had prepared the landscape design for "Harbor Hill" and his drawings for the Gatehouse of Child Frick's "Clayton," dated 2/15/21, were discovered in the archives of the Nassau County Museum of Art. 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 1976, 1977, 1989), the Valentine-Losee House (TG 1976), the Robeson-Williams Grist Mill (TG 1976-1977, 1988-1989), the George Allen Tenant House (TG 1978, 1982), the Warren Wilkey House (TG 1978-79-80), the

Pine-Onderdonk-Bogart House, the Teamster's House (TG 1980-1981), the George Allen Residence (TG 1980-81-82), the Leonard Thorne House (TG 1965-66), the East Toll-Gate House (TG 1976-77, 1982-83), the Captain Jacob Mott Kirby Storehouse (TG 1986-87), the John Rogers House (TG 1987-88), the John F. Remsen House (TG 1992-3-4), and in the demolition of the Arthur Duffett Building (TG 1987).

The 1994 Tour is the 34th Tour of local buildings presented by the Society. More than 100 structures exhibited 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, John R. Stevens and John Waite. 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 Seaman 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. Eliza Seaman Leggett, in her turn, wrote a notebook of her own, in the 1880's, for her granddaughter, Ellarose A. Randall. In a similar manner a letter written by Francis Skillman to the *Roslyn News* (ca. 1895) describes the history of many houses standing in Roslyn during the period 1829-1879. Skillman also prepared a holographic map to illustrate the location of buildings described in his letter. 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, included 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, later the Blue Spruce Inn, and the Federal part of the Valentine Robbins House (TG 1976-77) which can at present be dated only architecturally but which certainly was built within a few years of the other three. It seems reasonable at the time of writing to assume the Onderdonk House was built first, then the Robbins House followed by the Valentine House although future investigation may alter this tentative sequence. In addition, the Richard Kirk farmhouse, later "Cedarmere," which was built in 1787, may be the earliest member of the group. However, three major alterations and a serious fire have obscured its original configuration. The gambrel-roofed Francis Skillman House seems to be the most recent of the group. Measured drawings of the Francis Skillman House have been prepared by Alex Herrera, now Director of the New York City Landmark Commission, working under the aegis of the Landmark Society. During this procedure some fire-damaged moulded door facings were

salvaged as trim samples. It had long been the hope of the Roslyn Preservation Corporation to dismantle the remains of the surviving original main block of the Skillman House and reconstruct it on a similar site, a wooded hillside off Glen Avenue on the west side of the Village. Actually, the oak framing of the house had survived with little rot and little fire damage except to the intermediary rafters. Enough of the original architectural detail and sheathing had survived to plan an extremely accurate restoration. Negotiations with the estate of the late Carl Werner, which owned the house, had gone on for several years but the executors were never willing to actually donate the house. These negotiations continued until February 12, 1981. Less than one week later, on February 18, 1981, the building burned once again, this time completely destroying the original Federal house. It is most unfortunate that this locally outstanding building for which all the facilities for restoration were available, should have met this end. Actually, a six-panel, Federal interior door with its original Suffolk latch, a 2-panel shutter, a panelled cupboard front and a strip of door facing had survived in a tiny cottage on the site. These were donated to the Roslyn Preservation Corporation by the Carl Werner estate and it is assumed that all came from the Skillman House. Both shutter and door have applied mouldings in the Federal style which are identical in cross-section to those on the 6-panel Federal interior doors of the William M. Valentine House and it is assumed they were made with the same moulding plane. The attorney for the Werner estate also has donated the original front door and a number of early porch columns which were removed when an early porch was demolished to convert the Skillman House to the Blue Spruce Inn. Plans called for the preservation of this "Skillman Cottage," originally a small utility building, perhaps a carriage shed or stable, near the proposed reconstruction site for the Francis Skillman House. Unfortunately, the Skillman Cottage also was destroyed by fire early in 1984. 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" (TG 1974-75, 1986) in 1869. The Van Nostrand-Starkins House (TG 1976-77, 1989) and William Hicks' original "Montrose" both had kitchen dependencies which no longer survive. The kitchen dependencies of the Valentine-Losee House (TG 1976), the John Rogers House (TG 1976-1977) and of the 1869 alteration of "Montrose" all are standing. While the survival 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.

During the fall of 1984, the exterior of Stephen Speedling's original "Presbyterian Parsonage" (1887) (TG 1978-79) was stripped of paint on all but the north side, and repainted. It seemed obvious that an earlier "stripping" had taken place and no trace of the original paint colors was visible. Because of the onset of cold weather, the north front remained undisturbed. Stripping was continued during the fall of 1985. During this procedure the undisturbed, original, paint pattern was disclosed. This had been executed in three colors, green, reddish-brown and olive. The clapboards were painted green and the vertical boarding, in the north gablefield, was painted reddish-brown. The north gablefield battens had been picked out in the same green as the clapboard paint. This "picking out" of the

battens in a board-and-batten structure was identified for the first time in the East Toll-Gate House (TG 1976-77, 1982-83), in the Roslyn Cemetery, by Frank Welsh, a well-known paint analyst. The discovery of another similarly painted building, in 1985, suggested the possibility that the picking out of battens might be the technique of a local painter. Discussion with Frank Welsh disclosed that he had never seen "picked-out" battens except for those in the "East Toll-Gate House." Morgan Phillips, paint analyst for the Society for The Preservation of New England Antiquities, stated that he had seen battens treated as trim on only one occasion, in a late 19th century house in Connecticut. Similarly "picked-out" battens embellish the belt-course of the late 19th century "Charles B. Davenport House" at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories and probably were used in other buildings as well. Apart from these four examples of "picked-out" battens, no others are known. It is obvious that more general use of paint analysis is needed to disclose the dramatic design practices of Victorian house-painters. The SPLIA exhibit of the works of Edward Lange, in 1991, includes a few small accessory buildings having "picked-out" battens. These buildings all were in Suffolk County, establishing that the practice was a general one on Long Island during the mid-to-late 19th century.

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. Jacob C. Eastman may be the earliest identifiable local carpenter-builder. He is described in the article on Henry M.W. Eastman in "Portrait and Biographical Records of Queens County, N.Y." as born in New Hampshire and practicing in Roslyn before the birth of his son, Henry W., in 1826. It is possible he was the builder of the group of early Federal houses described elsewhere in this article. It is also possible that he was the builder of the Noon House at 1100 Old Northern Boulevard as the Noon House sheathing techniques of Northern New England and Canada appear in the Noon House. So far as we know, they do not exist elsewhere in Roslyn (TG 1994). Thomas Wood is another important early carpenter-builder. He probably was Roslyn's principal carpenter-builder between 1825-1865. 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 Williams-Wood House (TG 1965-66-67, 1988-89), 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 seemed related to it. Later carpenter-builders were John S. Wood, Thomas' son, and Stephen Speedling. Both worked during the second half of the 19th century. Thomas Wood's diary for the year 1871 was donated to the Society in January 1977. It indicates that by that time Thomas Wood was limiting his activities to making storm doors, sash and picture frames for Warren Wilkey, his son John, etc. John S. Wood was Warren S. Wilkey's brother-in-law and almost certainly was the designer and builder of his house. It was learned recently (1983), from a pencilled sheathing inscription, that the George W. Denton House was built by John Dugan who was a brother of Samuel Dugan I, a mason. John Dugan

was described in his obituary (Roslyn News, January 14, 1888) as “born in Ireland” and “a leading architect and builder.” He may have designed the George Washington Denton House in addition to having built it. Two houses built by Stephen Speedling were exhibited in 1978–1979. These are the Presbyterian Parsonage (1887) and the Oscar Seaman House (1901). Speedling’s carpentry shop still stands at No. 1374, Old Northern Boulevard. Speedling also identified himself as the builder of the south addition to the Jacob Sutton Mott House, in a pencilled note on a shingle dated August 8th, 1876. He probably was the builder of the John F. Remsen House (TG 1992–93) and the Estella Seaman House #1 (TG 1992–93).

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 used, provided it may be accepted that 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 1860, 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 the 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 door frames were usually in

style and executed with contemporary detail. On the other hand, metal hardware frequently was retarded in style, a 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 Williams-Wood house and the John Mott house. A Searing lock in the O.W. Valentine House (TG 1985-86) also bears the stamp "A. Hill/Patent; N. ORLEANS.

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, the larger, more fashionable houses being built along the harbor were 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). The Jerusha Dewey House belongs to the County of Nassau. It has been partially restored by the Town of North Hempstead Historical Society. Measured drawings were completed by John Stevens in December 1981. Copley also published the design for "Clifton," still standing in Roslyn Harbor (TG 1987-88), in *The Horticulturist* Vol. XX, 1865 Pg. 7 to Pg. 11 and reprinted in Woodward's *Country Houses* as Design #30, p. 139. In addition, he may have designed the Gothic Mill at Cedarmere." Copley did not consider himself an architect but signed himself "artist." He is known to have painted at least one Roslyn landscape, dated 1857, which returned to Roslyn in 1980. 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 (TG 1993-94). 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 XXVII, #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 "Locust Knoll," now "Mayknoll" (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) (TG 1961-1962) 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." 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 include the Marble Collegiate College as well as a number of commercial buildings. 13 of these built between 1879 and 1895 survive in the "Soho Cast Iron District" of which all but one have cast iron fronts. The present Roslyn Railroad Station was built in 1887 in the High Victorian style. Its train sheds were retrimmed and the interior modernized in 1922 at which time the exterior brick work was stuccoed, stimulating a conflict between Christopher Morley and the Long Island Rail Road in 1940. Copies of the original water-damaged drawings were donated to the Society by Robin H. H. Wilson, President of the Long Island Rail Road, in November 1981, and no signature could be found on the early set of drawings which have been redrawn by Bruce Gemmell of the School of Architecture of the New York Institute of Technology under the Landmark Society's sponsorship. The original Railroad Station design probably was done by an unknown Long Island Rail Road architect who designed a number of similar stations for the Line (TG 1982-1983). It was re-located several hundred feet to the south in December, 1988.

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 "Cedarmere" and later was the landscape architect of Central Park, a project strongly supported by Bryant. However, today most writers feel that Bryant was his own landscape architect at "Cedarmere." 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 possibly designed other local buildings. These local connections of Olmstead and Vaux may also have been responsible for bringing Mould, a Central Park associate, commissions in this area. Near the turn of the century architectural attributions may be made with stronger authority. In 1898, 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 (TG 1971-72). Frick's architect was Sir Charles Allom who designed



the re-decoration of the John Nash Rooms in Buckingham Palace for Queen Mary. He also was the interior designer for the major rooms of the Henry Clay Frick mansion on Fifth Avenue. The grounds at "Clayton," during the Frick ownership, were even more important than the house. During the 1920's and 1930's, landscape architects such as Marian Coffin and Dorothy Nichols superimposed formal landscape designs upon the existing Bryce parkland. In an effort to stimulate the restoration of Clayton's planned landscape, the Roslyn Landmark Society provided for the restoration of the Frick Rose Arbor by Robert Pape and the Jamaica Iron Works in 1981. In 1983, the Society was awarded a matching grant by the New York State Council on The Arts to prepare a restoration project plan for the superb trellis at the south end of the parterre which was designed by Henry O. Milliken and Newton P. Bevin in 1930. This study was undertaken and completed by Robert Jensen. The Society has raised the funds necessary to complete the restoration of the principal component of the trellis, the central, apsidal arch with its flanking, paired Ionic columns. Work on the restoration of the Milliken-Bevin Trellis was started by Wooden Bridge Inc. in 1987 and was completed during the Spring of 1988. Staining was completed by James Shea in 1989. The specially prepared stain and technique for applying it were donated by Samuel Cabot, Inc. This restoration will preserve one of the most important examples of landscape architecture in the United States.

The design of the Ellen Ward Memorial Clock Tower (1895) (TG 1971-72) 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 Roads. The dairyman's house also survives, as does the Water Tower, now owned by the Roslyn Water District. The same architects did the designs for Trinity Church Parish House (1905) and Trinity Church, Roslyn (1906) (TG 1969-70).

Architects of national reputation have continued to work in Roslyn. 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 served as the office of Paul L. Geiringer Associates and was one of ten New York State restorations of commercial buildings described in "Preservation for Profit" which was published by The Preservation League of New York State, in 1979. The architect for the restoration was Guy Ladd Frost, AIA.

During recent years there has been an increased interest in the Queen Anne Revival, an architectural style which developed in the last quarter of the 19th century. There are a number of examples in Roslyn, two of which were exhibited

on the 1978–1979 tours. Carpenter-builder Stephen Speedling was the principal exponent of the style locally. The Queen Anne Revival was a mixed style, established by the 1870's in England, by a group of architects under the influence of William Morris Arts and Crafts Movement, and first represented by the architect innovators Phillip Webb (Red House, 1859) and Eden Nesfield (Longton Hall, 1860). The style was internationally popularized by the work of Norman Shaw (Glen Andred, 1867).

Most of the Queen Anne style houses were designed for a small, aesthetically advanced segment of the upper middle class. Stylistic elements were culled from the mid-17th century Dutch style, as embodied in the William and Mary Period, as well as from the Queen Anne rose-brick vernacular buildings. Design elements were found as well in Gothic, Jacobean and Tudor buildings. It began as an expression of revolt against the pretentiousness of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival and the enormous Gothic mansions of the mid-19th century postulating a return to a more domestic human scale and purely domestic comforts. The use of native and regional materials were, in the beginning, an important element of the philosophy of design.

In America, under the influence of Norman Shaw and his contemporaries, the first house of this type was the Sherman House, at Newport, Rhode Island, built in 1874 by Henry Hobson Richardson, its interior distinguished by a novel open plan. It is usually referred to, in the context of the Newport expanded "cottages," as a Shingle Style building, and was widely imitated, with patterned shingles substituted for the "Hung-tiles" of its British predecessors. The architectural firm of McKim, Meade and White designed Long Island examples at a somewhat later date, often incorporating English-Georgian details. An English architect of the same group, William Burgess, designed the Quadrangle at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.

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 several 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.

Not all the new discoveries are based upon literary research. In the Tour Guide for 1977, 1978 the entry for the Augustus W. Leggett Tenant House describes the earliest part of the structure as a 1½ storey "copy-hold" house, 14 feet square. In 1979 the house was sold to Mr. & Mrs. James Shevlin who, late in that year and early in 1980, added extensively along the west front of the building which involved the destruction of most of its early west wall. During the alteration it was possible to locate the original south exterior doorway, the existence of which was only conjectured in the Tour Guide description. In addition, the original 10" wide yellow pine ground floor flooring was uncovered. More important, it was established that the original small building was sheathed in board-and-batten and retained its original ground floor horizontally boarded dado. The early framing included no studs but the plate, and roof framing above, were supported by heavy

corner posts and intermediary center posts. Dove-tailed mortises, for tie-beams, had been cut into the plate above each of the corner posts and the center posts. Since the loft flooring dated from the late 19th century when the original structure was much enlarged, it may be accepted that originally these tie-beams established the ceiling height of the room below, which made for a structure which included only a single plastered room, 14 feet square and 10 feet high. The location for the original hearth along the north wall was indicated by a cut in the flooring and the framing for the chimney remained at the north end of the ridge in contact with the gable rafter. As usual in local houses of the period, there was no ridge member. The chimney was approximately 24 inches square and set on the diagonal as it passed through the roof creating the impression of a diamond-shaped chimney. So far as we know no other example of this type chimney construction survives in Roslyn. This elegant little building with its single large room may have included a plaster cornice and probably was Augustus W. Leggett's library. Most likely it was built 1845–1855. After "Hillside", the Leggett estate, changed hands the building probably was allowed to deteriorate as Map #2 of the Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., Ltd's Roslyn Atlas published March, 1886, indicates it only as a 1½ storey "shed."

The description of the George Allen Tenant House (TG 1978–79–80–81–82) states that "the recently acquired Sanborn Atlas of Roslyn, published in 1886, establishes in Map #2 the dimensions of that house in 1886." Reference to the same map indicates the site of the 2½-storey Caleb Valentine house, complete with its east veranda at the end of a flight of stairs off Main Street—which survives to this day. The Caleb Valentine House, which stood between #36 and #60 Main Street, burned in February, 1887. It was described in the Tour Guides for 1977 and 1978 as "Hillside" because of its connection with Augustus W. Leggett. At that time its precise location could not be established. The Sanborn Map establishes its location at the precise spot described in the Tour Guide, at the top of the surviving stone stairway. The John F. Remsen House (ca. 1885) will be re-located to this site.

Apart from the recent (1984) restoration of John Warmuth's derelict saloon, perhaps the most exciting architectural event of all has been the construction, or reconstruction, of three Victorian commercial buildings in the Business District. First to be completed was the conversion of a small, mid-20th century, nondescript, concrete-block structure, on Bryant Avenue, into a much larger, architecturally convincing, Victorian bakeshop named "Diane's Desserts." Next to be completed was the reconstruction of a mid-19th century harness shop, which had been enlarged and modernized at the turn of the century and, for many years, been operated as "Raymon's Department Store." Because of a serious foundation problem and to gain space, the new "Raymon's" was rebuilt about ten feet to the west of its original location by the Roslyn Savings Bank. The reconstructed "Raymon's" is almost a precise replica of the original and retains its original bracket system and much of the original shopfront. The third building, like "Diane's," is on Bryant Avenue. In this case, the entire Queen Anne Revival front of Dr. William Dohm's veterinary hospital was applied to a newly constructed medical office building designed by Guy Ladd Frost, A.I.A., who, obviously, was strongly influenced by the design of Dr. Dohm's front. This elaborate Queen Anne Revival shop front was added to the front of an unpretentious, 1½ storey, clapboarded building by Dr. Dohm, after World War I. The architect of the original front was Henry W. Johanson, of Roslyn, who also was the architect of the Roslyn Rescue Hook & Ladder Company and of the Lincoln Building Group, all

of which survive. On the basis of the foregoing, the most important architectural component of Dr. Dohm's building has survived intact. Space prevents a more detailed description of all three buildings, here. However, a comprehensive account has been published on pages 7 and 20 of *The Roslyn News* for January 26th, 1984 (Vol. 106, #41). All three buildings enrich the Village substantially. It is hoped they will stimulate equally qualitative efforts by the owners of other commercial buildings. It is strongly recommended that participants in the House Tour visit all three buildings for the visual gratification of so doing and to see for themselves how each of the three has improved its surroundings. In 1984 Albert Margaritis, builder of "Diane's Desserts," built his own board-and-batten architectural millwork shop to the rear of "Diane's Desserts," modifying the remains of an old hen house. In 1989, Diane and Albert Margaritis modified another 20th century building, south of the bakery, in accordance with John Collins plans for a bracketed Italianate building. In 1989, the Bell Hotel, across Bryant Avenue from the Margaritis group, was restored by Guy Ladd Frost's design for Paul Brown. The Bell Hotel, in the Queen Anne Revival Style (ca. 1878) originally was clapboarded but was covered with shingles, ca. 1900. Later, synthetic siding was applied. The latter was removed in 1989 and the porches re-built more closely to their original design and enclosed.

1986 was an unfortunate year for historic preservation in Roslyn. In April, the shingle style George T. Conklin House (1912) at 198 East Broadway, burned to the ground without ever having been studied. Later in the year the Building Inspector required the reconstruction of the moribund front porch of the house at 1100 Old Northern Blvd. The house, because of its concrete block foundation and other architectural characteristics, had always been regarded as a "Colonial Revival" house which looked earlier. Reconstruction of the porch required exposure of the framing of portions of the principal (south) front. The exposed framing was constructed of heavy, riven timbers connected by means of massive pinned mortise- and-tenon joinery, which established that the house had been built about 1800, or even earlier. While future study of the house is indicated it now seems that this was one of the houses moved across Northern Boulevard when it was widened for the extension of the New York and North Shore Traction Company's street car line from Roslyn to Flushing in 1910, and that the concrete block foundation dates from that relocation. It is possible that the present 1100 Old Northern Boulevard is the M. Noon House which is shown on Francis Skillman's Map as being almost directly opposite on the south side of today's Old Northern Boulevard (TG 1994).

During 1986, it became definite that the course of Lincoln Avenue, in Roslyn Heights, was to be relocated to provide a direct connection between Warner Avenue and Round Hill Road. Six buildings stood in the path of this relocation, i.e., the Roslyn Railroad Station (1887) (TG 1982-83), the North-bound Passenger Shelter (1906-1922) (TG 1982-83), the Railway Express Office (ca. 1920) (TG 1982-83), the Arthur Duffett Building (ca. 1870), the Henry Duffett Residence and Country Store (ca. 1870) and the Henry Duffett Carriage Barn (ca. 1870). Plans had been made for the actual relocation of the Railroad Station about 1,000 feet south, several years earlier, and it actually was moved late in 1988 and was placed on its new foundation by Davis Brothers Engineering Company, early in 1989. For awhile, the Trustees of the Incorporated Village of Roslyn were interested in relocating the Passenger Shelter for use as a bus stop at Glen Avenue and Old Northern Boulevard, but decided it might be subjected to vandalism and withdrew. At this point the Roslyn Preservation Corporation contracted to

relocate the Passenger Shelter to the south end of the Captain Jacob M. Kirby Storehouse site, (TG 1987) where it has been restored to serve as a picturesque garden house and will conceal north-bound traffic and head lights on Main Street. Considerable effort was made to accomplish the relocation of the Henry Duffett Country Store and Residence (#6 Lincoln Avenue) to Roslyn Village either as single or two individual buildings. However, the scarcity of land and the very high cost of relocation prevented a successful outcome (TG 1987). The Arthur Duffett Building (#4 Lincoln Avenue) suffered the same fate (TG 1987). The Henry and Arthur Duffett buildings and the Railway Express Office all were demolished on Boxing Day, December 26th, 1986. Limited investigation of all these buildings was accomplished in connection with the demolition procedures. In addition, the most interesting architectural features were salvaged by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation.

The Henry Duffett Carriage Barn, ca. 1870, was so hidden behind modern additions and plastic sheathing that it was not even recognized as an early building. When it was, the Roslyn Preservation Corporation contracted to relocate it. It was dismantled and reconstructed at the rear of the John Rogers House (TG 1987-88) by John and Marian Stevens. While it may be considered that the "saving" of half of the six early buildings remaining around the 1870 Station Plaza may be reasonably successful preservation effort, especially in the light that the most important structure, the Railroad Station, will survive, it should be recognized that all the survivals will be relocated and that the Station Plaza, perhaps the most vital commercial area in Roslyn, during the late 19th-early 20th centuries, will have been eliminated completely. The Henry Duffett Carriage Barn utilizes a most unusual type of board-and-batten roof sheathing, which has survived in part (TG 1988—John Rogers House).

Near the end of 1986, Mr. Vincent A. Gentile advised the Roslyn Preservation Corporation that he planned to build new houses at the rear of the Jacob Sutton Mott House (constructed 1831-1837/family history) at 800 Mott's Cove Road, North, in Glenwood Landing and that, in order to do this, it would be necessary to remove two small, asphalt shingle covered, accessory buildings. He offered to donate both buildings to the Roslyn Preservation Corporation for relocation. One of these proved to be the Jacob Sutton Mott granary, 14' x 14', dating from about 1840. While some of the granary wood framing had rotted, most of its interior architectural features have survived. Since it was imperative that the interior of the tiny granary should survive, arrangements were made with the Nassau County government to relocate the building to Old Bethpage Village. The other building was a garage, which originally was 16' x 24', but which had been extended to the south to permit the storage of automobiles. However, much of the early south wall had survived, inside the extension, together with large areas of original shingling. The rafters, which were notched for purlins, had been turned over. The garage was set upon a concrete foundation. On this basis, the structure could have been relocated from some other site. Investigation of the structure indicated that it originally had been a house, built in the late 17th or early 18th century, which was converted to a barn about 1830. It had been enlarged and sheathed with asphalt strip shingles for use as a garage about 1920. Frank Harrington, the Roslyn Harbor Historian, reports that Jarvis Mudge bought and later leased this site from the Matinecock Indians in 1693. The site of a future house was designated in the document of sale. This land was purchased by Joseph Mott in 1734. He died in 1735 and the land was inherited by Jacob Mott I, the first member of the family to live on the east side of Hempstead Harbor. If the house

described actually is the one mentioned in this transaction, it could have been built by Jarvis Mudge as early as 1694, or by Joseph Mott I, shortly after 1735. The Roslyn Preservation Corporation contracted with Janice and Robert Hansen to relocate the structure, in sections, to the west of their house, "Locust Hill" (TG 1983-84) where it has been reconstructed to its configuration as an early 19th century barn, in accordance with the plans of John Stevens. The Mott Granary, also, was reconstructed on the grounds of Old Bethpage Village, in 1987. Subsequently, Mr. Gentile decided that he required the land upon which the Jacob Sutton Mott House (1831-1837) stood. This was purchased by Thomas and Patricia Loeb late in 1987 and has been relocated to a site at the corner of East Broadway and Davis Lane, where it was reconstructed. It was exhibited in a partially restored state, on the 1988 House Tour and in its restored state, on the 1989 and 1990 tours.

On April 30, 1988, Thomas Phelan, President, The Preservation League of New York State, presented their "1988 Adaptive Use Award to THE ROSLYN PRESERVATION CORPORATION for the exemplary preservation and reuse of THE ROSLYN HOUSE, ROSLYN, which demonstrates that the best way to protect New York's architectural heritage is to make valuable older buildings an integral part of everyday life.

On May 27, 1988, Commissioner Orin Lehman of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, announced the recipients of New York's Ninth Annual Historic Preservation Awards. The awards are given in recognition of outstanding public and private achievements in the preservation of New York's priceless historic assets. One of the recipients was The Roslyn Landmark society for the quality of its Annual House Tours and Tour Guide. The precise citation follows:

**THE ROSLYN LANDMARK SOCIETY (Nassau County).**

Initiated in 1961, the Annual House Tour of the Roslyn Landmark Society has been accompanied by a Tour Guide of exceptional quality and interest. To date, 90 structures have been documented in a manner which is thorough, professional in its approach, and at the same time very readable. Visitors get complete information on the structures in a serious format which has become the basis for an on-going writing project which comprises a history of the entire community.

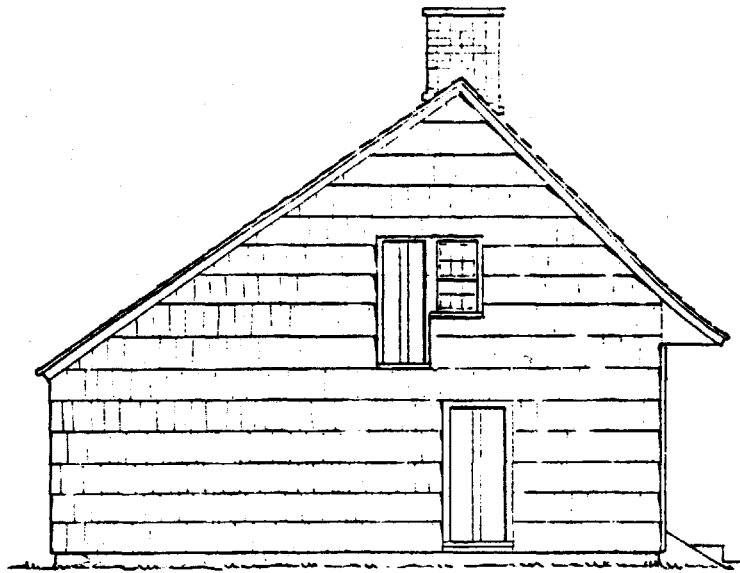
In 1992, the Society's Annual Tour Guide was the recipient of the Preservation League of New York State 1992 Tourism Award "for significant achievement in the preservation of the rich architectural and cultural legacy of New York State." In 1993, Peggy & Roger Gerry were the recipients of the Preservation League of New York State's Award of Honor for their preservation achievements in Roslyn. In the same year they received the preservation award of Honor from the New York State Division of the American Award of Institute of Architects.

Also in 1992, during the excavation for the John Remsen House sewer across Main Street, a buried stone wall was found five feet east of the present west curb. It has long been known that Main Street originally was narrower than it is today. This wall indicates how much.

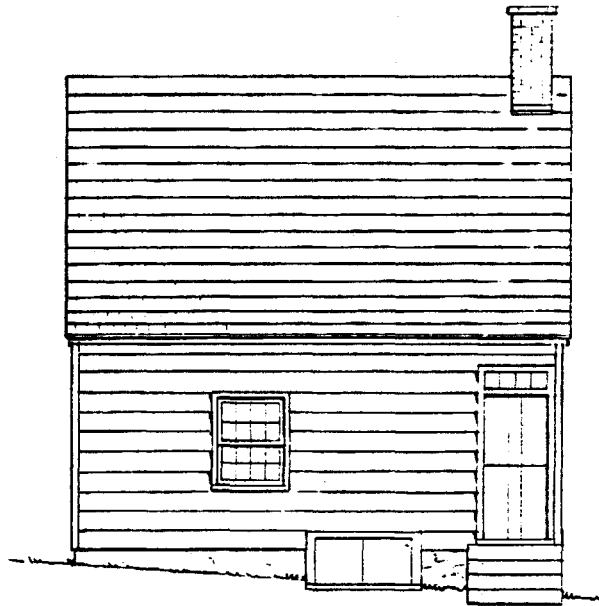
1988 also saw the completion of the Rallye Motors buildings designed by Ulrich Franzen of New York. The showroom is constructed of polished pink granite. The site plan and landscape were designed by Zion & Breen, of Imlaystown, New Jersey. During the summer of 1989, the Daniel L. Mott House, built by Lars Larsen ca. 1900, was relocated from Maple Street and Scudders Lane, in

Glenwood Landing, to the grounds of "Comfort Cottage" on Glenwood Road, in Roslyn Harbor. While the Landmark Society had nothing to do with the Mott House move, the successful relocation of other local buildings almost certainly influenced this effort.

In 1988 the much altered shingle style John F. Remsen House (ca. 1885) was displaced by the Park Ridge Development and had been up on blocks subsequently. Late in 1990, the Remsen House was acquired by the Roslyn Preservation Corporation which planned to carefully strip and study the structure and re-locate it to the site of the Caleb Valentine House, ca. 1820 (#58 Main Street), which burned in 1877. The site had been donated to the Preservation Corporation by Roger Gerry and Floyd Lyon late in 1990. The architect for the project is Guy Ladd Frost; the architectural historian is John R. Stevens and the contractors are Jim Kahn and Peter Kahn.



W.



S.

Van Nostrand-Starkins House, Stage II, ca. 1730-1800  
Drawings by John R. Stevens



**THE VAN NOSTRAND-STARKINS HOUSE (Circa 1680)**  
**221 Main Street**  
**Operated as a House Museum by The Roslyn Landmark Society**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Prior to 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 references 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 co-incidentally 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. (Historical Notes: Rosalie Fellowes Bailey)

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 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 1814. Francis Skillman states "the

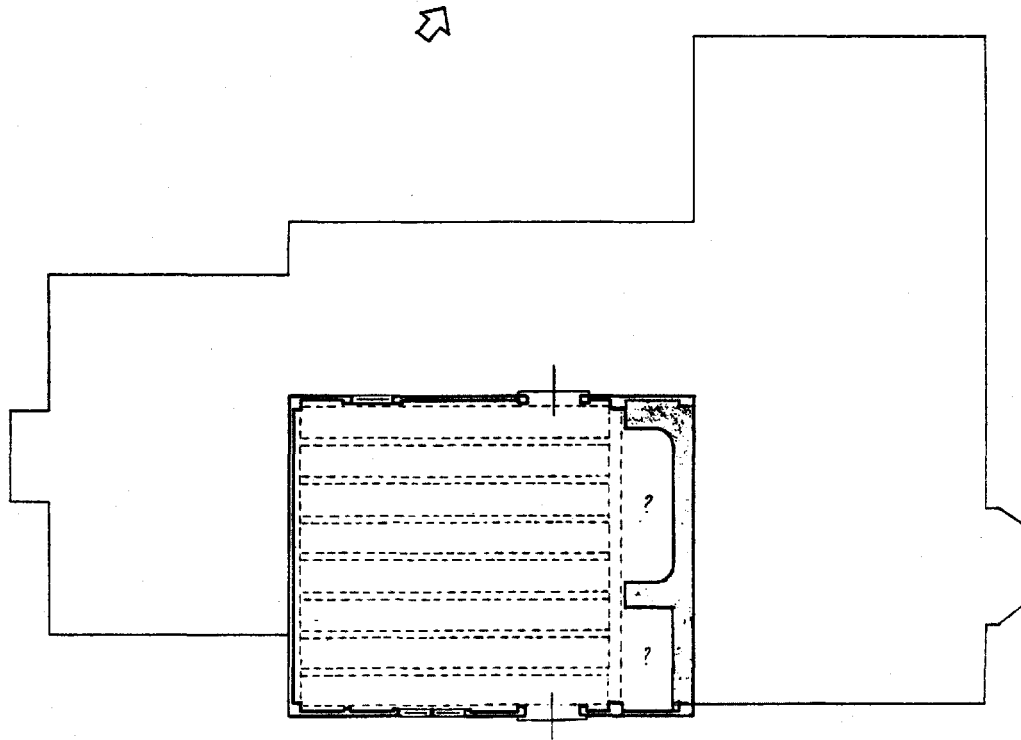
next house south was Joseph Starkins, the blacksmith, at the fork in the road. . . . South of this (going up the hill) and near the stone (R.R.) bridge stands the old house given by a Richard Valentine to his son, William (ancestor of the present Valentines in Roslyn)." Skillman implies there were no houses between the Valentine (Railroad Avenue) and the Starkins (Van Nostrand) houses. Yet the 1st census shows Lt. Col. Richard Manet (Maney), the senior Revolutionary War officer in Hempstead Harbor, as living between them. He may have rented the separate east wing in the Van Nostrand House. The Walling Map (1859) shows a Kirby House between the two but this probably was not standing at the time of the 1790 Census.

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 (TG 1986–87).

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 (TG 1986–87) and barn within the Corners triangle; the Van Nostrand house and its neighbor to the north (TG 1979–80), with his little office in the back (TG 1978–79) 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 (TG 1973–74) 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 Kirby-Sammis House (TG 1986–87) 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 they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. John G. Tarrant. In 1966 the Incorporated Village of Roslyn acquired the property from a holding company which 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. During 1973–1977 the Roslyn Landmark Society, with funds partially matched by a grant from New York State, restored the house to its appearance at the time it was the home of Joseph Starkins and William Van Nostrand.



Van Nostrand-Starkins House, First Floor Plan  
Stage I, 1680-1730

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS REPORT

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. However, the construction technique differs between the "original" and the "lean-to" portions of the foundation, so it now (1989) appears that the early house always has stood on its present site. 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 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.

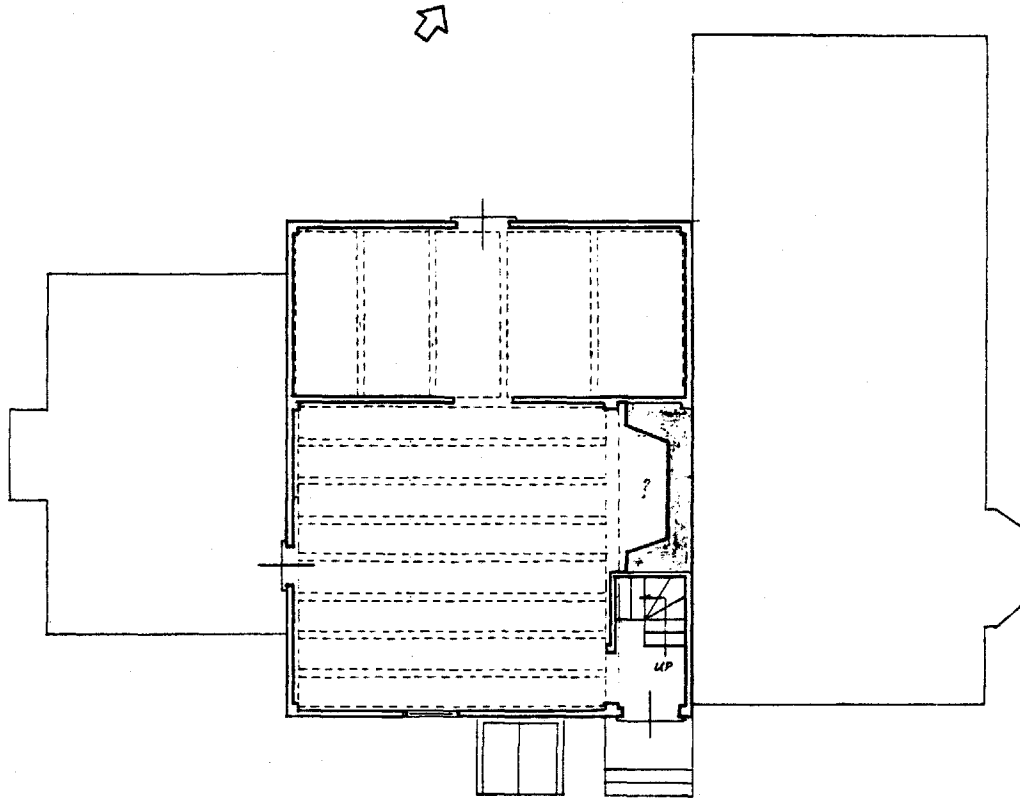
A major part of the original framing has survived. It is entirely of white oak. The original north and west sills exist, although a short piece of the north sill at the east end is missing. There is a rabbet in the west sill to receive the ends of the floor boards. The floor joists are set the thickness 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 double 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 joists 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 mortises that relate to the original construction period. Later mortises 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 borne 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 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. The two braces at the chimney girt are missing.

There were five pairs of rafters, of which the inner three pairs 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 mortised 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



Van Nostrand-Starkins House, First Floor Plan  
Stage II, ca. 1730-1800

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 mortise for a door post, and in the adjacent 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 has been removed of any other notches. In addition, the present north

cellar wall is 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 of the original, smaller lean-to. If this conjecture is correct and an earlier, Stage I, lean-to did exist, the present foundation dates from Stage I also.

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 even 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 with 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 mortises 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 mortised 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 mortises 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 re-used 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.

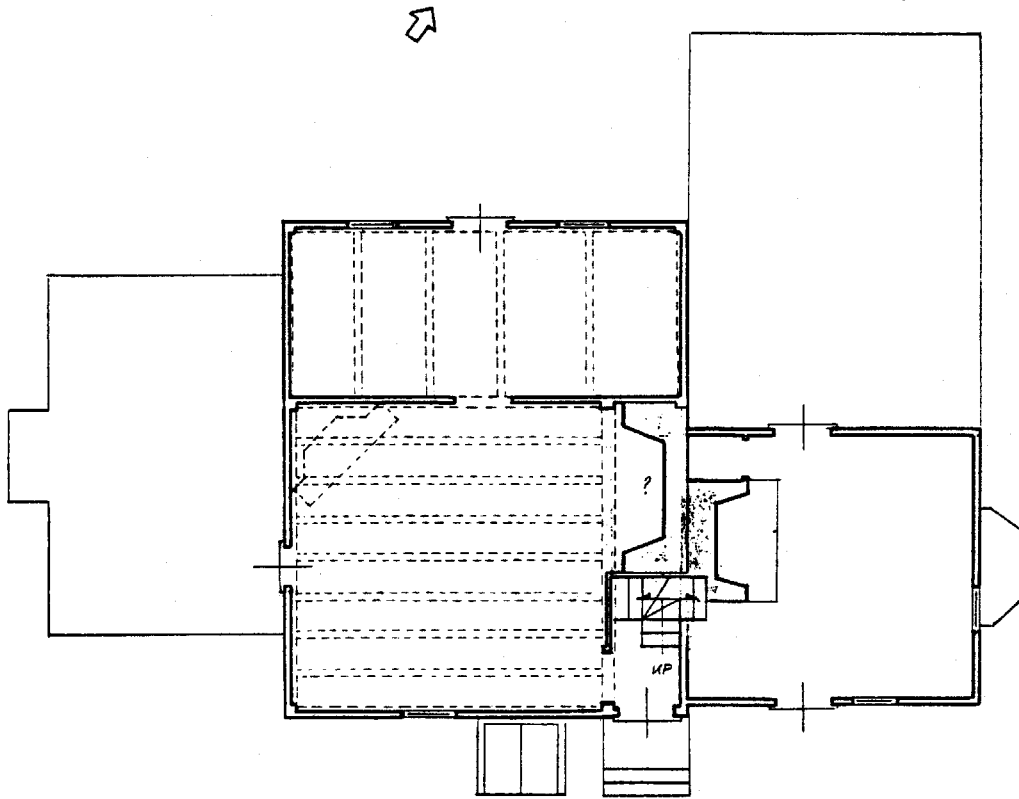
The "stone end" east wall was removed and replaced by a stone wall that ended short of the south wall, and extended up only as high as a girt inserted at this time. The top surface of this girt was on the same level as the original girts. Its ends are gained into the corner posts. There are seven more 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 wall of the original part by being let into it with a dovetail end joint. None of the joists 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 mortised into the lean-to plate. The lean-to corner posts are 5½ inches 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. Original, Stage II oak shingle lath extend behind this opening. 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 were in place. These were damaged in restoration and were replaced according to the original dimensions and patterns. Their under surfaces, which show as the first floor ceiling, are planed. They are about 12 inches in width.

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. This section, with its shingle lath, is on exhibit in the



Van Nostrand-Starkins House, First Floor Plan  
 Stage III, ca. 1800-ca. 1830

loft. 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. These have been replaced with new shingles, similarly applied.

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 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 baseboard also have survived behind the corner fireplace.



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 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 later 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 6/6 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 casing of the doorway originally had backbands on both sides, but only the exterior ones survived. 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 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.

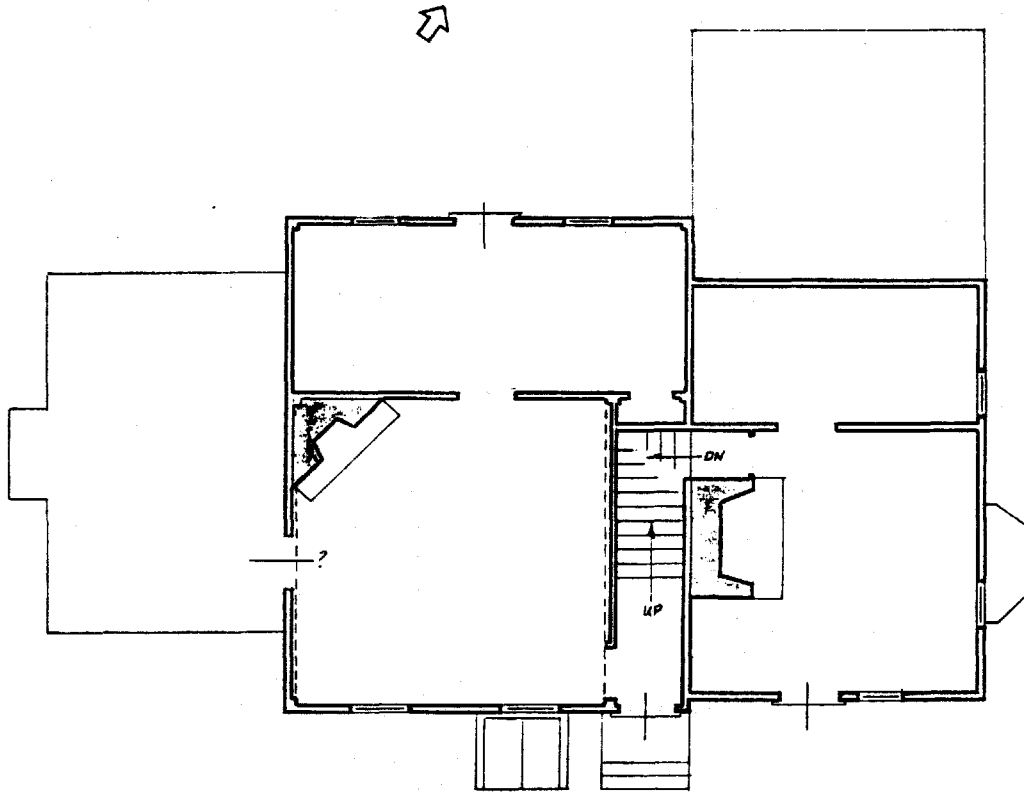
There was apparently no communication between the wing and the main unit for some time after the wing was constructed. Access between the two sections would seem to have been made in Stage V.

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 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



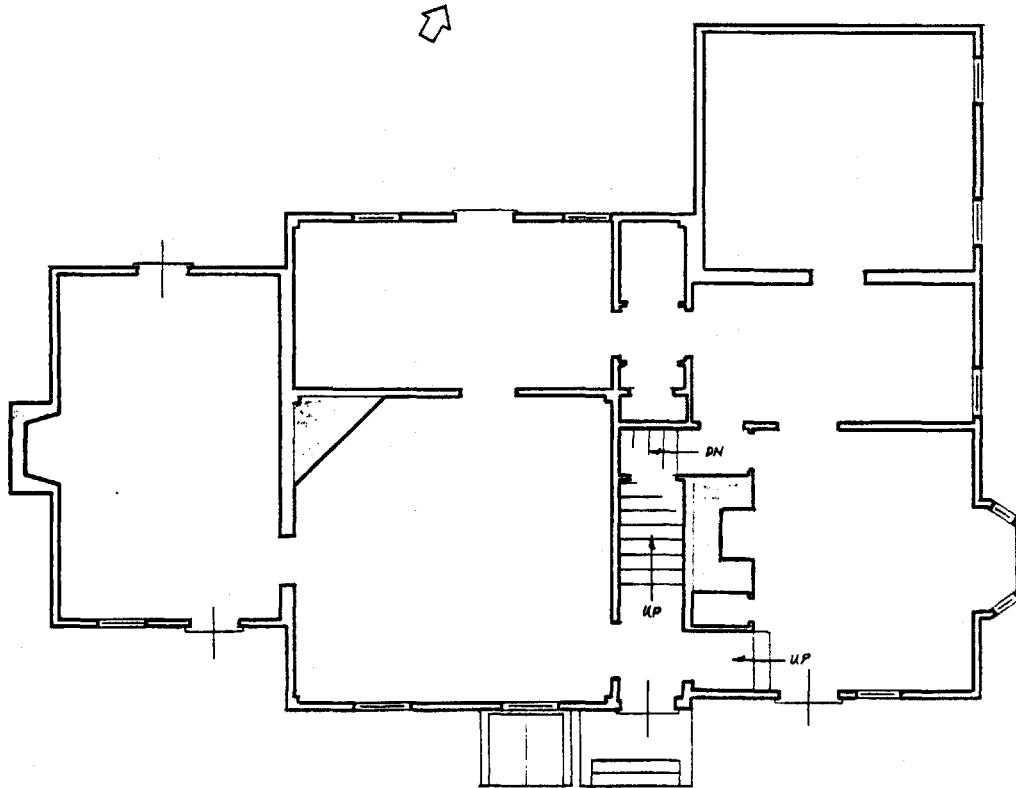
Van Nostrand-Starkins House, First Floor Plan  
Stage IV, ca. 1830-ca. 1875

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.

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 6/6 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 had 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



Van Nostrand-Starkins House, First Floor Plan  
Stage V, ca. 1875-1970

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 6/6 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 caps 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.

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 did 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 (TG 1974-75), 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**

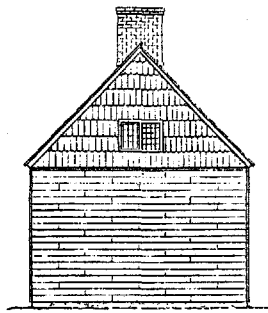
Most of the 20th century work involved the second floor of the main unit. On the first floor, the only significant change was the replacement of the flooring. In the main room the original joists were retained, but short joists were installed between them so that the new flooring ran from north to south.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

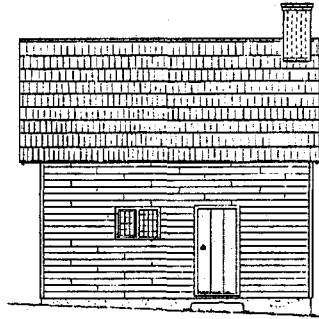
## **EPILOGUE**

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 and supervised its restoration. The chimney and fireplace design and construction were accomplished under the direction of Lt. Colonel Frederic N. Whitley, Jr., U.S. Army Engineers Ret., 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 and, subsequently, worked on many other local restoration projects. Mr. Soukup continues (1992) to work on local restorations. The interior color analysis was completed by Frank Welsh, and the interior painting was accomplished under the direction of Kenneth Rosevear.

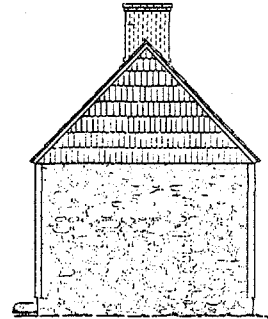
The analysis presented here describes the structure of the house as it was immediately prior to the restoration procedure. In developing a restoration



West elevation



South elevation

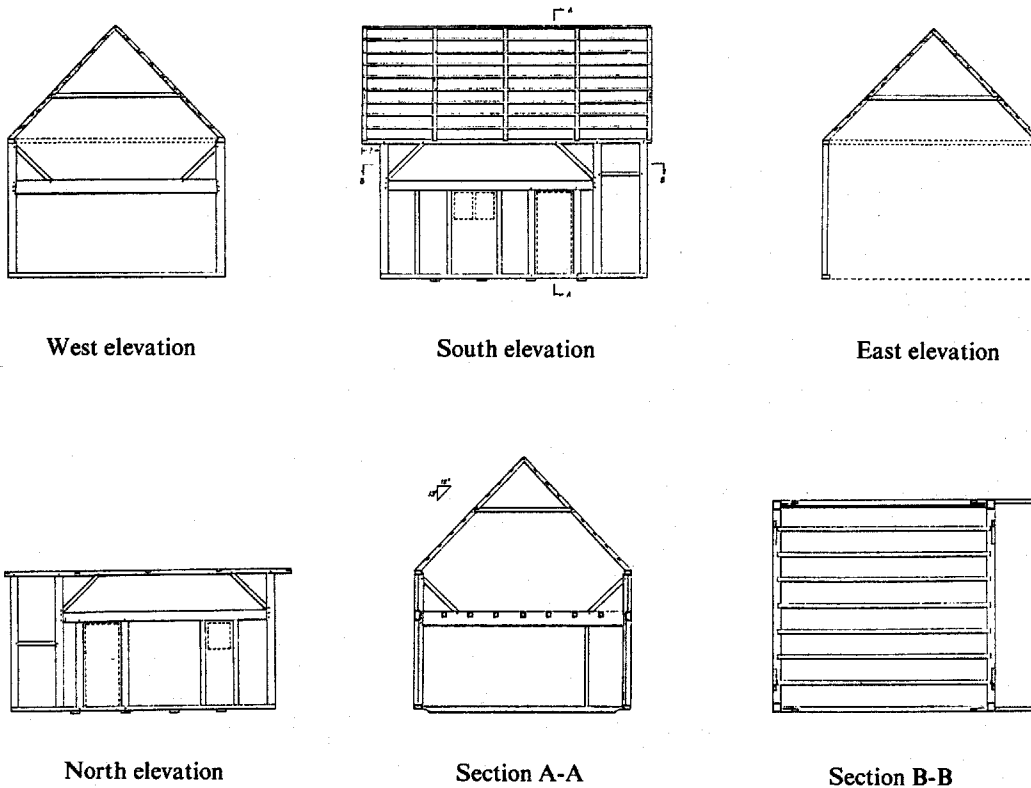


East elevation

Van Nostrand-Starkins House  
Reconstructed elevations  
Stage I, ca. 1680  
Drawings by John R. Stevens

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 early 18th century work. Restoration to Stage IV was contraindicated 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.

The restoration of the Van Nostrand-Starkins House was completed in 1977 and the house was exhibited in the Landmark Society tours in 1975, 1976 and 1977. Since then it has been open to the public as a house museum, on Saturday afternoons, from May through October. The Society has been fortunate in acquiring furnishings, mostly by gift, which have descended in Roslyn families, some of them in the Van Nostrand House itself. These include the Kirby lowboy and the Kirby kast, both of which must have resided on this corner for well over a century. The Kirby lowboy was exhibited in S.P.L.I.A.'s "Long Island Is My Nation" exhibit. The feet of the Kirby kast, dated 1734, were exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum's Kast Exhibit, in 1991. Numerous other Kirby family gifts also are on exhibit in the house. Several pieces descended in the Bogart-Seaman families, including the painted kitchen cupboard. The Long Island type gumwood



Van Nostrand-Starkins House  
 Framing Details  
 Stage I, ca. 1680–ca. 1730  
 Drawings by John R. Stevens

kast, which descended from Adam and Phoebe Mott, of Cow Neck, 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. The permanent exhibit of samplers worked by local girls is unique on Long Island. Since the completion of the restoration, the general site grading has been completed and a rubble retaining wall constructed along the house's north boundary. In addition, the only free-standing rubble wall construction in Roslyn during the past century has been erected along the east boundary. Both were built by Frank Tiberia. This site development program was made possible by a Community Development Grant awarded by the Town of North Hempstead American Revolution BiCentennial Commission.

In 1982, the fourth, and most comprehensive, archaeological investigation was completed under the supervision of Donna Ottusch-Kianka, of New York University. Significant quantities of relevant artifacts were unearthed which help significantly in understanding the life practices of early occupants of the house. Some of these have been placed on permanent exhibit in the cellar, which recently was re-worked for this purpose, along with comparable artifacts excavated near other local houses. Wooden sheathing from the John Rogers and Arthur Duffett Houses has been installed here for exhibit and to preserve them.

Similarly, all of the framing of the 17th and 18th century loft has been color-coded so that chronologic evaluation is easily possible. Local architectural fragments are exhibited here, including sections of the seven examples of 19th century fencing surviving in Roslyn as well as tool-boxes belonging to local carpenters which date over the entire 19th century. To enhance this fence exhibit, a replica of an early 18th century oak and locust fence was erected along the south boundary of the site, in 1988. This was designed by John Stevens and executed by Edward Soukup and Giulio Parente.

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. The plan was prepared 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 bed of medical and culinary herbs and, at the far end of the garden space, will be rows of root vegetables and other food crops." Unfortunately, the Landmark Society has never developed the beds as it has not yet been possible to find some dedicated person who will agree to care for them. Perhaps 1992 will be a better year.

During 1989, the cellar of the Van Nostrand-Starkins House was improved so that it could be used as an exhibition area for archaeological artifacts collected on the site and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere in Roslyn. Because the cellar is heated, it also could be used as an all-year work area. No changes were made which affected any of the original fabric of the house. The 17th century west rubble wall, which was powdering badly, was re-pointed as required. Overhead electric lines were concealed and improved lighting installed and the concrete floor was covered with plastic tiles. The new, east chimney wall was sheathed with wall panels from the second storey, west room of the demolished Arthur Duffett House (TG 1987). The utility panels, on the south cellar wall, were concealed behind early 19th century beaded wall-boards which had been used as flooring in the John Rogers House (TG 1987-88).

During the fall of 1990, the roof of the main structure was reshingled by Edward Soukup and Noel Zuhowsky using 32 inch long, split cedar shingles, having a 13 inch exposure to the weather. Shingles which were too irregular to lie flat were smoothed with draw knives. These replaced 24 inch, factory-made shingles installed in 1974. Also, during the fall of 1990, all the exterior solid-color stain was removed and was replaced with a penetrating oil stain of the same color. During 1990-1991, the 85 year old American elm at the south-east corner of the house, which towered over its roof and which was long thought to be resistant to Dutch elm disease, succumbed. Many of its seedlings had been planted in various arborita as blight-free elms. It was removed in late 1991-early 1992.







“Locust Hill”  
Hendrickson-Ely-Brower House (1836)  
As it appeared Ca. 1875. (Staircase is conjectural)  
Guy Ladd Frost

**"LOCUST HILL"**  
**HENDRICKSON-ELY-BROWER HOUSE (1836)**  
**110 Main Street**  
**Residence of Anne Gronan and Michael Viola**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Hendrickson-Ely-Brower House is shown on both the Walling (1859) and Beers-Comstock (1873) Maps of Roslyn as belonging to Samuel Rose Ely. It is shown on the Wolverton Map (1891) as belonging to "S. R. Ely" although, in this instance, the owner probably was Samuel Rose Ely, Jr. Francis Skillman states that the house was built in 1836 on land which had formerly belonged to Hendrik Onderdonk which had extended as far south as the southern boundary of the Hendrickson-Ely-Brower holdings ("Cider Mill Hollow"). Nothing is known of John Hendrickson. There was a "W. Hendrickson" house on the south side of the west turnpike during the second half of the 19th century. It is not even known whether or not he actually lived in the house. The house was exhibited on the Roslyn Landmark Society's House Tours in 1962, 1963, and 1984. Considerable information is available concerning Samuel Rose Ely. There is an excellent family genealogy, "The Records of the Descendants of Nathaniel Ely", by Heman Ely of Elyria, Ohio, which was published by Short and Forman of Cleveland in 1885. In addition, Samuel Rose Ely is one of the very few Roslynians whose biography was published in Appleton's "Cyclopedia of American Biography", N.Y., 1887. In any event, Samuel Rose Ely was born in Westfield, Mass. on December 29, 1803. He attended Westfield Academy and was graduated from Williams College in 1830. He studied theology at Princeton and subsequently held Presbyterian pastorates in Carmel, N.Y., East Hampton and Brooklyn. On October 10, 1834, he married Mary Van Gilder (born 6/3/1799), the daughter of Abraham Van Gilder of New York City. In 1846 Samuel Ely's health started to deteriorate and, in 1852, "seeking repose and the quiet of country life" he bought a house in Roslyn. Within a year his health had improved sufficiently for him to assume the pastorate of the recently-built (1851) Roslyn Presbyterian Church (TG 1973-74, 1990-91). He was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by Columbia College in 1865. He retired from his pastorate in 1871, and died, in Roslyn, on May 11, 1873. His widow continued to live in the house at least until the publication of the Ely family genealogy in 1885, although by that time she was 86 years old. A son, Samuel Rose Ely, Jr., lived at home with her. Since he was born on May 1, 1837, he would have been 74 years old in 1911 when the Browsers bought "Locust Hill." However, the Belcher-Hyde Map (1906) shows the property belonging to "Mrs. Phebe A. Cornell", so there was at least one intermediary owner between the Elys and the Browsers.

In 1848, Henry Western Eastman and Eugene A. Hyde, "a Connecticut school partner settled at Roslyn" who was editor of the "North Hempstead Gazette" (1848-1852), founded the Roslyn Academy at Locust Hill (TG 1988-89) in a building owned by Henry W. Eastman. The Roslyn Academy operated until 1850, after which year it was used for other purposes. On June 12, 1852 the Locust Hill property was conveyed by Henry Western Eastman and Lydia Macy Eastman, his wife, to Mary V. G. Ely, wife of Samuel R. Ely, of Brooklyn, for \$2,750.00 (Queens County Liber 97 of Deeds, page 490). This purchase included both the residence & the Academy building. From 1849 until 1851, when the church building was consecrated, the Roslyn Presbyterian Church held its services in the Academy building.

In 1890 Mrs. Samuel Rose Ely died and, in 1891, her son, Samuel Rose Ely, Jr., sold the Locust Hill property to Mrs. William H. Cornell. In 1911, the property was purchased by Ernest Cuyler Brower and his wife, Marion Willetts Brower. Ernest Cuyler Brower died in 1925 and, in the following year, his widow married his brother, George Ellsworth Brower. "Locust Hill" remained in Brower ownership for 66 years. In 1978 it was purchased by Peggy and Roger Gerry, who lived across the road and were anxious to protect it. They made necessary structural repairs to the mansion and donated two scenic easements to the Incorporated Village of Roslyn. They also covenanted that no additional residence be constructed on the property they conveyed to Mary Ann and Barry Wolf in 1980. Mr. and Mrs. Wolf divided the property in 1982, selling the mansion and about 4½ acres of land to Robert and Janice Hansen, and the old academy and about 1½ acres of land to Patricia Maloney (TG 1983-84), who sold it to the present owners, Jonathan and Kathy Rives, on February 1st, 1985. Robert and Janice Hansen sold the Mansion to the present owners on October 17th, 1993.

The Locust Hill property is shown in both the Walling Map (1859) and the Beers Comstock Map (1873) as belonging to Rev. S.R. Ely. It also is shown on the Sanborn Maps for 1908, 1920 and 1931. Earlier Sandborn Maps do not include that part of Main Street. On the three Sanborn Maps cited, the Academy Building is shown to be 25' by 40' in area and located 125 feet northwest of the mansion, and is oriented in the north-south direction. It is described on the Sanborn Maps as a one-storey building having a wood shingle roof. ½ of the building is shown as a "residence"; the remaining ½ for "Tool Storage." At some time shortly after 1931, the academy building was moved to its present location, 140 feet west of the Locust Hill Mansion. It also was rotated 90 degrees to the present east-west orientation.

On November 1, 1853, a young student, Joseph H. Bogart, who lived in the Pine-Onderdonk-Bogart House, was given a Bible as a prize for "Punctual Attendance and Good Behavior at the Roslyn Presbyterian Sunday School by his affectionate teacher, S.R. Ely, Jr." Samuel Rose Ely, Jr. was only 16½ old at the time he made this award. Years later, Joseph H. Bogart, who had become a physician, attended Dr. Ely in his declining years. In 1879, six years after Dr. Ely's death, Dr. Bogart was given a silver teapot made, circa 1825, by Gerardus Boyce of New York, by Dr. Ely's heirs. The teapot bears the engraved cipher "M. V. G." (Mary Van Gilder), and survives, appropriately enough, in the collection of the Roslyn Landmark Society. Both Dr. Bogart's Bible and the teapot were donated to the Society by Mrs. Bogart Seaman.

Early in the 20th century the house was purchased by Ernest Cuyler Brower and his wife Marion Willetts Brower, who were married in 1909. Mrs. Brower told two of the authors of this article (P.N.G./R.G.G.) that she and her new husband decided to buy a country house in 1911 and took the Oyster Bay branch until they reached open country. They detoured at a pretty village they later identified as Roslyn. They found a house they liked, "Locust Hill", and eventually bought it. The Browsers both were descendants of distinguished Brooklyn families. Ernest Cuyler Brower (born 1/8/1877) died in 1925. After his death his widow married his brother, George Ellsworth Brower (born 1/22/1875), on October 9, 1926. During the period of their ownership the Browsers made substantial changes to the house, the most consequential of which were designed by Bradley Delehanty, an architect who specialized in the design of Long Island mansions and in the conversion of country houses into appropriate residences for their fashionable

owners. Mr. Delehanty's role in the future development of the house was most important. Basically he was converting a late-Federal house into a Colonial Revival one. While he really did not understand Late-Federal or Greek-Revival detail, the areas we know he designed, i.e., the drawing room, dining room and second and third floor north chambers, are extremely well executed. In some places we do not know which work was his and which work was original. Actually, if he started work earlier than we think, prior to 1926, it may be assumed that much of the present finish of the house represents his design.

"Locust Hill" remained in Brower ownership for 66 years. After the death of Mrs. Brower it was bought by Dr. and Mrs. Roger Gerry (1978) who lived across the road (TG 1971-72, 1985-86) and were anxious to protect it. To do this they retained the services of Robert Zion, president of the firm of Zion and Breen Associates, to survey the wooded, hilly site and develop a plan which would assure its survival. In accordance with Mr. Zion's recommendations, scenic easements were donated to the Incorporated Village of Roslyn covering the wooded hillside south of the driveway and the land east of the house extending to Main Street. The two easements comprise approximately three acres and the easements provide that no structure can ever be built upon them. In June and July, 1978, the services of Steve Tlockowski and Edward Soukup were retained to restore the badly rotting dentillated east cornice of the house. On July 8, 1980, the Gerrys sold the house to Mary Ann and Barry Wolf. The contract of sale provided for the perpetuation of the two scenic easements and limited the total residences on the property to three, i.e. the already existing residence and the Roslyn Academy which had been converted to serve as a garage by the Browsers, plus one additional residence which could be built or moved there. All three houses were protected by architectural covenants. In addition, the Gerrys retained ownership of slightly more than one acre of the property which approached an abandoned section of Glen Avenue, which originally extended from Old Northern Boulevard to Willis Avenue. During their period of ownership Mr. and Mrs. Wolf retained the services of John Stevens, to prepare a floor plan and to explore the fabric in selected areas in order to be able to establish construction data. In 1982 the Wolfs divided the property, selling the old Locust Hill Academy and about an acre of land to Patricia Maloney, and the remaining five acres and the residence to Robert and Janice Hansen. In completing the arrangements for these transactions, all rights for the construction or re-location of a third residence were waived by all parties.

The residence only will be the subject of this article.

The Hansens painted the house and modernized the kitchen. No other alterations have been made.

## **ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

The house, as built, was five bays wide and had a pitched roof, the ridge of which extended from north to south, parallel to the road. Stylistically it was built in the Roslyn, late-Federal style, along with a number of other local houses, of which group it is the largest survivor. It was 2½ storeys in height and was sheathed with shingles. The eave soffits were closed. It had a full cellar which was rubble below grade and brick, laid in American bond, above the exposed east foundation wall which extended high enough above the grade to permit the use of 6/3 basement windows along the principal (east) front. The first and second storey windows all were of the 6/6 type, except for an elaborate three-part window over the front

door, which included a 6/6 central window flanked by 2/2 vertically placed sash. The third storey, 3-light clerestory, or "eye-brow" windows were set in a flush-boarded frieze below a dentillated cornice, which turned the corners and returned into the north and south walls. The 6/6 first floor windows were fitted with 3-panel, Tuscan-moulded shutters. The 6/3 basement sash were fitted with similar 2-panel shutters. The 6/6 second storey windows probably originally were fitted with panelled shutters matching those on the first floor. The clerestory windows never were fitted with shutters. A photograph survives, taken about 1920 during the Brower ownership, which confirms all of the foregoing. By the time this photograph was taken the house had been fitted with a two-storey-and-basement, flat-roofed service wing, at its south end, together with a large, wood-shingled, hip-roofed, open porch fitted with an outdoor chimney and fireplace, at its north. These were the indications that the house was owned by a fashionable family which employed trained servants who lived in the house and who had the leisure to relax on a large, isolated verandah. Most of the remainder of this article will be an assessment of those features which had been added or changed by the time the photograph was taken; which original features are not identifiable in the photograph and those modifications which have been completed since the photograph was taken.

Two rectangular brick chimneys are shown in the photograph, both placed in the east roof slope, off the ridge and inside the north and south exterior walls. Both have some type of masonry rain-caps. It is almost certain that both chimneys are original, but modernized by the date of the photograph. Modernization consisted of re-pointing above the roof line; removal of the original decorative chimney caps and placement of the masonry rain-caps. Almost certainly in the original house there were two similarly placed chimneys in the west roof slope, a total of four in all. No readily found evidence of the southwest chimney survives. Since the original north wall of the house is missing, no trace remains of either the actual northeast or the conjectural northwest chimneys. The photograph also shows an externally-placed brick chimney outside the south wall of the new service wing. Obviously, this could not have been built until the construction of the service wing itself. This chimney still survives and serves the new kitchen. The photograph also shows a hipped-roof porch structure having two massive tapering piers which support its roof. This entrance porch survives today although the present brick porch staircase is set directly east, in front of the porch platform. In the photograph a much less impressive staircase provides access to the north side of the porch. For reasons which will be described later, this is almost certainly not the original porch, although its masonry foundation appears to be quite early and may date from the original house. Since the first floor door-sill is at least five feet above grade, some type of staircase has always been essential.

The house today is seven bays in length, two bays longer than it was when built, and the north wall is constructed of brick laid in American bond. In her later years, Mrs. Brower told one of the writers (P.N.G.) that, "many years ago we had a chimney fire which did considerable damage to the north end of the house. We retained Bradley Delehanty to lengthen the house and to construct a brick wall at the north end for the new fireplace." A new porch was built north of the new brick wall beneath which was placed a large wine cellar and food storage area. A card tacked to the inside of the wine cellar door is dated "December 5, 1926" and lists the wine cellar contents on that date. Obviously the enlargement of the house had been completed by that time. During the spring of 1980, in the course of clearing out the contents of the loft of the Locust Hill Academy, Bradley Delehanty's

elevations for the improvement of the dining room were found. These were dated 4/23/1930. On the basis of the foregoing we may assume that Bradley Delehanty's connection with the alterations to the house began some time prior to 1926 and continued into the early 1930's. If Delehanty's work started before the north addition, i.e., before the photograph was taken, and he was the designer of the service wing, it may be assumed that much of the exterior detail is his work. This problem may never be resolved.

In all likelihood, when the Browers bought the house in 1911 it had been changed little, or not at all, at least on the exterior, since the time of its construction. Soon after they acquired the house they added the two-storey south service wing and the north porch. By adding the service wing they were able to relocate the kitchen from its original location in the basement to its present location on the first floor of the service wing. They also probably made some changes to the front porch, although these are difficult to date. Probably they made some interior changes to provide space for bathrooms, etc. Among these, they seem to have "straightened out" the south wall of the second storey center hall. In the early photograph the shutter is closed over the south section of the second-storey, central, east triple window. Today the south wall of the center hallway, now in a bathroom, ends at the site of this window and the shutter is kept closed to conceal the alteration. Obviously it was kept closed for the same reason when the photograph was taken. Similarly, the east window in the second floor of the service wing was a working window when the photograph was taken. Today this window is completely "walled over" on its interior and its shutters are kept closed. Some time after this first round of alterations to make the house an appropriate summer residence for the Browers, the fire in the north wall occurred and, as mentioned above, Bradley Delehanty was retained to enlarge the house to the north; build a new north brick wall and to make certain other improvements.

After the 1962 Landmark Society House Tour in which the house was exhibited and described, it caught fire again. This fire took place on January 27, 1963. The fire started in the master bedroom which occupied most of the second storey south of the central hallway, and destroyed that room, the south stair-wall, the maid's room over the master bedroom and a considerable part of the roof. For some months there was considerable local concern over the possible demolition of the house and division of the property as Mrs. Brower was elderly and the house much larger than she required. Finally, after several months of decision-making, the roof was closed in and the repairs of the fire damage completed.

## **EXTERIOR**

### **East Front**

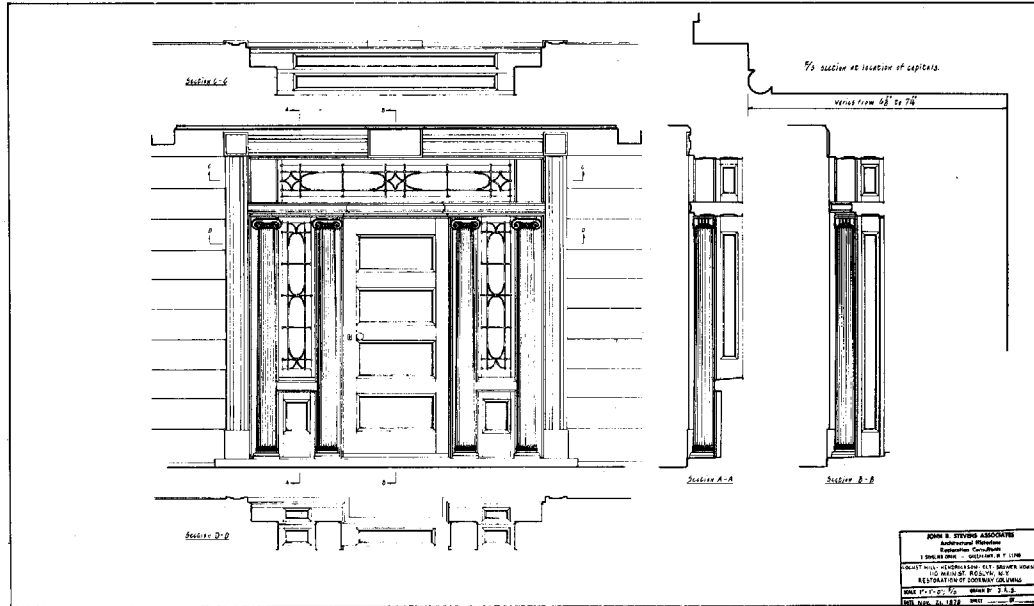
The high brick foundation, which is rubble below grade, has been described above. It includes 6/3 sash which are not fitted with drip-caps. The 6/6 windows all have plain drip-caps and plain, narrow facings. The house retains most of its original shingles which have an exposure to the weather of 9' to 10'. There are no corner boards at the end, where shingled walls meet. At the north end there is a flat corner board set on the brick wall. Only the edge of this is visible from the east. The basement and first storey windows retain their original panelled shutters for the most part. The louvered second storey shutters cannot have been installed prior to Dr. Ely's purchase (1853). They probably replaced panelled shutters, as those of the first floor, or else original louvered shutters, made on the job, which

could not be adjusted. The water-table consists of a plain board covering the top of the brick foundation, which has a projecting right-angled course upon which the lowest level of shingle butts are based. The southeast chimney remains as in the photograph, as does the exterior chimney at the south front of the service wing. The chimney at the north end of the house is part of Bradley Delehanty's enlargement of the house in 1926 or earlier.

There is an impressive dentillated cornice along the east front. The dentils are rectangular in cross-section. This extends around the north and south corners and returns into the end walls. The north two bays of this cornice are part of Bradley Delehanty's enlargement. However, the basic cornice and its dentils are original to the house. This finding was established during the cornice repairs of 1978 by the presence of square cut nails, etc. The cornice is supported by original wrought-iron brackets, in the same manner as the principal (east) cornice of the George Allen Residence (TG 1980-81-82). The clerestory windows, in the flush-boarded frieze, are separated by applied, moulded diamonds which extend on to the north and south returns. These are evident in the photograph taken before the north extension was built, as similar frieze does not exist in Roslyn. If Bradley Delehanty was responsible for the addition of the service wing and the other exterior changes, shown in the above-mentioned photograph, it is likely that he is responsible for the applied diamonds. If he was not involved in the early Brower alterations, it is most likely that the diamonds are original. It should be mentioned that two of the authors (P.N.G. and R.G.G.) felt that the major dentils represented Delehanty's work, until some of them were removed in 1978. Beneath the panelled diamonds, at the bottom of the frieze, there is a double, moulded string course which follows the frieze. There is a row of minor dentils dependent from the upper string course moulding. The minor dentils are themselves moulded utilizing a filleted torus moulding, identical to the battens of the Henry Western Eastman Dower Cottage (TG 1983). No other use of this moulding is known of in Roslyn. While the Hendrickson-Ely-Brower House is at least a quarter of a century earlier than the Dower Cottage, mouldings did remain fashionable for this long a period. If Bradley Delehanty applied the moulded frieze diamonds, he probably applied the minor course also.

The front (east) porch has a hipped roof and stands upon a rubble foundation which is brick above grade. The foundation brickwork appears to be early, if not original. The foundation ends are closed on the south exterior by part of a fine, beaded, flush-panelled door which retains an early 19th century keyhole-shaped spring latch on its interior, and, on the north, by an early window. The porch platform is concealed by canvas above and 20th century tongue-and-groove below and is not visible for examination. The present brick porch stairway with its wrought-iron railing is not visible in the early photograph although it may be concealed behind shrubbery. The staircase brickwork is much later than that of the porch foundation and the staircase, itself, probably dates from after World War I. The porch entablature rests upon two massive, square, tapering piers which are untrimmed except for simple, Tuscan-moulded capitals. The pier corners are not mitred. The piers appear to be those shown in the early photograph but probably date from the 20th century. The beaded porch ceiling appears to be earlier. The upper course of rectangular dentils, beneath the porch cornice, recapitulate the rectangular dentils of the principal cornice but are much smaller. A moulded strip separates the upper dentils from a projecting moulded string course which runs above the lower dentillated course. The lower filleted torus dentils are precisely the same as the minor dentils of the principal cornice.





John R. Stevens

“Locust Hill”  
 Hendrickson-Ely-Brower House (1836)  
 Front (east) doorway  
 (Ionic columns are conjectural)

The principal (east) doorway includes sidelights and an over-door transom. The panes are separated by traditional muntins. These are set in the Regency Style by which the muntins are so placed they provide for a narrow glass border around the wider, centrally placed panes. So far as we (P.N.G. and R.G.G.) know, this is the only Regency Style glazing arrangement to survive in Roslyn. The sidelights and transom are further embellished by the use of curved, moulded bentwood strips which further divide them into large, paired, flat ovals. The bentwood strips are further decorated at their crossings with small, cast-lead ornaments. Similar use of moulded bentwood strips to enhance sidelights and transoms have survived in the Onderdonk-Bogart House which stands at the north end of Main Street, and the James and William Smith House (TG 1984-85). The use of both the elaborate Regency glazing plan together with the bentwood designs seems almost like too much of a good thing. There is a temptation to attribute this to Bradley Delehanty. However, this would be a mistake as the work is all unquestionably in period. The bentwood designs conform to the glazing bars and the entire concept simply is the effort of a local carpenter-builder to get the most stylish effect he could achieve. The side-lights are placed over Tuscan-moulded panels. The frames and side-lights surround a Tuscan-moulded, back-banded door having four horizontal panels. The door retains its original hardware including a massive wrought-iron rimlock. Only the outside knob and rosette are missing. The doorway reveals are decorated with Tuscan-moulded panels. The doorway is encased by stepped pilasters and a matching lintel. The pilasters have plain bases and join the lintel at paired, plain corner blocks. There is a rectangular panel at the center of the lintel which is fashioned in the same manner as the

corner-blocks but in the form of a rectangle. Beneath the transom, and separating it from the door and side-lights, there is a prominent moulded transom-bar which breaks in over the door. The lateral projecting portions of the transom bar originally were supported by pairs of free-standing columns, one on either side of each side-light. These columns have been missing for many years. In November, 1979, Peggy and Roger Gerry retained John Stevens to design columns appropriate to the doorway. Using New York City prototypes Mr. Stevens selected round, fluted columns having Ionic capitals. Drawings were prepared for this work but the columns were not installed as the house was sold before the work was undertaken. It is interesting to speculate why the columns are missing. They may not have been available at the time of building. Limited paint removal was undertaken by Mary Ann Wolf but no "paint ghosts" were found. Complete paint removal was not undertaken. The original columns may have rotted and been removed or they may have been removed by Bradley Delehanty because he did not understand their role and thought them ornate, pretentious, or even "Victorian." For whatever reason, the columns are missing. This very fine doorway misses them and they should be replaced.

Over the east doorway there is a triple window, consisting of standard 6/6 sash in the center, flanked by a pair of narrow, 2/2 vertical sash. The side-windows are fitted with louvered shutters, of which the south is permanently closed. It is not known whether there is sash behind this shutter today although there was originally. Actually re-location of an interior wall has blocked up this narrow window. This alteration probably took place prior to the Delehanty alteration since the shutter is closed in the early photograph. The triple sash are delineated by four flat, untrimmed pilasters which have plain, flaring capitals. The latter support a flat, projecting shelf, like a mantel shelf, which serves as a drip cap. It should be recalled that even though the original fascia ornamentation continues over the north two bay sections of the house, that this addition was completed by Bradley Delehanty in 1925 or 1926.

### **North Facade**

The entire north end of the house was completed by Bradley Delehanty ca. 1925. The entire north wall is constructed of brick, laid in American bond, probably as a safety feature following the earlier chimney fire. The plain north chimney including its rain cover is contemporary with the north wall. The chimney includes a fireplace which opens to the north porch, which is served by a projecting flue which is corbelled into the north wall at the third storey level. The entire east cornice frieze returns around the northeast corner, which has a flat corner-board to terminate the east shingling. The cornice and double line of dentils on the frieze continue along the gable end beneath the eave line although the fascia is narrower than on the east front. The third storey windows in the gable field consist of a central round-headed window flanked by two quadrant windows. The same feature exists in the 1797 Anderis Onderdonk House (TG 1970-71) and this may be a Delehanty copy of the earlier work. The first and second storey sash are standard 6/6. At the north end of the house there is a large Adirondack Mountain porch built of locust logs retaining their bark. Adirondack Mountain camps were popular among the most fashionable families during the early 20th century. If one could not have a camp, the next best was a porch. There was an earlier large porch at the north end of the house in the early photograph. However, the present porch probably dates from the time the house was extended to the north. Beneath the

porch there is a large wine cellar and food storage vault which is entered from the basement.

### **West Facade**

This front apparently has always been the “carriage entrance.” The driveways end there today. Apparently, in the 19th century, there also was a carriage drive, from Glen Avenue, which crossed the present tennis court and ended at the west front. However, the west facade has always been simpler, architecturally, than the east front which faced the street. Basically this facade is the same as the east except for a few details, the most important of which is an original, five-bay, pent-roofed porch which extends along the entire west front of the house. The porch roof is supported by plain, turned, solid columns which have Tuscan capitals and no bases. Most of these are original. The wall of the house is flush-boarded beneath the porch roof. When Mr. Delehanty extended the house to the north he, mistakenly, extended the flush-boarding. There is a string-course across the top of the Delehanty flush-boarding to separate it from the shingles, above. This consists of a quarter- round moulding having a flat board beneath. This band continues around the porch roof. This probably is all Delehanty as it crosses the beaded fascia beneath the roof of the porch gable-field. The porch ceiling is beaded and probably most of it is original. The porch floor is brick today and may always have been. The large, projecting, canted-side bay window replaces the two original first floor windows south of the doorway. This dates from the Bradley Delehanty dining room alteration of 1930. Also dating from the Delehanty alterations, or later, were two low, shed-type dormer windows inserted in the west roof slope. A photograph survives which shows these in place after the house had been extended to the north. There was a triple window over the two windows north of the west doorway and a single dormer window over the windows just south of the west doorway. Both dormer windows were remarkably deforming. Fortunately they were destroyed by the fire of January 27th, 1963, and have not been replaced. The doorway has plain facings trimmed with back-banded Tuscan mouldings. The drip cap also is plain. The louvered, semi-elliptical, fan over the doorway is in period but an insertion from elsewhere. It could have been installed at any time. The five-panel, Tuscan-moulded door probably is original to this house, as early 19th century horizontally panelled doors are found in Roslyn only in this house; in the early part of the Oakley-Eastman House (TG 1977-78); and the James and William Smith House (TG 1973-74, 1984-85). However, this door has been much shortened to fit the opening and probably originated in another opening.

The west entablature is less impressive than the east. There is an original projecting cornice supported by wrought-iron brackets as in the George Allen Residence (TG 1980-81-82). The frieze is flush-boarded and is trimmed with moulded applied diamonds between the clerestory windows. There is a moulded string course at the lower edge of the frieze. However, the west entablature lacks the major and minor dentils of the east. The west entablature, like the east, continues around the corner, and returns against the north and south walls of the house. There is a one-storey wing at the south end of the west wall which projects furthest to the west. The north wall of this wing is faced with flush, beaded boards all the way down to its floor. A narrow strip of porch, matching the original, but having 20th century segmental columns, extends along the north face of this wing. This actually is a Delehanty addition to the earlier two-storey service wing which attempts to replicate the original west porch in 20th century materials. This addition ends with the narrow kitchen stoep which is sheltered by a pitched roof

supported by 20th century segmental columns. This addition is faced with board-and-batten sheathing along its west end. At the lower level there is a greenhouse and potting shed. This is entered by a round-headed west doorway. Sunlight is admitted to the area by way of a large, round-headed south window.

### **South Facade**

Originally this was sheathed with shingles and had fenestration similar to the rest of the house, apart from an 8/4 south basement window. The east and west entablatures both return against the south front. The gable fascia resembles the west frieze in that there are no dentils. As in the north gable-field, there is a central round-headed third storey window flanked by two quadrant windows. The sash in these are modern although the casings may be original.

Apart from these few early details, most of the south end of the house is occupied by a large, two-storey-plus-basement, flat-roofed, service wing. The box for the service staircase projects through the roof and there is a contemporary exterior chimney outside the new south wall. The chimney has a "waist" at the first storey eave line. Below this there is a "hound's tooth" panel. This appears to be pre-Delehanty as it shows in the early photograph. However, it certainly dates from the 20th century. It is only one bay wide from north to south. The second storey 6/6 east window is walled over on its interior today, but was a "working window" when the photograph was taken. The service wing projects farther to the south at the first storey and basement levels. This modification probably was completed at the same time as the west extension of the service wing which already has been described. The upper storey of the wing is shingled. The first floor is sheathed with board- and-batten. The basement level is a continuation of the potting shed at the west end and, like it, has arched openings at the east end. In this case the arches are pointed and infilled with lattice. The intervening south, basement-level, side wall is sheathed in novelty siding. The round-headed kitchen windows, at the first floor level, are the most interesting architectural feature of the new wing. Local tradition credits these with coming from the first Trinity Church (TG 1969-70) which was demolished in 1906-1907. It is likely, however, that they were new at the time this portion of the service wing was constructed.

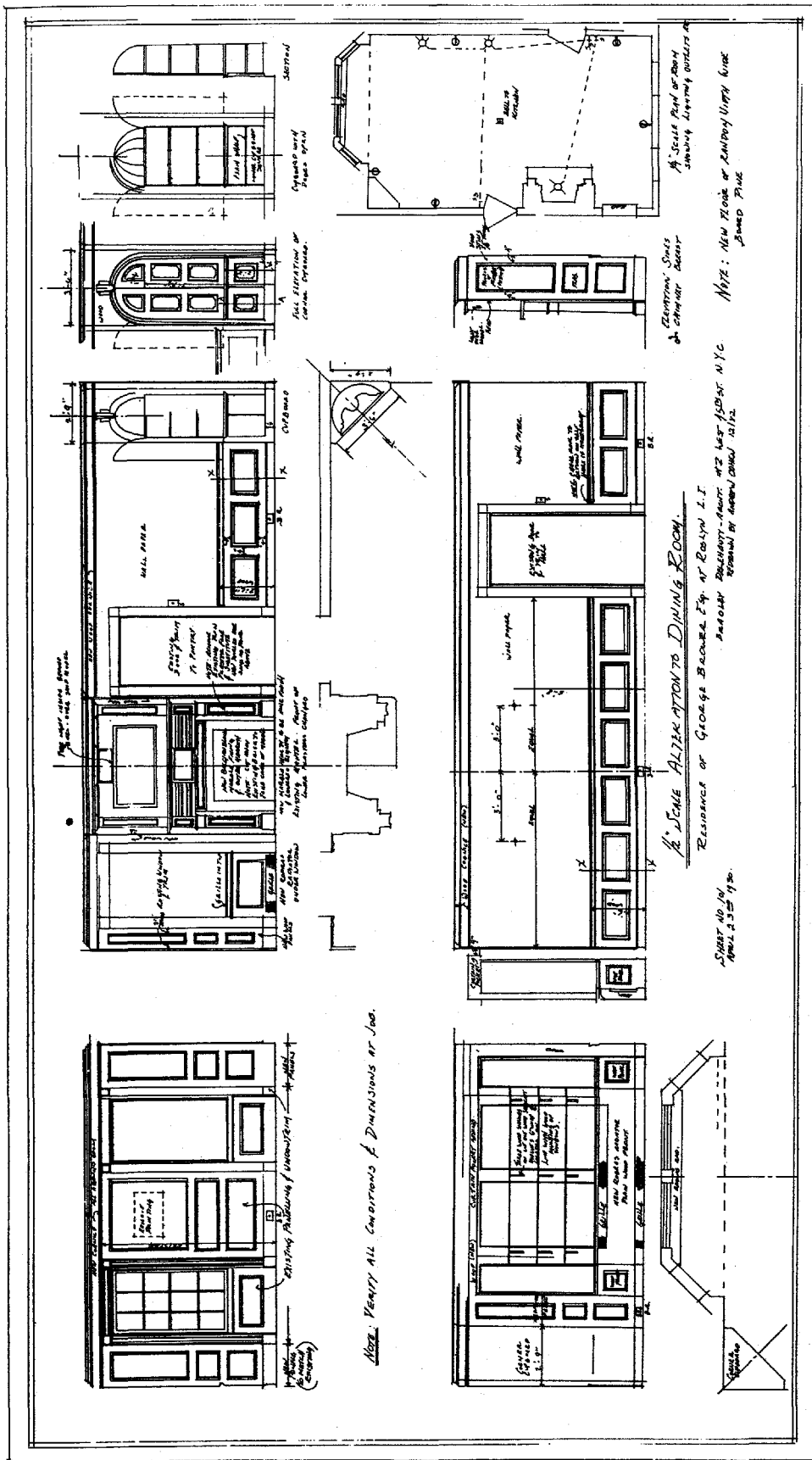
### **INTERIOR**

While the exterior of the house gives the impression of a large Late-Federal residence having a few modifications, the changes are far more evident in the interior. In general, the main floor central hallway and staircase are the least altered, although the present closet is a later intrusion. The dining room and drawing room are pure Delehanty although some features of the original interior trim are included in the Colonial Revival plan. The south wall of the second floor center hall originally followed the plan of the wall below it. However, this has been straightened to "square off" the master bedroom and has effected the blockage of a tall, narrow east side-window, as mentioned above. Also, the second storey floor plan has been altered to create space for a hallway to Delehanty's north chamber. This work seems to be poorly thought out and appears to date from the pre-Delehanty alteration shown in the early photograph. Probably it is the result of an early 20th century effort to create space for bath rooms. Similar modifications have taken place on the third floor.

Originally both first and second floors had four rooms, two on either side of the central hall. There probably was a small room at the east end of the second floor hall which included the triple east window. The third floor plan probably was similar to that of the second. The original kitchen was at the south end of the basement. This still includes the original bake-oven flanking the fireplace and the back and part of the cheeks of the early fireplace. The fittings for the large crane survive also. Today the ground floor center hall survives as built except for later flooring and an added closet. Its principal features include the interior faces of the east and west doorways; the stepped baseboards having Tuscan-moulded caps and the impressive staircase which crosses the hall at its west end. This has a San Domingo mahogany railing which includes a hand-rail, which is circular in cross section, and slender urn-turned balusters. The newel is the usual Roslyn newel of the 1830's. Three of the original interior doorways to the center hall survive, i.e., to the present dining room, to the present drawing room and to the present lavatory. The interior trim of the lavatory doorway is the same as in the present dining room and it is tempting to think that it originally represented the north end of a large rectangular room. When he stripped the walls of the lavatory in late 1980, John Stevens could not find evidence of this. If there were two rooms north of the stairway, the western room had to be entered under the west end of the stairway, which now provides access to the basement. The door cases are all faced with opposed, back-banded, Tuscan-moulded facings terminated by plain corner blocks, which are embellished by a simple, strip fillet. The Tuscan-moulded five-panel doors are all original. The present dining room originally had a north-south dividing wall west of the present pantry doorway. The door and window facings are original, except for the pantry doorway and the bay window. These have stepped surrounds with plain corner blocks. The original windows have Tuscan-moulded panels beneath. The mantel is original below the shelf except for the Tuscan-moulded piers which replace earlier turned columns, as in the Williams-Wood House (TG 1988-89) and the James and William Smith House (TG 1973-74, 84-85). The over-mantel panel was designed by Bradley Delehanty as was the elaborate, dentilled cornice. The elaborate round-headed corner cupboard may have been made by Judge George Ellsworth Brower, who was a talented cabinet-maker. Delehanty's drawings for the dining room labelled "Sheet #101/ April 23rd, 1930" were found in the loft of the Locust Hill Academy in 1979. Unfortunately the original work which survives, and that which was removed, are not indicated.

The pantry and kitchen are in the 20th century service wing. The kitchen stairway originally was enclosed and leads to two dressing rooms on the second floor and servants' bedrooms on the third. Earlier there was a small staff dining room at the west end of the kitchen. The dividing cabinets were removed during the refurbishing of 1982-1983. One of the kitchen cabinets includes glazed doors having pointed arches with carved mouldings. According to the late Marion W. Brower these came from the first Trinity Church.

The present drawing room originally included only two bays on the east and west. It almost certainly also was divided into east and west connecting rooms. The Tuscan-moulded, stepped baseboards and the Tuscan-moulded door and window surrounds at the early end of the room all are original. These are fitted with original corner blocks having interior fillets. The window cases include Tuscan-moulded panels beneath. All this has been reproduced by Bradley Delehanty to complete the north half of the present room. The present cornice and raised, moulded panels between the windows, and the dado, all were designed by Bradley



“Locust Hill”  
 Hendrickson-Ely-Brower House (1836)  
 Floor plan and elevation for dining room alteration by Bradley Delehanty, dated April 23rd, 1930.

Delehanty who obviously did not understand the inconsistency of using raised panels with mouldings of the Greek Revival Era. The massive north-south piers and lintel also were designed by Delehanty. This structure provides support to the floor above. It also provides for a library and "gentlemen's smoking area", a fashionable late 19th-early 20th century arrangement. The master bedroom at the south end of the second floor was created early in the Brower ownership by removing a wall which divided two chambers (east and west) and by relocating the north wall, east of the stairway to the north to create a rectangular bedroom. The shuttered south side-light of the triple window is at the south end of this wall. The fire of 1963 started in the master bedroom and no early architectural detail has survived. There are a pair of dressing rooms south of the master bedroom, in the service wing. The east window of the east dressing room has been closed over on the interior, but remains, with its shutters closed, on the exterior. Originally there also were two chambers north of the center hall and, probably, a small room at the east end of the hall, inside the triple window. All these have disappeared to create a hallway leading to Bradley Delehanty's north chamber. However, the hallway and small rooms created utilize a variety of 20th century detail dating from the early 20th century and after the 1963 fire probably were the result of an effort to provide bathrooms early in the Brower ownership. Some of the doors employed are 6-panel Federal doors having applied narrow Tuscan mouldings. These were re-used from this floor. The small east chamber has incised, panelled window stools which are original to the house. The stepped window casings also are original. The doorway to Bradley Delehanty's north chamber is at the end of the hall. This room occupies the entire second storey north end of the 1925-1926 addition. All architectural details date from then except for the mantel which is early and which probably was relocated from elsewhere in the house. This is a second quarter of the 19th century provincial type having a straight-edged shelf with rounded corners. The mantel breast is moulded, and the square piers which support the shelf are panelled but not moulded. The pier capitals include simple, raised panels, an unusual use in Roslyn. The only other use of raised panels with contemporary late Federal detail occurs in the George Allen Residence (TG 1980-81-82) in which both parlor mantel breasts include simple, raised panels. Actually, the use of raised panels in this vernacular group of mantels seems less of a mistake than Delehanty's misuse of raised wall panels in the highly sophisticated Locust Hill drawing room.

The principal stairway to the third floor is a continuation of the lower staircase and, like it, retains its original tread and landing flooring. All the flooring in the house originally was like that exposed on the landings today. The stepped baseboards and stair-stringer continue in the upper staircase but the cap is a torus moulding having a small cavetto moulding on top ("nose-and-cove"). Actually this baseboard moulding is also used in the second and third storey hallways and some of the small chambers. At the top of the stairway, at the third floor level, the stepped baseboard turns down to terminate in the floor while the moulded cap continues on to butt into a door surround. On the north side of the stair-wall the torus and cavetto baseboard moulding turns down to meet the floor in the same manner.

The third floor includes two maid's rooms, two baths, a cedar closet and a small bedroom on the west side of the hall which was Judge George E. Brower's workshop. It has been mentioned above that he was an accomplished cabinet maker. The detail, for the most part, is 20th century, although one of the south rooms includes an early 19th century board-and-batten door in its original case.

The linen closet also includes an early board-and-batten door, in this instance in a later case. Both doors almost certainly originated on this floor of the house.

The major third floor room is Bradley Delehanty's dramatic bedroom which extends across the entire width of the house. This includes the round-headed and quadrant windows already mentioned as well as an early Franklin stove which is plastered into the chimney.

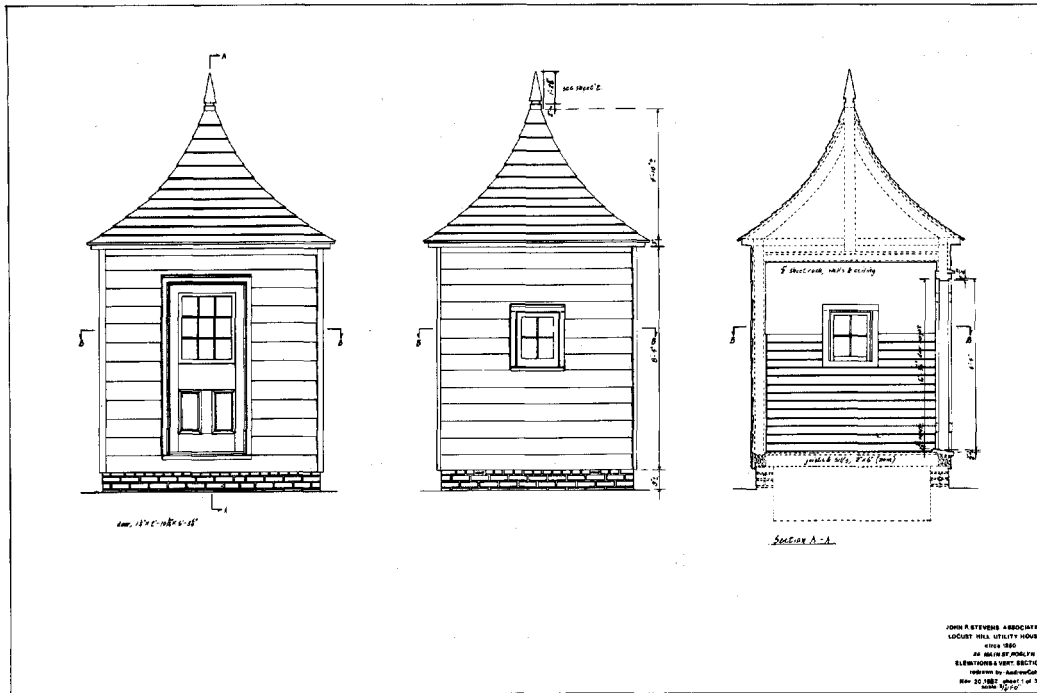
The rubble basement extends beneath the entire house. Actually, the east wall is brick above grade. The original kitchen, in the southeast corner, has already been described. Delehanty's wine cellar is at the north end of the house, beneath the Adirondack Mountain porch. The inner aspect of its doorway bears a list of its contents, dated December 5, 1926. The construction date of the Delehanty north addition has been estimated from this date. Near its doorway there is a large room, mostly having 20th century concrete walls, which probably functioned as a "servant's hall." The doorway to the space beneath the east (front) porch is fitted with a fine board-and-batten door, in its original casing, which retains its original Norfolk latch. Inside the food storage area beneath the porch there is the remains of a fine early flush-panelled door which closes the south end. This retains its early keyhole-shaped latch. It probably is earlier than the house, circa 1810, and its original source is not known.

## **ACCESSORY BUILDINGS**

The Roslyn Academy was built by Henry Western Eastman in 1847. It is approximately 25' x 40'; 1½ storeys high and has a pitched roof, the ridge of which extends from east to west. It is situated about 160 feet west of the main house. The building is clapboarded and obviously has been extensively reworked. According to John Pisarski, the gardener and maintenance man employed by the Browers, who worked on the place from 1927 until his death in 1980, and who lived in an apartment on the main floor of the building during most of this period, the Roslyn Academy originally stood a short distance to the north of its present location. About 1930 Pisarski and Judge Brower re-located it to its present site, at the edge of a rise, so that a three-car garage could be constructed beneath. Most of the alterations to the Roslyn Academy were completed at that time. The building subsequently, was extensively altered so it may be used as a private residence (TG 1988-89).

The Locust Hill Utility House was observed south of the present parking area by Peggy and Roger Gerry in 1977. It had deteriorated badly and had no footings which suggested that it had been re-located to that site. One of the writers (R.G.G.) questioned John Pisarski who said he had built it for the Brower children. Obviously he meant he had re-built it as it probably antedates the Roslyn Academy. Most likely it was built in 1853. In any event, when the property was sold in 1980 it was understood by both parties to the sale that it was an important small building and it was agreed that if the purchasers did not restore it within a year of closing, the sellers could remove it to another location for restoration. Actually, Mary Ann Wolf retained John Stevens to prepare measured drawings of the building but no actual restoration was undertaken. Finally, after two years, during the summer of 1982, it was dismantled by John Bugsch and reconstructed at its present site just south of the George Allen Tenant House (TG 1979-80, 81-82). During the relocation the east and west walls were transposed, intentionally, so that the window would be visible from the street. This disclosed a small, framed





John R. Stevens

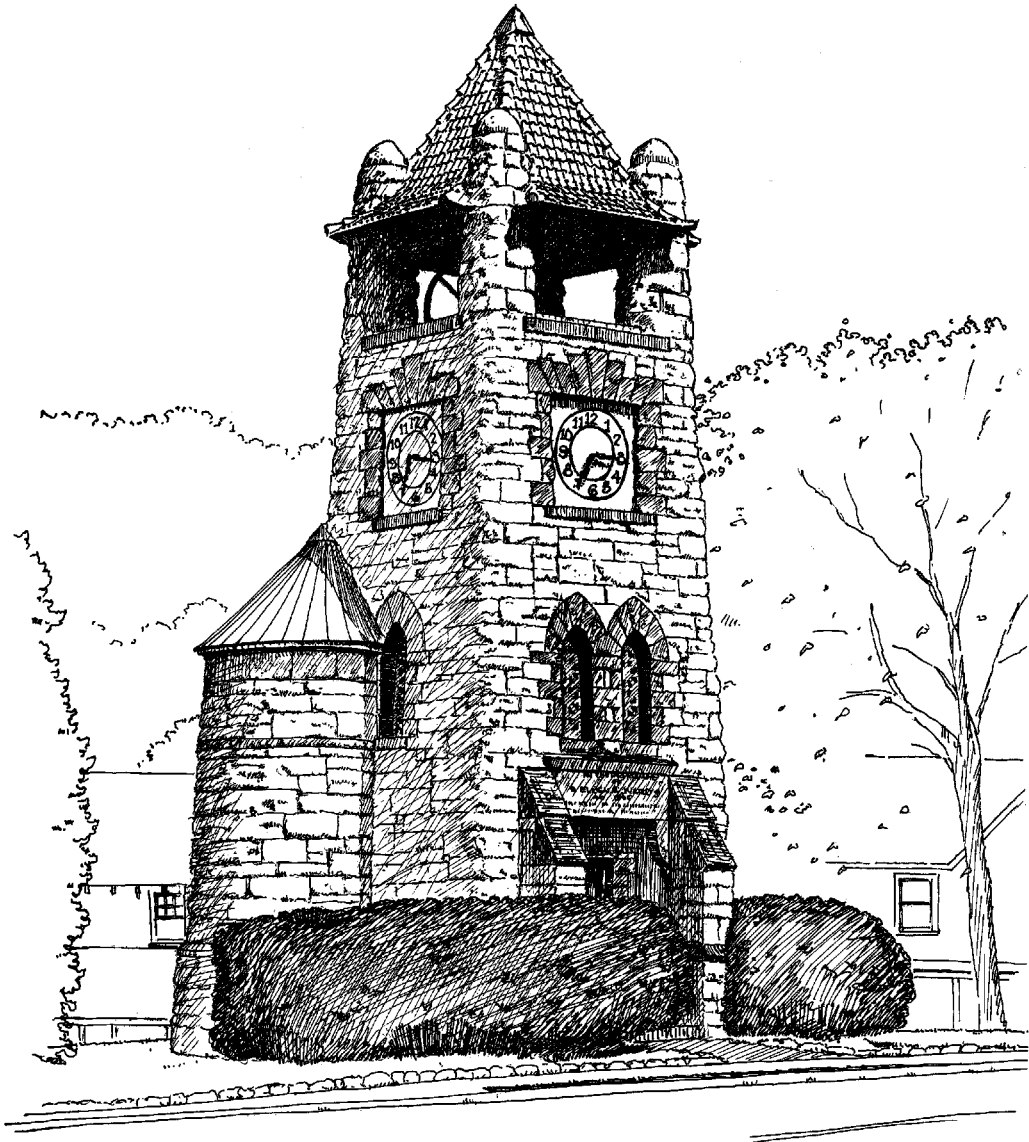
“Locust Hill” Utility House (1850–1860)  
 Showing “King-post” roof framing. Door and pinnacle are conjectural.  
 Interior horizontal sheathing, Ca. 1930, has been removed.

opening, for a clean-out door, and established the fact that the building had originally been constructed as a privy. This early framing, which is now at the north end of the west wall, is now in the wrong position and has been sheathed over. However, an appropriate opening has been constructed at the south end of the west wall. Prior to the use of “indoor plumbing,” at about the time of the Civil War, privies were important buildings and their architectural quality reflected upon the prestige of their owners in much the same way that house-owners, today, build elaborate bathrooms. The Locust Hill Utility House is almost identical to one in Claverack, which is illustrated on page 138 of “A Visible Heritage—Columbia County, N.Y.,” by Ruth Piwonka and Roderic M. Blackburn. When “indoor plumbing” became available, those who could afford to installed it. Those who could not built privies which were as unobtrusive as possible (Kirby Store, TG 1986–87).

The Locust Hill Privy measures 8'3" × 7'3". It was fitted with a single doorway and a small window, both of which retain their narrow, beaded facings and simple dripcaps. Otherwise its only opening was the “clean-out” door already mentioned. The building was clapboarded originally and it retains most of its original clapboards which have an exposure to the weather of 8½". The privy has always had cornerboards. These face north and south and are 3" wide. The building has a plain water-table. It stands upon a brick foundation, today, but on its unknown original site probably stood on locust posts.

The building's most important architectural feature is its tall, concave, hipped roof. This is shingled today but probably was sheathed in terne-plate originally. This conclusion was made because of the difficulty of shingling without ridge shingles. Probably all concave roofs had metal sheathing. Spaces have been left between the interior sheathing boards so that the shingles may dry. Originally these were set close together. The privy originally had a pinnacle. Although this had rotted away, Mr. Stevens duplicated a cone-shaped pinnacle from the Henry Eastman Tenant House (Mott Avenue at West Shore Road) to replace the missing original. This pinnacle is the only conjectural detail in the building. The eave soffits are closed. Paint analysis of the exterior was completed by Frank Welch and the clapboards have been painted buff as they were originally. The original trim was reddish-brown but, to date, it has not been possible to match this. The white trim color is a protective priming. The original studs clearly showed lath marks, so the interior was plastered during the restoration even though all the original lath and plaster had been replaced with wainscotting and plasterboard by John Pisarski. There is a louvered trap-door in the plastered ceiling which was not present in the original building. This modification was made for ventilation and so that visitors could examine the "King-post" construction of the roof.





JOHN COLLINS  
5.95

The Ellen E. Ward Memorial Clock Tower, 1895  
Drawing by John Collins

**ELLEN E. WARD MEMORIAL CLOCK TOWER (1895)**  
**Tower Place**  
**Property of the Town of North Hempstead**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The history of the prominent clock tower that marks the high end of Roslyn's business district is well documented by issues of the *Roslyn News*. Combined with the story of the tower's generous benefactor, the history of the building is rich in detail.

The first mention of a clock tower for Roslyn came in the *Roslyn News* on March 22, 1895. Since the village of Roslyn was not incorporated at the time, the offer from the children of the late Ellen E. Ward to erect a stone tower and clock to her memory was extended to the Town of North Hempstead. The News reported on April 5, 1895, that "it affords us great pleasure to be able to state that the resolution concerning the acceptance of the Tower and Clock for Roslyn Village was carried by a large vote on Tuesday."

Ellen Eliza Ward (b. 1826) was the daughter of William and Ann Cairnes who lived at "Clifton" (known now as "Willowmere"). She was married to Passed Midshipman Robert Stuart, USN, in 1848. Their house, "Locust Knoll" (known now as "Mayknoll") was built in 1855. The couple had three children. Lt. Stuart resigned his commission in 1857, and died in 1863. In 1866, she was remarried to Elijah Ward. Mr. Ward had been Judge Advocate General of New York State, served several terms in Congress, and was a close friend of President Garfield. Elijah Ward died in 1882. A memorial window was subsequently installed in his name at Trinity Church, Roslyn. In 1885, Ellen Ward donated the Roslyn Watering Trough, located in front of the Willet Titus House to the memory of her husband. She died at her son's home in Pasadena on January 18, 1893, and was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mrs. Ward was deeply interested in the Roslyn community, and particularly in the affairs of Trinity Church. During the depression of 1873, when there were no funds for the rector's salary, Mrs. Ward supplied funds for lay readers so that services might be held. She continued this support until 1887. Upon her death, she bequeathed \$20,000 to the church, the interest from which was to be used toward the rector's salary. Her children, Mrs. Alexander McKenzie Smith, Robert and William Stuart, donated a litany desk and a brass eagle lectern to Trinity Church in their mother's memory.

**THE TOWER'S CONSTRUCTION**

There was considerable local interest in the progress of the Clock Tower. Articles about it appeared in the *Roslyn News* almost weekly from March 22, 1895 to December 20, 1895, when it was announced that the clock works had been installed and the clock was in running order.

In an article on September 6, 1895, the architects for the project were identified as Lamb & Rich of New York. The same article goes on to describe the tower as being "Egyptian" in style, and continues: "The contractor is the firm of George Mertz and Sons, of Port Chester, New York, who have a competent foreman in the person of Mr. Harry Skewes in charge of the work. The triangle in which the tower is being erected will be graded and enclosed with a coping and otherwise improved. The entire work including the clock is expected to cost about \$10,000."

The architectural firm of Lamb & Rich, which was active from 1882 to 1903 had established a reputation for the design of church and college buildings and were the architects of the main group of buildings at Barnard College. They also designed extensively at Dartmouth College, as well as at Smith College and Colgate University. During their partnership, Hugo Lamb (1848–1903) was the architect of Theodore Roosevelt's home, "Sagamore Hill" in nearby Oyster Bay. Lamb may have been the chief designer of Roslyn's Clock Tower, as the *Roslyn News* on June 14, 1895 mentions that "one of the architects, Mr. Lamb, arrived in town Tuesday afternoon and located the spot for the erection of the Clock Tower."

Harry Skewes, reported to be the mason in charge of construction, relocated his family to Roslyn. They moved into the John Rogers house at 95 East Broadway and proceeded to settle in Roslyn. His son, Edgar, married Ella May Magee in 1909. Their descendants are still a part of Roslyn's population.

The *Roslyn News*, September 6, 1895, carried a detailed description of the tower: "The tower is being constructed from Letts Island granite with red sandstone trimmings. It will be 44 feet high from the street level and rests on a foundation 4 feet 3 inches thick. The walls will be 2 feet 6 inches thick and lined on the inside with brick. The outside dimensions above the water table are about 18 feet square. The walls incline towards the top where the tower is 14 feet square under the cap and 12 feet at the top. The roof will be of tile, there will be two stories, the first story having two handsome windows on each of the four sides. Just above the second story the clock, which has a dial nearly 6 feet in diameter, will be placed. The clock will be encased in a brown stone with marble dials and bronze figures. Above the clock will be a belfry in which a bell weighing 2700 lbs. and equipped with a muffled clapper to deaden the sound, will be placed. A stairway will lead from the entrance to the belfry, but will not be open to the public. The entrance to the tower will be on the west side, and will be enclosed by a door of elaborate architectural design. It will be encased in brown and red sandstone, which material will also form the window casings. Above the door will be placed a handsomely carved memorial tablet of brown stone. The steps leading to the entrance will be of granite."

The clock, too, was of great interest to the local paper. On December 20, 1895, the *News* carried the announcement that "The clock in the Ward Memorial Tower is in running order. Mr. King, of Thomaston, who is placing the works, is an expert from Seth Thomas Manufactory and will see that everything is in working order before he leaves." In the same issue came the news that "Charles H. Pearsall of this village has the honor of being the first keeper of the new clock in the Ward Memorial Tower." The clock, it was noted, is "keeping excellent time and giving universal satisfaction."—keepers: Charles Pearsall; George Washington; Elbert Miller III

The tower reached completion during the winter or early spring of 1896. The *News* reported on April 24, 1896 that two of Ellen Ward's children, Mrs. Smith and Robert Stuart, were in Roslyn to make an inspection of the tower. According to the *News*, "they were highly pleased with the work, now the grounds are to be graded and put in first class order."

The *News* also reported in detail the specifications for the bell to be installed in the belfry. Weighing approximately 2500 pounds, the bell was fitted with a large wheel so that it could be tolled separately from the clock mechanism and used as a

fire alarm. Though it has not served its alarm function for many years, the bell is still tolled on important occasions.

Soon after the tower was completed and in full operational order, the *Roslyn News* reported in its July 26, 1897 issue that lightening had struck the tower and damaged the roof so that a new roof was required on one side. Soon after, the *News* reported that Stephen Speedling, a local carpenter, and Elbert Miller, his apprentice, were at work replacing the damaged tiles.

## DESCRIPTION

As the Clock Tower exists, it differs little from the description printed in the *Roslyn News* nearly one hundred years ago. The building is constructed of blocks of granite and red sandstone. An article by Alice Titus in the *Roslyn News* published in 1955 stated that "the stones were cut in Vermont but after building the first three feet it was found they were too large for the rest of the design and had to be cut down on the site by the master stonemason."

The tall, narrow building is square in cross section and has rounded corners. It is four stories high, including the belfry, which is an open area. The Spanish tiled hipped roof is held aloft by four rounded piers. On the northeast corner of the main tower there is a two-story stair tower, three-quarters round in section, with a conical copper roof and a molded copper cornice. The walls of both the clock tower and the stair tower are inclined or "battered," giving the clock tower the approximate shape of an obelisk. This shape was likely what led the *News* to label the building's style "Egyptian." A more accurate description of the building's style may be "Richardsonian Romanesque," named for the architect H.H. Richardson (1838-1886). His work incorporated elements of medieval buildings, particularly those of Norman origin, to evolve a style of massive masonry buildings rich with texture and color. Richardsonian elements include the ashlar masonry, the contrasting red sandstone employed at the watertable and window, door and clock face surrounds, and Gothic detailing evident in the lancet shaped windows.

The building is entered on the west or Main Street facade. Three granite steps lead to the entrance. The door is flanked by a pair of granite buttresses which are capped with red sandstone. The rather plain beaded board door is hung by enormous medieval revival strap hinges. A sandstone lintel over the door contains the tower's dedication:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
ELLEN E. WARD  
A.D. 1895  
To Whom Roslyn and Its People  
Were Dear  
She Fell Asleep January 18, 1893

The second floor window placement varies from one elevation to another because of the placement of the stair tower; the west and south elevations have paired lancet windows, while the north and east elevations have single lancets. The stair tower contains three small rectangular windows and a single lancet window to light the interior stairwell. All of the windows are trimmed in red sandstone and have sandstone sills as well; heavy wood grills cover all of the window openings.

The third story of the tower includes the four faces of the clock. The square marble dials are recessed from the building walls and are each composed of two

rectangular slabs of edge joined white marble. The bronze Arabic numerals, cut in a style known as "circlet," are mounted between concentric bronze rings, which project from the clock face by one to two inches, creating a shadowed effect. The clock hands are oak and are fitted with counterpoise adjustments.

## THE GROUNDS

The area at the base of the tower have been planted with yews, which have grown quite large. Amongst the shrubs can be found three additional monuments; a small late 19th century cannon, marked with a brass plaque engraved:

U.S.S. WASP  
From Spanish Gunboat  
Don Jorge-Juan  
Nipe Bay, Cuba  
July 21st, 1898

This memorial was donated by Lt. Aaron Ward, nephew of Elijah Ward and commander of the Wasp in Cuban waters in 1898. Lt. Ward had a distinguished naval career, advancing to the rank of Rear Admiral in January, 1910.

The other two memorials consist of large granite boulders into which bronze plaques have been mounted. The monument to the south of the tower is dedicated to the Roslyn men who gave their lives in World War II and was donated by the Roslyn Chapter of Kiwanis International in June, 1949; the northeast monument, with a neoclassical relief, bears this legend:

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF  
CORP. PILOT WILLIAM H. TAILER  
OF ROSLYN  
SHOT DOWN IN THE WAR FOR LIBERTY  
FEB. 5—1918  
FEB. 3—1895 FEB. 5—1918  
Erected by His Fellow Townsmen

## INTERIOR

The interior of the main tower is octagonal in plan, and though never intended to be open to the public, it does have a level of finish. The walls are lined with whitewashed brick laid in common bond, with headers used to articulate the window and door openings. From the interior the glazing pattern of twelve light glazing in the lancet windows is obvious. Square wooden chutes contain the clock mechanism weights as they descend and a wood case protects the pendulum as well. The winding stairs and upper floors are wood, with exposed structural elements.

## THE CLOCK

The clock mechanism is located at the third story, inside the four marble dials. Its label is inscribed thus: Seth Thomas Clock Co.; Thomaston, Conn., USA; Oct. 30—1895; 873 A.S. Hotchkiss. The clock is a "Tower Clock," similar to other clocks that were made in large numbers during the second half of the nineteenth century for churches, colleges, street clocks and clock towers. In their 1879 catalogue, Seth Thomas asks that architects and builders "in making plans for



buildings, provisions be made for Tower Clocks. It costs but little in addition, is an ornament, and a public and private benefit.”

As for the maker noted on Roslyn’s clock, Andrew S. Hotchkiss was one of the principal makers of tower clocks. Hotchkiss had a long and well documented career of making and assembling clocks for Seth Thomas and other clock makers. In 1874 the American Clock Company’s catalog noted that a clock made by Mr. Hotchkiss in St. George’s Church, New York was destroyed by fire in 1865. Brooks Palmer, in his *Book of American Clocks*, lists A.S. Hotchkiss & Co., New York City as having started operations in 1869–1870, and also noted that Hotchkiss assembled tower clocks made by Seth Thomas and sold by the American Clock Co. The American Clock Company was a sales organization based in New York which represented a loose consortium of several independent clock-makers. One of the company’s catalogues refers to Hotchkiss’ clocks: Designed by A.S. Hotchkiss and manufactured by the Seth Thomas Clock Co of Thomaston, Conn. [the clocks] are unsurpassed in accuracy of time-keeping, excellence of material and workmanship.” Approximately 150 Hotchkiss designed tower clocks are itemized in the 1874 catalogue, among them clocks in New York City Hall; the Naval Academy in Annapolis; the Centennial Clock in Independence Hall, Philadelphia; and the Jefferson Market Court House in New York.

To return to the subject of the Roslyn clock mechanism, the clock works are a weight driven Seth Thomas #17, eight-day strike, which has the following characteristics and attributes:

1. A dead beat escapement (with no recoil, no energy is lost).
2. An eight foot wooden pendulum rod with a slot for the crutch pin and a 200 pound cast iron round bob at its bottom. The clutch pin’ impulse keeps the pendulum going and in return is controlled by the constant rate of pendulum and bob.
3. “Maintaining power,” a spring and gear arrangement that keeps the clock going while being wound and prevents escape wheel teeth from being broken. The spring has stored energy from the same weights that drive the clock.
4. A small “minutes only” attached dial which locates the minutes on exterior faces of the tower.
5. The “motion works,” an arrangement of four gears located behind each external dial which provided the hour indications on the external faces. The minute indication is supplied directly from the clock.
6. A quad gear arrangement, located right above the clock and connected to it, which transmits the time to all four faces of the clock.

## EPILOGUE

The Ellen E. Ward Memorial Clock Tower was donated in 1895 by her children who wished to honor their mother. As the tower is poised to enter its second century, its fitness as a landmark and timepiece for the community has been proved. Architecturally, the Richardsonian style has stood the test of the years and continues to evoke a sense of the stolid and medieval. The clock continues to keep time and strike the hours, with the care of the latest keeper of the clock, Frank Laricchia. The recently formed 1895 Clock Tower Committee is committed not only to celebrating the centennial of the tower, but to the long term preservation and care of the building as well. Walter Sedovic, AIA Architect has worked with the committee to specify needed repairs to the building and clock,

along with suggested improvements to the landscaping and lighting that will ensure the best possible care of the building. This work will address deterioration of some of the building stones and mortar joints; minor repairs to the clock mechanism; incidental improvements to the woodwork, metalwork and glazing; and new lighting which would highlight the building and clock dials rather than the clock alone.

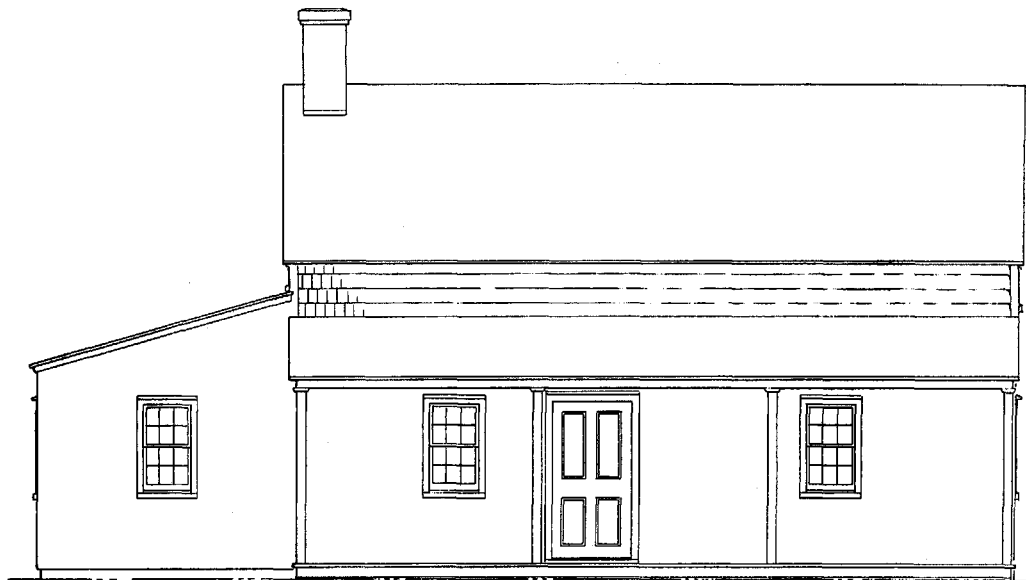
## THE WILLIAM J. STRONG HOUSES

According to the will of William J. Strong he lived at 69 Mott Avenue, in the Village of Roslyn at the time of his death on May 31st, 1941. Schedule "A," appended to his will, also states that, at the time of his death, William Strong owned "an irregular plot of land approximately 100 feet by 200 feet upon which were situated 5 small bungalows of frame construction with no improvements. The property is located in the Incorporated Village of Roslyn." Only two of the houses were "bungalows," numbers 69 and 71 Mott Avenue. These were built in 1923 and probably did have "improvements." According to the Title Chain, these two were never owned by William J. Strong, but were acquired by his son, Edgar H. Strong in 1923. Edgar owned both until 1972. We do not know why William bequeathed them, in 1941, when he did not own them. However, the heirs to his residual estate were his wife, Alice Strong, and his son, Edgar H. Strong. So it all worked out well, anyway.

Three of the houses survive. One of these, 1100 Old Northern Boulevard (1830-1840), William J. Strong may have been moved from the site of the New York and North Shore Traction Company buildings at the intersection of Northern Boulevard and Middle Neck Road. This house is being exhibited on the current house tour. Immediately behind it was a small wooden house which was very badly damaged by fire about 1975 and subsequently demolished. Behind this house was another very small house. Both these houses probably were in situ when William Strong acquired the property. This latter house was very small. In his will William J. Strong bequeathed to his foster daughter, "Jane E. Blankmeyer, the use during the term of her natural life of my residence property located in the rear of the premises known as 69 Mott Avenue, Roslyn, New York, with a right-of-way for the passage of automobiles from and to Old Northern Boulevard, and also Mott Avenue, and direct my executors to pay the taxes on the said property and all other expenses for the upkeep and maintenance thereof out of my residuary estate during the term of my said foster-daughter's life."

According to Carol Berier Newbold (b. 1943) who grew up in the bungalow at 71 Mott Avenue the aforementioned small cottage was lived in during her childhood. Barney and Evelyn Murtagh rented this small cottage. They were followed by Mary Chomicki. Subsequently, a garage was attached to this cottage, and subsequently, additional garages which were allowed to deteriorate. Today, the structure is beyond "restoration," but an effort will be made to re-build it as a garage, following whatever original plan can be identified.

The two bungalows, at Nos. 69 and 71 Mott Avenue, have been part of the same parcel since they were built in 1923. As mentioned above William J. Strong lived in 69 Mott Avenue. It will be restored during the coming summer, and, hopefully, will be exhibited on the 1995 Tour. #71 currently (4/1/94) is undergoing restoration. It will be exhibited on the current House Tour.



*South elevation*

**William J. Strong House, 1830-1840**  
**South Elevation as it appeared when built**  
**Drawing by John Stevens**

**WILLIAM J. STRONG HOUSE (1830-1840)**  
**1100 Old Northern Boulevard**  
**Property of Dr. & Mrs. Roger Gerry**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

For many years it was assumed that the house at 1100 Old Northern Boulevard had been built in the "Colonial Revival Style" sometime around 1900. This opinion was based on the Nassau County Tax record which indicated that a building on this lot was first taxed in 1903, even though the tax records frequently disagree with the construction dates by several years. In addition, the exposed west chimney and the style of the front porch both suggested a late 19th or early 20th century construction date. Furthermore, the rusticated concrete block foundation almost certainly was constructed of fabric dating from about 1900. In 1985, the derelict front porch was reconstructed and it became possible to examine the second storey house framing after the front porch ceiling had been removed. These framing members obviously were 18th century work and it was assumed that the house originally was on the south side of Old Northern Boulevard and had been displaced by the laying of the Mineola-Roslyn and Port Washington Street-car tracks in 1907. Roy Moger, former Village Historian, had suggested that some of the houses on the south side of Old Northern Boulevard had been either demolished or relocated to the north side of Old Northern Boulevard at that time. It was assumed that the present 1100 Old Northern Boulevard was one of the re-located houses and that its new foundation had been constructed of rusticated concrete blocks.

However, this thesis could not be substantiated. The Alfred Noon House, almost directly opposite, had not been built until after 1870 and was much later than the house under discussion. Also a post-street-car track photograph showed one of the houses on the south side of Old Northern Boulevard still at its original location after the street car was in operation. Harry Tappan, who wrote an article on the construction of the local street-car line stated, on page 37, "The Trolley Company had bought about 2 acres of land from a Mr. Strong, or his landlord, if he was the tenant, on the Northwest corner of the Turnpike and Flower Hill Road" (Northern Boulevard and Middle Neck Road). In the absence of a complete file of the Roslyn News, one of the writers (J.K.) checked the microfilm files of the Port Washington News at the Port Washington Library for the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The following two entries were found in the "Roslyn Section." 10/12/1907: "Car stables for the trolley, now in construction, are to built opposite Daniel Foley's Highland Hotel. Work has been started on them already." (The "car stables" are still standing.) The issue for Saturday, October 26, 1907, includes the following statement: "The house of William Strong was moved this week to make way for the car stables. It was moved to a place at the top of Roslyn Hill, where he will make it his home."

The sale of #1100 Old Northern Boulevard, Roslyn (Sec. 6; Block 54; Lot 430) from Alfred Hackett and his wife, to William J. Strong was recorded on October 9, 1907. The house now on this site was moved from its original site to its present location during the week of October 19th, 1907. There does not seem to be much doubt that William J. Strong, tenant or owner, re-located the house and renovated it in late 1907. Of course, the house had been standing for almost a century at the time of the move. We hope by next year's House Tour, to be able to

trace back the title of the house, on its original location and establish the identity of the original builder.

Research of various maps including *Beers-Comstock Atlas of 1873*, the *1859 Walling Map*, several issues of the *Sanborn Maps*, and the 1906 and 1914 *Belcher-Hyde Map* are all in agreement that a structure was not located on this site until sometime after 1906. It is in the 1906 edition of the *Belcher-Hyde Map* that a house, probably 1915, appears upon this site, but it is not until the *Sanborn Map* of 1918 that a structure unequivocally appears on lot 430.

A title search of the property revealed a recording of the mortgage for the lot as being held by the Roslyn Savings Bank since November 24, 1893, and the release of said instrument to Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Hackett on November 11, 1907 (Liber 140, pg. 436). The lot was conveyed to William J. Strong in October of 1907 (Liber 145, pg. 27) who held it until his death in 1941. It was willed to his son Edgar Strong.

## ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Because of the high concentration of recycled building materials used to construct the house, initial attempts to determine a date of construction for the structure were difficult. Several types of nails, including hand wrought rose headed and clasped nails, cut nails with hand wrought heads, cut nails with machined heads and wire nails have all been found throughout the structure. As cut nails with machined heads were used in part of the earliest construction, this indicates a terminus post quem of 1827. Circular sawn lath, used extensively on the first floor, is not known to have been manufactured in this area until after 1837. Despite the use of numerous pieces of fabric known stylistically to be of a much earlier date, the house's earliest construction date must be limited by the dates after which its machined nails and circular sawn lath became available.

Given its floor plan, construction methods, styling, and the type of materials and fasteners used, it seems almost certain that the house predates by a substantial margin its appearance on the 1918 *Sanborn Map*. Comparisons to local houses' methodology, style, and materials are all indicative of a construction date between 1830 and 1840. Acceptance of such a date necessitates an explanation for its lack of appearance on lot 430 prior to 1906. One very probable conjecture is that the house was moved to this site from another location, and such a theory is supported by the fact that its foundation is constructed in part of rusticated concrete blocks, not known to be in used until sometime after 1900.

Vagaries as to its origin are only a part of the structure's historical record. A complete understanding of the house is further obscured by several construction techniques not typical of the Roslyn area in the mid nineteenth century.

The first of these relates to the manner in which the sidewall shingles are applied over a solid board sheathing as opposed to the common regional practice of installing the shingles over lath. This technique was prevalent in New England areas but is a rarity in this locale until the latter part of the nineteenth century when the "shingle style" became popular.

One possible explanation for this technique is that a carpenter, new to this area, utilized construction methods familiar to him from another locale. Such a carpenter meets this criteria and is known to have practiced his trade in Roslyn during this time frame, making this possibility all the more plausible. Jacob

Eastman, father of Henry Western Eastman, is known to have moved to Roslyn from New Hampshire early in the 19th century and according to *Munsell's*, his trade was that of a house carpenter. (Munsell's,—see "References": Tour Guide 1988–1989. "Roslyn Academy").

Still another unusual feature of this house is the extensive re-use of materials from an earlier structure or structures. During the initial phase of the restoration, occasional pieces were identified as having been recycled, but as the work progressed it became increasingly difficult to identify components that were original to the house. Doors, windows, boarding, lath nailers, framing and lath are just a few of the materials identified as recycled. Though the re-use of materials was a practice not uncommon in this area during the mid-nineteenth century, there is no known example of such extensive recycling here in Roslyn. In addition, the house which almost certainly was built between 1830–1840, appears to be at least 50 years earlier than its construction date. So far as we know, no other Roslyn house has this deliberately retarded quality. In addition, various 18th century decorative devices were incorporated into its structure at the time it was built. This quality, too, is unique in Roslyn. These include a raised-panel dado, two small raised panel doors, and an 18th century door-case which includes a contemporary raised panel door. All of these were installed as parts of the original construction.

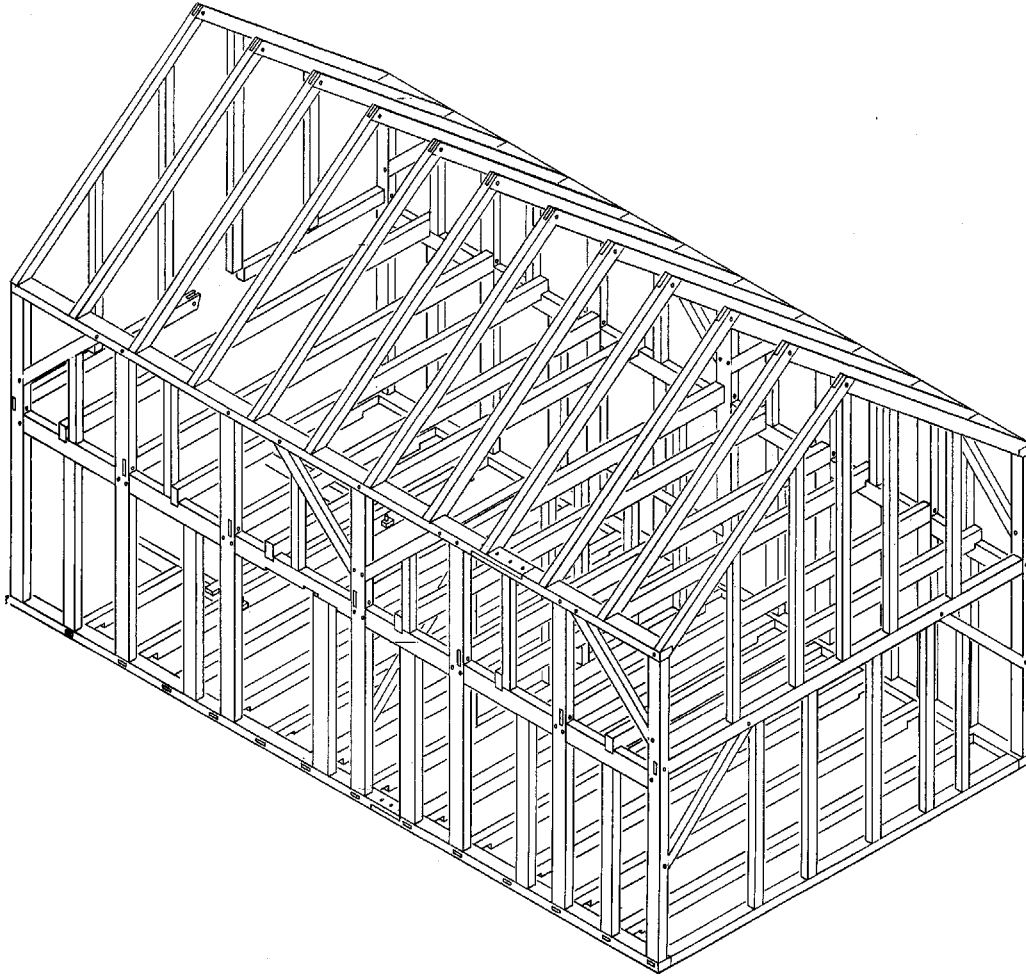
## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

### Framing and Exterior Finishes

Although it cannot be stated with any certainty what materials made up the original foundation, there is evidence of staining along the bottom edges of the first floor joists. This staining is consistent with that found in conjunction with masonry foundations and the length of the stains is indicative of a stone foundation, as opposed to narrower walls built of brick.

Whether a cellar was a part of this original foundation is unclear but findings along the south side of the former hearth location and paint remnants on the floor framing indicate that there was an early if not original floor opening allowing passage to a cellar. Whether this cellar extended under the entire house or merely occupied the west portion may never be known. Although additional details of this opening will be discussed later, suffice to say that this is the only possible opening found in the existing structure which could have afforded access to a cellar.

The frame of the house consists of seven bents spaced at distances of 3'1" to 4'6" from each other and joined laterally with spandrel girts. The posts are a storey-and-one-half, the tops of which are mortised into a top plate which shows clear signs of having been pit sawn. The anchor beams of the bents also serve as floor joists and the posts contain a shouldered mortise to accept the tenoned ends of the joists. Diagonal braces are used at the four corners and also at the partition wall of the first floor. Intermediate studs and joists between each of the bents are mortised into the frame and all joints are bored and pegged. These framing characteristics are based upon Dutch precedents. The rafters, set on a 9/12 pitch, are joined at the ridge with two different methods of joinery. Those in the west part of the house utilize a slotted mortise and tenon while those in the eastern part are half lapped. Both style of joints are held together by pegs, and neither system incorporates the use of a ridge board.



William J. Strong House, 1830-1840  
Isometric framing drawing  
by John Stevens

Most of the framing components show signs of having been used before in the construction of another structure. Extraneous mortises, tenons, nails and nail patterns are found throughout the frame with the exception of the roof rafters, the eastern part of the house and three spandrel girts in the eastern part. Unlike the other framing members, which are largely hardwoods, these elements have been sawn from pine or of similar soft wood. Of those framing members thought to be recycled into the frame, approximately one half are hewn, and the other half have been mechanically sawn with an up and down saw.

On the wall area enclosed by the present porch roof and ceiling at the south elevation are signs of a roof system that once projected from the facade of the house. Alongside the posts and studs used to construct this wall and just below the present line of porch roof rafters are scars left by the attachment of prior framing members, some still containing nails in the scarred areas. The manner and angle of attachment strongly suggest that this was a shed roof of some indeterminate depth



but possibly similar to the porch roof that is presently in place. Because there are two windows below this former roof projection and evidence indicates that windows were always present in these locations it appears that this former roof overhang was a porch that spanned the length of the south facade. The fact that this roof projection was a part of the original construction is borne out by the absence of sheathing boards below the line of these former rafters. In fact, there is no nailing pattern in the framing of this area that would indicate sheathing had ever been applied to this area. Further indications of the former presence of a roof projection may be found in the lowest course of sheathing located just above this early roof line. Although the shingles that would have comprised the first two courses above the roof line have been removed (probably at the time the present porch roof was installed), the pattern of nails left by these shingles are consistent with the use of a double starter course at the line just above which this roof would have intersected the south wall. At the east end of the crawl space the original corner board is still visible, its end cut at a bevel, equal to that of the former roof pitch, and terminating in line with the earlier roof.

As previously stated, wood shingles were applied to the roof over a solid board sheathing attached to the rafters. As built, the roof rafters terminated at the wall plate with a bird's mouth joint and did not overhang the exterior walls. The gable end rafters were treated similarly.

Exterior trim details were minimal, and probably limited to the use of corner boards, door and window architraves, and a one piece fascia and verge board, all of which were nailed directly to the framing. Herein lies another curiosity of the house. At present, there are unmolded corner boards measuring 1½" by 4" at both the east and west corners of the south facade. At the northwest corner on the north face are two corner boards, side by side. This may relate to a possible earlier addition at the west end of the house. This will be further explored during the course of the restoration. Of further interest is the fact that there is no corner board, or any indication of there ever being one, at the northeast corner.

As originally built the house contained at least eight windows, possibly nine, all 6/6. The hall (or first floor west room) contained one window in each of the north and south walls. The parlor also contained one window in each of the north and south walls, and probably one in the east wall where there is now a pair of 20th century double-hung windows. On the second floor, two windows were located in the east gable and two on either side of the chimney in the west gable. All of these openings are thought to contain their original frames with the exception of the double unit at the east end of the parlor and the frame in the south wall of the hall.

The style of these windows is one which was common prior to the advent of the double hung window. Known simply as sliding sash, they differ from double hung in their absence of pulleys and weights and the lack of a beveled meeting rail. The upper sash was usually fixed by a molded strip that extended from the sill to the underside of the sash where it was notched to go around the upper sash and continued up along the exterior side to meet the head jamb. This strip served the dual purpose of acting as a keeper for the sash and as an exterior stop molding. An additional strip would have been applied at least to the head jamb on the interior to prevent the sash from falling inward. With the absence of a beveled meeting rail, a parting bead was unnecessary and instead the lower sash slid alongside the upper. This lower sash was held in place on the interior side by means of a stop molding. As there are no signs of other known devices, the sashes were probably held open by means of a stick propped in the opening.

Of the original windows that have survived, none have their original stop moldings and only the south window of the parlor and the upstairs windows retain their original upper sash keeper strips. As for the sash themselves, none of the windows retain their original, but a lower sash of 6 lite configuration was found in a shed addition at the northwest corner of the house which fits the openings of the original frames on the first floor. Another sash was found installed in a basement window on the south side of the house although it had been cut in half. Paint analysis will hopefully confirm that these are original sash and that their paint history is consistent with that of the frames.

All of the early window frames are believed to contain their original exterior casings although the two windows at the north elevation contain a mid-to-late-Federal period band molding. Whether or not the other windows originally contained these moldings is unknown. Given the size and style of these windows, the dating of the house was confused by the apparent retarded sizes and features of these windows. Upon closer examination of the window, now located on the south wall of the parlor, the reasons for this became apparent.

Upon removal of this window's interior casing it was noted that there were secondary nail holes along the interior edges of the jambs which did not correspond with the holes in the removed casing. At some point another casing had been applied to this jamb. A closer look at other interior casings showed the same conditions. The secondary nail holes were not present in the casings themselves which would have indicated a use prior to the one they currently serve. It is clear, then, that the windows at one time were faced with an earlier interior casing, and that this earlier casing was not the result of the present ones simply being reapplied.

Inspection of the exterior casing of the southeast window followed, and a different pattern emerged. Upon removal of one leg of casing from the first floor southeast window it was found that there were no secondary nail holes on the exterior edges of the jamb, but that there were extraneous nail holes on the outer edges of the casing itself. In addition to this, no secondary nail holes were found on the post to which it was currently attached. It is certain, then, that these exterior casings had always been attached to this window frame but that at an earlier time this frame and casing had been installed in another location. An exterior casing from this same room at the north wall was removed and the same findings were established. A summary of these findings indicates that the window frames, with their exterior cases still attached to the frames, were removed from an earlier building and reused in their present locations. Of the window frames presently installed in the house, at least seven appear to have been recycled. All of the exterior window casings with the exception of the two dormer windows contain mortises for butt hinges, apparently for the use of shutters. Some still contain a leaf of these hinges held in by screws without tapered points. As the process for pointing screws was not developed until 1846, this too supports a construction date before 1840. When razing the 20th century kitchen addition at the north side of the house, a shutter was found resting on the ceiling joists. The size of this shutter matches the early window frames. Further investigation revealed that the mortises in this shutter are consistent in size and placement with those found on the window casings. The shutter is constructed of one board with a beaded and rabbeted edge and two battens applied, one each at the top and bottom ends measuring  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick by 4" wide. Alongside the window on the west end of the north wall is an early wrought iron keeper used to hold the shutter back.

Evidence indicates that during the period of initial construction two exterior doors were installed approximately centered on the north and south walls, each of which allowed entry to the hall. The door at the south likely served as the main entry door and its original frame and exterior casing appears to be intact in the opening.

The mortise pocket for the intermediate post at the eastern side of this door had at some time been opened from the inside to release it from the spandrel girt. It was then moved to the east about six inches to widen the opening between it and bent number five, allowing the use of a wider door. If this enlargement to the opening had taken place subsequent to the finishing of the hall, such an alteration would necessitate the reattachment of lath, resulting in secondary nail holes along its length. Since such a nail pattern does not exist and because the flush boarding shows no signs of being altered, this work was presumably done during the original phase of construction.

The entry door itself is a four panel ogee molded door with two solid panels below and two larger rectangular glazed panels above. Wooden glazing strips attached to the ogee moldings of the upper panels suggest that the glass is a retrofit and that the upper panels were originally wood to match the lower panels. This door dates from about 1870.

The exterior doorway at the north side of the hall is also thought to contain its original jambs, as well as exterior and interior casings. This clearly indicates the former presence of a narrow 24" door. Attached to the east leg of the exterior casing are two driven-in iron pintles, indicating that this out-swinging door had been hung on strap hinges. The exterior casings are unmolded and measure 2¼" wide with a wood drip cap attached to the head casing.

The only other exterior trim likely to have been applied is a one or two part fascia along the rakes and possibly the eaves, but during a later alteration the rakes were enclosed obviating the assessment of such a likelihood.

Prior to the installation of siding, an underlayment of sawn square edge boards measuring one inch thick were attached horizontally to the frame. As the application of these boards followed the installation of exterior trim, this boarding was merely butted up to the trim, as previously mentioned, a technique quite uncommon in this area. Over this sheathing was fastened a shingle siding consisting of 18" long random width riven shingles, smooth planed, and attached with exposed nails along the butts of the shingles. These shingles have been installed 7" to the weather and appear to survive on the entire structure except at the lower story of the west gable end where 20th century sawn shingles have been installed.

The only area not to receive this type of sheathing was the lower story of the south facade, where a tongue and grooved flush boarding of random width boards was applied to the frame horizontally. These boards measure one inch thick and were vertically sawn and planed on their exposed faces only.

Installation of the shingle siding would have completed the exterior of the house as first built, and given the circumstances of its history, it is remarkable how much of its original material has survived. Those elements missing are the original front porch and an addition at the west end, but with the exception of some miscellaneous components, the main block of the house retains almost all of its original architectural fabric.

## Interior Architectural Detail

Following the completion of the exterior work, attention would have next been focused on the interior space and the first operation would have been the installation of the flooring, most of which still remains. The flooring consists of boards 1¼" thick and of random width, milled with tongue and grooved edges and fastened through their faces with cut nails at each joint. Here again lies another curiosity in that the boards show two distinctly different milling patterns: some boards contain either a tongue at both edges or a groove at both edges; others display a second, later practice, in which each board contains one tongued edge and one grooved edge. The significance of such differences in milling is not yet known. A possible explanation is that the earlier treatment may actually represent recycled flooring, but it is not clear if there are secondary nail holes to validate such a conclusion.

As already mentioned, most of the original flooring appears to have survived intact, though there are exceptions. One area is where the stairwell to the cellar was cut through the first floor. Evidence indicates that this was a part of a later alteration and that originally the spandrel area consisted, at least in part, of a closet. Another area no longer containing its original flooring is the south side of the hearth where 20th century ¾" square edge boards approximately 27" in length were installed. Absence of the original floor boards can be explained either as a result of the replacement of the west sill or the prior existence of a cellar access or a combination of the two. The only other area devoid of its original floor boards is at the top of the stairs on the second floor, where one board is missing, the result of an enlargement to the stairwell on this floor and the restructuring of the original staircase. In any event, the surviving flooring is in remarkably good condition and exhibits little shrinkage.

Examination of these floor surfaces reveals a pattern of use commensurate with their assumed function. The hall floor, where much of the domestic activity would have taken place, shows signs of far greater use than that found elsewhere in the house. The flooring of the chambers of the second floor exhibit less wear than that found in the hall, whereas the parlor floor, a room likely not used for much more than the entertaining of guests, is in impeccable condition.

Unlike methods common today in building construction, installation of interior trim preceded the installation of wall finishes as evidenced by their attachment directly to the framing. In the case of 1100 Old Northern Boulevard the application of the trim immediately followed the flooring, and before the lath was set in place. For the sake of clarity the interior architectural detail will be described on a room by room basis.

Entering into the hall through the door in the south elevation, the original stair was located across the room occupying the northeast corner in very much the same location as the present stair. The first two risers ascending the staircase rose in an easterly direction with the first tread and riser combination protruding into the doorway of the north exterior door. The second tread may have been a pie shaped winder but evidence at this time is inconclusive. After mounting the second tread, one would have to turn 90 degrees to the south and continue to climb the remaining eight risers. Although this original closed string staircase was removed during a later renovation, paint "ghosts" on the board wall of the stairwell clearly depict their earlier stair arrangement.

Floor scars, paint lines, and a nailer adjacent to the stairwell trimmer joist establish the fact that early on the staircase was enclosed by vertical boarding. Although none of this boarding has survived, it was likely similar in its milling to that on the walls of the stairwell. Beneath the stair string and midway of its run a second wall returned underneath the staircase likely forming a closet. This, too, is evidenced by paint lines on the east board wall of the stairwell.

At the west end of the hall and approximately centered on the west wall is an opening in the floor for a hearth. This was likely removed when the house was moved. Openings in the second floor and roof establish that the original chimney ran inside the interior wall of the house as opposed to the chimney's current location on the exterior side of the west wall. The original mantel was missing.

At the north end of the west wall and adjacent to the hearth opening are scars and paint lines on the floor indicative of a door saddle flanked by cheek walls approximately 10" in length on either side. Given the width of these scars it is likely that these walls were of board construction. The door and walls may have functioned as an enclosure for a closet or may have served as a means of accessing an addition on the west end of the house.

To the south of the hearth the floor had been patched in with 20th century boards as mentioned earlier in the flooring description. During investigation it was discovered that the extreme west ends of the three courses of original flooring immediately adjacent to the hearth and which terminate approximately 26" from the gable wall contain holes from nails having been driven in through the endgrain. The pattern, placement and number of holes is suggestive of a vertical board wall at this point. Further study has revealed a floor framing configuration indicating an intentional opening in the floor framing. The framing members have been painted on those surfaces facing into the opening. The joist that doubled as a header for this opening was also notched on a bevel prior to being painted and the bottom of the head joist was eased in an arch shape. A likely explanation for this configuration is that the opening served as an access to a cellar and was enclosed with a vertically boarded wall, the header of which was beveled back to increase available head room. When the remaining courses of 20th century flooring were removed along the south wall adjacent to the aforementioned opening, a secondary nail pattern in the joist was noted indicating prior floor boards, probably the originals. If the door at the north of the fireplace was for a cupboard then it is likely that this area served as the entrance to the west addition.

Window and door openings in the hall were finished with a 3½" wide casing with a 1/2" quirked edge bead. A 1¾" wide Tuscan molding was applied to the outer edges of these casings. The legs of the window casings terminated at a torus molded sill that also served as a chair rail.

Completing the finish woodwork in this room was the use of a horizontal boarding, probably containing an edge bead, that ran the entire perimeter of the hall but possibly excepting the west wall. Although none of this board dado has survived, its prior existence has been ascertained by several pieces of evidence. Upon removal of the sawn lath from the walls of this room it was noticed that from a height of 32" down to the floor the lath had been installed with wire nails while the lath above had been attached with earlier cut nails. Further examination revealed the absence of any secondary lath nails or plaster burns in this lower field but did reveal secondary nail holes consistent with a wainscot similar to that found in the east room. Measurements confirmed that all of these secondary nail holes

were limited to an area 32" above the floor, consistent with the east room dado. Further support for the prior existence of this boarding is the way in which the 20th century board sheathing at the west gable has been notched at either end to a height slightly above that of the dado. The fact that the sheathing needed to be notched is evidence not only that the wainscot existed, but that it extended to the framing line, possibly even into the former west addition. The reproduction of this boarding is, at this time, a part of the restoration plan (April, 1994).

The east room of the first floor likely served as the parlor and most of its original woodwork remains intact. Two original window frames and their interior cases have survived in each of the north and south walls. These windows were cased in the same manner as those in the hall, and still contain their original Tuscan band molding. The only doorway original to this room is at the west partition wall leading to the hall. This doorway is trimmed in the same manner as the windows and it too has its original Tuscan molding intact. The door itself has not survived. The casings for this door were set back from the jamb leaving a reveal along the edge of the jamb which acted as a stop molding for the door. With evidence of mortises for hinges found in the edge of the casing on the parlor side of the doorway, it is likely that these early doors were of a board and batten construction. Use of board-and-batten doors throughout the interior is established by the presence of 7/8 inch door jamb rabbets, which are too small to accommodate any other type of door.

Upon removing sheets of masonite along the lower walls in this room, the original horizontal boarding was found to be intact along the entire perimeter of the room with the exception of an area along the north wall where a doorway was cut as access to a later north addition. The boarding is formed of random width tongue and grooved boards with a 5/16" quirked edge bead. The boarding comes up to the underside of the windows where it is finished off with a 1 1/4" torus molded chair rail that also acts as a sill for the two windows in the room. No evidence of a baseboard used in conjunction with this wainscot has been found.

Underneath a layer of plaster and sawn lath in the area of the stairwell a similar boarding to that used in the parlor was discovered. However, unlike the parlor, the entire wall was boarded from floor to ceiling. A change exists on the east wall of the stairwell in that the boarding switches to a vertical application beginning at the line of the second floor and continuing up to the sloped ceiling of the second floor. The boarding is intact except at the north wall at the first floor level where it had been removed during a later alteration.

During the period of original construction the stairs to the second floor terminated in a large room that encompassed not only the stair hall, but also the west chamber. This room measured 17'3" by 15'2" and contained 48" kneewalls at both north and south walls upon which the rafters are seated. The ceiling line conforms to the slope of the roof until a height of 8'6" where collar ties were used to form the ceiling. Both the north and south half walls were boarded in tongue and grooved edge beaded boards of random width and laid in a horizontal fashion. In addition to the boarding, an 18th century raised-panel dado was inserted in the south kneewall, commencing at the southeast corner of the room and ending at a point 10' from this corner, where an opening is located in the kneewall. That this raised panel dado was not specifically made for its present location is evidenced by the widening of the east casing on this opening as compared to the narrower west casing, clearly to compensate for the lack of sufficient length in the panel. The

purpose of this opening is unclear, but because there seems to have been a roof projection on this south wall that would have created a crawl space in this area, it is likely that this opening served as access to that space. This opening was also fitted with a raised-panel door likely cut from a larger door.

Paint ghosts on the casing are indicative of the use of a leather hinge. The boarding on this wall has survived intact whereas that on the north wall had been removed. Only three courses were replaced to act as backer boards for lathing during a later alteration. It is presumed that the west wall was treated similarly to the north and south but this boarding would have likely terminated at the chimney that was originally at the center of this wall. Further evaluation of this area is necessary.

Paint lines and floor scars clearly indicate that the east partition wall of this room, running from the front to the rear of the house, was formed by a vertical board wall with two doors leading to the east chambers. Portions of the wall remained intact at both the north and south ends, and relocated pieces of this wall were found to be used as furring strips for a 20th century wall in the same location. At what was originally the top and center of this wall was found a narrow trap door set on H L hinges. This door opens to an attic crawl space created by the lower ceiling in the east chambers. Given the size of the door, it likely only permitted someone to reach through the opening, perhaps for some type of storage.

In the northeast quadrant of this room and adjacent to the stairwell was built a closet, also of vertically applied boarding. The closet was part of the original construction, indicated by the way in which the boarding articulates with the roof rafters and the early riven lath and plaster that were installed up to the boarding. The door of this closet is also of raised-panel construction and presumably a recycled component as well. A rabbeted  $\frac{1}{2}$ " bead on its leading edge is suggestive of its having been part of a paired set. Its decorative Dutch style wrought iron "H"-hinges, a portion of its original casing molding and the paint "ghost" of a decorative latch plate are all indicative of an earlier highly styled door system.

On the west wall of this room were two windows, one on either side of the former chimney. Although slightly different in construction from the other early windows in the house, it is believed that these frames are original and, like the other windows, missing their original sash. The trim on these windows is three inch wide square edge boards, the legs of which terminate on a torus molded sill which capped the board dado below. Neither sill has survived, but all of the casings with the exception of the two legs at the northerly window remain intact.

At the east end of the second floor the space was divided into two equal sized rooms by means of another vertically boarded wall which has not survived. Evidence of its existence is a slot in the baseboard at the east wall, a "pocket" in the lath of the same wall, and a paint line on the floor, all of which are representative of a board wall similar to the adjacent north/south wall. Paint lines indicate that the baseboard was limited to the exterior walls of these two rooms, and a beveled shoe molding served as a base for the board walls. Each of these rooms had an east facing window whose jamb and exterior casings are the same as the early windows of the first floor. Interior casings are the same as those in the west room, however they terminated not at the sill but at an apron with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " edge bead along the lower edge. The sills of these windows have not survived but were likely bullnosed as the other windows.

The lath used in the original construction was of two different types: riven and sawn. The riven lath was used primarily on the second floor and in limited areas of the first floor. Of interest with respect to this lath is the fact that it has been re-used from another house as it all contains secondary nail holes that do not relate to the arrangement of the existing framing. Of equal significance was the uncovering of two pieces of lath with the name "J. Drew" carved or burned into the face of the lath. The second type of lath consists of narrow sawn pieces, and was found to be used largely on the first floor, but it was also used in small areas of the second floor. It is an early type of sawn lath evidenced by its narrow width. Unlike the riven lath, this type did not contain secondary nail holes. The only original plaster found at the start of the restoration was on the second floor behind an electrical box mounted to the east gable wall and on the ceiling of the south kneewall closet opposite the stairwell. The condition of both of these areas did not permit repair.

With the exception of paint finishes, the description of which is pending until results from paint analysis are received and analyzed, this likely completed the construction of the original house. One possible exception to this is the possibility of another ground-floor room that was once at the west end of the house.

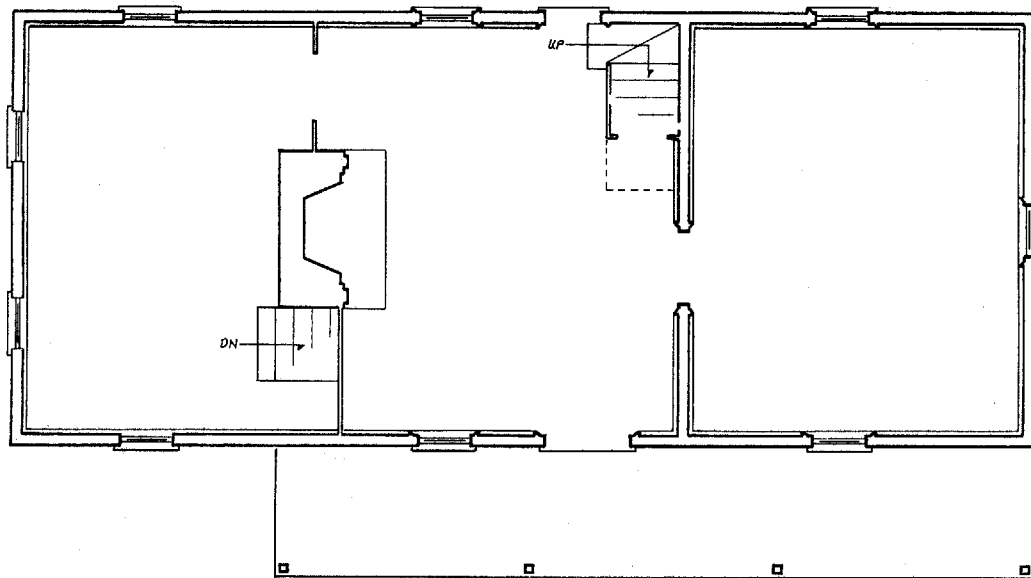
Evidence of another room having once been attached to the west end of the residence is indicated by several clues uncovered during the course of work. A corner board located on the north wall at the northwest corner of the house contains a miter cut approximately 12" below the north plate indicating that at one time the corner board terminated at a roof. Across the entire west gable end and beginning at a line equal to that of the bottom of the second storey window sills is a doubled course of sidewall shingles, both courses of which are composed of full length shingles indicative of a starter course. The bottom or butt end of these face nailed shingles is also at a height equal to that of the mitered corner board at the northwest corner. The sidewall sheathing from this doubled course down to the sill consists of 20th century material attached with wire nails, and the framing from the girt of the same wall down to the sill is also of 20th century 2 x 4 framing.

Further data supporting the existence of such a wing is portions of a plaster wall with wallpaper which were found along the southwest corner of the first floor west room. This plaster and wallpaper is attached to the southwest corner post and terminates at a ground 1½" from the outside face of this post suggesting the absence of a framed wall at this end. It is possible that as the restoration work proceeds additional findings will be made that may better explain just what happened at this end of the house and whether or not this wing was, as suspected, part of the original construction.

## ALTERATIONS

The earliest known change to the floor plan of this building seems to have taken place ca. 1850. This alteration involved the installation of a north/south wall on the second floor along the west side of the stairwell, thus dividing off the west room. A closet wall was built perpendicular to this north/south wall forming a closet on the south wall of what now became the stair hall. Unlike the original board wall of the east end, these walls were constructed of 9½" wide boards with an edge and center bead at both faces and were fastened to a 1 x 4 plate at the top of the wall, the plate resting on the surface of the plaster. Although the north/south wall was removed to a later alteration, the plate was reused as a top plate for





*First floor plan*

William J. Strong House, 1830-1840  
 Original First floor Plan  
 Drawing by John Stevens

a 2 × 4 framed wall and survived as such until the present. Although the closet wall of this early alteration still exists except for its door, it is scheduled for removal so that the 18th century raised panel dado along the south wall will be visible from the stair hall.

In 1994 a door from the Caleb Frost House was added to the closet. Although from a Greek Revival period building, this door was clearly earlier in construction and matched a similar door on the second floor of this house. The two upper panels had been removed and glass had been inserted; this treatment was reversed, and the restored door was installed in the closet door opening.

From this point on, the order of alterations to the structure become unclear as they are so closely linked that it is likely these changes were all made as part of the same renovation.

As described earlier, it is believed that the house was moved from elsewhere to its present site. If this is correct, then it is likely that prior to the move the hearth and fireplace were removed to reduce the difficulty of such a relocation. It also seems possible that the first floor west addition was removed at the same time because that new lot size was of inadequate breadth to accommodate this west addition. It is also likely that at this same time the roof projection (porch) on the south facade was also removed. If all of these removals were contemporaneous with the relocation of the building then the only portion of the structure to survive this move was the central core of the house consisting of the two first floor rooms and the reconfigured second storey consisting of three chambers and a hallway with two closets.

Moved to its new site, the house was probably set upon its present foundation. This foundation is constructed of a cobble and concrete wall from the cellar floor to a height just below grade at which point it changes to a rusticated block foundation. A large opening would have been left in the west wall by removing the fireplace and west wing. This is probably the cause of the 20th century framing, sheathing and shingling at this end. As mentioned, the board dado was still intact in the west room as evidenced by the way in which the sheathing is notched to go around this dado on both the north and south walls.

Next, on its new foundation, given the height of the front door above grade, it seems reasonable to assume that at this time a new porch was built across the front of the house. The roof line of this porch was similar to that which preceded it; however, the roof was raised approximately 14" above its former roof line. During this construction, two courses of shingles were removed to enable this higher roof line. For reasons unknown this porch was built on a foundation of concrete block to grade and a door gave access from the main cellar to the underside of the porch. Although the present porch was the subject of an extensive restoration in the early 1980's, its present configuration and detailing is the same as the porch that was constructed following the relocation of the house.

It was likely the loss of living space due to the loss of the west lean-to addition that caused the construction of the north lean-to. This lean-to addition, roughly centered on the north wall of the house, measured 12' east to west and 16' from south to north. It was built upon a foundation of the same material used in the lower portion of the main house foundation. The roof had a single pitch of approximately 2/12, and the rafters intersected the north wall of the main block of the house approximately 12" below the top of the wall plate. The addition contained a double hung window in each of its three exterior elevations, a door in the east elevation and a door in the west elevation. The floor joists ran north to south and were supported at their midsection by individual stones laid on grade. A chimney for a cook stove was erected at the west side and a shed roof was built above the east door in the southeast corner created by the addition.

Although it cannot be stated definitively, it was probably during these alterations, i.e., 1907, that the second floor and the exterior became the subject of major alterations. Although the timing of these changes in relation to the aforementioned alterations is unclear, the modifications to the second floor and changes in exterior design can be linked one to the other due to the re-use of earlier fabric.

The board wall running east to west at the east end of the second floor was removed in its entirety causing the east end of the second floor to become one large bedroom. The adjacent north/south board partition wall of this same area had its midsection of boards and two doors removed, and in its place a 2 x 4 wall laid on the flat was constructed. A new single door leading to this large room was installed in very much the same location as the former southerly door of the board wall.

The c. 1850 board partition wall of the west chamber was also removed and in its place was constructed a 2 x 4 wall that followed very closely the line of its predecessor.

Another aspect of this interior remodeling was the reworking of the stairs leading to the second floor. The original staircase was removed and the stairwell

was enlarged to the south and a new staircase was installed that was not as steep as the original. The first three risers were also altered in such a way as to eliminate the encroachment of the last tread on the north exterior door. With the elimination of this earlier, steeper staircase came the installation of the staircase to the cellar. This staircase paralleled the one above it and its installation was also the cause for the removal of the small closet in the area of the spandrel. The stairs to the second floor and the first floor stairwell were once again enclosed with a vertically boarded wall of narrow edge and center beaded boards commonly known today as wainscot. Unlike the former wall, this boarding ran only from the first floor level boards up to and including the stair stringer but terminated at the string board. This created the need for stair rail and balusters, none of which have survived. A left hand swing batten door of beaded boards was installed at the south end of the stairwell enclosing the cellar.

The board wall enclosing the former staircase, where it intersected the north exterior wall, likely concealed a transition in wall finishes: the easterly or stairwell side of horizontal boarding, while the westerly side, enclosed by the hall, was finished in plaster. When the stairs were removed and the stairwell reworked, it became necessary to remove the lower portion of the horizontally boarded north wall of the stairwell. This wall was eventually lathed and plastered to match the remainder of the north wall.

With these alterations came changes in the styling of the exterior giving it a Colonial Revival appearance. Two "dog house" dormers were installed at the south facade of the house, one dormer in each of the west and east rooms. Boarding that was removed from the partitions of the east half of the second floor and center beaded boards from the west partition wall (c. 1850) were recycled as sheathing for these dormers. In addition, several pieces of door casings from the north/south partition walls of the east room were used as lath nailers for the ceiling of the west dormer. To further develop the Colonial Revival style, overhangs at the perimeter of the roof were also installed. These overhangs, 18" deep were finished with a fascia and verge board with a crown molding that was kerfed and bent at the lower 3' of the gabled ends to impact the appearance of bellcast eaves. The underside of these roof overhangs were enclosed with beaded boards. Upon further examination it was revealed that these boards were those removed from the board walls of the second floor.

Another significant change of this period was the installation of a new chimney on the exterior, centered on the west gable. Thimbles at each of the first and second floors indicate the use of wood or coal burning stoves in each of these rooms. In addition, two double hung windows were installed on either side of the chimney on the first floor level and a replacement window was installed at the south wall.

With the completion of these changes came the need for replastering. In addition to those areas formerly plastered, a substantial amount of additional plastering was also necessary. The horizontally boarded west wall on the second floor was removed, as were some of the boards of the north knee wall. What remained of the boarding at the north knee wall was firmed out and lathed over and a similar treatment was used on the south knee wall. Both of the remaining board walls at the stairwell also received vertical furring strips with lath applied over these. The two dormers and their adjacent affected areas also received an application of sawn lath. Following the installation of the lath the entire house was

plastered with the exception of the closet ceiling on the south wall opposite the stairs and an area behind an electrical circuit box at the top of the east gable wall.

Subsequent to these major alterations of c. 1907, a shed was added to the northwest corner of the house with two of its walls common to both the kitchen lean-to and the north wall of the original block. The shed had a minimal sloped roof pitching to the west, vertically boarded walls, and a door in the west wall. A door in the east end of the shed and south of the kitchen chimney served as an access to the kitchen. The function of this shed is unknown, but it possibly served as a storage area for firewood.

At about this same time an addition was added to the east end of the kitchen wing measuring 6'6" by 16' with a shed roof on the same plane as that of the kitchen. This space was divided into two rooms with a full bath at the north end and a washroom/laundry at the south end.

From the first time this work was completed up until January of 1994, it appears there were no other changes to the basic floor plan except for the addition of a closet in the northwest corner of the parlor along the west wall, probably c. 1970. Two sizable repairs to the house are known to have taken place. The first was rebuilding of the chimney at the west gable. It is not known if any changes were made to the chimney's configuration at this time but it would seem that it was replaced as originally built c. 1910. The only other significant repair was made about 1985. This involved the restoration of the front porch. Repairs to the porch at this time were done in a manner that utilized as much of the original fabric as possible, and when new components were fabricated they were done so as to reflect the original as closely as possible. The only known exception to this was the replacement of the 3" edge and center beaded ceiling boards with 1" x 6" edge and center beaded boards. Examples of the original ceiling material can be found in both the east and west half gables of the porch.

## **RESTORATION PLANS**

Generally, the restoration of the structure will be consistent with the two significant time periods in its history. Very little is planned in altering the c. 1910 exterior appearance of the house, which has largely survived until the present. The only significant departure from this period will be in the use of a two storey gabled wing at the north side of the house where originally there had been a one storey, c. 1907, lean-to configuration. Removal of the c. 1907 kitchen addition was necessitated by its extremely derelict condition and was considered well beyond the point of restoration. The increased floor space afforded by a two storey addition will significantly reduce the impact that twentieth century living requirements would otherwise have on the original block of the house. The only other change to the c. 1907 exterior will be in the removal of the outside chimney now located at the west gable wall.

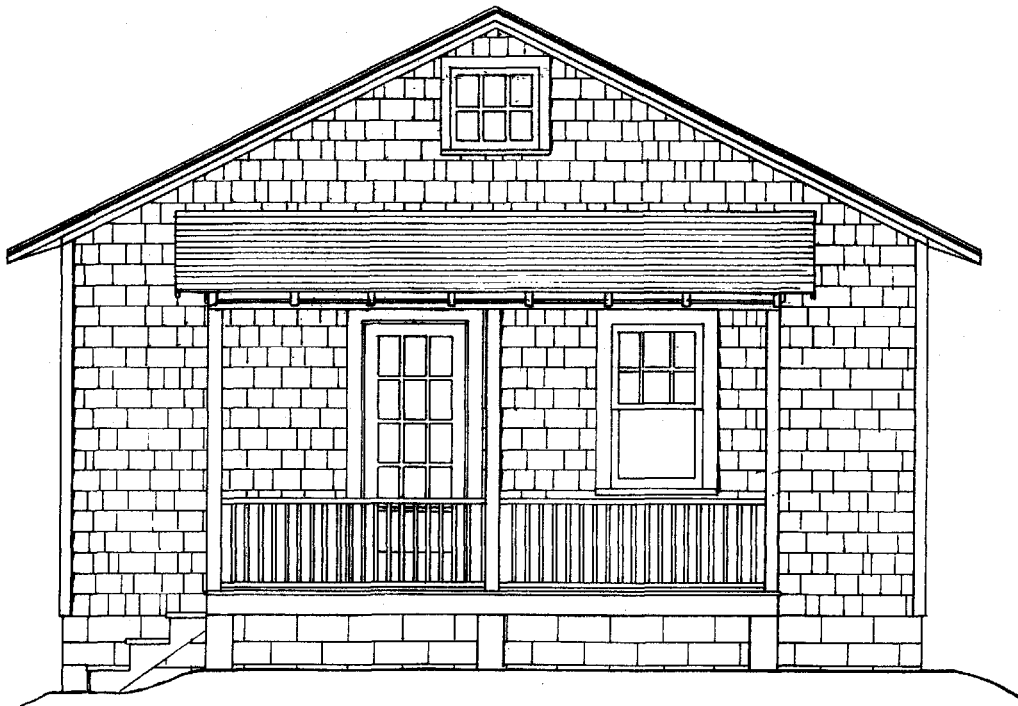
The decision to retain the c. 1907 appearance of the exterior necessitates some compromises in the restoration of the interior of its 1830-1840's appearance. Two examples of these compromises are the retention of the two dormers at the south slope of the roof and the double window unit in the parlor. Although both of these, have a visual impact upon the rooms, neither of them alters the floor plan of the 1830-1840's house.

The only alteration to the floor plans of the 1830–1840's appearance will be on the second floor of the house. During the initial phases of the restoration it was found that the east room had originally been divided into two small chambers by an east/west board partition wall which had been removed c. 1907. At this time it is not a part of the restoration plan to recreate this wall, but allowances for such a future possibility are being made. The only other change to the 1830–1840's floor plan will be the removal of the closet wall at the south knee wall that now obscures the view of the raised-panel dado at this wall.

The original fireplace formerly at the west end of the house and its flanking walls are scheduled for reconstruction in the former hall. The mantel to be used here dates from the early 19th century and is in the Federal Greek Revival transitional style. It originated in a demolished house in Jericho and is the only architectural element to be introduced during this restoration. The board dado that was an early part of this room will also be reconstructed. The 20th century windows that were inserted on the west wall have been removed; however, the replacement frame in the south wall will remain. All of the windows of the original block except the dormer windows and the double unit in the parlor will be returned to their probable 6/6 configuration and will match in detail the original sash found in the shed and basement. New interior door and window casings with Tuscan moldings will be fabricated as necessary. The stairway to the second floor will be rebuilt to match paint "ghosts" of the original stair, and its accompanying board walls and door will also be reconstructed.

Those boards and trim belonging to the board walls from the east rooms on the second floor that were re-used elsewhere in the house will be incorporated into the restoration of these walls. Though only four pieces of window casing have survived from the second storey west wall, enough evidence has been obtained to return this wall to its original appearance which includes a board dado similar to that found at the adjoining walls.

The meticulous and scholarly restoration of the William J. Strong House was achieved by Jim and Peter Kahn during the winter and spring of 1994. John R. Stevens served as architectural historian and Guy Ladd Frost, A.I.A., was the architect who designed the new (1994) addition. Jack Waite, of Albany, served as consultant and Douglas Bucher, of Albany, completed the paint analysis.



Edgar H. Strong Bungalow, 1923  
North elevation as it appeared when built  
Drawing by Jim Kahn

**EDGAR H. STRONG BUNGALOW (1923)**  
**71 Mott Avenue**  
**Residence of Ms. Janet Insardi**

This diminutive bungalow was built on land formerly owned by Elisa West. It appears that when the house was constructed the property owner was Edgar H. Strong, according to a receipt for plaster from Hicks Lumber found in the walls of the house. The same receipt identifies H. Peters as being on site and ordering materials. Much of the information about the original use and finishing of the rooms has been supplied by Carol Newbold (formerly Bercier), a long-time resident of the house, who was born there in 1943 and remained in daily contact until 1978.

The construction date was almost certainly 1923, the year in which Edgar H. Strong acquired the property from Eliza K. West (Liber 816, page 464, recorded 10/3/23). On 3/17/72, by Nassau County Tax deed from Edgar H. Strong, the house was conveyed to Sadie Schwartz (Liber 8364, page 342). On 8/14/72 the house was conveyed by Sadie Schwartz to Dale Holding Corporation (Liber 8426, page 414). On 3/7/88 the property was conveyed by Dale Holding Corp. to the Estate of David K. Schwartz (Liber 9897, page 328) and on 12/16/93 it was conveyed by the Estate of David K. Schwartz to Peggy and Roger Gerry (Liber 10377, page 807). County tax records indicate that 1923 was the first year in which a house on this site was taxed.

The house was built in the "bungalow style." This was developed in India and had its greatest growth there during the 19th century. The style was taken back to England by members of the East India Company and reached the U.S. toward the end of the 19th century. The style took America by storm during the very early 20th century (1907-1909) and some of the richest people in the U.S. owned bungalows. The foremost designers were Greene & Greene and their most luxurious example was built for David B. Gamble, of Pasadena, in 1908. Every detail of the Gamble house was finished like a fine piece of furniture. As the bungalow style became more popular and attainable by more people, bungalows became simpler and less expensive to build. The Edgar H. Strong bungalow is reflective of plans popular in building handbooks of the 1910's and 1920's.

The entire house measures 22'0" x 28'0" and is located on a lot measuring 50' wide, with a mean depth of 145'. The house's framing is transitional with elements of both balloon and platform framing. Wall studs, 16" o.c. rest on wood sills. The foundation is concrete block and the original roofing material was likely red asphalt shingle. The roof pitch is 6/12. The first floor is framed with 2" x 8" joists, which are 24" on center. Prior to the construction of the Northern Boulevard viaduct, Mott Street would have faced a pastoral view towards Hempstead Harbor. With its shallow gable end to the street, the house's modest front porch would have been the perfect place to take in the view.

The house is entered from the north porch directly into the living room. To the west is a bedroom, to the south a full bathroom and beyond, the kitchen. Another room in the southwest corner had served as a bedroom, but is now intended as a dining room. In the center of the house are stairs which lead up to an attic and down to a full, unfinished basement. Within this plan, reports Mrs. Newbold, she grew up with her parents and five siblings.

Most of the interior finishes had been removed prior to the current restoration project. All trim and plaster had been removed with the following exceptions: the plaster and trim survived in their entirety in the living room; the bathroom window casings and portions of the baseboard were intact; door jambs and doors of the bathroom, basement and northwest bedroom survived; one half of the wainscot batten door leading to the attic was found in the basement; and the plaster ceilings in all rooms except the kitchen were intact. Between photographs, the scant physical evidence and Mrs. Newbold's memories, the information necessary to inform the current restoration has proven to be sufficient to reconstruct the house interior much as it would have looked when completed originally.

The living room is the only room which retains its original baseboards, window and door surrounds, plaster and picture moulding. The treatment is typical of that which would have been found throughout the house and has served as a guide for other rooms with less intact treatments. The original plaster ceiling has been preserved under the newly installed drywall. Although the woodwork is now painted, it was originally stained and varnished wood (possibly cypress) and, as Mrs. Newbold remembers, diligently waxed. The baseboard is a flat board 6" in height with a molded cap. The window and door surrounds are flat boards with crosssetted lintels and radiussed 6/1 sash, which originally were stained and varnished. The wood flooring throughout is original, laid in strips of fir or gum. The living room, two bedrooms and part of the attic had linoleum flooring installed. The house as built had no closets. Floor and ceiling marks indicate the former presence of a small corner cupboard which had been built into the northwest bedroom for the family's clothing.

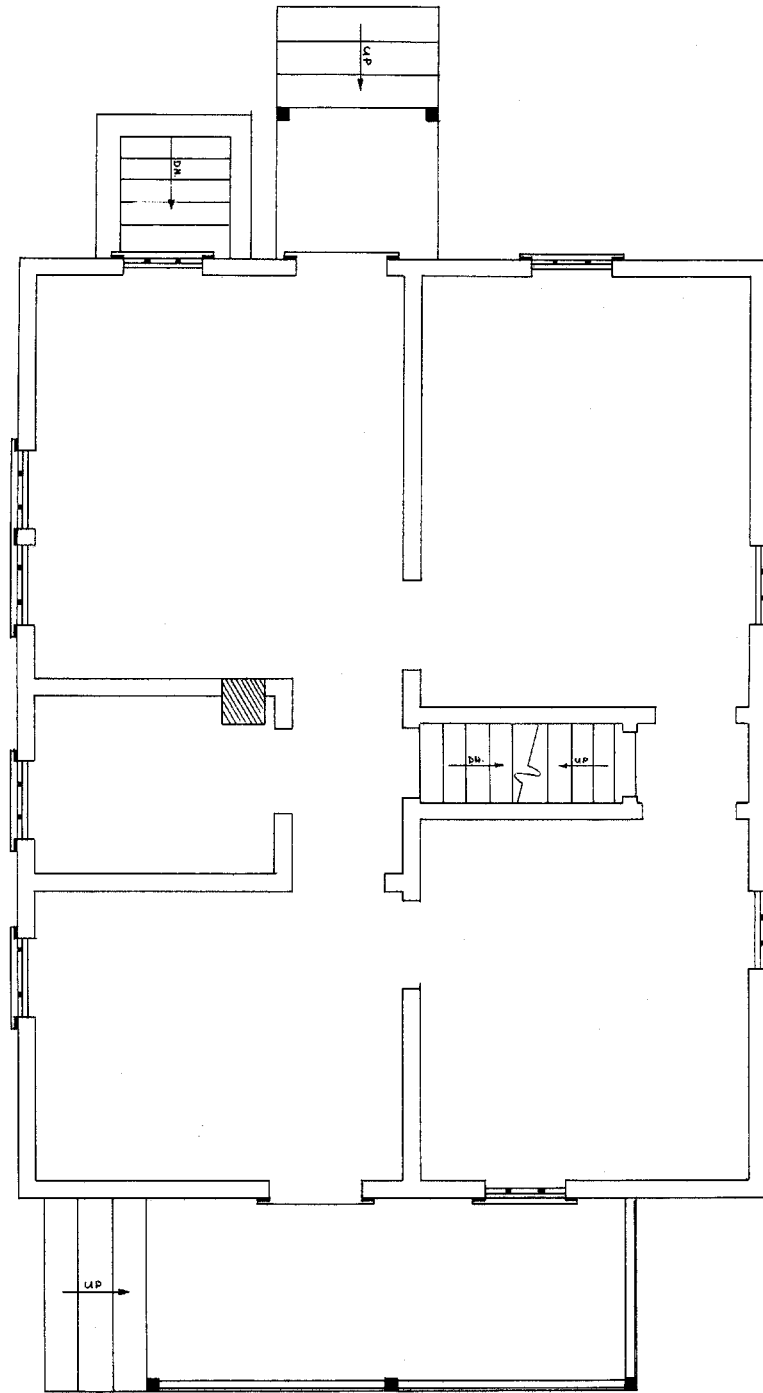
The kitchen once had a wall mounted porcelain sink on the north wall, with a coal burning stove to the left. There was a built-in cupboard in the southeast corner of the kitchen for storage and the family's dining table was located in front of the south window. The back doorway is in its original location, though the original door had been removed. It was discovered in the nearby No. 69 Mott Street, and has four panes of glass above three wood panels.

The bathroom had a wall mounted sink, toilet and footed tub. Its window is smaller and higher than the others in the house. The furnace/stove chimney protrudes into the bathroom space on the south wall.

The attic is reached by a staircase which runs west to east in the center of the house. The area where the landing is now had been adapted for a wood stove. It has been returned to use as a landing. Part of the stair door, made of varnished 3¼" wide board with edge and centerbead, survived in the basement and will be repaired and reinstalled at the bottom of the stair. The attic had been unfinished space with a window in each gable end, and had served as the bedroom for the Bercier boys. One half has now been finished sufficiently to serve as a storage area. The roof rafters are 2" x 6", 24" o.c.

The exterior of the building has not been extensively changed since the house's construction. The exterior walls are wood shingled, 6½" exposure, with 4½" flat board trim surrounding the windows and doors, as well as gable rakes and corner boards. Although both shingles and trim are now painted, the shingles were likely left unpainted at the time of construction. The windows and doors also have an unmolded cap. The front porch has a beaded board ceiling, likely originally varnished, but extensive repairs and alterations have been made to the steps, rails and posts. The original open railing had square balusters set between 4" x 4"





Edgar H. Strong Bungalow, 1923  
Original floor plan as it survived  
Drawing by Jim Kahn

posts. The asphalt shingle roof overhangs the building walls, with exposed rafter ends, and the rakes are trimmed with a fascia. The back stoop is concrete, with an overhanging roof. The cellar entry is to the east of the back stoop and was once enclosed by a bulkhead.

The cellar could be entered from the exterior at the southeast corner, or from the central hall across from the bathroom. The concrete floor and concrete block foundation are part of the original construction, but three new "areas" have been created for storage and utilities in the previously unfinished space. The house was heated by a coal furnace located in the basement, with a grate in the central hall which allowed warm air to rise into the house. The furnace was later adapted to natural gas, then back to coal, shoveled into the cellar from the northwest corner. The coal bin was located at the northeast corner of the cellar, while wood for kindling the fire was kept along the northwest walls.

Although modest, the bungalow at 71 Mott Street was built of quality materials in a location that had been quite pastoral and desirable at one time. The character of the neighborhood has gone through several changes and it is hoped that with projects such as this one, the area will regain its charm. While it is unlikely that the house will again see a family of eight in residence, the small changes that have been made in the attic and basement do allow the house to respond to the requirements of late twentieth century living while retaining the character of the early twentieth century bungalow, an American invention. In the very near future, the restoration of the Edgar H. Strong Bungalow will have been completed and it will serve as the home of Mr. Jim Kahn, who restored it. Jim Kahn's contribution to the preservation of Roslyn Village is inestimable. In the Residence "C" area alone, the most deteriorated part of the Village, it has been possible to restore 13 houses, completely changing the quality of the area. Three of these, i.e., the Edgar H. Strong bungalow, the William J. Strong House and the Mott-Gallagher House have been restored, meticulously, by Jim Kahn. In the near future he will complete the restoration of yet another Strong Bungalow. He also completed the precise major restoration of the Milliken-Bevin Trellis (1930) and a number of private homes, all supported by a high level of literary research.





G. W. Denton House, ca. 1875  
Drawn by Guy Ladd Frost, A.I.A.

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON DENTON HOUSE (1875)**  
**57 West Shore Road, Flower Hill**  
**Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Fisher**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

This house was built by George W. Denton in 1875. It is not shown on the Beers-Comstock Map, which was published in 1873. However, its site was surveyed by Singleton Mitchell on 8/15/1874 and it may be assumed that construction started shortly thereafter. The Mitchell survey indicates that the site included 2.11 acres, a bit more than it does today. However, the site, at that time, extended to the middle of West Shore Road. It is one of four Roslyn "showplaces" mentioned in "Long Island & Where to Go," a guide-book published by the Long Island Rail Road in 1877. All four houses (Bogart, Bryant, Denton and Eastman) survive. The Denton House is described as standing on "elevated ground above the bay, and across the water we see the residence of William Cullen Bryant."

George W. Denton was a well-known local lawyer connected with a prominent North Hempstead family. He had numerous clients in Roslyn, and was the attorney for the Roslyn Knitting Company when its trustees filed for voluntary dissolution ("Roslyn Tablet," 13th July 1877). In 1877, Oliver Cotter, Deputy Sheriff of King's County, was retained by the Roslyn Sons of Temperance to investigate the violation of liquor licensing regulations. Mr. Cotter alleged there were 21 unlicensed vendors of spirituous beverages in Roslyn. Numerous arrests and trials followed. Mr. Denton represented the Sons of Temperance in these proceedings. ("Roslyn Tablet," 28th September, 1877, 5th and 12th October, 1877).

Recent discovery of the typescript "Journal of Leonice Marston Sampson Moulton, 1860-1883," in the New York Public Library, disclosed the following entry for Thursday, December 2, 1875: "Called on Mrs. Dr. Ely with the poet (William Cullen Bryant/R.G.G.). Thence to the Denton House—a very pleasant air—clear." This entry establishes that the Denton House was standing and lived in by 1875. The Denton House changed owners during July, 1983 and, during the subsequent refurbishing, a sheathed board was found behind the siding beneath the north second storey bay window which bears the pencilled legend "John Dugan/ Carpenter & Builder/Dec. 20th 1875/Roslyn Long Island. Apparently the Denton House was not quite finished when Mrs. Moulton was given tea. "Ducan (sic), John, Carpenter" and "Ducan (sic), Samuel, Mason, are listed in the Roslyn Directories for 1867-68 and 1868-69. Samuel Dugan I (TG 1966-67, 1978-79) is listed in his Family Bible as having been born April 20th, 1813 and having died April 20th, 1881. Samuel Dugan I fathered three sons. According to the same Bible, John Dugan was born February 9th (or 10th), 1842 and died January 10th, 1888; Samuel Dugan II (Jr.) was born September 4th, 1849 and died January 24th, 1921; and Andrew B. Dugan was born June 1st, 1853 and died June 14th, 1913. John Dugan's obituary, in "The Roslyn News" for January 14th, 1888, also mentions that he was born in Ireland and that he was buried in The Roslyn Cemetery. It specifies pneumonia as the cause of his death. The obituary also describes him as a "leading architect and builder." If this statement is accurate he may have designed the George Washington Denton House in addition to having built it. Identification of additional buildings built by John Dugan may establish this. At this time, no other local buildings are attributed to John Dugan.

It is not known how long the Denton family owned the house. It is shown on the Belcher-Hyde Map of 1906 and 1914 as belonging to someone named "Tapscott." Title search reveals that on April 22nd, 1897, Elias P. France and Edward Willets conveyed the property to Hannah T. Willets. Frank L. Tapscott and Embury MacLean were the mortgagees. It was conveyed by Lillian E. Tapscott to Allene, Princess Henry XXXIII of Reuss (a small German Principality in Thuringia) on June 28th, 1919. This transaction was recorded at the office of the Nassau County Clerk on June 28th, 1919 (Liber 539 of Deeds, Page 79). Princess Allene, the former Allene Tew Burchard of Locust Valley, conveyed the property to the Girls' Service League of America, on April 8th, 1930 (Nassau County Liber 1520 of Deeds, Page 19, dated April 12th, 1930). The Girls' Service League of America sold the property to Colonel and Mrs. Frederic N. Whitley, Jr. on July 15th, 1946 (Nassau County Liber of Deeds 3141, Page 145, dated July 22nd, 1946). Colonel Whitley sold the property to the present owners in July 1983. A splendid photograph of the house survives, which is signed, in ink, "Pickering/Roslyn/1919," which shows the house prior to any of the few changes which have taken place. The photograph probably was taken during the ownership of Allene Tew Burchard. The Denton House is illustrated in Brendan Gill's "A Fair Land To Build In" (Preservation League of New York State, 1984) and is included in the National Register of Historic Places. The George Washington Denton House was exhibited on the Landmark Society's Tours in 1966, 1967, 1985 and 1986.

## EXTERIOR

The Denton House retains much of its picturesque Victorian landscape plan. Its carriage drive curves up the hillside to the house and then continues on to an upper plateau to end at the carriage house site. Much characteristic Victorian plant material survives, such as French hydrangeas.

The Denton House was built to be stylish and elegant as fitted the position of its owner. Stylistically, it was designed to imitate the interior of a Tuscan villa as closely as reasonably feasible in wood and, like its prototypes, i.e., "Cronkhill" in Shropshire (John Nash, 1802), was built upon a hillside with an open view. To this end it features two apparent "towers" (although they actually are dormer windows) and there are simulated rafter-ends beneath the eaves on all four sides. The principal (east) tower projects forward by one bay and its top is decorated with a window oculus and a pair of arches supported on pylon-style pilasters. It provides space for a bed-chamber on the third floor. The rear (west) "tower" is much smaller and, actually, is a more conventional hipped-roof dormer window. The shallow hipped roof of the house originally was slate-sheathed. The slates apparently were taken up, and re-used in part, during the 1920's, when the original terneplate gutters and flashing rusted out and were replaced with copper. The roof was re-sheathed again, by the present owners, in composition strip-shingles. The low, hipped roof is hard to see because of facade gablets over the paired windows of the east and south fronts and over a single window on the north. Each of these originally was decorated at its gable peak by a palmetto-leaf shaped anthemion. These are visible in the Pickering photograph but no longer survive. They probably were removed during the 1920's roof repairs. The roof, also, is partially concealed by a large 2-storey canted bay window which fills the space north of the tower. This bay window has five sash on its first storey and four on its second. Also, there are single storey matching canted bay windows, one each on the north and south fronts. All of the bay window sash have rounded-edge, flat panels beneath their exterior sills. The large, "L" shaped verandah, on the east

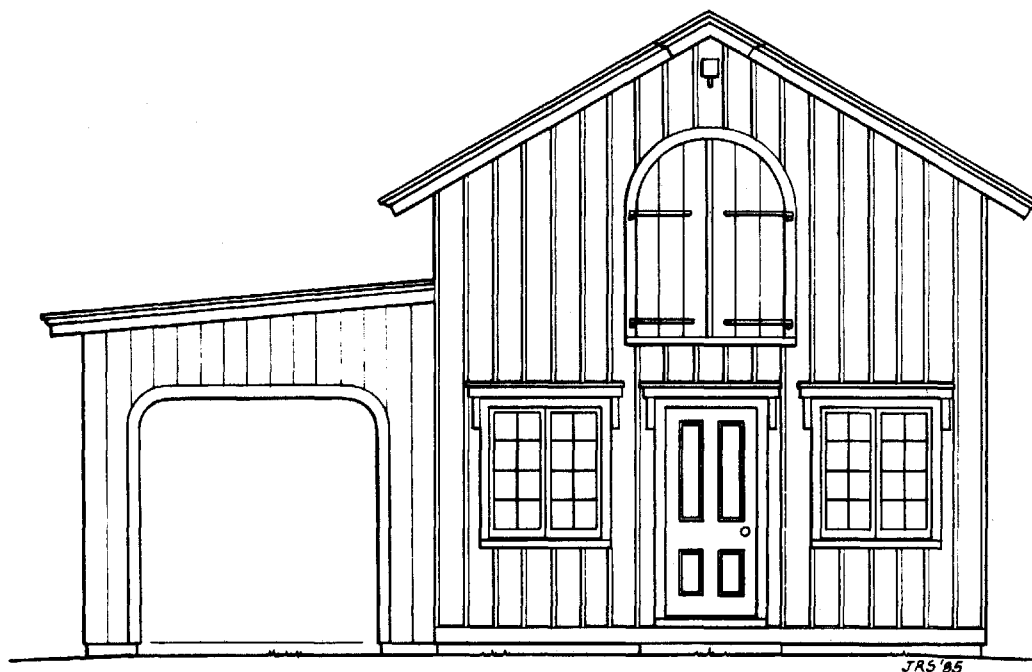
and south fronts, is a major architectural feature. The porch roof is supported on a Renaissance style arcade of decorative, flattened, round arches between the porch piers. The porch deck had been widened after the 1919 Pickering photograph, but was partially restored to its original design by Colonel Whitley. One section of the original porch railing with its rectangular, semi-circular cut-outs and a small portion of the substantial, bi-chamfered, moulded hand-rail survived at the southwest end of the porch. Along with a few surviving remnants of the more elaborate, wooden grill beneath the porch deck, these original pieces formed the basis of a complete porch renovation by the current owner in 1989. This included reconstruction and installation of an entirely new balustrade, deck and below-deck grill, in accordance with the drawings of John Stevens. In the 1919 Pickering photograph, there was a low, matching railing at the second storey level, which enclosed the area from the south face of the two-storey bay window to the south side of the east tower. This was removed some time after 1919.

Also after 1919, large paired, panelled boxes were installed flanking the principal porch steps—for safety and architectural embellishment. These were removed in 1989 and stair-rails matching the porch railing were installed, in accordance to designs of John Stevens. The south porch staircase is a smaller version of the principal east porch and was likewise installed in 1989. The entrance arch rests upon free-standing colonettes and is recessed inside the plane of the verandah arches. The front entrance has a crosssetted Tuscan doorway trimmed with vigorously projecting ogee mouldings. The paired pine doors are faced with chestnut on their interiors. The round-headed upper door panels enclose etched glass panes decorated with a Greek Key border and a central monogram “G.W.D.” (George Washington Denton). Only one of the two glass panels has survived. They are protected on their exterior surfaces by paired cast-iron grilles having central rondels. There are square wooden panels at the lower parts of the doors, each with a carved wooden tablet flower at its center. The original, decorated, cast-bronze door hardware survives.

The three original chimneys survive. The chimney in the north roof slope has two flues, a patterned rim and two ceramic Victorian chimney pots. The south chimney also has a patterned rim. In addition, it has a slate rain cover. The latter is visible in the 1919 photograph but probably is not original to the house. The west chimney has been rebuilt from the roof up and does not have a patterned rim. Actually, the north and south chimneys appear to have been rebuilt from the roof up, also, but their original appearances have been preserved.

Besides the 3-bay by 3-bay, hipped-roof main block of the house, there are two, two-storey rectangular wings which occupy the north half of the west front. The smaller of these is to the west of the larger. Both have half of a hipped roof. The larger provides ground floor space for the kitchen and the smaller for the early laundry. The south half of the west front is occupied by a single-storey, pent roof wing which provides space for the pantry. There is a small addition to the west of this one-storey wing, but this has a concrete foundation and is later work.

The house has a full brick foundation, laid in common bond. The cellar has three-light windows and a small brick-cheeked bulkhead on the south. The clapboard exposure is five inches to the weather. The house has moulded corner-boards appropriate for its period and has a magnificently contoured water-table beneath the lower course of clapboards. The window sash in the east and south fronts of the main block are of the 1/1 type. The east and south fronts were the



G. W. Denton House—conjectural east elevation of Carriage House, ca. 1875;  
based on rough sketches by Colonel Fred Whitley.  
Drawn by John Stevens

most visible and, therefore, were fitted with more “modern” sash. The remaining windows were fitted with 2/2 sash which was less expensive and would not be seen anyway. All the windows are fitted with broad, cross-topped exterior facings and vigorous drip-caps, some of which are moulded. There is a projecting window string-course, beneath the ground floor windows, which forms their sills. All but the bay windows originally were fitted with louvered shutters. These are not in place, but have been carefully preserved in the cellar and attic. Their use, of course, explains the absence of moulded trim on the window facings. The bay windows did not have shutters but were fitted with panelled interior blinds only one of which has survived.

#### ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

A characterful, small, ice-house stands on a rise to the rear of the house and is contemporary with it. The ice-house has brick walls laid in common bond, which are surmounted by a board-and-batten “frieze.” The use of a gable-on-hip roof at the front (east) end and a full gable at the rear, permits the use of the natural slope for the development of a separate rear entry for loading. The paired, original, board-and-batten doors at the front (east) end are capped by shallow, rounded brick arches, laid in a stylized “hound’s-tooth” pattern. The ice house originally was roofed with wooden shingles. It is not known when the wooden shingles were removed and the present composition strip-shingle roof installed. The ice house is now flanked on either side by a hand laid stone retaining wall, installed by the current owner, and a set of stone steps up to the top rear of the structure, installed by Colonel Whitley.



Originally there was a board-and-batten, pitched-roof carriage house northwest of the house and on the plateau above it, which faced the east. The carriage house had a single-storey, flat-roofed extension on its south side which had a flat-arched opening to accommodate a carriage or motor car. The main part of the carriage house had a slate-sheathed roof which had vigorous eave mouldings. There was a roundheaded loading bay, with paired doors, in the east gable-field. The east front also included a pedestrian door-way, fitted with a four-panel, ogee-moulded door, which was flanked by large casement windows. The "carriage-house" seemed to include no stalls, or other accommodation for horses. In fact, there seemed to be no way to get them inside. Except for the one-storey vehicle wing, the entire building may have been intended as quarters for a coachman and his family. The carriage house was demolished during the 1950's, and only part of the foundation remains.

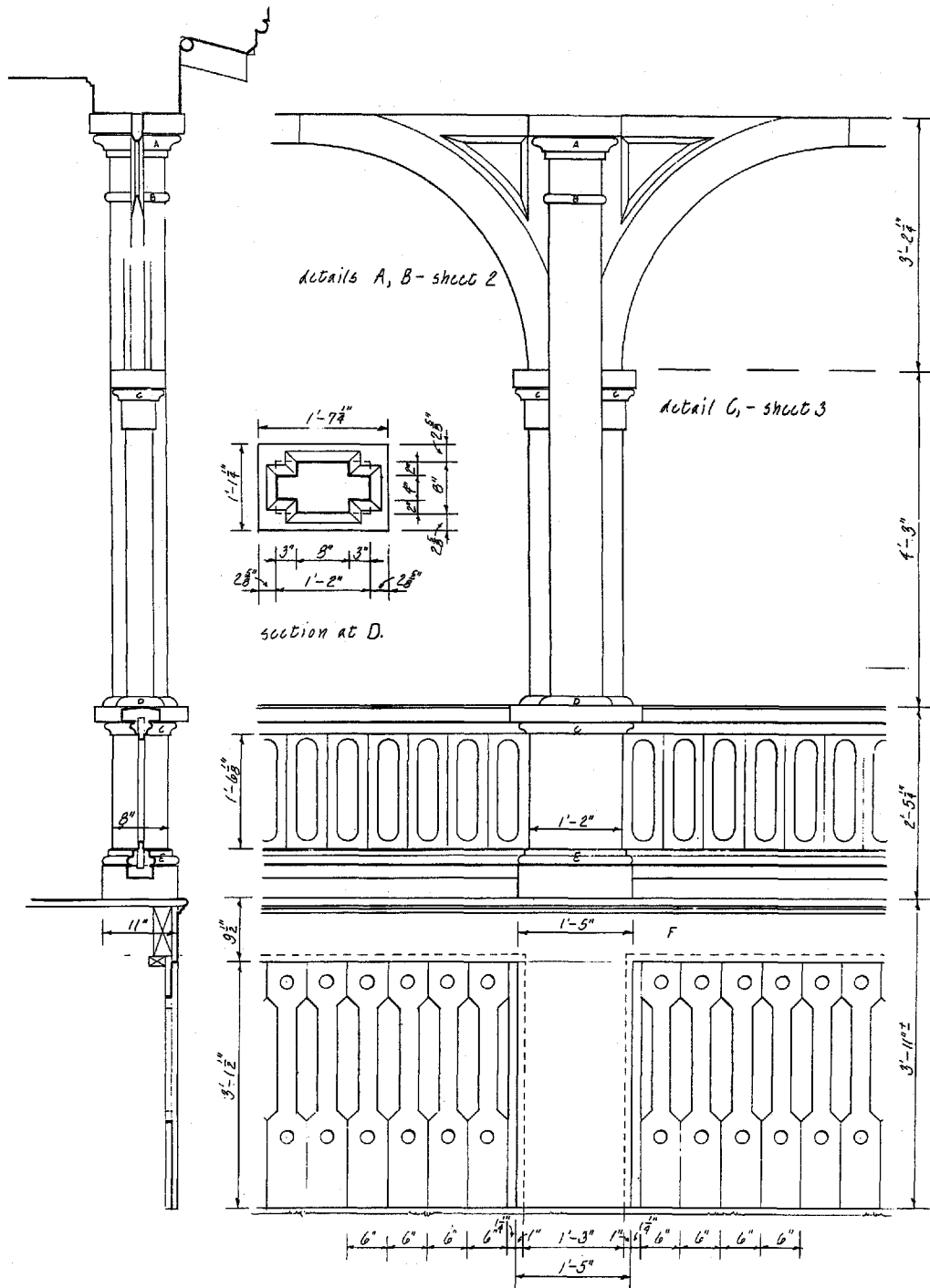
To the west of the ice-house, near the west boundary line, there was a characterful board-and-batten privy which had a pitched roof fitted with shaped verge-boards. The eight feet square brick foundation for the privy still survives.

In addition to the accessory buildings, originally there was an elaborate "gutter and down-spout" system which collected rain water into a system of cisterns. Although the exterior fittings are long gone, three of the buried cisterns survive. The largest of these is circular, 20 feet in diameter and is located on the upper plateau near the stable site. The next largest is ten feet in diameter and is northwest of the house. Apparently, it supplied water for the kitchen and laundry.

## INTERIOR

The interior of the house is even more remarkable than its exterior, as virtually every architectural element has survived. The house retains its original floor-plan, flooring, decorative trim, doors, hardware (including some window catches), and even some elements of its original hot-air heating system. The interior doors all have decorated cast-iron hinges and brass-mounted porcelain knobs. This remarkable survival becomes even more unusual when one considers that prior to the Whitley ownership, the house was used for a number of years as a resort by a social agency for girls, and many layers of paint were applied over the original woodwork. It is largely as the result of this practice that the house looks differently today than it did at the time it was built. Originally, all the interior pine trim was "grained" to simulate a hardwood, as black walnut, chestnut, or "golden" oak. All this has been painted over, except in the entrance hall, where the actual hardwoods were employed. In addition, all the floors originally were designed to be covered with carpeting, probably of the flowered Brussels variety, except for the dining room and a small upstairs sewing room, which were designed to have, and still do have, hard yellow pine floors, with black walnut borders. The dining room floor was laid in a herring bone pattern which also survives.

*The cellar*, i.e., foundation, walls are laid from floor to sills in brick laid in American bond. The cellar extends under the main block, only, and does not extend under the pantry, kitchen or laundry wings. Interior brick walls divide off a small room directly under the east end of the front hall. The south wall of this room has never been whitewashed. Since all the other cellar walls were whitewashed, originally, it may be assumed that this one is a later addition. There is a much larger, brick-walled room which fills the southeast corner of the cellar. It probably was used for food storage, originally. The main floor joists are all



George Washington Denton House, 1875  
 East Porch Restoration  
 Construction Drawing by John Stevens, 1989

concealed by a later ceiling so their dimensions cannot be identified. The brick arches for the three chimneys may be found at the base of each chimney. Each, originally, had shelves for storage space as one still does today. The stairway to the main floor is divided from it by the flat-panelled reverse of the main stair wall. According to Colonel Whitley, the name, "George Washington Denton," is written in pencil above the ceiling on the under surface of the principal staircase, above. The four-panel, unmoulded, door, at the top of the cellar staircase, retains its somewhat worn original graining. The stiles are grained chestnut and the panels burl walnut.

*The Entrance Hall* is completely original. There is a vigorously moulded dado of chestnut and walnut which includes one of the original hot-air heating registers. The boldly projecting doorway mouldings employ cyma- and cyma-reverse curves and are made up of alternate courses of black walnut and chestnut. The doors are chestnut with black walnut cyma mouldings which project beyond the stiles. All this hardwood trim has been stripped by the present owners. The original moulded plaster ceiling cornice and chandelier medallion both survive. According to Colonel Whitley, these, originally, were painted Venetian red, black and gold. The entrance includes two angled doors, at its west end, with a sculpture niche between. The principal staircase was placed in a separate hallway, behind the entrance hall, but accessible to it. In order to achieve this, both end doors have been placed diagonally across the inner corners of the hall. The practice of removing the principal staircase from the principal hall originated, in this country, with Thomas Jefferson.

*The Reception Parlor* originally was intended for the reception of formal callers. The two open corner cupboards originally had doors and served as guest closets. The original ceiling cornice, chandelier medallion and flooring all survive. All the wooden architectural trim employs projecting ogee mouldings. There are wooden panels beneath the two pairs of paired windows. All these wooden surfaces are now painted, but, originally, were "grained" to simulate hardwoods. The slate mantel has a round arched opening and moulded panels typical of its period. The incised, stylized, floral decorations are very early examples of the Eastlake influence. These originally were highlighted with gold leaf as they are today. For many years this mantel was painted the same as the trim colors. This later paint was removed by Colonel Whitley, who repainted the slate mantel in its original Venetian red and black. This stripping process also revealed the pair of Minton porcelain portraits of hounds, in polychrome, which were in position when the mantel was set, originally. The fireplace retains its original cast-iron hob-grate.

*The Dining Room* also retains its original plaster ceiling cornice. Originally, there was a chandelier medallion which had to be removed during the 1950's. There is a large canted bay window which overlooks the south lawn. The bay window sash all are panelled beneath their sills. The bay window alcove is separated from the rest of the dining room by a shallow, plastered ceiling arch which rests upon moulded plaster brackets having foliate decoration. The dining room also includes a heavy moulded chair rail and crossetted doorways surrounding four-panel, ogee-moulded doors. The two innermost doors have been placed obliquely across the corners to provide symmetry within the room without disturbing the design of the entrance hall. All the wooden architectural detail is painted in a solid color, but originally was artificially grained to simulate a hardwood. The hard yellow pine herringbone floor is original and has a black walnut border. The mantel is constructed of panelled and moulded slate and has a rectangular

opening. For many years the mantel was covered with trim paint but, during the 1970's, Colonel Whitley removed this to reveal the original marble graining which was restored as indicated.

*The Butler's Pantry* again points up the extremely high survival of the architectural features of the house, and the generous attention given to all details in a prosperous household of a century ago. The original storage cupboards all survive, with doors above and drawers, for linens, below. The doors are all panelled with standard ogee mouldings. All the cast bronze decorated drawer handles survive. Similarly, the copper pantry sink and the copper-sheathed drain-boards and counter-tops have all survived. To add a proper finishing touch, the shelves in the south china closet all have carefully shaped leading edges.

*Powder Room:* The original rear entrance, with small, open step porch and roof, was located on the west front, adjacent to the butler's pantry. There was also a double hung sash window along the northern wall of the step porch (southern wall of the kitchen). Some time before 1983, the space around the step porch was enclosed, an outer door installed, the floor of this rear porch removed and the window replaced with glass block. In 1986 the rear porch space was converted to a powder room. During construction, a false ceiling was removed, which revealed the original ceiling of the porch with its original paint intact. This surface has not been repainted, except for minor touchup.

The kitchen is the only principal room in the house which has been "modernized." However, even this room retains its original stone hearth (beneath a modern brick platform) and a brick stove embrasure, the opening of which was filled by a large Franklin stove of the Beekman pattern by Colonel and Mrs. Whitley. The stove has been stored in the attic, for future relocation to the Tower Room. To the south of the stove embrasure, the original lower (counter) section of a group of early 20th century kitchen cabinets survived until 1985. This has been removed and replaced with specially designed cabinetry fabricated by Edward Soukup. The black and white tile floor, in the manner of the late 19th century, also was installed by the present owner.

*The Stair Hall* is a small area, definitely secondary to the entrance hall, which is too small to be furnished and which includes only the principal stairway and an angular clothes closet. The stairway is ogee panelled beneath the treads, and extends all the way to the attic. The heavy octagonal newell post is made of black walnut, and includes a recessed, moulded, pointed Gothic panel on each of its surfaces. The heavy, moulded stair-rail and turned-and-fluted balusters also are made of black walnut. The understair panelling, doors, and door-surrounds are now solidly painted. Originally, they were grained artificially to simulate black walnut. A sample of the original artificial graining survives on the reverse surface of the cellar door. The under surface of this stairway has the name, "George Washington Denton," written on it in pencil. This is the only known reference to the middle name "Washington."

*The Back Drawing Room*, or family room, was the room which the Denton family and their close friends used on a daily basis. However, the back drawing room and the front drawing room are separated by a pair of recessed, sliding doors so both rooms could be used en suite for large social gatherings. Neither of the drawing rooms has a dado or a chair-rail. However, both rooms employ the same prominent, stepped, ogee-capped baseboards as do the entrance hall, reception (or front) parlor and dining room. The wood architectural detail, also, is similar to

that in the aforementioned rooms. This is now painted a solid color but, originally, was artificially grained to resemble golden oak. The original, elaborate, plaster chandelier medallion survives, but an appropriate gas chandelier may never have hung from it as public gas service did not reach West Shore Road until well into the "electric" period. However, an equally appropriate kerosene-fired chandelier probably was used in this location. The ceiling cornice in this room is not plaster, but wood. Probably it was plaster, originally, but failed early in the life of the house and was replaced with a conforming wood cornice to avoid the mess of plastering. The canted bay window arrangement matches that in the dining room except that the foliate-moulded brackets are larger in the back drawing room. Both single-storey bay windows are symmetrically placed on the building. Until recently the slate mantel was painted to match the trim. The present owners have removed this later paint to disclose the original black slate beneath. The incised decoration, in the Eastlake manner, originally was gilded and this finish has been restored. The principal decoration of this mantel is the moulded-edged, flat panels above and below the pilasters and filling the corners created by the round-headed arch of the fireplace opening. There are six circular recessed, moulded-edged panels running along the lower edge of the mantel breast. The moulded edges frame recessed Minton tiles in the designs of polychrome rosettes and tablet flowers. Until recently, these recessed panels were filled with plaster and painted over so they were visible only as linear, circular scars in the mantel surface. The plaster was removed to expose the tiles as a part of the stripping procedure. The family parlor fireplace retains its original, cast-iron, moulded fire-box surround and its original cast-iron hob-grate.

*The Front Drawing Room* was intended to be the most elegant room in the house and has the most elaborate chandelier medallion and ceiling cornice. Actually, the chandelier medallion is identical to that of the back drawing room except that it has been extended at its east and west ends to add to its importance. There are two separate moulded plaster panels within the principal cornice, and the moulded plaster panel in the bay window ceiling is circular in outline. The bay window is slightly more than a semi-circle, in floor plan, and incorporates five windows separated from one another by turned, wooden, colonettes. Clusters of three identical colonettes are placed at each end of the bay window opening. All ten colonettes are raised slightly above floor level so that carpeting could have been slipped underneath. All the original wooden architectural detail, i.e., ogee-capped, stepped baseboards, crossetted doorways and colonettes are painted in a solid trim color today. Originally, they were artificially grained to simulate "golden oak." The walls in this room, as in all the major rooms, were papered, originally. The slate mantel, in the front drawing room, is particularly interesting as it is the only one, on the first floor, which retains its original, simulated, black Belgian marble surface and incised, gilded, Eastlake-style decorative detail. It has never been altered in any way.

## SECOND FLOOR

*The Upstairs Hall* continues the decorative plan of the first floor stair-hall, below. The base-boards and walnut stair-rail are the same. The moulded, plaster ceiling cornice is simpler than in the rooms below, and establishes the cornice design for the second storey rooms.

*The Northeast (Master) Bedroom* has the same ceiling cornice as does the second storey hall. The ogee-moulded baseboards are shallower than those of the

floor below, or of the second storey hall, but are still impressive. The ogee-moulded window surrounds include ogee-moulded, flat panels beneath the sash. The plaster arch which delineates the bay window is similar to those of the dining room and of the family parlor but is based upon simpler, acanthus-leaf moulded, plaster brackets. Originally, there was a doorway which connected the master bed-chamber to the morning room alongside. This was closed up when the morning room was converted to a bathroom by Colonel Whitley in the 1960s. With the recent (1993) bathroom the doorway has been restored and appropriate baseboard moulding installed.

*The Sewing (or Dressing) Room* is a small room just west of the master-bedroom and is entered from the hall, thru an angled, ogee-moulded doorway. It does not have a ceiling cornice but is important enough to have the same baseboards as the master bed-chamber as well as the same ogee-moulded window surround and an ogee-moulded panel beneath the 2/2 window sash. The sewing room retains its original hard yellow pine flooring and black walnut border. This floor was not intended for carpeting.

*The Morning Room* is a small "T"-shaped room, south of the master bed-chamber, which always could be entered from the stair-hall and which, originally, could be entered from the master bed-chamber. Like the master bed-chamber, it has a simple plaster ceiling cornice and ogee-moulded window surrounds which are panelled beneath the 1/1 sash. It now serves as a bathroom.

*The Southeast Bed-chamber* has the same plaster ceiling cornice, ogee-moulded baseboards, and ogee-moulded door- and window-facings as does the master bedroom and, like it, its windows are ogee-panelled beneath the sash. There are paired 1/1 windows in the east and south walls. The chimney, characteristically, projects into the room, on its west wall. Originally, there was a fireplace at this site. The slate mantel survives and is stored in the attic.

*The Southwest Chamber* is similar to the southeast, next door, and has the same cornice and trim. As in the southeast chamber, there is a 1/1, paired window in the south wall. However, the less visible (from the exterior) west window is single and has 2/2 sash. Both have ogee-moulded surrounds and are ogee-panelled beneath the sash. This room retains its original fireplace, complete with its unaltered, marbleized slate mantel and its original, cast-iron fire-box surround.

*The Back Hall-way* descends two steps from the second storey hall and is entirely contained within the Kitchen Wing. There is a *former secondary bedroom* on the north side of the hall which has been converted into a bathroom. The back hallway continues west to a *rear (servants') stairway* which descends into the original laundry area. Beyond this, over the laundry, there is an additional, very *plain bed-chamber* which originally was intended for use by a servant.

*The Principal Staircase* ascends, unaltered, to a *landing* at the west end of the house, just below the attic floor level. There is a paired window having 1/1 sash and ogee-moulded facings, but which is not panelled beneath the sash, which opens to this landing from the west. This was meant to be looked at from below as there really was no reason why anyone but immediate family members and servants would ever proceed as high as the landing, itself. The principal stairway continues for a few steps, upward from the landing, to the attic floor level, to reach the *third storey stair-hall*. The most interesting feature of this space is the canted plaster ceiling which has its principal slopes to the north and to the south, and

resembles the interior of a hipped roof (which, indeed, it is) at its west end, over the landing.

There are three ogee-moulded doorways opening off the third floor hallway. Originally, these were fitted with four-panel, unmoulded doors. The east door has survived. The south door has been glazed, in part, and the north door is missing.

The north and south doorways open to *attics* which have no knee-walls. The yellow pine roof-sheathing of both attics is set "tight," unlike shingle-lath, to accommodate the roofing slates which were nailed to it. The rafters are 3' by 5' vertically-sawn yellow pine set on 24" centers. In the *south attic* the south chimney is easily accessible. This has been reconstructed, using Portland cement, from the attic floor, or below, to its cap. Its rain-cover is a 20th century modification.

The east doorway off the third floor hallway opens to the rectangular "*Tower Room*" which actually was designed to be a servant's bed-chamber. It has plain, un-moulded baseboards and window surrounds. There are windows on three sides, all having 1/1 sash. The windows in the south and east walls are paired. The sheathing continues along the lower part of the north chimney breast, beneath what appears to be a simple mantel shelf. Originally, there may have been a fireplace or coal stove beneath this mantel shelf. If this conjecture is correct, the beaded vertical sheathing is an alteration. It is the intention of the present owners to re-install the "Beekman" type Franklin stove, formerly in the kitchen, in this "mantel" location.



The Cornelius House, ca. 1886  
Drawing by Guy Ladd Frost, A.I.A.



**THE CORNELIUS HOUSE (circa 1886)**  
**64 Bryant Ave., Roslyn Harbor**  
**Residence of Mr. and Mrs. David E. Kruse**

## **HISTORY**

The property on which this house has been built has a complex and not yet fully understood early deed history. The first grantor appears to be Joseph Curtis, Sheriff of the County of Queens, in a foreclosure action against Valentine and Elizabeth Mott, Edward M. Banks, George Kissam and John C. Lattimer, dated August 8, 1859. This deed, which transferred 72 acres, cites Stephen Mott as the grantee. It is unlikely that the present house was on the property at the time. A mere four years later, the property was transferred from Stephen Mott to Nathaniel Terry and James Mott; five years after that, Nathaniel Terry transferred a seventy acre parcel to Harriet Terry, while Stephen Mott transferred a 150' × 175' parcel to the same Harriet Terry. Selah B. Strong and Thomas Strong had interest in the Stephen Mott parcel, and although the nature of their interest is not known, their shares were transferred to Harriet Terry as well. Three months after Harriet A. Terry had collected the parcels and interests, she transferred the property to Catherine O. Miller, on May 25, 1868.

Catherine O. Miller was not the owner of the property for long either, as she transferred the property to Henry W. Eastman in 1872. There is a possibility that, as a part of Eastman's continuing development of the Roslyn area, that he may have been responsible for the actual building of the house; he owned the parcel for fourteen years, and the style of the house reinforces a post-Civil war construction date. However, the 1873 Beers-Comstock Map indicates only the plot of land, without a structure, and does not identify a property owner. Lydia Eastman, as executrix of the estate of Henry W. Eastman, transferred the property to George H. Cornelius in 1886. Cornelius was a local carpenter, and it is possible that he was responsible for either the construction or finishing of the house. (The Roslyn Landmark Society owns the tool chest of Cornelius.) The Cornelius family, first George and later Margaret owned the property through 1980, when the property was sold from the estate of Margaret Cornelius to the present owners, David E. and Gloria F. Kruse.

## **HOUSE EXTERIOR**

The house remained in one family for nearly 100 years, and there appears to have been a minimum of changes and alterations, many of which can be identified from surviving photographs and physical evidence.

The style and framing of the house all indicate a construction date of post-Civil War. Although there are Gothic Revival and Queen Ann style details evident, particularly on the exterior of the building, the house has little consistent detailing on which to hang a stylistic name. Rather, the house would be considered vernacular. If it is the work of George Cornelius, it might be thought of as the work of a carpenter accustomed to working on more high-styled buildings, but in this instance, creating a residence for himself and his family.

The original house plan was in the shape of a "T," with the primary facade fronting on Bryant Avenue, and the lot bordered on the north by Summit Avenue. The 2½ story house had a cross-gable roof, placing a gable end at all four elevations of the building. The gable fields were shingled with patterned wood

shingles, while the remaining siding was clapboard. There were both corner boards and a water table on all elevations. The deep overhanging eaves, finished with flat boards, contained built-in gutters. There were three chimneys in the house when first built: one inside the north wall, one located against the dining room wall near the middle of the house, and one inside the east wall for the kitchen. Each one had a corbelled stack, and all emerged on or near a roof ridge. The roof was covered with wood shingles.

The fenestration of the front facade was symmetrical, with a straight pointed arch window in the gable; three paired double hung windows on the second floor; and two paired double hung windows on the first floor. The double hung upper sash consisted of a large pane surrounded or "banded" by smaller panes, all of clear glass; the lower sash consisted of a single large pane. On the first floor both top and bottom sash were elongated, so that the window sill came within inches of the floor level, allowing breezes to sweep through the front rooms. The window caps were molded. The front doors were also paired, and consisted of varnished oak doors with etched glass panels above raised panels.

The front porch appears to be original to the construction of the house, although there is a possibility that it was added later. The flat-roofed porch extends across the entire front facade of the house. At the front of the porch there are four turned posts, and at the house facade there are two engaged or half posts. At each post there is a pair of sawn brackets in an elongated scallop design. There are turned balusters and a molded handrail forming a railing, with an opening at the front steps. The porch was built on brick piers. According to pictorial evidence, the handrails and balusters for the front steps, the lattice under the porch, and the spindlework at the roof's edge were all added later.

The north and south elevations originally consisted of the gable ends of the front portion of the house, and the full two story side elevations of the rear portion of the house. The fenestration for these elevations was similar: the straight pointed arch window in the gable ends (the north window is now covered with shutters); two double hung windows at the second floor level, main house; and one double hung window at the second floor, rear portion. On the north, the first floor of the main house had two windows, while the rear portion had none. On the south, the first floor of the main house had a three-sided bay window, and the rear portion had one door and one window. The bay window, built on brick piers, was trimmed with delicate Gothic Revival style colonettes and the same paired brackets as are found on the front porch. The lattice under the bay was a later addition. The windows on the rear portion of the house did not have molded window caps, but they were all the same style of sash, with a banded upper sash and a single light lower sash.

The east elevation of the house consisted of the "back" of the front portion of the house, and the gable end of the rear portion. Since there was a chimney inside the east wall of the rear portion of the house, there were no windows in this elevation, except for the "split" pointed arch window in the gable, being the two halves of the window located on either side of the chimney. There were no windows on the east elevation of the main portion of the house.

At some point in the house's history, canvas awnings were installed on the eaves of the front porch, allowing the porch and house interior to be shaded from the west sun.

From the front, the house's exterior today is much as it was built, except for the changes to the porch noted above. In 1992, the present owners of the house expanded the first floor section of the rear portion of the house. The addition took the shape of a one story, hip roofed "U," slipped on from the east around the trunk of the existing "T." The addition allowed expanded use of the first floor east rooms, as described below. It also allowed the construction of a deck and pergola on the south side of the addition, which look down into the garden to the south. The deck is reached through two pairs of new french doors on the south. The siding, fenestration and trim of the original house were duplicated to allow the addition to blend with the existing work. Existing windows were relocated to new walls to preserve historic material. A new polychromatic paint scheme was implemented to emphasize the diverse textures and surfaces of the house. The addition was designed by Guy Ladd Frost, AIA and constructed by Tim Lyons, Contractor.

## INTERIOR

The house is entered through the paired front doors, which lead directly to the stairhall. The stairhall's main feature is the massive newel post and stair balustrade. The newel, octagonal in plan and a masterpiece of turnings, is mahogany. The molded banister is mounted on turned balusters, two to a stair, all of mahogany. The stair turns a quarter turn near the top of the run, ending at the second floor landing. There is a strong likelihood that these stair elements came from another location, as there are extra pieces of banister and extra balusters in the attic, and the newel seems out of scale with its surroundings. The brass and glass hanging light fixture appears to be original to the house, likely a gas fixture later electrified.

Moldings introduced in the stairhall are found consistently throughout the house. The 7" flat baseboard has a molded cap. The door surrounds are formed from a 4¼" flat board symmetrically molded, with a quarter round added on the inside edge. Door and window surrounds both have turned corner blocks at their upper corners.

To the north of the stairhall is the original parlor (now the dining room), and to the south is the original dining room (now the parlor). Both rooms once had hall doors. Originally there was no opening at the back of the hall to the east. Instead, there was a butler's pantry with a pass-through to the kitchen and an opening to the dining room. The arch now at the rear of the hallway was created in 1992 as part of the addition and alterations.

The original parlor, the north room, is largely unchanged. The front wall shows the pair of elongated double hung windows. Because of the length of these windows, the molding which forms their surround dead-ends into the floor, rather than into a baseboard. The north windows are located on either side of a chimney, and are paneled below. The picture rail in both this room and the south room is original to the house. A ghost of a stovepipe hole indicates that this chimney once had either a gas or coal stove installed, though there is no indication that there was ever a fireplace or mantle. In the east wall there is a new opening to the kitchen, created in 1992.

The south room, now the parlor, is also largely unchanged. The front windows are as in the dining room, elongated and without panels or baseboard. The south wall is broken by an arch, springing from plaster brackets, which leads to the

three-sided bay window. The edges of the arch opening are finished with a quarter-round molded in plaster and finished with a lamb's tongue. The bay windows are paneled below. This room has its original pine floor exposed, and an examination of old tack holes show that the floor was at least twice covered with a floor covering—once with strips of carpet or straw matting laid wall-to-wall, and once over the center portion alone, with a painted border. Originally there was a chimney located on the north wall, close to the hall door. The door opening in the east wall is original, though it has a new door. Special note should be made of the unusual cast iron corner radiator in the northwest corner of the room.

The east room was formerly one room, used as a kitchen, and approximately 14' × 14'. A door in the south wall gave access to the back stoop and kitchenyard. A chimney inside the east wall served a cooking range. The butler's pantry, noted above, was against the west wall, as were steep flights of stairs serving both the second floor and cellar.

The alterations of 1992 expanded this space to the north, east and south; created new access to both the north room and the front hall; and created new access to the exterior at the northeast corner and along the south wall. All the exterior walls are new, as is the maple flooring. The new space is designed with a central core, which contains the chimney, storage closets, bathroom and built-in storage for both the den (south side) and kitchen (north side). The south wall is clad in beaded board, while other new walls are drywall. New windows, window and door trim match the originals.

A new entrance to the full cellar was created under the main staircase when the back staircase was removed. The foundation consists of brick above grade, with stone (reinforced by concrete) under the original house. The addition sits on a poured concrete foundation and crawl space. The original floor joists were radially sawn, 3" × 8", located on 2'0" centers, and run north-south. They are let into the sill with a half-lap joint. A portion of a board wall shows the former location of the cellar stairs.

The second floor reflects the original dimensions of the house, and varies only slightly from the original plan. At the top of the stairs, the second floor landing runs east-west to the front and rear of the house. To the right at the top of the stairs, and through a door opening, there is a bathroom on the right. This is where the back staircase would have come through the second floor, but the stair was terminated when the first bathroom was installed in the house. Thereafter, the back staircase was rendered useless, and the bathroom was reached through the hall door. The east bedroom could only be reached from the south bedroom, no doubt sacrificing someone's privacy. The current bathroom has been moved slightly to the south, to allow a passageway to the east bedroom. Fir floors have been added throughout this east section.

The hall wall which encloses the attic stair is beaded board. The oil lamp mounted on the wall is an original fixture. The north and south bedrooms have not substantially changed; built-in closets and dressers have been added to the south master bedroom, as the house had typically minimal closets when built. The north bedroom has its original pine floors, and the chimney on the north wall shows signs of having once had a stove pipe installed. Although the baseboard, window and door surrounds are the same as the downstairs rooms, there are no panels under the windows on the second floor, and the west wall windows are of normal length. The south bedroom once had a chimney against the north wall, as in the parlor

below, and a door in the east wall to the back bedroom. The east bedroom has new casement windows which allow the passage of large pieces of furniture to the second floor.

The attic is accessible by the stair over the main staircase. The roof framing consists of vertically sawn roof rafters, 3" × 5", located 2'0" on center. An old wood shingle roof on lath is visible, with closed valleys flashed in galvanized tin. The attic flooring runs north-south in the front part of the house, and east-west in the rear portion.

## **CONCLUSION**

This diminutive house, originally three rooms over three rooms, seemed to reflect the knowledge of both a building style and lifestyle beyond the means of the original builders. The elaborate porch, magnificent newel and stair fittings and the butler's pantry are all signs of this understanding in what is an otherwise unpretentious and humble house. The latest owners have acknowledged this history by maintaining these elements, and adding additional space for the necessities of modern living.



“Stone House” 1871  
Carriage Front  
Wood Engraving by John DePol



“Stone House” 1871  
Garden Front  
Drawing by Guy Ladd Frost

**"STONE HOUSE" (1871)  
35 Post Drive, Roslyn Harbor  
Residence of Dr. Morris A. Gelfand**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Stone House stands on land formerly owned by William Cullen Bryant, and north of the original location of the Mudge Farmhouse. While the exact date of construction for Stone House has not yet been determined, it was likely under construction in 1871. In July 15 of that year, W.C. Bryant wrote a letter to Charles Nordhoff:

*My Dear Sir:*

*The bearer is Mr. Hendrickson who is superintending the building of a Stone cottage on the Mudge place for me. He wishes to see the manner in which the roof of your house is so constructed as to keep the upper chambers cool in hot weather, and to bare something about the cornice. If it be necessary, I should be glad to have him go to the house and examine it for himself. Perhaps that will be better than to rely upon any oral description that can be given. Will you be so kind as to talk with him a little and if he should go to Englewood tell him the way and give him a note to Mrs. Nordhoff:*

*Yours truly,  
W.C. Bryant*

As this is the only known Stone "cottage" on the Mudge Place, it appears that the house was under construction in 1871, though interestingly, the total design had not yet been developed. Sources place Charles Nordhoff on the staff of the New York "Evening Post" from 1861-71, so Mr. Hendrickson likely traveled to New York City to consult with him about the roof design.

It is also possible that the house was not completed for several years after construction had begun. Conrad Godwin Goddard, in his "The Early History of Roslyn Harbor," notes that when "Harold Godwin moved into the Stone House after his marriage to Elizabeth Marquand in 1884 he had to finish the stairways and other details of the interior, as I have learned from a plan with his name on it in the files." Goddard also notes that there had been a stable with the house, located near the stream.

The stone of which the house is constructed may have come from the local area. There is a long-standing tradition that while Bryant was away on a trip, his mason broke apart an enormous stone on the property to build the house, and that Bryant was so furious upon his return that he had the builder fired. There seems to be no documentation for this tale. As to who did the actual construction of the house, that, too, seems to have more than one answer. William Cullen Bryant mentions Mr. Hendrickson, the supervisor, Conrad Goddard mentions George Cline, supervisor of the Bryant holdings, as the builder of Stone House; and Bryant's letters of 1872 indicate a Mr. Topps, a Long Island stone mason, employed at building a stone house at Bryant's Cedar Mere in July of 1872.

The Goddard family rented the house for a time before it was acquired, along with 60 acres of the Bryant estate, by a real estate developer. The land was subdivided into one acre parcels, but the Stone House was allowed to stand, and was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. Morris A. Gelfand in 1957. Beatrice Gelfand had

been trained as an architect, and the family undertook a substantial remodeling project in 1961 and completed it in 1962. The house has been little changed since then.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Stone House was built loosely in an English cottage style, with the unusual feature of the mansard roof. Its rustic charm and pastoral location on the grounds of the Mudge Farmhouse must have been intended by Bryant, and early plans show the building surrounded by planting areas, reinforcing the idea of a house and surroundings being of one design. The Stone House was built in a T-shaped plan, with the front entrance originally located on the south side, facing the Mudge Farmhouse and the house's stables. (At one time a circular drive serviced this entrance.) The western portion of the first floor contained two living rooms on a north-south axis, while the dining room, kitchen, cold room, maids' rooms and bath and service areas were arranged on an east-west axis. The two areas were joined by the stairhall, with Dutch doors to the exterior on both the north and south walls. The second floor plan duplicated the first, with two large bedrooms and one bathroom above the living rooms, and three smaller bedrooms and two baths above the kitchen and dining room wing. Undated plans drawn for Conrad Goddard show four full baths and one lavatory, as well as several small closets, and though it is not clear if all these details were part of the original construction, they very well could have been. A note on the plans indicates that the attic over the entire house is 3'6" high and "celotex insulated." This attic design may have been what W.C. Bryant was referring to as "the manner in which the roof of your house is so constructed as to keep the upper chambers cool in hot weather." Although the attic may not have been insulated originally, the 3'6" space surely collected the hottest air.

The house was not substantially altered through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, except that at some point the north door became the main entrance to the house. Gelfand's alterations to the house are recorded in her drawn floor plans, dated August 22, 1961. The most major changes were in the eastern portion of the first floor, where the former maids' rooms, bath, kitchen and service areas were reworked into a more modern bath, laundry, pantry, kitchen and informal eating area, and a small office space. The hall along the north wall was created, and several closets were built in to new walls. In the rest of the first floor, fireplaces were modernized, carpeting and parquet wood flooring were installed, built-in bookcases were constructed, the walls were textured and painted white, and the lavatory adjacent to the living room was removed. The windows, doors, moldings and staircase remained the way the Gelfands found them. On the second floor a new wall was constructed in the northwest bedroom, adding closet space and increasing the size of the bathroom, and covering the existing fireplace. Doors to both the northwest and southwest bedrooms were relocated, and the fireplace in the southwest bedroom was covered. In the hallway, stairs which once led to the attic were removed, and a "disappearing" staircase (a folding staircase behind a trap door) was installed to create more light and space. The east stair wall was cut down to 2'6" above the floor, and new molding and wood dowels were installed to permit the passage of more daylight. Both small bathrooms were extensively remodeled, and new closets, shelving and desks were installed in the three bedrooms. A fireplace in the center south bedroom was removed. Baseboard hot water heat was installed throughout the house.



The house today is much as the plans were drawn in 1961, with a few changes to the kitchen area. The northwest living room has become a library; the dining room is also used as a workspace for Dr. Gelfand's printing; and the southwest bedroom is his study.

Many interior details date from the house's construction, or whenever the house was completed in the nineteenth century. The windows, set in 18" thick stone walls, have flat paneled jambs and headers, and many windows also have built-in window seats. Most windows are 4/4 double hung wood sash, though there are also 2/2 and 1/1 sash in the bay windows. The windows are framed by a complex architrave made up of several molding profiles and measuring 6" across. Baseboards, however, are a plain board topped with a simple cap. Both the front and back doors are constructed as Dutch doors, having 3-light transoms above. The staircase has turned spindles, two per step, an oak handrail and square-headed, vase-turned newels. The steps have a gentle 6¾" rise with a generous 10" run, making for a commodious and comfortable ascent and descent.

The dining room fireplace opening, 51" high by 54" wide, may indicate the original location of the kitchen. It appears to have a granite lintel, with a latter granite hearth.

The second floor floors are 4½" wide pine, and are reflective of the original floors throughout the house and which survive under carpeting. The upstairs windows have 2/2 sash and plaster reveals. Several windows have beaded board window seats trimmed out to the wall plane.

The basement is the former location of the laundry, but now serves as Dr. Gelfand's private printing shop. It has a concrete floor, 2' thick stone walls which are painted or whitewashed white, brick window jambs and 3/3 sash on the east, south and west walls, and 3 light fixed sash on the north. The first floor joists are 3" x 9½", 17" on center, and are vertically sawn fir. The subfloor for the first floor is tongue and groove pine. There is an exterior entrance to the basement from the east. The chimney bases are brick, and the living room chimney base was built with an arch to support the hearth.

The exterior of the house has not been changed since its construction. The rubble stone walls have brick window jambs, flat stone lintels and sills, which are all painted white at this point. The lintels are tooled with parallel horizontal lines. Four-panel window shutters are held with iron tiebacks. The stone masonry ties into brick quoins at the building corners. The slate mansard roof has exposed rafter ends and is gracefully curved at the lower edge. The cornice, which Bryant referred to in his letter, as Hendrickson wanted to "bare something about the cornice," steps out around the dormers, and conceals the change in plane of the roof between the lower portion of the mansard and the relatively flat upper roof. Dormer windows are trimmed in wood, and are chamfered on the front edge. The lower edge of the roof is hung with a copper gutter, and downspouts lead back to the building face and to the ground. Two brick chimneys project from the roof, one in each part of the "T" of the plan. A garage is located to the northeast of the house.

The Stone House has been altered to accommodate the needs of a twentieth century family, but Beatrice Gelfand found ways of retaining those parts of the house which were appealing to her, and adding quality design which reflected her time, the 1960's. The innovations of built-in desks, tucked-away closets and an open plan for the kitchen are still functional.



**THE THOMAS CLAPHAM ESTATE (1868)**  
**Currently "Wenlo" Since 1943**  
**48 Glenwood Road, Roslyn Harbor**  
**Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Capanegro**

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The property on which "Wenlo" is located has a similar early history of ownership to "Montrose," "Willowmere," "Springbank," and several other Roslyn Harbor houses. The land was part of a 150-acre grant given to Nathaniel Pearsall (1649-1703), a proprietor of the Town of North Hempstead. Most of the land was farmland, stretching between the port villages of Roslyn and Glenwood Landing. The piece of property on which Wenlo is sited was farmland, located between Hempstead Harbor and Glenwood Road, and had been deeded to Stephen Taber from the Pearsall family in 1837. As the land was located on the west side of Glenwood Road, and Taber's house was on the east side, Taber was reluctant to sell the lot, knowing that any construction would jeopardize his view of the harbor. A persistent and wealthy Thomas Clapham finally managed to purchase eighteen acres of the property, allowing Taber to place restrictions in the contract which would safeguard his view. Taber sold the land in 1867 for the unprecedented sum of \$1,000 per acre. At the time of purchase, there was an occupied tenant's cottage on the property, but no other structures are mentioned in the agreement.

At the time of the agreement, September 10, 1867, Thomas Clapham's residence was listed as Huntington, Connecticut, though there was also a reference to his residence at "No. 20 Bush St., Brooklyn." Clapham was descended from an old English family whose home was at Beamsley, Lincolnshire, England. He was born in Shelton, Connecticut, and later moved to Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. He owned a Herreshof sloop named "Qui Vive," and, according to a local story, "cruised up Hempstead Harbor looking for a home site." His first efforts to purchase land in Sea Cliff were unsuccessful, but his eventual purchase of eighteen acres from Taber just south of Mott's Cove proved most satisfactory. He augmented this purchase with an additional eighty acres purchased from Benjamin Mott in 1869.

Clapham is thought to have been extremely wealthy, as the heir apparent to a large estate in England. Based on this source of funds, Clapham embarked on the building of an estate that was the first major, formal, architect designed residence in Roslyn. The building was designed by Jacob Wrey Mould, a prominent New York City architect responsible for the designs of many New York churches, including All Souls' Unitarian Church and Parsonage (1853-1955), and most of the structures in Central Park. These he designed in his capacity as Architect of the New York City Department of Public Parks. Although it is not yet known how Mould and Clapham became acquainted with one another, the Brooklyn residence listed for Clapham in 1867 shows that he was not entirely based on Long Island, and may have been familiar with Mould's city work. Or he may have met Mould through his neighbor, William Cullen Bryant, a close friend of Mould's Central Park Associate, Calvert Vautr.

**THOMAS CLAPHAM'S "STONE HOUSE"**

In 1875 a publication titled *Wooden and Brick Buildings with Details* was published under the direction of A.J. Bicknell. The volume's elaborate title page

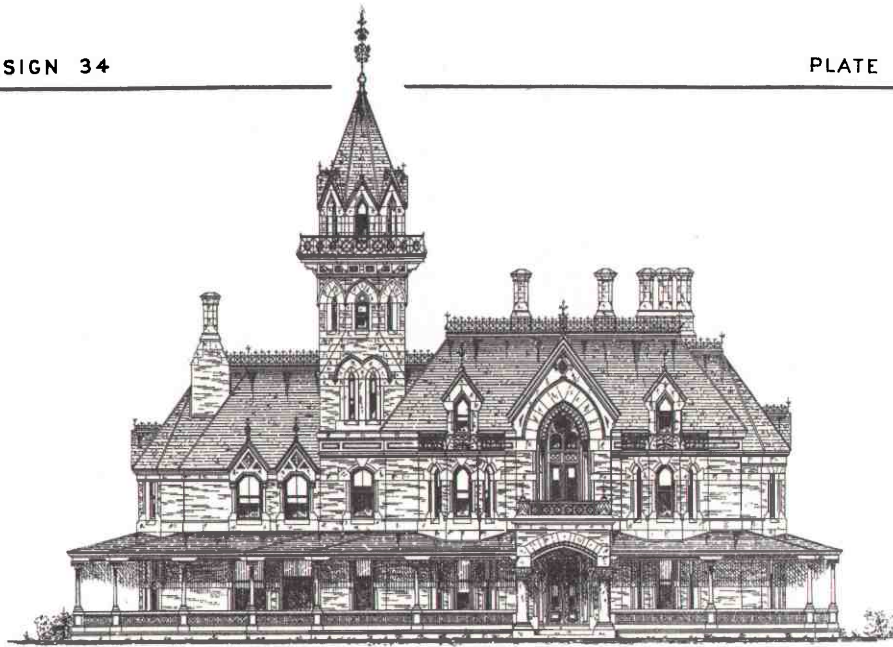
describes the contents, including “one hundred and sixty plates of Plans, Elevations, Views, Sections and Details of villas, cottages farm houses . . . and a variety of miscellaneous exterior and interior designs and details. . . .” Plates 61 through 66 illustrated “an elaborate villa which has been erected for Thomas Clapham, Esq., on a projecting point on the east side of Roslyn Harbor.” The description elaborates the materials used, including “Greenwich Bastard Granite as in the Ellen Ward Memorial Clock Tower (TG 1971–72) in rough rock face, random ashlar work, with trimmings of Ohio stone,” and “Minton’s encaustic tiles.” The plates include plans and elevations, and show the extensive piazzas, iron cresting, five story tower, and other details that decorated the exterior.

Clapham’s “Stone House” was constructed in 1868–1872. Although not exactly mimicking the published plans, a photograph dated 1887 shows that the final product did closely adhere to Mould’s design. The house was built in the Italian Villa style, an architectural revival style which was enjoying great popularity, particularly in upstate New York locations along the Hudson River. It was a style propounded by A.J. Downing in his *Architecture of Country Houses* published in 1850, containing designs for “cottages, farm-houses, and villas.” The villa style incorporated details from Italian architecture in a non-academic manner, borrowing such features as polychromatic stonework, colonette-style columns, and elaborate constructions such as towers, bays, dormers and piazzas. Clapham’s Stone House had these things and more, including an enormous vault-roofed conservatory set into the bank south of the house itself.

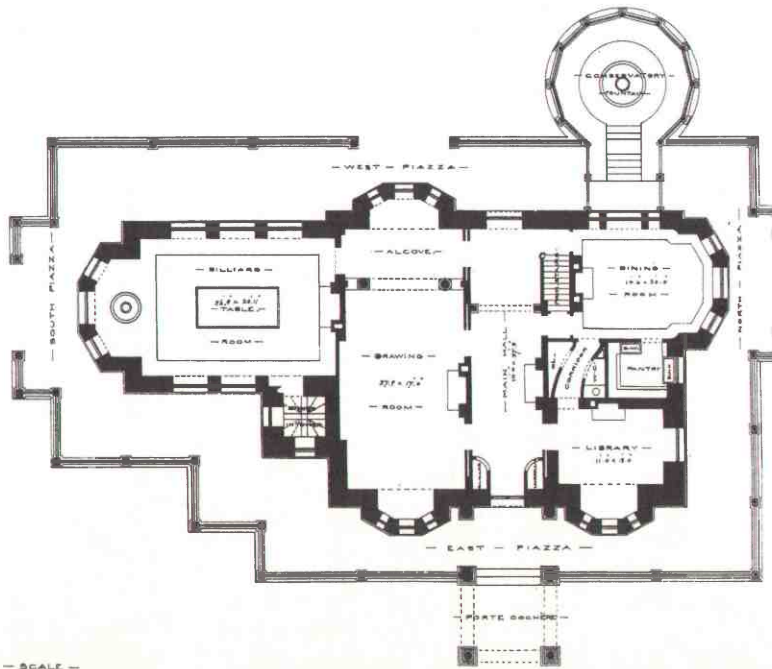
As originally constructed, Stone House consisted of a main block, three bays wide and three storeys high, the third storey being under-the-roof space lit by dormers. A large wing extended to the south, and at the southeast junction of the main block and the wing was a five storey tower, very much resembling an Italian campanile. Clapham’s coat-of-arms, Churchill, and the date “1868” were carved in stone and set into the tower above the third storey. All the roofs appear to have been slated, with at least two colors of slate. Piazzas encircled the south and north ends of the house, and most likely extended along the west elevation as well. Many of the window and door openings were round-headed or lancet-shaped, trimmed in light Ohio lime-stone and contrasting with the walls of granite. Stringcourses of Ohio stone also contributed to the colorful articulation of the walls. Chimneys terminated in hexagonal stacks, and every roof ridge was trimmed in elaborate cast iron cresting.

The differences between the published designs and the building as photographed were relatively minor, and may relate to cost savings or a necessary simplification of building construction details. The fifth storey of the tower, as shown in the drawings, was meant to be octagonal; instead, it was built in square section. The drawings also show the piazza wrapping entirely around the building, and the front entrance articulated with a porte-cochere; neither the east piazza nor the porte-cochere seem to have been constructed. A chimney is shown in the south wing, which was never constructed, and the large separate conservatory seems to have replaced a proposed 12-sided glass structure shown on the plan.

The only other structure known to have been built by Clapham was a cottage intended for his mother, constructed in 1875 and known as “Dower House.” The construction of the modest building was fortuitous, as shortly after the Stone House was completed, another heir to the family fortune in England was located. This heir claimed the remainder of the estate by the law of primogeniture, leaving Clapham without the means to suitably occupy and sustain the Stone House. He



— EAST ELEVATION —

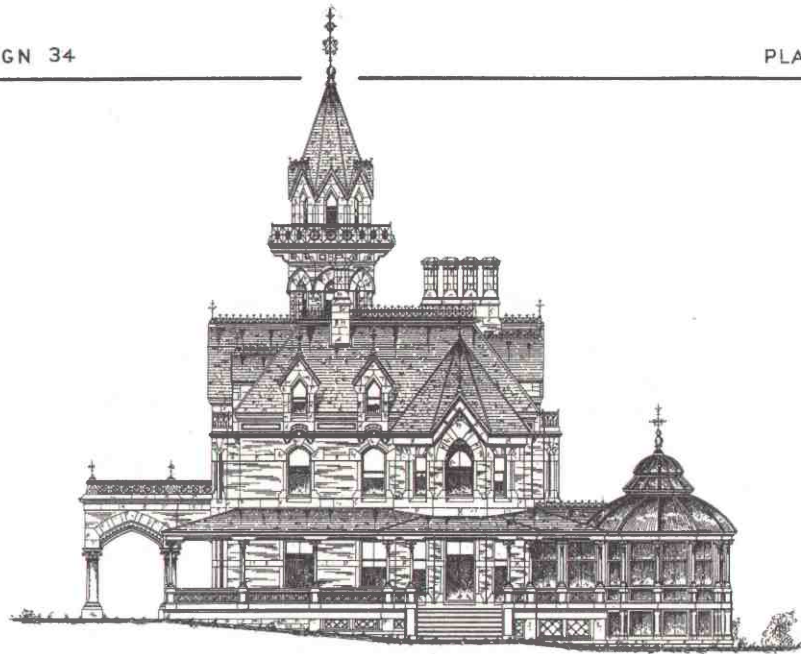


— SCALE —  
1" = 10'  
S.W. & B.L.

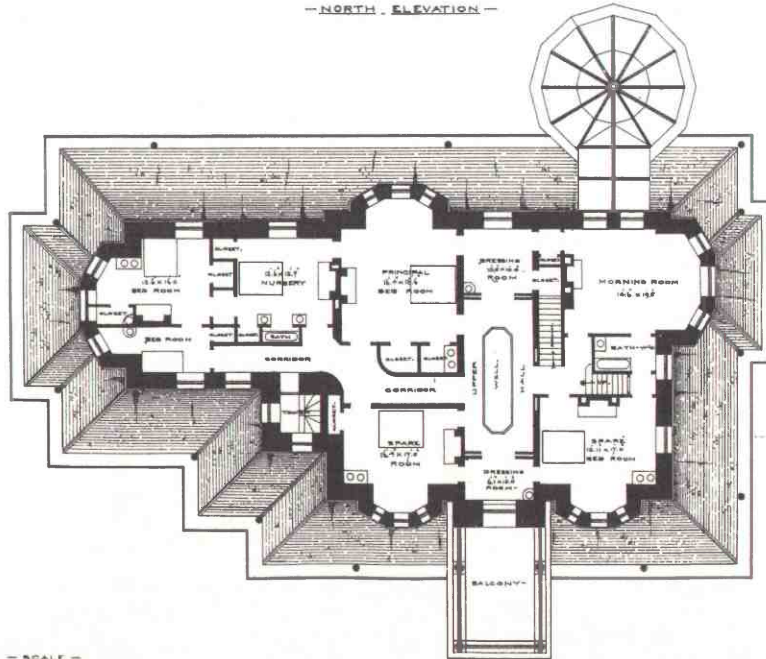
— PLAN OF PRINCIPAL FLOOR —

— J. WREY, MOULD, ARCHITECT —

Original elevation by Jacob Wrey Mould, Architect, from *Bicknell, A.J.*:  
"Wooden and Brick Buildings with Details," N.Y., 1875.



— NORTH ELEVATION —



— PLAN OF CHAMBER FLOOR —

— J. WREY MOULD, ARCHITECT —

Original elevation by Jacob Wrey Mould, Architect, from *Bicknell, A.J.:*  
“Wooden and Brick Buildings with Details,” N.Y., 1875.

had reputedly spent at least \$250,000 for its construction, but in 1885 he moved into Dower House, having occupied the mansion for less than 15 years. The small house still stands off Glenwood Rd., and is now known as "Comfort Cottage," perhaps an allusion to Clapham's solace in removing to such a modest abode. Clapham is best known as a designer and builder of small yachts, a profession he successfully pursued until his death in 1915. His boat building sheds were on Mott's Cove creek, nearly within view of the Stone House, and the boats he designed there, including the "Roslyn Yawl," and his "Bouncer" design, a shallow draft scow, are well-known for their speed, and ingenuity.

#### **AFTER CLAPHAM**

The history of ownership of the house between Clapham and the next distinguished owner, Benjamin Stern, includes use as a military school for boys, "The Bryant School," owned by Ephram Hines and run by George B. Cortelyou; and as the residence of Dr. Valentine Mott, an eminent New York physician grandson of the noted surgeon of the same name (1785-1865) and who for a while owned the Valentine-Robbins House (TG 1976-1977). While it is likely that neither of these owners substantially changed the Stone House as built by Clapham, it is during this period that the estate was first subdivided. Henry P. Tailer purchased the southern portion of the property, and built a wood house in the Colonial Revival style.

#### **BENJAMIN STERN'S "CLARABEN COURT"**

Benjamin Stern, owner of the New York City department store, purchased the Stone House property from Dr. Mott, and in 1906 embarked on a major remodeling project. His intent was to change the style of the building from its Italian Villa demeanor to one which would be in the French "chateau" style, imitative of such buildings constructed in France in the 18th century. Again, the work was reflective of an architectural style which was popular among very wealthy New Yorkers who were building mansions on 5th Avenue and on the north shore of Long Island. The extensive work which was required to restyle the building must have been very costly, and changed the form and details of the building inside and out. Mr. Stern's architect has not been identified specifically. He may be the same as the landscape architect, "A. Duchene, architecte," 10 Avenue de Tokio, Paris.

While the main block of the house remained intact as to its form, the angle-sided, two storey bays which flanked the front entrance were replaced with shallow square sided bays; the round-headed windows of the original bays were replaced with square-topped windows. The entrance bay, which originally extended a full three storeys and terminated in a gable, was decreased in height to the level of the cornice; three new dormers were constructed, with fancifully shaped gables. The iron cresting which had decorated each roof ridge was replaced with copper ridge caps and other details. A large copper cornice and built-in gutter was added, covering Stone House's frieze. A three storey wing was added to the north, and though the building wall stone seemed to match, the windows on the first and second floors were flat-headed, there were no contrasting stringcourses, and the new cornice continued around this section. The roof of the north wing was peppered with three shaped dormers and five porthole windows. The north wing roof was similarly treated. Both the north and south piazzas were demolished, and supposedly the east one as well. In their place, Stern created a tiled terrace to the east of the south wing, and wrapped a classically-inspired

piazza around the south and west elevations. The new piazza featured tiled floors and doric columns, supporting flat or shed roofs. In a c. 1920 photograph, several of the first floor windows and the terrace around the south wing are fitted with striped awnings.

The only exterior element which appears to not have been altered at all was the tower, still a full five stories and with windows and stonework unchanged. To assert the new ownership and style of the house, the site was renamed "Claraben Court," after the first names of the Sterns, Benjamin and Clara.

Although the changes to the interior are more difficult to document without the assistance of photographs, it is clear that a total restyling occurred inside as well. In fact, the restyling began right at the front entry, with a pair of large oak doors decorated with carvings and turnings, which opened to reveal the inner vestibule partition and doors of wrought iron. Comparing plans of Stone House printed in Bicknell's book, and plans printed in 1936 of Claraben Court, the most substantial change to the first floor was the replacement of the main staircase. In the Stone House, a straight staircase was entered from the west, and once on the second floor, traffic circulated through an upper hall with a well which looked down into the main hall. Stern replaced this with a flowing, curved staircase mounted from the east, and finished with a substantial iron and brass balustrade. The curved stairhall wall allowed for the display of a grand tapestry.

Also according to the original plans, Clapham's house had a fireplace on the north wall of the drawing room; Stern removed both the fireplace and the wall, and replaced it with a large hooded stone fireplace in the south wall. Separating the front entry hall and the living room was a classical dentilled cornice carried by columns and pilasters with composite capitals. The cornice continued around the living room.

The south wing of the house, labelled "billiard room" in Clapham's plans and "salon" in Stern's, does not seem to have changed in form through the renovation. Two openings, a window to the west and a door to the east, were closed in to create bookcases, and it is likely that the oak paneling and black marble fireplace also date from Stern's period.

To the north, Stern added a large wing to accommodate a new dining room, butler's pantry and maid's room. To do this, he enclosed the original north wall of Clapham's house, including the bowed wall of the original dining room. It appears that during the tenure of both Clapham and Stern the kitchen was located in the northern end of the basement, below the original and later dining rooms.

Although there were corresponding changes on the second floor, the general distribution of bedrooms remained the same. Stern added a number of bathrooms, created a straight north-south corridor along the spine of the house, and created bedrooms, dressing rooms and baths on the second floor of the north wing. A secondary staircase was also located in the north wing to facilitate circulation of the staff. Two sun decks were accessible from bedrooms: one to the south, and the other to the west. The third floor was also finished with guest rooms and baths, maids' rooms and utility spaces. While the vast majority of this remodeling occurred as the 1906 project, Stern strove to "constantly modernize" the property to keep its equipment and systems up-to-date.

Stern also manifested substantial changes to the grounds of the estate. Using plans prepared by a French landscape architect, "A. Duchene, architecte" of 10



Avenue de Tokio, Paris, the grounds were laid out in elaborate formal gardens, walks, terraces and vistas. South of the south wing, where Clapham had located his glass conservatory, Stern installed a Sunken Garden laid out around a long oblong reflecting pool. At the southern end of the garden was a large columned trellis, not unlike that designed by Bevin and Milliken for "Clayton" (TG Clayton—1971-72—Arch. History—1990 e.s.). Ionic columns supported a curved cornice and frieze; atop the uppermost lattice were classical urns. The original drawings for the trellis and much of the garden layout survive. The trellis has been dismantled, repaired and its components stored in the cellar. Other gardens arranged south and east of the main house included a rose garden and a cutting garden; overlooking Mott's Cove was a woodland garden.

Other improvements Stern made to the property included an imposing entrance of granite pillars and iron gates on Glenwood Road; a granite gatehouse located just southwest of the entrance, and imitative of the main house in architectural style; a wood bath house located on the waterfront directly west of the main house; a garage capable of housing ten cars and containing two apartments on the second floor; a complex of greenhouses; and a double tennis court. All but the greenhouses survive. "Comfort Cottage," which had been home to Clapham, was retained by Stern as a gardener's cottage. There was also an associated "model farm," consisting of 23½ acres and everything that was necessary to support an estate, including a dairy barn, creamery, silo, chicken houses, greenhouses and dwellings.

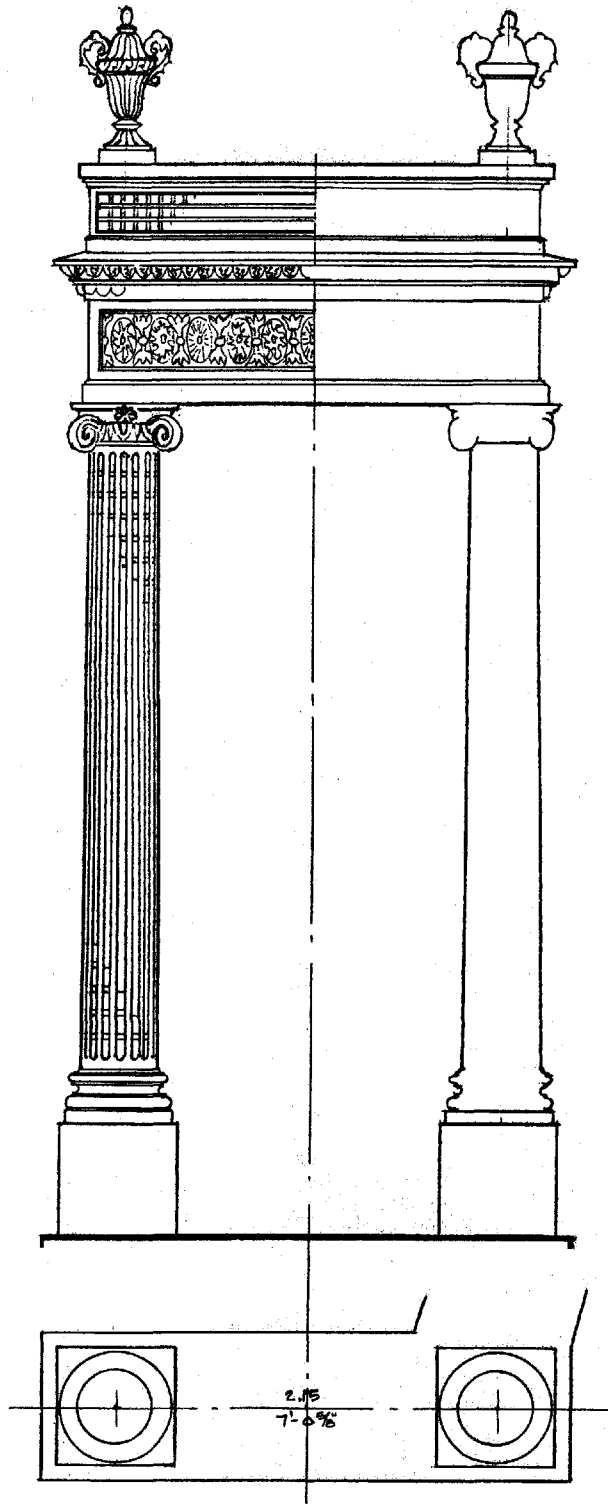
Stern died in 1929, and Claraben Court was advertised for sale in 1936, Stern's charitable bequests having exhausted the assets of his estate. It was owned briefly by Mr. Cartier; by 1943 the property had been acquired by Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Hughes.

#### **THE HUGHES' "WENLO"**

The Hughes occupied the building much the way the Sterns had left it, though renaming it "Wenlo" for their first names, Wendell and Louise. In 1960, the house was consumed by a major fire; the fire was followed by a period when the building was damaged by both the weather and vandals. In 1963, nearly one hundred years after the original construction of the house, the Hughes undertook the third major building project. This last project restored some details of Clapham's period, removed others, and changed some of Stern's alterations as well. The building as altered by the Hughes is much the way the property is today, and so will be described as "existing conditions" below:

#### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

"Wenlo" was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Freese in 1967, and in 1993 it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Michael Capanegro. Structurally, the property has changed little through these last two periods of ownership. The property is still approached as it was in both Clapham and Stern's times, from Glenwood Road to the east. Passing through Stern's entrance, the gate lodge Stern had built is immediately to the left, though now located on a separate lot. Just west of the gate house is the Stern greenhouse, remodeled as a residence and also on a separate lot. The drive winds to the house, terminating in the courtyard bordered by some of the granite balustrades installed by Stern's landscape architect, A. Duchene. Some ornamental urns and flowerpots survive as well.



Original, deteriorated west elevation of trellis by A. Duchene, architecte. Traced and redrawn by Guy Ladd Frost.

The main block of the house is still three bays wide and two full stories. The three projecting bays, front door treatment, copper cornice and window sash all date to the Stern alterations. The shallow hipped slate roof, without dormers, is part of the Hughes' project, as was the removal of the upper two stories of the tower. There is also a large new chimney which dates to the Hughes' work. The cornice on the tower is also part of the Hughes' project. Dr. Hughes' architect was Henry Stojowski of New York City.

On the south wing, the slate roof, again without dormers, dates to the Hughes' work. The terrace, with its doric columned flat roof, is part of Stern's work. The porch has recently (1994) been repainted in a green and white color scheme. The second floor sun roof still has one of the green-and-white striped awnings that would have been on all terraces and decks during Stern's time. The terraces and stone balustrades are part of Duchene's landscape plan; the metal railings are later.

On the north, the wing constructed by Stern was demolished by Hughes, leaving only the basement level intact. This is now roofed over, and is used for garage and storage space. The flat roof is used as a terrace. The two story angle sided bay was part of Clapham's construction, though its flat roof is part of Hughes' work.

The entrance to the house, through a pair of oak outer doors, leads to a vestibule defined by a wrought iron door and partition, all Stern's work. The front foyer has been abbreviated by the addition of a later elevator; recently a floor to ceiling mirror has been installed to create the illusion of a larger space. Passing through an arched opening to the entrance hall, Stern's grand curved staircase, with its iron and brass balustrade is the most dominant feature of the hall. To the south through the columned and pilastered opening is the drawing room. The architectural focus of the room is the stone hooded fireplace installed by Stern. The room is finished with a large dentilled cornice, which has been copied to also finish the later office in the southeast corner.

The drawing room has recently (1994-95) had murals painted directly on the plaster walls, cornices and hooded fireplace. Artist Igor Naskalov, formerly of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg and now living in New Jersey, drew his inspiration from Michelangelo's Sistene Chapel to create full-sized figures and decorative painted surfaces throughout the room.

Under the massive staircase there is a small powder room, recently walled and ceiling in its entirety with mirrors to expand the sense of space. A small stained glass window, designed by artist Anna Zavrashnov, allows natural light into the diminutive space.

The first floor of the south wing contains the library, which is largely unchanged from Stern's renovation. The entire room is finished with oak, including the walls, carved ionic pilasters, a modillioned cornice, recessed french doors and round-headed alcove bookcases with cabinets below. The black marble fireplace and cast iron fireback also date to Stern's period. The gilded surrounds above the mantle were meant to contain mirrors and/or paintings.

The north end of the first floor was substantially altered by the Hughes through the removal of the north wing. The current dining room, in the northwest corner, is actually in the same location as Clapham's dining room. During the Stern's tenure, this room was labeled as the "smoking room," and served as an

anteroom to the dining room. The room has been recently redecorated by Igor Naskalov in the style of Pompeian frescoes, with the addition of a plaster layer and deeply pigmented paintings. The decoration of the room, including the window treatments, was done by Mrs. Capanegro, an interior decorator.

The Capanegros have also installed Italian tile throughout the first floor area, creating a uniform floor treatment from the entry hall into the dining room and drawing room.

The northeast kitchen space was created by the Hughes, as the kitchens for both the Stern and Clapham families were located in the basement. The room had been the library in Clapham's time, and a reception room during Stern's tenure. Also dating from the Hughes' renovations are the service stair to the second floor and the pantries between the kitchen and dining room. The kitchen has been completely remodeled by the Capanegros, including the reopening of the east windows, which had been concealed by a false wall.

The basement can be reached through a door near the pantries, and show that the original foundation of the house was a combination of brick and stone rubble, some of which was plastered; later additions are supported by foundations of concrete block. There is no evidence left of the original kitchens. Brick piers are visible which carry the chimney base for the living room fireplace and the inner corners of the tower.

On the second floor, the distribution of rooms is largely unchanged from Stern's work. While the floor always contained a combination of chambers, dressing rooms and baths, the flow of traffic in Clapham's house was by short corridors leading off the central stairwell. Stern changed the flow by creating a hallway down the north-south axis of the building, with bedrooms off both sides of the hall. This plan largely survives, though some bathrooms have been changed to dressing rooms, additional closets have been installed, and the rooms formerly in the north wing have been lost. Recently, the wood floors have been refinished.

There is little doubt that Stern's remodeling affected nearly every surface in the house. Considering that nearly every window was changed, including alterations to the stonework, it is likely that all the woodwork have been altered as well. The tower room, entered from the second floor hall, has the most intact original features, including a baseboard, window surrounds and recesses. The room is now used as a laundry/kitchenette. Although the tower was labeled as a stair tower in Clapham's plans, there is no evidence that a stair was ever actually built. The first floor tower room can be entered from the outside only, and shows original features such as simple window and door surrounds, baseboards, and flat paneled shutters. The plaster in this room has never been painted.

One bedroom, located directly above the front entrance on the east side, was probably remodeled again in the 1920's, as it contains a number of "art deco" features. These include the unusually wide and shallow cornice, unique built-up moldings at the windows, and brass hardware typical of the period. This may be a part of Stern's "continual upgrading" that was noted in the advertisement of sale in 1936.

The remainder of the second floor rooms consist of bedrooms, bathrooms, dressing and sitting rooms, all finished largely as Stern had them finished, with modernizing of fixtures and closets done throughout by the Hughes and Capanegros. A separate suite of rooms, including a bedroom, bath and sitting room, are

located at the north end of the hall, while the rest of the rooms are located to the south.

On the grounds, the oblong reflecting pool that had been located south of the house has been filled in, and the iron trellis which sat at its southern end has been dismantled and removed. The wood stairs at the waterside lead to the bath house, topped by a small cupola, and finished on the interior with varnished beaded board. Many of the gardens installed by Stern and Duchene are low located on other lots, as are the garage, Comfort Cottage and the model farm.

In closing, the house begun by Clapham in 1868 has been remodeled, expanded, struck by fire and eventually reduced in size. Each owner has had a different vision of the decoration of the house—and each furnishing scheme has been unique to the owners' style and predilection. Through all these changes the magnificent site and solid stone walls have endured. There is surely much life left to this splendid house.

## SPONSORS

MR. AND MRS. ROBERT AMON  
MS. PAULA ARIDAS  
MR. AND MRS. LESTER ARSTARK  
MISS SUZANNA BARUCCO  
MR. JOHN BELL  
DR. AND MRS. MARVIN BORIS  
MS. ELIZABETH A. BRANDL  
MISS MARY ANN BRANDL  
MRS. JEAN DAVIS CHAPMAN  
JOHN COLLINS  
MR. AND MRS. JAY CORN  
MR. AND MRS. DANIEL EHRLICH  
MR. AND MRS. VINCENT C. ELLIS  
MR. AND MRS. PAUL F. EMMANUEL  
DR. STANLEY E. FISHER  
DR. AND MRS. LEONARD FREEMAN  
FRIEND OF A FARMER EAST  
FRIENDS FOR LI HERITAGE  
MR. AND MRS. GUY L. FROST  
MR. AND MRS. M. GALANTE  
DR. MORRIS A. GELFAND  
DR. AND MRS. ROGER G. GERRY  
MR. AND MRS. MORRIS W. GETLER  
MISS LORRAINE GILLIGAN  
MR. AND MRS. FRANK X. HARRINGTON  
MR. JOH PAUL HAWKINS  
MR. HUYLER HELD  
MR. AND MRS. ROBERT V. HENNING  
COW NECK PENINSULA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MS. JANET INSARDI  
MR. RAY JACOBS  
JOHN FLYNN BUILDING CO.  
DRS. RALPH KAPLAN AND NAOMI SADOWSKY  
MR. AND MRS. DONALD J. KAVANAGH, JR.  
STEVEN AND DIANE KLETZ  
ERNEST KOVACS, M.D.  
MR. AND MRS. MORTON L. LEAVY  
MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM D. LITTLEFORD  
DIANE MARGARITIS  
MR. AND MRS. MICHAEL MODICA  
TERRY MORABITO  
MR. AND MRS. NOLAN MYERSON  
DR. NATALIE A. NAYLOR  
MR. HOWARD NEEDLEMAN  
MRS. ELY PERLMAN  
MR. AND MRS. RICHARD D. PONEMON  
MR. AND MRS. MILLARD B. PRISANT  
ROSLYN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
SORENSEN LUMBER INC.  
MS. DIANE M. STIGLIANO  
THE ROSLYN SAVINGS BANK  
MR. AND MRS. MICHAEL VIOLA  
MR. AND MRS. LEONARD WADLER  
DR. AND MRS. JAMES D. WATSON  
DR. AND MRS. GEORGE L. WILLIAMS  
MR. AND MRS. HENRY V. WILLIAMS

Thanks also to those sponsors whose contributions arrived after the deadline

