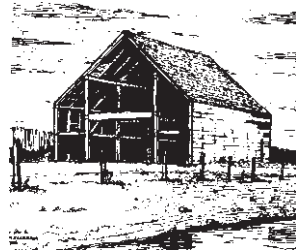


DUTCH BARN PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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The Van Der Veer Farmstead, Town of Florida, Montgomery County, NY.

By Jason Lampkin

Introduction

The Vanderveer farm is located on Belldons Road in Montgomery County, just south of the city limits of Amsterdam, above NYS Thruway Exit 27, with a commanding view of the Mohawk valley (Photo 1). The property was originally part of the Warrensbush or "Warren's Town" patent issued to Sir Peter Warren in c.1735. (Lots 82-86 and 155 were sold to a Henry Huff).¹ Sometime after the death of Warren, the upper and lower tracts of Warrensbush were purchased (including the Huff patent) by John Watts Jr.²

This Farm was originally derived from lots 82 and 86. A 1766 map of Warrensbush depicts a dwelling house on each of these lots. Research has yet to reveal the identity of the colonial occupants. Whoever they were, they were gone from the properties by the Revolution's end. In the early twentieth century historian Robert M. Hartley recorded that two neighboring farms, those of the Rowland and Hunte families, were raided, looted and

burned during the Revolution. It is possible the settlers here may have met a similar fate.³

In the 1980s, then Amsterdam City Historian Katherine Strobeck wrote that "some evidence has been found that there may have been an earlier structure...[it] probably would have been a log or wooden building and was destroyed by the raids of Johnson and Brant..."⁴ Unfortunately, the identity of the source for this information, when it was found, where exactly on the property it was located, and how it was concluded that this structure was a casualty of the Revolutionary raids is not mentioned or explained. Until further research is done or more evidence is discovered (or rediscovered for that matter), the validity of this story will have to remain in question, and the property's early history will remain a mystery.

The Van Der Veers

John Vanderveer Sr. (1765-1839) was a descendant of Cornelius Vanderveer, a Dutch immigrant who settled in Flatbush (Long Island) in 1659. Garrett, John's father, lived in Monmouth, New Jersey. Part of the Battle of Monmouth was fought on Garrett's farm in 1778, and resulted in the loss of his buildings and livestock; the Redcoats even filled his well with stone and rubble.⁵

Jacob Vanderveer, John's uncle, was the first in the family to see the Mohawk Valley, while marching in the Continental Army. He was immediately taken by the area's beauty and rich fertile soils. He decided he'd make a home there as soon as the war ended:

"...he [Jacob] purchased a farm containing buildings and improvements from John Watts, the brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson. He remained a year, sowed and reaped a crop of



Photo 1. Aerial view of the Van Der Veer farmstead, c.1950, looking southeast (Courtesy of the Walter Elwood Museum). The New World Dutch barn is seen at left, with the swing-beam barn beyond and the brick house at right. The NWD barn and house are both oriented north-south. The site of the foundation of what is speculated to have been a tenant's house can be seen in the top center of this image.

(continued on page 2)

Van Der Veer Farm (continued from page 1)



Photo 2. The Dutch barn, looking north-northwest, May 2007 (Photo by W. Wheeler).



Photo 3. Bent C, looking southwest, May 2007 (Photo by W. Wheeler).

wheat, which he sold for one dollar per bushel, and thus paid off his indebtedness of \$1100. He then returned to his family in New Jersey, who ere long came with him to the new home.”⁶

Enticed and encouraged by their uncle Jacob’s success and satisfaction, John and two of his brothers settled on land in the town of Glen, purchased for them by their father Garrett. John quickly grew dissatisfied with this arrangement; he wanted to own a farm all to himself. In c.1790, he rented lots 82 and 86 from Watts, adjacent to his uncle Jacob’s farm in the town of Florida. He briefly

returned to New Jersey to marry his childhood sweetheart Catherine Conover in 1791. John Watts Jr., despite having strong loyalist connections (he was the brother-in-law to John Johnson and a nephew of Sir Peter Warren), somehow managed to remain well-respected by both sides during the Revolution and retained all of his assets thereafter. However, post-Revolution America was filled with an “early anxiety to get rid of the vexatious ground rents. But the lease system was well entrenched, and the owners knew well their value; only slowly and gradually was the right to the soil obtained.” John Vanderveer and his neighbors quickly grew impatient with Watts; they wanted to own their farms, not rent them. Watts finally gave in and signed a quit-claim for his remaining leaseholds in 1793.⁷

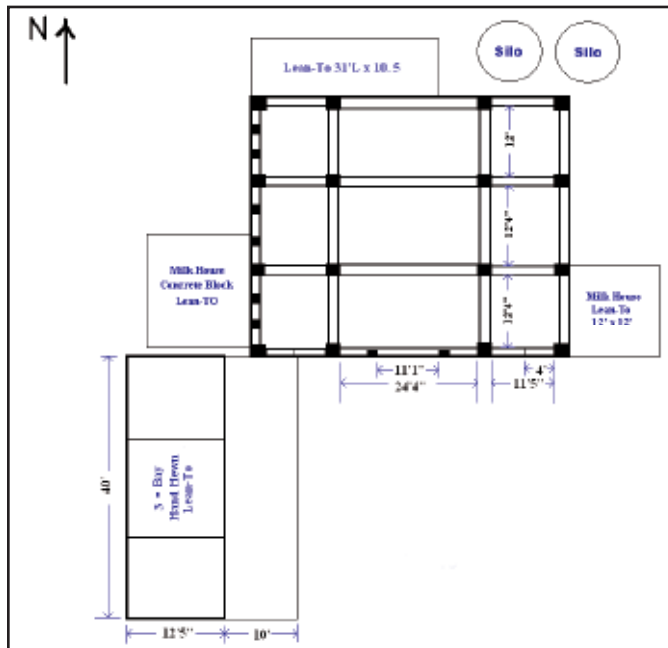


Figure 1. Plan of New World Dutch barn and associated structures. Corner posts measure 10” by 7½”. Three longitudinal tie beams survive, they are 9 feet above the floor of the barn and measure 9½” by 6½” or 7½” by 5½” in size. Studs of exterior walls measure 7” by 6” and are spaced four feet apart. Lower transverse struts (four measured) are 8½” by 6½” (two examples), 7½” by 6” and 7” by 5½” (Unless noted otherwise, all figures and photographs are by the author).

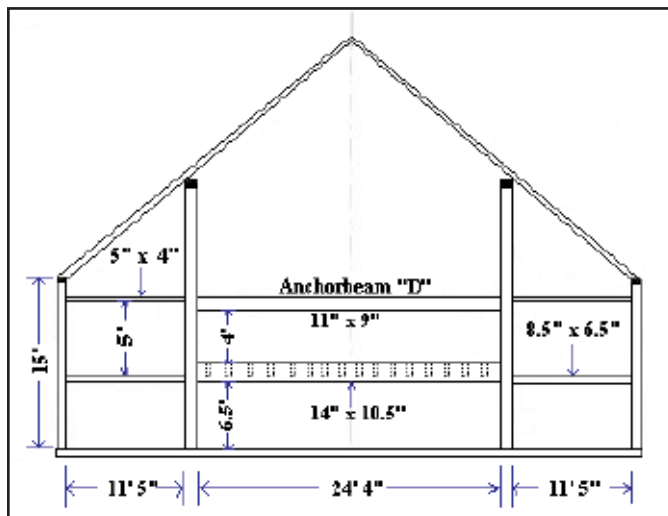


Figure 2. Bent D, the northernmost bent, section looking north.

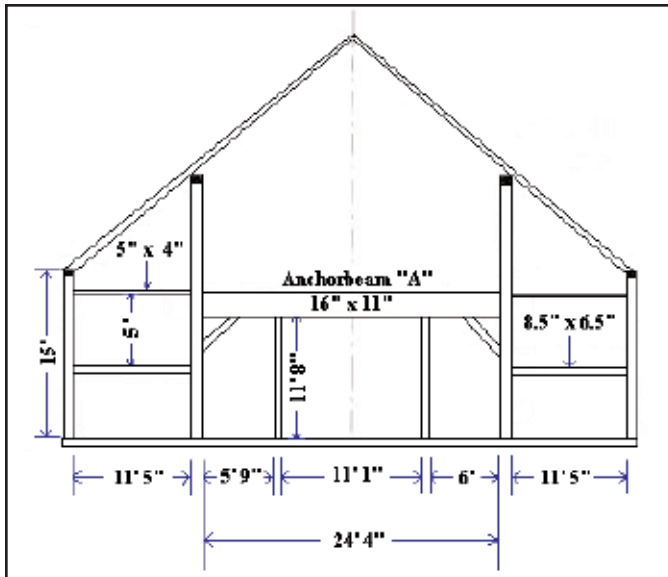


Figure 3. Bent A, section looking south.

John and Catherine are known to have had at least eight children: Jane, Cornelius, Sarah, Garret, Tunis, John Jr., Catherine and Henry. They appear to have followed a Dutch tradition when naming their children; the first and second sons and daughters were named after their grandparents, the third-born son and daughter were named after the parents and the remaining children were named after aunts or uncles.

John also followed the Dutch tradition of leaving the farm to his youngest son, Henry. But Henry died young, with his wife and only child following him soon after (1837), and the farm fell to the second youngest son, John Jr., by default. John Jr. had three children: two daughters, Catherine and Mary, and a son, Rev. Lauren.

John Sr., who died in 1839, “for the remainder of his life, lived on his farm in Montgomery county, New York, where he was fairly prosperous, became a man of some influence, and was highly esteemed and respected by the community in which he lived.”⁸ John Sr. and his wife are buried behind the Florida Reformed Church in Minaville.

The New World Dutch Barn

The Vanderveer Dutch barn has a four-bent, three-bay frame with classic proportions and its gables face north and south (Photos 2 and 3). It measures approximately 50 feet wide by 40 feet long and its side walls are 15 feet high (Figures 1 through 3). The center aisle is 24'-4" wide. The bents are spaced between 12 feet and 12'-4" apart. The height of the anchorbeams above the floor is 11'-8". The anchorbeams have thru-tenons which do not project beyond the outside face of the posts (Photos 4 and 5).

The dimensions and manner of construction suggest a build date of around 1790-1815.⁹ It appears that the barn was built, in part, with recycled materials. The anchorbeams of the southern half of the barn appear to be older and larger than those of the northern half; the southern interior anchorbeam measures 1"-10" x 10", while the opposing interior anchorbeam measures only 11 1/2" x 8 1/2". How did the barn come to take this form? The earliest tax records for the town date back to 1805. The rolls from



Photo 4. Bents B and C, looking west, May 2006.



Photo 5. Anchor beam and transverse strut junction with anchor-beam post, showing marriage marks, May 2006.

that year indicate that Vanderveer was the fifth-wealthiest man in town at that time. Clearly, he had the means to build a barn completely from scratch. One theory could be, as aforementioned, that he did not yet own the land when he first settled here in 1790 and perhaps he was unwilling to build a brand new barn until he was certain the land would be his. Alternately, Vanderveer may have utilized elements from the colonial-era structures remaining on the property at that time; recall that the 1766 map of Warrensbush depicted the property as settled and occupied by that date. Vanderveer may have chosen to reuse the materials for practical reasons; why waste time and resources making all new timbers when old ones would do the job and were there for the taking? Dendro-dating this barn could help prove or disprove this theory.

The NWD barn was not configured as a “drive-thru” barn. The two northernmost anchorbeams both have a second beam located about four feet below them. These beams are larger than the anchorbeams themselves and presumably served to support a hayloft floor. This setup would have made it impossible to pass through the barn on wagon out the northern end. It does not appear that there were wagon doors, at least not originally, on the

(continued on page 4)

Van Der Veer Farm (continued from page 3)



Photo 6. General view showing the relationship between the swing-beam barn, at left and the New World Dutch barn, looking northwest, May 2006.



Photo 7. Swing-beam barn, looking west-northwest, May 2007 (Photo by W. Wheeler).

side walls either, although the east side is so badly altered and deteriorated it is impossible to come to a definitive conclusion with respect to that elevation. Both side aisles have animal doors on the south gable and the north gable may have had them as well but no evidence of them remains. The oldest surviving siding remains on the north gable wall. It measures 16" wide and is fastened by hand-forged square nails. It seems the barn was meant to serve as a hay and animal shelter more than a grain processing and storage facility.

Overall, the barn is in poor condition. The northeast corner has almost completely rotted away. The purlin plate in this corner is partially exposed to the elements with the interior column tilting badly toward the exterior wall. The bottom six feet of the columns have been replaced by metal poles which rest on a concrete floor.

The Vanderveer Dutch barn is one of only two confirmed three-aisled NWD barns still standing in the township of Florida. The other being the "Smaller Wemp" barn located on Queen Anne Street (The "Greater" barn having been restored and relocated to Feura Bush). A third barn, which stood along the NYS thruway by the

Bulls Head Road overpass, was dismantled in the 1990s by Russell Ley, then of Scotia, and currently rests in storage.

Lean-to Addition

To the southwest of the NWD barn is a lean-to structure with a hand-hewn frame. Its length is as long as the Dutch barn itself (40 feet) and is 12¹/₂" wide (Photo 1). Lean-to structures were often built to store wagons but this particular example is framed in a way that would have precluded such a use. Most likely this building served as a shelter for small livestock. It originally stood apart from the main barn but a 10-foot wide addition was constructed at a much later date, connecting it to the southwest corner of the NWD barn.

Swing-Beam Barn

About 90 feet south of the Dutch barn stands an early threshing barn. The barn has four bays and measures 58 feet long and 32 feet wide (Photos 6 and 7). It has a massive swing-beam measuring 16" high by 12" wide (Photo 8). The swing-beam is fastened to its posts with a double tenon. A heavy board with a hole in it for a threshing



Photo 8. Detail showing swing beam with double tenon connection to post, May 2006.



Photo 9. Detail showing attachment on swing-beam for threshing pole, May 2006.



Photo 10. View of front of house, looking south-southwest, May 2007 (Photo by W. Wheeler).



Photo 11. View of house, looking west-southwest, May 2006.

pole is still fastened to the center of the swing-beam (Photo 9). The entire east wall of the barn is currently void of all studding and siding. A couple of the east wall posts have been braced or supported by old telephone



Photo 12. Date on carriage entry keystone, May 2006.

poles but the rest of the frame is in relatively sound, solid condition, and exhibits good craftsmanship. The roof, which has purlins supported by canted purlin posts, is fully intact (Photo 8). A small cattle wing was once attached to the haymow bay of the eastern wall but only traces of its concrete floor now remain. If the Vanderveers constructed the swing-beam barn at the same time as the Dutch barn, it may explain why the Dutch barn was not configured for threshing.

Additional farm buildings include a small three-bay barn with hand-hewn frame, located just south of the brick house, and a 12' x 16' corn crib, which stands behind the swing-beam barn.

The Brick House

Across the road from the barns, to the west, stands a large two-and-a-half story Greek Revival style brick house (Photos 10 and 11). It is in a semi-ruinous state but has been little altered or added on to since it was built and is a good example of a mid-nineteenth century house built by a prosperous farmer. Despite its condition, the house retains a stately presence that commands respect.

Keystones set into the arches of the carriage house wing bear the date "June 29, 1846." (Photo 12). According to Vanderveer family history, John Sr. first built the back (kitchen) wing of the house and the carriage house and front (main) part of the house were added at a later time.¹⁰ While many early homes grew and evolved in just such a way, it is not the case with this house. The foundation was fabricated of cut granite and there are no joints or breaks to indicate multiple construction phases.

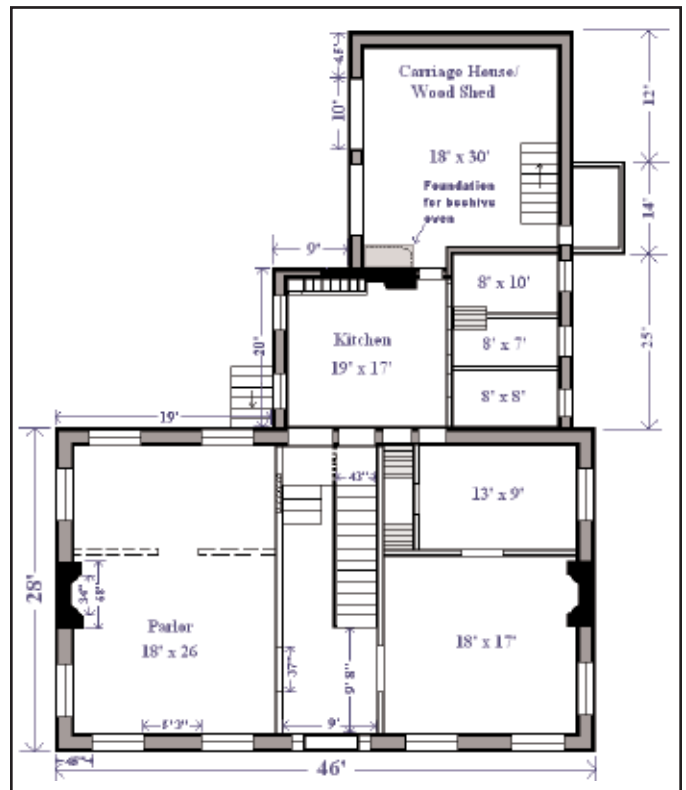


Figure 4. First floor plan of the brick house. The house is located 68 feet from the road.

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Van Der Veer Farm (continued from page 5)

The timbers in every part of the house are sawn. No physical evidence of any kind was found to suggest that any part of the house could be older than 1846. Therefore, it was John Jr., not his father, who built the house in its entirety.

The front of the house has heavy dentils under the eaves as well as a decorative molding with a spooling pattern. The main entry is adorned by a large granite frontispiece. The inner door surround is wooden; it has fluted pilasters, sidelights and an architrave crowned by dentil moldings.

A central hall extends the full depth of the house and leads back to the kitchen wing. A prominent staircase winds up to the attic story (Figure 4). The hallway doors and trim once sported a grained finish. A parlor and dining room flank the hall. The parlor also stretches the full depth of the house and originally had two doors leading to the hall.

The front rooms all had 11 foot tall ceilings. The fireplaces were designed to burn coal and had marble mantles. Trim work around the doors and windows is of the shouldered and tapered design, bestowing the imposing look and feel of an ancient temple upon the rooms. The ceiling cornices are all made of plaster.

The dining room has a narrow room located behind it which features a small "butler's pantry." This pantry could also be accessed from the kitchen. The kitchen, located

in the back wing, features a fireplace that was once fitted with a cast iron range/stove. A small opening to the right of the hearth served as the door for a beehive baking oven that projected out into the carriage house. The Kitchen also originally had nine doors, two windows and a narrow enclosed staircase left of the hearth.

The Kitchen is flanked by three smaller rooms on its west side. A 1902 deed between members of the Elwood family may reveal the function of these rooms at that time:

"...retain and reserve the possession, use, occupation, rent and income of the sitting room, bedroom and clothes press (?) adjoining the same. The use of the kitchen pantry, sink-room and bedroom adjoining the kitchen, the cistern and well, in the dwelling house on said farm....also, reserve the right to use any portion of the cellar under said house with the right to go to and from the same at any time."

The largest of these three rooms extends six feet into the carriage house, which occupies the south end of the wing, and has a cistern directly under its floor; likely making it the "sink-room" mentioned in the deed. The middle room is the smallest of the three and is believed to have been the "pantry" because it contains evidence of early shelving. Through process of elimination, the remaining room would have been the "bedroom."¹¹

The second story of the house exhibits the same style of doors, trim work and moldings as the main floor, except there are no ceiling cornices and no fireplaces. The master bedroom, above the parlor, has two small rooms behind it, identical in size (Figure 5). These were possibly utilized as changing rooms or, when the occasion arose, perhaps a nursery. A stovepipe hole in the bedroom's chimney wall suggests it had its own stove as a heat source and the other main bedroom, across the hall, was likely heated in the same manner.

With the main staircase winding all the way to it, and having been lit by fancifully trimmed eyebrow windows, the Vanderveer house's attic story creates an impression that it was as grand a living area as the chambers below it. But it is clear that it was never a finished living space. The bottom chords of the roof trusses are about chest high and there are no signs of any heat source such as floor registers or holes from stove pipes. Attic spaces in a house such as this are often envisioned as being servants quarters, and sometimes they were, but in this instance the space was most likely used for storage.

Small House

A second house, a companion to the brick house, appears on nineteenth century historic maps as early as 1853 and disappears prior to 1905. The house stood about 500 feet south of the brick house on the same side of the road. During the summers of 2006 and 2007, members of the Community Archaeology Program of Schenectady County Community College, under the instruction of Dr. Ronald Kingsley, located the site of the house's foundation and performed a partial excavation (Photo 13). The foundation measured 18 feet by 28 feet and had a stone bulkhead entrance on its south side. The foundation walls above ground level were of quarried stone, while the lower portions were of fieldstone. Based on the analysis of the artifacts recovered the house was

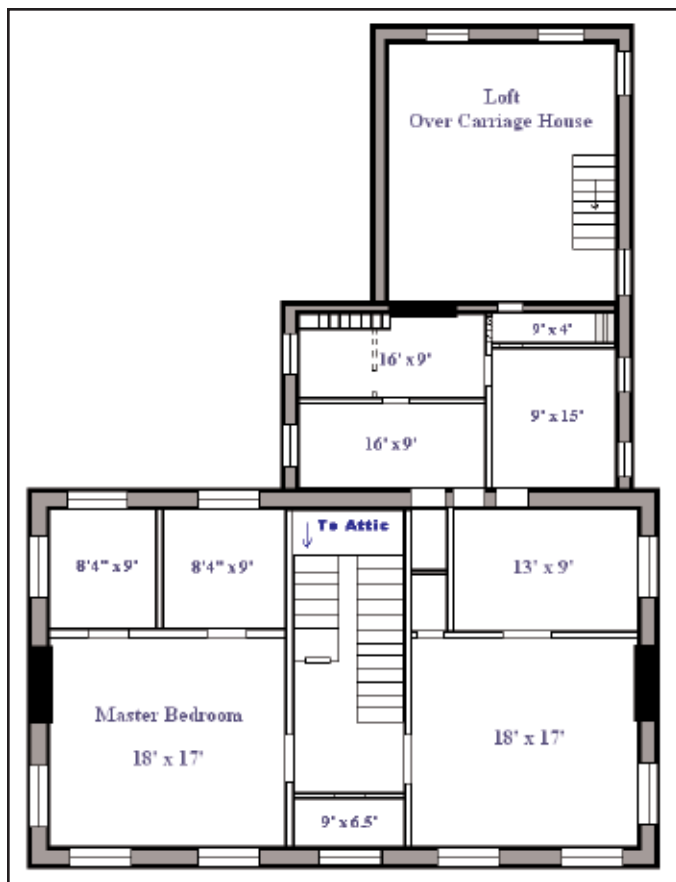


Figure 5. Second floor plan of the house. Ceilings are 10 feet high on this floor (Drawing by the author).



Photo 13. Site of what is thought to have been a tenant house, where archeological excavations were undertaken in 2006 and 2007, looking northeast toward the barns and brick house, May 2006.

built between c.1830-1860 and is contemporary to the brick home. A plausible theory is the small house served as tenant quarters for the hired farm help.

The original Vanderveer homestead was obviously totally replaced by the current brick one. The early nineteenth-century tax rolls show John Sr.'s real estate value to be notably higher than other farms of similar size. It may be that a substantially-sized dwelling stood here at that time as well (before the 1846 house was constructed), or there may have been more than one house on the property. It is not currently known why the original Vanderveer house was taken down. If its timbers or parts were recycled anywhere, there seems to be no clear evidence remaining on the property. Since the historic records are vague or mostly silent, and there are no above-ground clues, a more intensive archeological investigation would be necessary in order to discover more about the brick house's predecessor.



Photo 14. The Elwood family with members of the Turner family, seen on the front stoop of the brick house, c.1904. (Courtesy of the Walter Elwood Museum).

The Elwood Family

In 1867, John Vanderveer Jr. sold the farm to Henry (1822-1902) and Anna Klock Elwood (1824-1903).¹² Numerous sources credit Henry's immigrant ancestor, Richard, with the building of Fort Klock. Henry was a "tiller of the soil" all of his days. The couple had two children; a daughter, Harriet, and a son, Judge Emery Elwood. Emery (1850-1923), besides running the family farm which he named "The Evergreens," was a Justice of the Peace for the town of Florida, a county supervisor, a Knight Templar, and high priest of the local chapter of Royal Arch Masons. Emery was first married to Catherine Lingenfelter, who died in 1906. Later, he would marry his sister-in-law, Sarah Lingenfelter. Emery's first marriage produced his only child, Walter Elwood (Photo 14).

Walter (1886-1955) was renowned as a pillar of his community. He was the founder of the Amsterdam city museum which bears his name (Photo 15). The Walter Elwood Museum is currently located at historic Guy Park Manor.

According to their website, Walter was "an avid collector of ethnographic materials and natural history items from every corner of the globe."¹³ Walter left the farmstead to attend Cornell University where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree. He served in the Red Cross during WWI. Walter became Superintendent of the



Photo 15. Walter Elwood, seen here in his museum (Courtesy of the Walter Elwood Museum).

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Van Der Veer Farm (continued from page 7)

Amsterdam School District in 1916 and held that position for the remainder of his life. In addition to being a world traveler and artifact collector for his museum, Walter was also a playwright and a novelist, publishing at least two books, "Guimo" and "The Terrible Teenenfelters" that had a wide readership.

In his *History of the Mohawk Valley*, Nelson Greene wrote that "Mr. Elwood continues to make his home on the Elwood farm place . . . Where he has delightfully pleasant quarters, this hospital old home offering the ideal situation for the pursuit of his literary labors."¹⁴

Walter called the farm his home as late as 1926, and although it is said he had a life-long interest in agriculture, he never was a full-time farmer. After his father's death he leased and/or tried to sell the farm to a neighboring farmer, Walter Francisco, but this arrangement fell through, perhaps because of the economic hardships of the Great Depression. Around this time a branch of the Vanderveer family considered reacquiring the property, but this too did not come to pass. In 1934, Elwood sold the farm to the Nadler Brothers Dairy.¹⁵

The Nadler Family

The Nadler family was of German/Austrian descent. Anna Nadler, a widow, settled on the south side of the city of Amsterdam with her sons around 1890. Eventually the family established a milk plant on Collins Street. By the mid 1920s their creamery was the largest in the city. To sustain the growing business the Nadler's purchased the former Vanderveer farm and several others in the area. The Nadler family never lived on this property; the brick house was converted into a two-family tenant dwelling and used by their farm laborers. The Nadlers Brothers Dairy ceased operations after three generations in about 1980, although the business continues to exist as an entity on paper and the family still owns the property. They have been renting the land to the Terleckey family for about three decades.

Agriculture

This farm generally followed the typical patterns, practices, and changes in American agriculture through out its long history. The Vanderveers, like many pioneering families of their time, raised small livestock and grew grains. In 1837, the estate papers of Henry Vanderveer recorded 24 sheep, about nine pounds of wool yarn, and 1 milk cow. In 1855, John Jr. had 26 sheep, three milk cows, and sold 60 pounds of wool.¹⁶

In reflection of the general westward shift of wheat production areas during the nineteenth century the Elwoods focused on dairy production. They had 24 milk cows in 1875, which was well above the average herd size for that time, and were one of the largest cheese producers in the county. By the 1920s, the farm's milking herd had shrunk in half.¹⁷

By the time of the Nadler occupation, farmers had moved away from making cheese and focused on fluid milk sales. The Nadlers adapted the barns to house as

many cows as possible. At least three milk houses were added on or placed in the Dutch barn. The Nadlers also built a large dairy barn (no longer standing) at the intersection of Route 30, Belldons Road and Thruview Drive. The barn was quite modern for its day; it featured a milking parlor with large glass windows so motorists could pull off the road and watch the cows being milked. It is also said to have had the first milk house with hot water, a convenience which many local rural folks did not yet have in their own homes. The Nadler's supplied milk to the local families, schools, and to the New York City market.¹⁸ They competed with over 30 other milk dealers within Amsterdam during the early years of their business. By 1935, just 10 were listed in the city's directory and that number, as well as the number of farmers, decreased dramatically as the century wore on. The American dairy industry continues to decline today. Land-wise, this property is still a functioning farm. The Terleckey family mainly raises hay here and sometimes grows a small amount corn.

Conclusion

The Vanderveer-Elwood-Nadler property has long since entered "the winter" of its years and the farm land faces an uncertain future. Fate has not been kind to the brick house. Decades of vacancy and vandalism have left it a shell of its former self. The back wing is mostly roofless and collapsing, and in the process it is pulling the back wall of the main house down with it. The roof of the front of the house has started to fail; one can stand in parts of the cellar and look up all the way to the attic where the sky shines through holes in the roof. Many have tried to purchase and save the house to no avail and the once-proud home will presumably deteriorate until it is no more.

There remains a small glimmer of hope for the barns. Although in a somewhat forlorn state, they are still in restorable condition and have yet to be relegated to derelict status. They still earn their keep, sheltering the Terleckey's hay crop. However, since the barns are mostly left open and exposed on their eastern sides, if they were ever left empty on the inside a winter wind from that direction could potentially do severe damage or bring them down all together.

A housing development was proposed for the property in 2006, prior to the recent recession. A pamphlet circulated within the community at that time explained that the development would sprawl out over 90 acres on the northeast side of Belldons Road. It would contain about 100 housing units, being a mixture of single family homes, condos and townhouse type structures. Permission to extend Amsterdam's water and sewer lines under the thruway to the proposed site was granted but the cost of this undertaking has so far proved cost prohibitive.

This property has long stirred the imagination and invoked the curiosity of the nearby community and passers-by for generations. Sadly, like many old farmsteads before it, it will probably lose its agricultural identity to suburban sprawl and its buildings will likely fade into history.

- ¹ John Bleecker. Map of Warrensbush executed in 1766. Montgomery County Clerk's Office, Fonda, NY, drawer 14-0002.
- ² *History of Montgomery and Fulton Counties, N. Y.* New York: F. W. Beers & Co., 1878 (reprint edition, 2002), 110-111.
- ³ Robert M. Hartley. "The Story of the Money Hole," An Address Delivered Before A Joint Meeting Of The Mohawk Valley Historical Association and The Van Epps-Hartley Chapter, New York State Archeological Assn., 1936. <http://threerivershms.com/moneyhole.htm>, accessed December 2011.
- ⁴ Katherine M. Strobeck. *Mohawk Valley Happenings*. Fonda, NY: Montgomery County Historical Society, 1990, 46-47.
- ⁵ John J. Vanderveer. *A Genealogy of this branch of the Van Der Veer Family in America*. Amsterdam, NY: Evening Recorder Print, 1912, 7-9.
- ⁶ Cuyler Reynolds. *Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical Memoirs, Vol. 1*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911, 240-253.
- ⁷ *History of Montgomery and Fulton Counties, N. Y.* New York: F. W. Beers & Co., 1878 (reprint edition, 2000), 111.
- ⁸ Cuyler Reynolds. *Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical Memoirs, Vol. 1*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911, 240-253.
- ⁹ Based on dating methods found in John Fitchen's book, *The New World Dutch Barn*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1968 (second edition, edited and with new material by Gregory D. Huber, 2001), xliiii-ii.
- ¹⁰ Interview with Marcella V. Marvin, a Vanderveer descendant, June 2007.
- ¹¹ L143:273, Montgomery County Clerk's Office, Fonda, NY.
- ¹² 1867 Deed between Vanderveer and Elwood, L81:426, Montgomery County Clerk's Office, Fonda, NY.
- ¹³ <http://www.walterelwoodmuseum.org/about.html>, accessed May 2006.
- ¹⁴ Nelson Greene, *History of the Mohawk Valley: Gateway to the West 1614-1925*. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1925, I: 842-849; II: 1127-1139; III: 723-724, 741-742, and 806-807.
- ¹⁵ 1934 Deed between Elwood and Nadler, L230:78, Montgomery County Clerk's Office, Fonda, NY.
- ¹⁶ 1855 NYS Census.
- ¹⁷ 1875 NYS Census and estate papers and letters of administration of Emery Elwood, January 22, 1925. Montgomery County Clerk's Office, Fonda, NY, L4:288 and L12:329.
- ¹⁸ Interview with Doug Nadler, spring 2006.

The Author would like to thank Norm Aldrich, Hannah Bischoff and the "CAP community," for their assistance on this project; thanks to the Walter Elwood Museum of Amsterdam, NY, for research assistance and permission to use photographs in their collection; thanks to Vanderveer descendant Marcella V. Marvin for sharing her family history; thanks to Walter Wheeler for providing his architectural expertise; and thanks to owner Doug Nadler for allowing permission to survey and document the property.



Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Descriptions of Albany-Area Farmsteads with New World Dutch Barns

Walter Richard Wheeler

Two years ago I presented a group of real estate advertisements for farmsteads culled from New Jersey and Pennsylvania newspapers predating 1791 in the *Newsletter*. Each of those notices contained reference to a New World Dutch barn as a component of the farmstead. For this issue I've pulled together a group of similar advertisements for farms located in the vicinity of Albany, located within the present-day Albany, Schenectady, Saratoga, Columbia, and Rensselaer counties. These ads span the period from just after the Revolution until 1800. It is curious to note how few advertisements from this region used the term "Dutch barn" at that time; one might speculate that the many ads which simply refer to a barn on the property—particularly those which go on to describe a building roughly square in plan—refer to New World Dutch barns. Why then, was the term not more frequently ap-

plied in the region? One possible answer is that to the farmers in the region these were simply 'barns'; the application of the cultural identifier "Dutch" may have been of more use in areas where the types of barns constructed were more varied.

Also of interest to note when assessing this small group of documents is that almost all of them are for medium-to-large scale farms, chiefly owned by people at the upper end of the economic spectrum. The higher value of these farms would have meant that a prospective purchaser would likely have had to have been found from a broader geographic area, rather than from the neighborhood. Was, then, the term "Dutch barn" introduced chiefly for the benefit of an audience outside of the more conservative areas of the New World Dutch cultural hearth?

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Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Descriptions

(continued from page 9)

TO BE SOLD,

A FARM situated about four miles above the city of Albany, on the west bank of Hudson's river, containing about 400 acres of land, about 80 acres of which is interval, and a proportionate quantity of woodland, a commodious Dwelling-House, a large Dutch Barn; and other buildings necessary for a farmer erected on it: The pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, and its being in the neighbourhood of the city of Albany, will render this farm a valuable and desirable acquisition to any gentleman who wishes to reside in that part of the country. For particulars enquire of Mr. FREDERICK JAY, in this city, or of the subscriber on the premises.

98 **PETER SCHUYLER, Sen.**

1. New-York Packet, 29 July 1784, supplement p. 3.

TO BE SOLD.

That valuable Farm,

ON which John DeWandelaer now lives; situated at Schatikoke, about 20 miles above the city of Albany, about two miles east of Hudson's river; containing near Three Hundred Acres of Land, seventy of which are of the best intervale or low land.---meadow sufficient to cut about 50 loads of hay; and with small expence considerable more may be made. Said Farm is in good fence, and has a sufficient quantity of wood land, with good timber thereon for fencing and fuel; an orchard of about 80 bearing apple trees; a commodious dwelling house; a large Dutch barn, and other buildings necessary for a farmer, erected on the same.---There is sowed on said farm near sixty bushels of wheat and rye, which will be sold with or without the farm, as may best suit the purchaser.

If the above farm is not sold at private sale, on or before FRIDAY, the first day of FEBRUARY next, it will on that day be sold on the premises, at PUBLIC VENDUE, and struck off to the highest bidder. For terms of sale or further particulars, enquire of the subscriber, or John DeWandelaer, living on the premises.

PETER DE WANDELAER.
Schatikoke, November 5, 1787. 11.81

3. Albany Gazette, 3 January 1788, p. 4.

To be SOLD,

AN excellent FARM, lying at that noted place called Kinderhook Mills, a mile and a half from town, and six miles from the landing; containing 150 acres of choice land, part thereof is intervale and extraordinary fine meadow, where there is yearly cut thirty ton of good hay, with a beautiful young and old orchard of about 300 trees, part thereof grafted, and the whole excellent trust. A good FRAME HOUSE, with 4 rooms on a floor, one story and a half high; a fine cellar, a large store ready fixed for a merchant, a good Dutch barn; a fine stand for trade or any public business, there having a store been kept for upwards of thirteen years, commands the trade from several districts and eastern towns back; it is very pleasantly situated where three roads meet, and is the best stand of trade, I dare say, of any in the county, as all the produce that goes to landing from the eastward, must pass by the door. Also, the convenience of a GRIST MILL, with a fine stream of water, and the half of a new Dutch SAW MILL, adjoining the door, where 3000 logs can be sawed in a season, and plenty of timber. The above place has been let a number of years for about 80l. a year, and will now be sold lower than any person can expect, the situation and value considered.

Also, a large and elegant BRICK HOUSE, situated at Schohack, on the bank of Hudson's river, 31 feet in length, and 31 in breadth, two stories and a half high, 4 rooms on a floor, with a kitchen and cellar under the whole, and a fine water lot, the best in Schohack, commands a fine prospect up and down the river of several miles distance, and a fine stand for trade; a new bath, fine well of water, and a beautiful garden spot. Any person chusing to purchase either of the above places, on paying one quarter of the money down, may almost have their own time of payment for the remainder, or goods will be taken at cash price, and a good title will be given for either, or both places. For further particulars enquire of the subscriber, living at Kinderhook, or to GEORGE and WILLIAM LUDLOW, New-York.

CORNELIUS SEBRING.

Jan. 18. 17. 1211.f

2. New-York Daily Advertiser, 7 March 1788, p. 4.

To be Sold

AN excellent FARM, about 11 miles from the city of Albany, and 5 from Schenectady---containing one hundred acres of land---Sixty of which is under good improvement---and the whole farm is well watered. Upwards of forty tons of hay were mowed on it last year.---On the premises are a new Dutch Barn 45 feet square, and a good Log-House. Possession will be given the 1st of May next.

For further particulars enquire of the printers of the Albany Gazette; Capt. Ostram, on Gunfolus's Schenectady-road, or of the proprietor, THOMAS V. JAMES, near Marshal's ferry.

Flatts. July 9, 1791. tf 83

4. Albany Gazette, 14 July 1791, p. 1.

Sheriff's Sale.

BY virtue of two writs of fieri facias to me directed, issued out of the supreme court of judicature of the state of New-York, I have seized of the lands and tenements of Charles H. Toll,

One farm containing about one hundred and fifty acres of land, situated on the south side of Tombetuck creek, within the Hofack patent; being part of lot No. 28.

One other farm of about one hundred and fifty nine acres, being also a part of lot No. 28 aforesaid, adjoining Hofack river, with a convenient mill-place, thereon.

One other farm of about one hundred and thirty one acres, on which the said Charles H. Toll now lives; together with a large and convenient brick house a Dutch barn and other buildings thereon.

One other farm of about one hundred and fifty acres; lying on the Hofack river aforesaid, and on the main road leading from Lansingburgh to Chace's Bridge, with a commodious dwelling house and other buildings thereon, well calculated for a tavern-keeper, situate about forty rods from the said bridge, and now occupied by Abijah Purnam; which farm has two or more mill places.

As also five islands, containing about sixty acres of good meadow and arable land, and a privilege of commonage on Schatikoke point. And by virtue of one of the above executions I have seized a tract of land lying in Pittstown, described and distinguished in the partition deeds of the township of Pittstown, by lot No. one hundred and thirty two, containing one hundred & seventy nine acres, whereon William Rice and Jonathan Yates now live. ALL which lands and tenements aforesaid will be exposed to sale at public vendue, on Friday the 24th day of February next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, at the dwelling house of the said Charles H. Toll, in the town of Schaphrickoke. The terms of sale to each purchaser will be, a payment of one half the money bid for the said lands immediately after the sale thereof, and the other half at the expiration of six months thereafter.

ALBERT PAWLING, Sheriff.
Troy, January 13, 1792. 6w41

5. American Spy (Lansingburgh, NY), 27 January 1792, p. 1.

FOR Sale, that valuable FARM, situate at the Norman's-Kill, on the public road, leading from Albany to Schohary, within 12 miles of the city of Albany---containing about 120 acres of arable and meadow land---the greater part of which is under good improvement. There are on the premises, a good dwelling house, 40 feet by 24, a good Dutch barn, about 45 feet square, and an orchard of about 100 bearing apple trees. This farm is an excellent stand for a merchant or tavern-keeper. For further particulars, enquire of Gerrit Bancker, proprietor, on the premises, or of Mr. Volkert S. Veeder, near the printing-office, State-street, Albany. March 22. 559

6. Albany Gazette, 22 March 1792, p. 3.

FOR SALE, that beautiful and well-improved FARM, situate in Nistqueyuna, about 10 miles from this city, containing about ONE HUNDRED ACRES of mostly excellent land: Has on it a good orchard—a new brick dwelling-house, and out-houses, and a good Dutch barn. It is a very commodious stand for any public business. Any person inclining to purchase, may know the terms by applying to the subscriber on the premises, by whom an indisputable title will be given.

BASTEAN TIMESEN.

Albany, February 25, 1793.

7. Albany Gazette, 25 February 1793, p. 3.

A FARM, FOR SALE,
SITUATED in Clifton Park, with a good dwelling house and large Dutch barn, containing 230 acres of land, upwards of one hundred is improved—it is excellent land for raising grain and has good meadow and pasture. The terms will be made easy. Apply to the subscriber, on the premises.
JACOBUS A. VAN VRANKEN.
Clifton Park, October 30, 1794. 28*32

8. Albany Gazette, 30 October 1794, p. 3.

FOR SALE,
220 Acres of Land,

a great part of which is intervale and meadow, being that beautiful and valuable FARM, pleasantly situated along the East bank of Hudson's River, at Paapsknee, in the town of Greenbush, about three miles below the city of Albany, lately in possession of Abraham Witbeek, deceased, and now in possession of Abraham Cole.—There stands on the premises a commodious brick dwelling house, a good Dutch barn and an excellent orchard of the choicest grafted fruit, and is well watered.—Possession will be given at any time, when most convenient to the purchaser.—For further particulars, and terms of sale, apply to the subscriber, at the Parroon's Mills, one mile North of the City of Albany.

THO'S L. WITBEEK.

December 8th 1795. 16944

9. Albany Gazette, 18 December 1794, p. 4.

FOR SALE,
THE FARM of the subscriber,

situate in the town of Water-Vliet, and county of Albany, opposite the village of Troy, and only half a mile distant on a strait course from Hudson's River—It contains about fifty acres of land. Upon the premises are a good brick dwelling-house in complete repair, a convenient kitchen adjoining the dwelling-house, built the last year, a large Dutch barn and out houses. The garden is spacious and in good order, enclosed with cedar post-fence; and is well stored with fruit trees, such as cherries, plumbs, &c. currants, raspberries, and strawberries in abundance; several asparagus beds, just fit to cut—There are a considerable number of nut trees on the farm, which produce plenty of nuts—The orchard contains upwards of fifty bearing apple trees, and a variety of young trees lately set out—an excellent well, and a new falling spring of the best water, near the house. The meadows produce generally near one hundred loads of hay in a season.—In short, from the pleasantness, of situation, variety of prospect, and vicinity to the city of Albany and the village of Troy, being little more than seven miles from the former, and half a mile from the latter, affording every thing requisite for a genteel country seat, and a large dairy, this place is worthy the attention of any one. If agreeable to the purchaser, the stock now on the premises, consisting of two horses, several of the best kind of milch cows, a Holland bull, sheep, hogs and poultry, together with a waggon, cart, sledges, and the farming and gardening utensils, hot beds, &c. will also be disposed of on reasonable terms. An indisputable title will be given. For terms and further particulars enquire of the subscriber.

N. B. The whole farm is in good fence, and generally new.

DIRCK TEN BROECK:

Albany, 20th April, 1798.

11. Albany Centinel, 27 April 1798, p. 1.

TO BE LET,

AND possession given immediately, a commodious SHED at Coxackie-landing, one of the best stands for business in that place; there are on the premises an excellent dwelling House and Kitchen, together with a new Dutch Barn, Store House and Dock. Also, an extensive young Orchard of bearing apple trees, and a variety of other fruit. Likewise, an excellent Garden, and a piece of meadow Land. For further particulars, apply to the Printers—of *Andrew N. Hermance, Esquire, at Coxackie-landing.* March 18. 9727p.

10. Albany Gazette, 18 March 1796, p. 2.

(continued on page 12)

Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Descriptions

(continued from page 11)

Glen's Falls,

SITUATE in the Town of NORTHUMBERLAND, County of Saratoga, and State of New-York, on the fourth side of Hudson's River, five miles west of Fort Edward, and nine miles south of Lake George, with Grist and Saw Mills, and all the other Buildings thereon, with upwards of three hundred acres of Land, about one hundred and forty of which are under improvement. As the country around abounds in Ore, as well as in Timber and Wheat, &c. there may be, (in addition to those Mills,) erected Forges, Furnaces, Distilleries and Manufactories of every description, having the whole North River to supply them with water, and the convenience of the Falls, which are forty-five feet high, and called the greatest curiosity of any cataract in the country. There are on the Premises a large Dwelling-House, six fire places on a floor, a large Dutch Barn, a Mill-House for the hands attending the Mills, and a small Farm-House. There is a Bridge across said Hudson River, at those Falls, and the great roads from Albany and Schenectady, by the Ballstown and Saratoga Springs, to and from Canada, both by the way of Lake George and through Queensbury and Fort Anne, by Skeensborough, are over this Bridge and through this Farm; also the road to and from the new, growing countries, Jessup's and Thurman's Patents, &c.—The Saw-Mills have this last summer been new modelled, and are superior to any in the State; the Gang-Mill, with fourteen saws; will cut a Log fourteen feet long in fourteen minutes. The situation of this place is elegant for a gentleman's seat, and equal to any for extensive and profitable business. For terms, apply to the Proprietor, at Schenectady.

JACOB GLEN.

April 1, 1799. [†]

12. Albany Centinel, 2 April 1799, p. 3.

A FARM and MILLS,
in the County of Saratoga.

FOR SALE, a FARM, containing upwards of 100 acres, with a new Grist and Saw-Mill, situate on a never failing stream of water, running thro' said farm. The mills are in the best order, do good business, and are situated in a neighborhood who supply plenty of custom. On the farm are a great number of saw-logs, and timber and fire wood, in abundance. The mills are situated only 10 miles from Half-Moon Point, and 5 miles from Hudson's river—a public road passes by them.—They are an excellent stand for a merchant.

ALSO—FOR SALE,
About 80 acres of LAND,

Situate opposite to Half-Moon, in the town of Schaghticoke, with a Dwelling House, and large Dutch barn, 47 by 56, and a large orchard of bearing apple trees, &c. in good order, standing thereon, together with a Ferry, across the Hudson, with boats, scows, &c.—To any person or company desirous of forming an extensive and lucrative establishment for trade, perhaps no one on the Hudson offers more advantages or is better situated, being only 7 miles north of Lansingburgh, and having several excellent landing places for boats and lumber coming down the river; and a back country of great extent, rich in almost all the productions of nature, especially wheat and other grain, lumber, &c. &c.

The terms of sale, and time of payment, will be made to suit purchasers. Titles, deeds, warranty and indisputable, will be executed, and possession given on the day of sale, by the subscriber, living in the town of Watervliet, 8 miles north of Albany, opposite the village of Troy.

Luvinus Vandenbergb.
December 6, 1799. 6m

13. Albany Gazette, 3 March 1800, p. 8.

DUTCH BARN PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



This newsletter is printed by the Dutch Barn Preservation Society, a non-profit organization incorporated by the Regents of the State of New York.

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