

**Johannes Radliff (Radcliffe, Radley) House
48 Hudson Avenue, Albany, New York**

Old buildings, particularly from the 18th century have had a difficult time surviving in Albany. Two, located at 674 and 922 Broadway in the northern part of the city had been surveyed by HABS (Historic American Building Survey) but were demolished in the 1940's. One of these, identified as a Slingerland house (922 Broadway) was a one-and-a-half-story gable-fronted house only one room deep. Its side walls were weather-boarded and its lower façade was of cross-bond brickwork, above which, the gable was shingled. Old photographs show that these shingles had clipped corners indicating they could have dated from the 18th century. This example of a wood-over-brick façade was thought unique until the Pieter Winne house was "discovered" in 1999 at Bethlehem, a short distance south of Albany. (see *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830**, hereafter cited as *DVA/NA, Pl. 128.9 and cover*). The Pieter Winne house has been dendro-dated to 1723.

The Johannes Radliff house is described and illustrated in the section titled 'Early Albany' by Paul Huey, in *Albany Architecture***. The building had been used for many years by Saul Equipment Company, a purveyor of restaurant fixtures. Mr. Huey states that the house had to have been built after 1756 when the stockade that formed the south boundary of Albany was moved a block south. The front wall of the house is set at an angle to the side walls (skewed) indicating that it closely fit the property lines established in 1756.

The Radliff house was purchased at the beginning of 2006 by Brian Parker, the owner and restorer of the Pieter Winne house, previously mentioned. The writer and a group of fellow members of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA) had an opportunity to examine the building in detail, February 3. Sufficient measurements were taken for a set of framing drawings. These drawings contain a certain amount of conjecture.



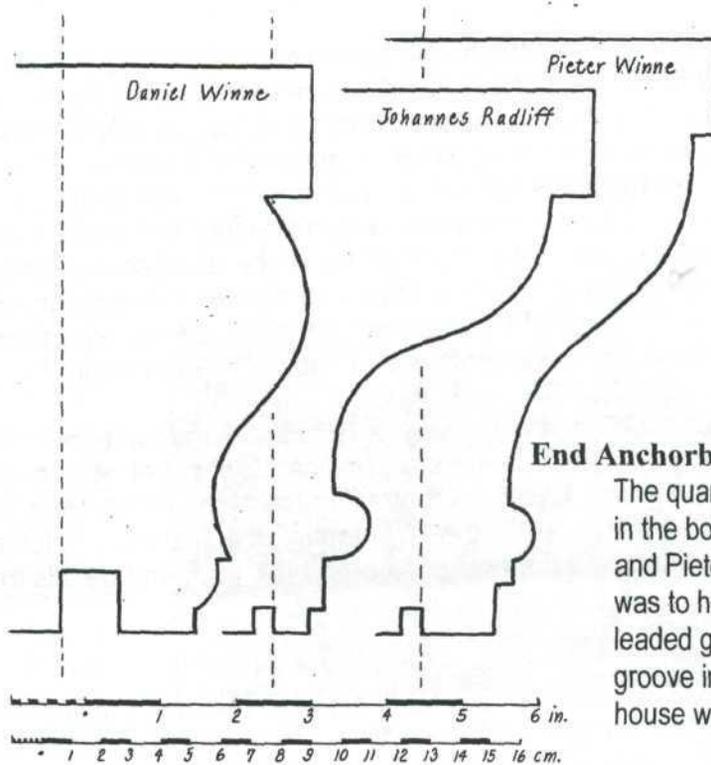
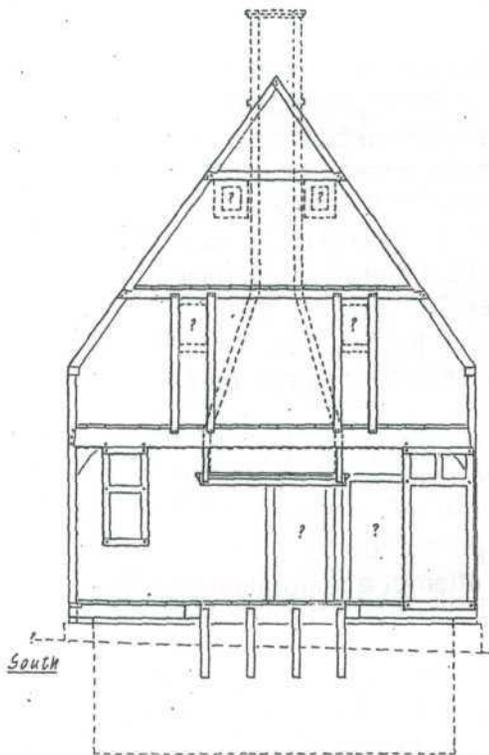
**The Johannes Radliff House, March 2006
48 Hudson Avenue, Albany, NY**

The Radliff house, previously Saul Equipment Co., is shown here with its later enlargements and new façade. Its 1796 brick neighbor on the right was also later enlarged and Victorianized. These are two rare survivals of Albany's 18th century heritage.

1. Historic American Buildings Survey, N. Baldwin, Photographer, April 1937, VIEW OF FRONT.
HABS NY,1-ALB.7-1

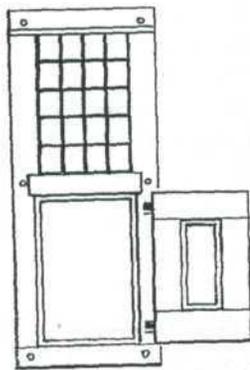


**Slingerland House,
922 Broadway, Albany, NY
HABS photograph 1937**



End Anchorbeam Profiles

The quarter-inch groove in the bottom of the Radliff and Pieter Winne houses was to hold fixed panes of leaded glass. The one-inch groove in the Daniel Winne house was to hold a board



Early Kloosterkozijn with fixed leaded glass above and shuttered opening below.

The house was originally one-and-a-half stories in height with a steep gable roof of 54-degrees. There are seven full rafter pairs and one partial pair. The roof is boarded with close-fitted, bevel-jointed boarding. The rafters are joined at the ridge with a half-lap that was nailed rather than having the more usual wooden pin. There had been two tiers of collar ties, joined to the rafters with lap, half-dovetails and fastened with nails.

The frame consists of seven Dutch H-bents and a partial bent, the beam of which is framed into a trimmer between full bents 2 and 3 (numbered from the front wall). This was to make the opening for the hood of a jambless fireplace located on the west side-wall. Three of the complete H-bents had braces, Dutch designation 'gebintbalkschoor'; 'korbeel'. These were bents 2, 3 and 6. Bents 2 and 3 were on either side of the west side-wall jambless fireplace and 6 was the hood beam for the jambless fireplace on the south end-wall. Part of the brace at the west end of bent 4 survives. It shows that these braces had been the same size and profile as ones in the Pieter Winne house (see DVA/NA, Pl. 129C) and the Coeymans secondary house (see DVA/NA, Pl. 75Ba).

All that is left of the original façade (north elevation) is the end anchorbeam. Like that of the Pieter Winne house, it is molded (see drawing comparison of end bent molding sections). Originally, it had rested on a brick wall, as in the Winne house. Mortise holes in its underside show that it originally had a doorway towards the east side topped with a mullioned transom. There had been two windows Dutch designation 'kloosterkozijn'. Cut into the underside of the end beam over the doorway and window locations are grooves to house the top edges of the panels of leaded glass. The molding on the beam creates a four-inch overhang. The top surface of the beam has four mortises for gable studs. The spacing of these allows for a central doorway with a window on either side of it.

That there were so few studs in both north and south gables presents an interesting dilemma. One might have expected the gable to be covered with weatherboards, but this does not seem to be the case with this house. The writer suggests that maybe the gables had vertical boarding. Vertical boarding was certainly the standard usage in the old World, as can be seen in numerous examples in the Zaan region of the Netherlands.

The side-walls of the house were weatherboarded. A brick building was constructed immediately to the west of the Radliff house at the end of the 18th century, leaving a space about a foot wide between the two buildings. Because of this, most of the weatherboards of the west wall have survived. They show no signs of any kind of finish. Inside the weatherboards, the space between the posts are in-filled with brick that was given a plaster coat and whitewashed.

There had been a basement fireplace under that of the front room, on the west side-wall. Its flue passed behind that of the fireplace of the room above, similar to the situation in the brick and timber-framed building at the Mabee farm in Rotterdam Junction (see DVA/NA, Pl. 16, section B-B). The lintel of the fireplace had been hung on iron straps let into the first floor beams, similar to the basement fireplace of the Schermerhorn-Pruyn house in Kinderhook (see DVA/NA, Pl. 89. 90).

As the building stands today, a substantial part of its original structure survives in generally good condition. There are significant clues that help to reconstruct missing aspects of its early structure and layout. In contrast much of the timber used in the late 18th century enlargement was replaced in the 20th century, It is therefore much more practicable to accurately re-construct the house in its 'as built' form and details than to attempt a restoration of its appearance at the end of the 18th century.

Notes:

(*) *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830*, John R. Stevens
Published by the Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture, West Hurley, New York 2005

(**) *Albany Architecture*, edited by Diana S. Waite. Published by Mount Ida Press in association with the Preservation League of New York 2005.



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March 2006

The Pieter Winne House 1723
Bethlehem, Albany County, NY
painting by L.F.Tantillo 2004

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