

The DuMond House (Spy House)
Old Hurley, Ulster County,
New York.

HABS No. 4-302 HABS
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District No 4
Southern New York State

Historic American Building Surveys
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THE DUMOND HOUSE

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Village of Old Hurley, Ulster County, New York.

Historical Introduction

The Dumond House is sometimes called the "Spy House" or the "Guard House." In the American Revolution the spy, Daniel Taylor, who was taken and courtmartialed at Little Britain, was brought to Old Hurley, kept in the Dumond House overnight, and the following morning (LeFever's History, page 339, gives October 18, 1777, as the date) the courtmartial was confirmed at a meeting in the Andreuse (or Van Duesen) House and Taylor was taken out and ^{hanged} hung from an apple tree nearby, which stood in the rear of the George L. Van Sickle House.

The date of the house is not known. The Andreuse House (or Van Duesen House) was built in 1723. The Dumond House is known to have stood some time before the Revolution, and its date is estimated at about 1740 or 1750.

The present owner is Mr. George Kent, of Old Hurley, Ulster County, New York, who occupies the house at the present time.

Architectural Description

The Dumond House is one and one-half stories high, and is built of limestone with a frame lean-to in the rear, or north side. The limestone walls are of various thicknesses, from a nearby quarry, with rather square ends laid up in mortar made of clay, and pointed with lime mortar outside.

The steep pitched gables are built up in stone to the peak with an interesting verge board with scalloped edging.

It is interesting to note that the wall plate does not run through to the face of the gable walls, but is stopped about 7" from the end. This may be due to the style of verge board which overhangs the walls about 4".

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In most of the old houses the plate extends through to the face of the wall with the verge board set flat against the gable wall and broadened at the eave to cover and protect the end of the plate.

The front porch is no doubt of later date than the house. This had a ceiling panel that, when taken down by the owner, proved to be a Dutch door. The dimensions checked with the old log frame in opening number 1, which was exposed to examination. Impressions of a wrought iron lock case, key, and spindle hole also checked with an old lock fitted on one of the inside doors. This was probably not the original door. The moulding on the face panels and bevel on the back of the panels on the other side matched those of the old window shutters and were no doubt installed at the time such changes and repairs were made. The use of a rim lock would also indicate a later date.

The original front door is thought to have been a Dutch batten door, similar to those shown on sheet number 9. Outside door openings number 2 and 5 are of quite recent date, as the doors, frames and lintels over the openings show.

The main portion of the house occupied by rooms A and B was built first, at which time cellar opening number 2 gave access from an area at the rear of the building, evidenced by the heavy oak lintel over this opening, which can be plainly seen and is chamfered similar to that over the cellar area door number 3, built later. Portions of this rear wall were exposed

and are pointed outside the same as the frame wall, and where the wall of the kitchen wing joins the main house, there is a vertical joint the full height of the wall, and The roof was built over the main roof of the house where some portions of the old worn shingles remain under the rafters and boards, and ^{gives} evidence that this wing was a later addition.

The frame lean-to enclosing the space marked "Summer Kitchen" was added still later. Remodeling of this wing was begun by the present owner. The drawings show the windows, doors, and clapboards in their original place taken in the survey before the alteration.

The old house was originally roofed with hand split pine shingles 30" long, and laid about 12" to the weather, as measured on a full length shingle found in the attic under the lean-to roof, and preserved by the present owner.

The front dormer was no doubt built in the roof at some later date.

The floor beams are of heavy hand hewn timber, exposed and mostly of oak in the cellar, with some pine for the second floor used. The pine beams are mostly smooth dressed, and painted. They vary in both size and spacing, as shown on the plans and sections.

The floor boards are mostly of pine, 1 1/2" thick, splined, and many of them measure 16" and 17", in width. These were ~~not~~ nailed to the beams with hand made spikes. Owing to the varying widths these floor boards were laid with all ends finished to a line on one beam without breaking the joints as in modern work.

Frames of both doors and windows are worked out of heavy oak, framed and pinned at the corners. They are set within 1" of the face of the walls and the head functions as a lintel supporting part of the wall over it. Another plank shaped lintel about 4" to 5" thick is laid on top inside, and supports the remaining thickness of the wall.

The windows in walls supporting floor beams are set between the beams and the heads raised close to the floor above. Therefore the sills are higher than those in the end wall.

The window jamb reveals are made of single wide board -- these on the three windows in the southeast wall are set with a splay -- the others straight. The top sash is fixed. The bottom sash slides up and is held with notched wood buttons in some cases.

The door frame of opening number 9 is finished with a heavy moulded pine head-piece on the inside, and inside door number 10 has a head-piece both sides as shown on the detail sheet. This is spiked to the head of the frame, typical of old Dutch houses in Ulster County.

The old doors remaining on the first floor are of three wide boards, varying in width with wide board battens as detail shows. These battens were secured to the boards on one side with hand made nails and the ends clinched in staple form, sunk with the grain and flush with the face of the board.

These doors were fitted with hand forged strap hinges set on battens and also fastened with nails clinched through the door. In some cases, leather pads are used under the nail head, which permitted of a tighter clinching. These

hinges are hung on heavy pintle or hinge pins with spike ends which are driven into the oak frame.

The latches and handles are also hand forged. The latch bar is in practically all cases set with a slope or cant. This has a large nail at the end of the bar and a staple guide near the edge of the door. In the frame is a heavy catch-pin which engages and holds the end of the bar when the door is closed.

The spindle of the drop handle passed through door and was clinched over the cam which laid under the latch. The end of cam rested in the guide as assembled on detail sheet number 10.

On the Dutch door this drop handle is on the upper half of door. The lower half of door has only a back latch which is operated from the inside.

Other minor doors are fitted with back latches ^{on} one side and thumb latch handles on the other. Some doors are now fitted with the Roggins cast iron thumb latches which are of a later date.

The central chimney is a part of the stone partition wall and above the second floor up and out through the roof is built square of the thin brick. In the cellar store rooms can be seen pieces of heavy blue stone flag built in and projecting 4" to 8" each side of the wall. On one side this shelf is used to support the spring of an interesting hearth arch built of old brick.

On the other side of the wall, instead of an arch, there are two heavy locust posts with cross pieces framed in and pinned, with heavy cross poles laid over on which the support

of the overhang of fireplace and hearth is built.

The hearth in room "A" has been removed and the fireplace closed to accommodate a modern heater flue which breaks through the arch in the cellar. The original mantel shelf and facing is still left. The boards from shelf to ceiling have been removed, also the cupboard built in the right-hand jamb, thus exposing the chimney shaft. From the top of shelf to the ceiling which the present owner stated he found covered with many layers of white-washing, indicates the house had been lived in with this exposed and that the mantel and facings were finished later.

The present owner, Mr. George Kent, has preserved the cupboard doors, frame, and some boards -- these were checked with the chimney when the survey was made and are shown in the sectional drawing, sheet 8, in their original position.

In room "B" the old hearth has been replaced with cement, but the fireplace has the old shelly stone back wall and the splay of jambs is built of brick.

The rear kitchen chimney has two heavy stone wall piers in the cellar with poles built in and projecting to support the hearth over.

The fireplace in the kitchen has been filled in at the back with new stone, making it shallow. At the right is the bake-oven with the opening, flue, and dome arch in good repair, except that the overhang on the outside of the wall has broken away, leaving portions of the old brick and supporting stone shelf still in place. The opening has been filled in flush with the wall in new brick.

The kitchen chimney has a simple board facing and shelf as shown in the section.

The original wall cupboard facings at the right of the fireplace are shown. These were found fitted against the back wall inside the closet now faced with plain boards and batten doors of recent date.

The outside walls of the rooms were originally plastered directly on the stone work and are still in this condition in the gable walls of the second floor bedrooms.

The present owner has furred and lined the walls of rooms "A" and "B" with sheet rock plaster board.

All first floor ceilings are formed by the boards of the second floor above, and are painted.

On the second floor the partitions in rooms "A" and "B" are old plaster work both sides. Partitions in room "C" are plastered over boards on room side with lath used as a furring. The ceiling of this room is of boards but of narrow and uniform widths while in other rooms the boards are wide and of varying widths.

The bedroom in the attic space over the kitchen, shown by dotted lines, was built with stud walls plastered on one side. The board ceiling is supported on 2" by 4" beams. When this room was built, the roof ^{cross} ties were cut out to make room for the ceiling height.

There is evidence of an old window opening closed up with stone in the rear of this wing at the point indicated. It is likely this room was made for help quarters and the

stair from the summer kitchen was put in for access to this room. The inside cellar stair was then built under, as the trap door in the floor to the cellar area was no doubt less convenient for daily use and was only used when provisions were stored in the cellar. This area has not been used for some time and the door is nailed shut.

The main stair in the living room is not the original. The original stair was much steeper as the well-hole indicates and was enclosed with boards with a batten door at the base. There is a notch in the beams each side of this stair well where a small header indicates the line between the end of the wall and a former trap door in the second floor which was used as a granary.

There is also another trap door over room "B". This existed at the time the survey was under way, and was fitted with hinges of leather or hide nailed on. This opened into a narrow space, partitioned off with boards, and the end opening to the attic is closed with a batten board panel held in place with wood turn^{ed} buttons.

Written, April 26, 1934, by

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