

Andrew Thompson Residence
Monacaale, Pennsylvania

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Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Pennsylvania

Historic American Buildings Survey
Ralph W. Lear, District Officer
311-312 Dime Bank Bldg., Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

ANDREW THOMPSON RESIDENCE
Honesdale, Wayne County, Pennsylvania

Date of Erection

1854

Builder

John Torrey

Present Owner

Heirs of Andrew Thompson.

Number of Stories

Two stories and attic.

Present Condition

Very good. In danger of being torn down.

Materials of Construction

Brick structure; foundations, stone. Roof is slate, and tin. Porch is brick and stone, with ornamental cast iron grill work. Floors are wood.

ANDREW THOMPSON RESIDENCE
Honesdale, Wayne County, Pennsylvania.

Jason Torrey, father of John Torrey who built the house, was popularly known as Major Torrey and was one of the earliest settlers of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He was efficiently and conspicuously connected with the first half century of it's material and social development. He was one of the first surveyors and surveyed for the new village of Wayne County. He settled first in Bethany.

John Torrey was born in Bethany, April 13, 1807. His early years were passed among the limitations of a frontier life. He was educated in the public schools at Bethany, which in 1820, developed into the "Beech Woods Academy" and was continued at the Academy of the Rev. Mr. Richardson, at Harford, Pennsylvania. He seems to have had no ambition to enter college, and his studies were in a line calculated to fit him for the business of life and the field of labor lying before him.

During the years 1829 and 1830, John Torrey spent the greater part of his time in looking after his father's interests in Honesdale. Soon after his marriage in the fall of 1830, he settled permanently in Honesdale and erected the first brick house there, on the site of the present house, which was erected in 1854.

About the year 1836 or 1837, by reason of the impaired health of his father, he succeeded to the large real estate business of the latter, which embraced nearly all unseated lands in Wayne County, together with many thousands of acres situated in Pike, Monroe, and that part of Luzerne now comprised in Lackawanna. This gave him a familiarity with land laws and titles, which made him a recognized authority upon all matters pertaining to real estate in this part of Pennsylvania; and being endowed with an unusually retentive memory,

there was probably no man living who had a clearer and fuller knowledge than he possessed of the old land titles, not only in this, but in many other sections of the State.

He was a master of every detail of his business as surveyor and land agent. His maps were models of neatness and accuracy; and are still and will probably remain for years to come, the final appeal in all questions as to lines and titles in Wayne County, and portions of adjoining counties.

His association with the transfers of lands naturally brought him into frequent contact with lawyers and the courts. He familiarized himself so thoroughly with the statutes, the practise of the land office, and the practise and decisions of the courts, that he became a recognized authority upon all land questions; and lawyers and judges frequently availed themselves of his knowledge and experience in the preparation and decision of cases involving the most important questions of real-estate law.

His long residence in a single locality made him familiar with the salient points of local history. It is unfortunate that during his lifetime, he was unable to make available to the public his personal knowledge, by writing a history himself. He contemplated such a work, and went so far at one time as to call in his brother, David Torrey as collaborator in it. A part of the proposed work was actually written, but it was found impossible to bring it to completion.

Mr. Torrey, before reaching manhood, made a profession of religion, and united with the Presbyterian Church, at Honesdale, by letter from the Bethany Church. He was it's oldest member, at the time of his death.

By Act of the Legislature, March 18, 1836, the Honesdale Bank was chartered. Mr. Torrey was one of the most active of those engaged in securing that charter, was the last surviving member of the original corporators, and had been continuously connected with it's directory, since its first organization in November, 1836.

December, 1863, he was elected the Vice-President, which position he continued to fill until the annual election of January, 1878, when he declined a re-election, because of impaired health. But, in May, 1889, he was unanimously elected President, and held that position continuously until the time of his death.

Mr. Torrey was prominently connected with various other business enterprises. In 1838, he was associated with two others in establishing the Honesdale Grist Mill. In 1849, he purchased the interests of his partners, and for some time was sole proprietor. In 1854, he assisted in the organization of the Honesdale Gas Company.

The only public office ever held by Mr. Torrey was that of Associate Judge. He was appointed by Governor Johnston in 1851; but his commission expired on the first Monday of December, 1851.

Mr. Torrey died March, 1894. He was the last link that connected the present generation with the pioneer history of Honesdale. His wife died in 1877, and since then, his two surviving daughters have maintained the home. Frances R. Torrey married Andrew Thompson in 1873, and later occupied the house.

Andrew Thompson came to Honesdale from New York and Port Jervis in 1872. He was a director and vice-president of the Honesdale National Bank.

The exterior style of architecture of the Andrew Thompson House is Classic Revival type.

The pitch roof is slate surmounted by a cupola. The foundations are stone, and the walls above are brick. The front porch is constructed of stone and brick, with ornamental, cast iron grill work, used as railings and posts. The porch roof construction consists of iron "T's" bent to a curve upon which are fastened roof boards. These boards are covered with tin.

All the brick was hauled from Philadelphia by horse and wagon. The cellar was first constructed, and covered with a temporary roof. All the lumber for the building was then framed and stored in this cellar for three years, until it was thoroughly seasoned; then the remainder of the building was constructed.

One enters a small square vestibule, panelled with heavy oak. There are large double doors leading into a great, square hall. A long, elaborate stairway goes to the second floor. The baluster and newels are of good design. They are octagonal in shape. To the left of the hall on the first floor is a very large, parlor with double doors leading from the hall. There are three double hung windows, extending to the floor, and to within two feet of the ceiling. There are panelled shutters, folding back into the window jambs. Two windows have wood panels from window stool to floor. There are plaster cornices in parlor, music room, living room, and hall. The ceiling center piece is ornamented plaster. In this room, is a large fireplace, with marble mantel and wood-burning grate. There is a very heavily ornamental brass, gas lighting fixture.

There is a 9'10" x 10' doorway leading to music room, with ornamental, wood beaded grill work, across the top of the doorway. This room also has decorated plaster work on ceiling, and brass light fixture. There is also a fireplace with marble mantel, brick facing, and stone hearth. There is one window next to fireplace with panel work from window stool to floor. There are concealed shutters. A wide panelled door leads to hall.

To right of hall, is the living room. Large double doors lead from hall. There is a fireplace with pink marble mantel and wood burning grate. From the living room is a door leading to the bed room. There is a closet on either side of the door on the bed room side. One is lined with shelves and drawers. The fireplace is closed.

A door leads from the bed room to bath room, which is modern. Another door leads from the bath to the kitchen.

There is also an entrance from the dining room and hall to the kitchen. The walls here, are modern. A double door leads to a side porch, another leads to the laundry, which is modern. A heavy door leads down three steps to a wood shed. Behind this shed is a short stairway, leading to a small attic in the rear wing.

The dining room is large with a small connecting closet to the kitchen. There are two long, double hung windows and a fireplace with a black marble mantel. There is a large closet and two service pantries off the dining room. A corner cupboard has panelled doors on bottom, with leaded glass doors.

In the hall, directly opposite the dining room is a built-in oak cupboard with three glass doors and five long drawers across the bottom. Between dining room and music room is what was originally known as the west entry. This is a small passage-way having a marble wash basin, with panelled doors on the bottom.

The second floor is on two levels. There is a stained glass sky light over the stair well. Leading from the first platform is a door to a narrow hall. To the right of the hall is a large modern bath room. In the hall, are long, panelled built-in cupboards. Another door leads to the servant's quarters and service stairs. There are two bedrooms and a bath. The original hardware remains on the doors in this section.

On upper level, to the right of the hall, is a large bed room, with a white marble fireplace. There is one double-hung window and one small casement window, in this room. Another bedroom also on the right side of the hall, follows the same plan. The mantel has been somewhat covered by four shelves being placed across the top.

Across the front of the house, there is a sitting room, a small square room, and a very large bed room. In the square room, there are very wide, twin, double-hung windows with concealed shutters. In the bed room is a fireplace with a

black marble mantel.

There is a closed stairway leading from the second floor hall to the attic.

One other bed room on the left side of the hall, was closed.

There are very high ceilings throughout the house. Heavy mouldings are very much in evidence.

There is a small, brick office on the south corner of the lot, used by the former owner of the house.

West of the house is a frame building containing wash room and privies.

Historic information obtained from: "John Torrey-1807-1894"; "Memoir of Major Jason Torrey, and Genealogy" By: Rev. David Torrey; "History of Honesdale Presbyterian Church" by: R. M. Stocker.

Author

Approved

Date

Betty Toal Morrison
Ralph W. Lear
June, 1937