

Building a Stone House in Ulster County, New York in 1751

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PROLOGUE

On 9 April 1751, in the Town of Marbletown, about six miles east of Kingston, New York, Johannes Vandermerke, Cornelius Conner, and Barent and Petrus Markel began digging the cellar for a new stone house to be constructed for Louis Bevier, Jr. By the middle of the month, a team of three masons, headed by Louis's cousin, Johannis Bevier, began laying up the basement walls. In May, once the walls were high enough and door and window openings began to take shape, carpenter Levi Pawling began installing their wood frames. Hendrick Bush had rough cut them in the pine woods in March when trees were felled and squared into beams and rafters. The rafters were raised on May 23 by Augustenis and Abraham Vandermerke, and Benjamin Krom and Augustus and Frederick Keator covered the roof with wood shingles the following week. In the span of two months the stone house had been erected and roofed. After a slowdown in June and July when Bevier, his hired workmen, and his crew of slaves and labourers shifted their attention to the wheat harvest, work resumed to complete the job. The masons came back to plaster the interior walls and finish the chimney and hearth. The carpenter returned to complete his work on doors and windows. Augustenis Vandermerke and Abraham Konstapel and his man, Andre, spent two and one-half days at "finishing," which were the final tasks Louis Bevier, Jr. recorded in his building accounts on 30 October 1751, almost seven months after construction began. Another stone house was added to Ulster County's growing inventory.

New York's Hudson Valley contains some of the oldest examples of historic architecture in the eastern United States. It is best known for its Dutch houses built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by a variety of non-English European groups who settled there. Among these, Ulster County's stone houses have gained wide recognition. Yet, in spite of their remarkable survival rate – today, there are hundreds of stone houses in the county – and their international renown, little attention has been focused on what exactly distinguishes them in terms of design and construction. Dutch architecture was not celebrated by American antiquarians until the 1920s when Helen Wilkinson Reynolds, a genealogist from Poughkeepsie, New York, was encouraged by fellow old house buff Franklin Delano Roosevelt to document some of the Colonial-era relics. This project became a book entitled *Dutch Houses in the Hudson Valley before 1776* published by the Holland Society of New York in 1929. Many stone houses from Ulster County were illustrated in the book and established as Dutch through Reynolds's genealogical associations.

Numerous pictorial surveys have followed Reynolds's landmark publication, but none of them have really concerned themselves with architectural questions beyond gross matters of age, form and

materials. A serious obstacle has been a persistent absence of any useful documentation concerning the construction of these houses and the people involved in it. Building contracts for seventeenth century houses have been preserved in New York's Dutch-language court records, but they are very rare after the English Conquest of 1664. Apparently, whatever legal practices the Dutch followed were not required by the English regime, particularly as the population increased and spread out into the countryside. So when a detailed accounting for the labour of constructing a stone house in 1751 was discovered in a collection of family papers recently donated to the Huguenot Historical Society in New Paltz, New York, it was a notable event. No such account has ever been reported before.



Figure 1. Bevier House, Marbletown, New York. Current conditions reflecting additions and alterations made in the nineteenth century. The house is owned by the Ulster County Historical Society (Photograph by Neil Larson, 2005).

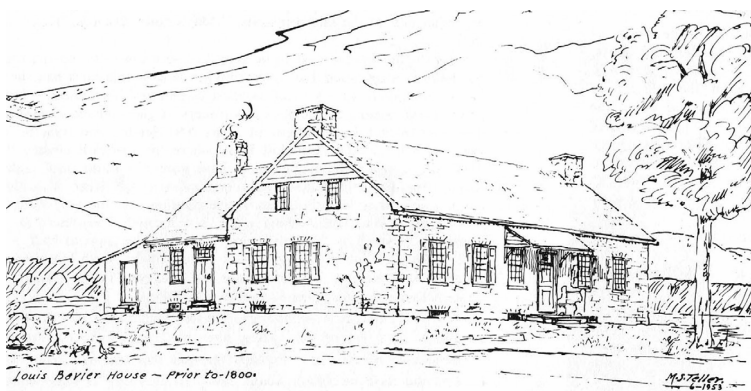


Figure 2. Hypothetical drawing of Louis Bevier, Jr. House, drawn by Myron J. Teller, 1953. This conceptualization purports to illustrate what the house looked like after construction of the “new house” (*A Marbletown Album* (1977), 17).

Better still, the accounting is detailed with numerous categories of work that are associated with the names of the men who completed the tasks, the dates on which their work took place, their rates of pay, and means of payment.

Unfortunately, this stone dwelling has not survived in the form and plan in which it was constructed. Louis Bevier, Jr.'s house was destroyed by fire in the 1800s, and later reconstruction and expansion have made it nearly impossible to distinguish it in the existing Bevier homestead. **(fig.1)** According to a description in a 1798 tax assessment, the stone house measured 64 ft in length and 29 ft in breadth, one story in height, and contained five windows (HHS Town Records Coll.). Its length indicates that it had a three-room interior plan (parlour-hall-kitchen) typical of the better stone houses of the period. **(figs.2 & 3)** With a greater breadth than usual, the principal rooms were probably subdivided by board partitions to increase the number and diversity of interior spaces. Louis Bevier, Jr.'s account book also has entries dated in the spring and summer of 1752 for work on "my old house," which apparently became a component of the new house as was often the case. Thus the new house built in 1751 amounted to only a one- or two-room part of that recorded in 1798.

THE EVOLUTION OF STONE HOUSES IN ULSTER COUNTY

The typical eighteenth-century stone house with its long, low front façade, with multiple entrances and vague symmetry, evolved from the seventeenth century Dutch prototype house that had its front façade on a gable end in the urban tradition **(fig.4)**. These houses were introduced to the New World when the Dutch West India Company began building their trading settlements in New Amsterdam (New York City), Beverwyck (Albany), and, later, Wiltwyck (Kingston) **(fig.5)**. The prototype house had side walls one-and-one-half stories in height with a steep gable roof. Initially there were two rooms, with a public work or shop space in front (*voorhuis*) and a private room (*kamer*) in the rear where the family congregated for meals and rest. Attic space was devoted largely to storage of goods and foodstuffs, but it also could contain unheated work or sleeping areas. By the eighteenth century, a second private room in the rear of the house became common where the heads of household could retreat for greater privacy or entertainment. A separate kitchen space was often created in the basements or at the rears of houses, particularly if slaves were part of the households.

Population in the colony steadily increased the seventeenth century, and new towns began to appear outside of the three Hudson River trading centres. Settlers began by building wood frame dwellings in village settings following the conventional Dutch manner. By 1700, they began to build this enduring house form using masonry materials so that their homes were more commodious and permanent. When their children reached adulthood, villages could not accommodate new houses for them, and they spread out in the surrounding countryside on independent farmsteads. Many of those established in Ulster County had stone houses at their core. At first, house design remained

the same, but the front gable orientation was abandoned once the constraints of narrow urban lots were removed, making entrances on the long side facades more directly accessible (**figs.2 & 3**). Room designations changed in the shift from urban to rural applications. The *voorhuis* was no longer a practical designation. On farms, the kitchen was the work space where labourers, slaves, and family commingled. Next to the kitchen was the *kamer* where most of the family's daily activities occurred. A best room (*groot kamer*) was at the opposite end of the house, isolated and protected from the clamour of the kitchen.

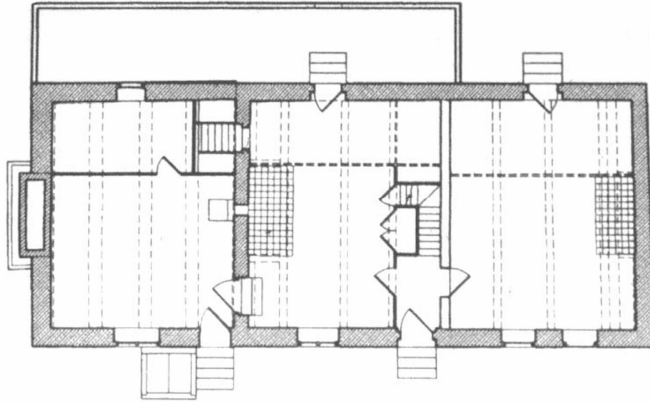


Figure 3. Floor plan of Daniel Hasbrouck House, New Paltz, N.Y. A typical example of the three-room linear plan of better stone houses in the eighteenth century (Larson & Barricklo, 2003).



Figure 4. Bevier-Elting House, New Paltz, New York. One of a very few houses surviving in New York with its front gable façade intact (Photograph by Neil Larson, 2004).

This room was reserved for the family and their best things. Although use was restricted, it contained beds for sleeping, as did the other rooms in the house.

The attic was unpartitioned and continued to be used for storage of the family's food supply. A basement extended under most or all of the rooms, and food reserves requiring the cool, dark conditions were stored here. Although there were three levels in these large, long houses, family habitation was restricted to the middle or ground level. This was primarily due to the presence of hearths in the ground floor rooms. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Dutch heated their rooms with and cooked their meals in jambless fireplaces. These were large hearths, embedded in floors, without sides, that vented into chimneys built on the floors of attics. Though considered inefficient when compared to jambed, or English, fireplaces, the Dutch preserved this Old World feature as a symbol of their cultural identity in America.

LOUIS BEVIER, JR.

This was the architectural environment with which Louis Bevier, Jr. was familiar. His grandfather and namesake was one of the original proprietors of the 38 000 acre New Paltz Patent in Ulster County, south of Kingston, granted to twelve Huguenot families in 1677. Along with his other French- speaking, Protestant kinsmen, he had come to America following a brief sojourn in the Palatinate region of today's Germany. Louis Bevier established a homestead in the village of New Paltz where he built a stone house in the Dutch manner (**fig.4**). All the New Paltz patentee families were affluent, but on a 1712 tax list, Louis Bevier was ranked the wealthiest (LeFevre, 89).

Like the others, much of Bevier's wealth was invested in land he had acquired to be able to establish his male heirs on productive farms. He acquired large tracts in the Rondout Valley west of New Paltz and south of Kingston (it seems as if the Dutch were attracted to flood plains by nature, and they quickly dominated lowland areas throughout the Hudson Valley). Of his four able-bodied sons, two – Jean and Abraham – were given a large tract in Wawarsing to divide. This area was south of Marbletown where the patentee had acquired lands for his son, Louis. The fourth son, Samuel, inherited his father's New Paltz lands (**fig.6**).

The second Louis Bevier (1684-1753) moved to his Marbletown lands in 1715 after he married Elizabeth Hasbrouck, daughter of Jean Hasbrouck, another New Paltz patentee. Only one child of theirs, known as Louis Bevier, Jr., survived to adulthood. The family is said to have resided in a dwelling built by the previous owner of the land, Peter Van Leuvan. The "old house" referenced in the building accounts may have comprised this house and/or a smaller stone house where Louis Bevier, Jr. (1717-1772) resided with his family after he married Esther DuBois in 1745. Their first child, David, was born in 1746. The birth of a daughter, Elizabeth, occurred in 1749. Before their second son, Philip, was born on 28 December 1751, they had completed the "new house."

BUILDING THE NEW HOUSE, 1751

Louis Bevier's detailed accounts provide an understanding of the construction process of an eighteenth century stone house. In some cases, they confirm what has been imagined to have occurred such as the obvious sequence of steps from digging the cellar to shingling the roof; but in others, they provide valuable insight into the scope of the project, which employed at least 18 men over a period of eight months. Bevier carefully kept record of the time – in fractions of days – each workman spent at his task, indicating the amount of work each construction component required. A cost was assigned to these tasks, ranging from 4 shillings and 6 pence per day (4/6) for the master mason and the carpenter to 3 shillings a day (3/0) for the labourers digging the cellar, hauling and breaking stone, “rough cutting” timbers, burning lime, and “tending the masons,” giving a sense of the value placed on certain skills and nature of the local economy in which they participated. The skilled workers were paid in cash, while the labourers were compensated with a combination of currency, farm produce, and consumer goods. In a number of instances, Bevier paid a labourer's share of the minister's salary. Some of these men performed other chores on Bevier's farm, such as making fence rails, cutting firewood, mowing hay, and planting corn, for the same 3/0 daily rate, sometimes more.



Figure 5. Map of New York State Counties. The Hudson Valley region extends from New York north to Albany on the southeast side of the state. Ulster County is located in the middle of the region. (<http://county-map.digital-topo-maps.com>)

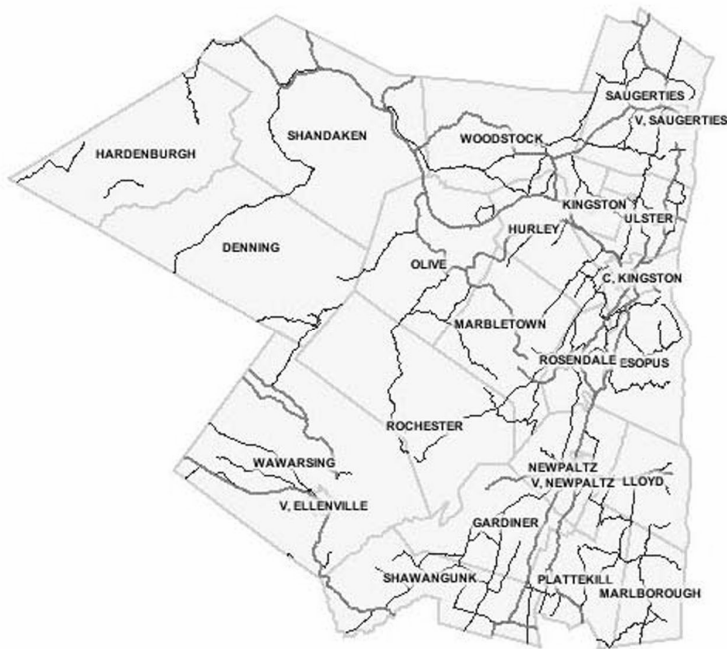


Figure 6. Map of Ulster County, New York. Kingston, Marletown, New Paltz, and Warwarsing are depicted. The Shawangunk Mountains separate New Paltz from Marletown and Wawarsing. (<http://gis.co.ulster.ny.us>)

Many of these people have left faint footprints on the documentary trail. As might be expected, the owner of the stone house is the best known, with the master craftsmen having equal importance. Louis Bevier, Jr. was a farmer and a surveyor and a peer of his mason (his first cousin) and his carpenter, who were both leaders in their localities. The account book provides a list of occupations for a group of anonymous men who laboured on farms and construction projects in the town. The identification and interaction of these men give a sense of the social organization in colonial communities. One important source of labor in eighteenth century Ulster County was its large slave population. Louis Bevier, Jr. is known to have owned four slaves in 1755, who would have surely been employed in the construction of his house. However, the extent to which these slaves participated in the project is not recorded in the accounts because Bevier did not have to pay them.

October 1750

The first entries in the account book are for Barent Markill and Jacob Middagh on 12 and 13 October 1750. Both these men resided in Marletown and their names can be found in church records as parents or sponsors at baptisms (Brink 1905-14). Jacob Middagh was destined for great notoriety. In 1777 he would be hanged as a Tory actively recruiting his neighbours in support of the English (Brink 1906, pp. 308-10). Markill was paid 3/0 for one day rough cutting beams. (This charge was credited to a debt of 19/0 he had with Bevier for the “exchange of a gun”). Middagh

worked two days “squaring” beams. For this work he was paid 9/0 in currency or 4/6 per day. This rate was at the high end of the range indicating that this was a skilled task and represented creating the smooth, planed finish on the large pine beams displayed in the ceilings of the main rooms in the house.

Based on the payments, hewing beams was considered “rough” work, and Markill received only a labourer’s wage for it. Both the pine beams displayed in the ceiling of the main floor that Middagh planed smooth on three sides and an equivalent number of unfinished oak beams supporting the floor would have been rough cut. Three large finished beams would have been needed for each room in the new house along with two smaller ledger beams embedded in the walls to support the ends of attic floor boards. If Middagh worked only the two days recorded, then the new house may have contained but one room. However, additional work done prior to October 1750 may have been recorded in an earlier account book. Other preliminary steps, like felling trees, are not noted in the accounts either.

March 1751

No other work relating to the house was recorded until March 1751. Early in the month, Barent Markill and Johannes Vandermerke were paid for one and one-half days of cutting wood for the lime kiln. The town of Marbletown was named for the exposed seams of limestone that characterized the local landscape. The stone was used both as a building material and as the source of lime for mortar. The lime was burned in a stone kiln or simply a pyre on Bevier’s property. An entry for “riding lime” – i.e. loading the lime on a wagon and delivering it to the construction site – suggests the limestone was burned at its source rather than at the house site.

Immediately afterwards Markill and Hendrick Bush were assigned to rough cutting wood for rafters and door cases. (Barent Markill had already worked on March 2 rough cutting door cases.) Bush was working “in the pine woods” on 12 and 13 March, and on 14 March, both men were rough cutting at the house where they were assisting Jacob Middagh who was there squaring the rafters into their final tapered shape and cutting the lap or fork joints in their tops. Two days later, all three men were back in the woods working on cutting and shaping rafters. Presumably more were needed. The rough-cut door cases would wait until May before the carpenter arrived to “square” them.

By 18 March, Markill, Vandermerke, and Bush had shifted their attention to “riding stones.” Bush was one of Bevier’s monthly wage labourers, and his time accounted for six of the nine and one-quarter days needed for the task. Like the others, he was compensated at the usual rate of 3/0 per day in a combination of cash, grains, and goods, including “one tinder Horn & a Schoot Bagg Strop.”

April 1751

Johannes Vandermerke and Barent Markill transported lime to the construction site on 6 April 1751. In a few days Vandermerke began digging the cellar hole with the help of Cornelius

Connuater and Petrus Markel. According to the recorded accounts, it took the three men only three days to complete the excavation, suggesting that animal power and/or slave labour also may have been used (or it may have been started the year before). The masons began work on 12 April. Head mason, Johannis Bevier, brought two others to the job: John Kittle and Isaac Low. They worked for 11 days during the last half of April. They were paid 4/6, 4/0, and 1/6, respectively, illustrating a hierarchy within the team. With such a low wage – one half the rate received by the laborers – Isaac Low was probably an apprentice. Johannes Vandermerke and Barent Markill stayed on the payroll “tending the masons,” and Petrus Markel was paid for “carrying stones” for one day.

Johannes Bevier (1724-1797) was the son of Louis’s uncle, Abraham Bevier, who settled in Wawarsing, 10 miles south of Marbletown (**fig.6**). Johannis’s marriage to Rachel Lefevre in 1747 was the first recorded in Wawarsing. He would become active in the militia during the Revolutionary War and, later, in town government and the Reformed Dutch Church. While Johannis Bevier may have been directly involved in the construction of the stone church in Wawarsing in 1742, but there is no written reference to him ever having been a stone mason (Bevier 1916, pp. 78-81). John Kittle was also a resident of Wawarsing. He would be killed and scalped during an Indian raid that occurred there on 12 August 1781 (Brink 1913, pp. 236).

May 1751

April ended with the cellar walls essentially completed. During the first two weeks of May, Petrus Markel worked six days “breaking stone” for the exposed upper walls of the house. Whether stones were collected in the surrounding fields or were limestone split from nearby exposed seams, they were roughly dressed so that a flat face could be oriented to the exterior and interior facades. The walls of stone houses are generally 20 ins. thick with separate sections laid up on outside and inside faces and a mix of clay, straw, and rubble filling the centre. (This method is also used in the construction of brick masonry walls, and in both cases, the exterior and interior wall sections are tied together with occasional pieces that span the internal space). On May 13 Markel was assisted by Stephen Nottingham’s “Negro [named] pitt.” Evidently, Nottingham was paying off a debt owed to Bevier, perhaps for surveying, with his slave’s labour.

The masons and their tenders appear to have completed the bulk of their work by the end of the third week of May. On 13 and 14 May, carpenter Levi Pawling was on site “making door & window cases.” These would have amounted to no more than two doors and four windows. The cases were heavy, four-sided oak frames joined at the corners and notched on their inside faces with stops for doors and window sashes. They were a structural part of the exterior face of the wall and would have been installed in the openings created by the masons before the tops of the walls were completed over them. No payments to Pawling are recorded, but he would have received the craftsman’s 4/6 rate.

Levi Pawling was the grandson of Henry Pawling, an officer in the English garrison established at Kingston in 1664. After the militia disbanded, he remained in Hurley where he was appointed Officer in Charge of Indian Affairs (Fried 1975, p. 130). Levi inherited property in Marbletown

from his uncle, Albert Pawling, who was member of the Provincial Assembly. This land probably originated with his grandfather who was among the English soldiers receiving grants there in lieu of back pay. Although English, Levi Pawling would be commissioned a colonel leading the Third Regiment of the Ulster County Militia during the Revolution and a delegate to the Provincial Congress in 1775. After the war, he would be appointed the first judge of the Ulster County Court of Common Pleas.

On 21 May 1751, Augustenin Vandermerke cut a “neck spar” as the first step in raising the roof. Stone houses do not have ridge poles, but the spar may have been used to hold the rafters erect prior to the application of roof boards, which would have stabilized them. Augustenin and Abraham Vandermerke saw to “raising the house” (roof) on 23 May. Prior to this Augustenin spent three days “when the masons was at work”[sic] probably overseeing the laying of beams, and plates in the walls, although this important step was not specifically mentioned in Bevier’s accounts. Starting on 24 May, Benjamin Krom, Augustus Keator, and Frederick Keator began trimming wood shingles and making the roof. Each roofer worked from two to five days for a combined total of 11 days in May and were paid the top rate of 4/6 per day.

June and July 1751

The roofers came back for the first week of June spending five days to complete their work. When that was done, work on the house was suspended for two months so Louis Bevier and his workmen could concentrate on the annual harvest (the wheat the local Dutch preferred was planted in the late fall and matured early; the first cutting of hay was also harvested). Augustenin Vandermerke worked on the first day in July laying the floor. The account book is silent as to from where or from whom the floor boards came. Then at the end of the month, Barent Markill worked three days cutting wood and “making the lime kill.”

August 1751

Work resumed in earnest in mid-August when the exterior of the house was finished. Jacob Middagh spent a day-and-a-half “making the [wood] gutters.” Barent Markill dedicated another two days to “breaking & riding of stones” on 12 and 13 August. The next day he spent riding lime. The three masons and their tenders (Markill and Markel) came back for a fourteen day stint. The walls of stone houses were laid with a clay and straw binder with a protective lime mortar pointing applied to the exterior. Perhaps the pointing was left to the end, helping to account for the 42 total man-days the masons were at work in August. Levi Pawling returned for four days at the end of the month to work on doors and windows. Interior work was also underway. Some of the mason’s time would have been dedicated to plastering the interior walls. Pawling would have constructed the two or three interior doors, too.

Louis Bevier, Jr. recorded that “After Harvest Abraham Konstapel and Andre his man worked at my house” 17 days in August, but did not specify what they did. In October their jobs were

described as “finishing,” indicating they were completing the interior. This could have included woodworking for partitions, enclosures, and board facings for the deep door and window jambs in the stone walls. In this section of the account book, there is a list of paints bought of Nicholas Vanderline of Kingston, New York (Vanderline was the latest in a long line of Kingston house and portrait painters and father of renowned nineteenth-century artist John Vanderlyn, the first American painter to study in France). Without a “painter” identified, the location of the “finish” work in the sequence of accounts indicates that Konstapel filled that role.

The materials list contains a large amount (25 pounds) of white lead, most of which would have been used on exterior wood surfaces, including windows, and Spanish Brown, which was the colour of most interior woodwork of stone houses in the period. Yellow paint was also on the list. Interior doors were painted yellow with blue (or the green noted on the list?) highlights. Recent paint studies have shown that yellow became a fashionable colour for beams in the second half of the eighteenth century. Floor boards were not painted, but base boards were coloured black. Plaster walls were whitewashed, another application for the stockpiled lime (Larson and Bartlett, 2003 & 2004).

September & October 1751

There was another intermission in September and October, probably related to continuing harvest work needed at the workmen’s homesteads. In the first week of the month the masons spent two-and-one-quarter days to complete their plastering. Abraham Konstapel and his man, worked until 10 September, and Levi Pawling spent five more days “making door & window cases.”

The workmen returned during last week of October to complete the entire project. The three masons arrived on 23 October to finish the chimney and lay the hearth. It would have been a jambless fireplace with which a Dutch mason like Johannis Bevier would have been well familiar. Barent Markill had broken the hearth stones on October 2; roofer Benjamin Krom returned for part of a day to “tack” the roof around the chimney. Augustetin Vandermerke and Abraham Konstapel used one-and-one-half days “closing the garet,” presumably on the end where the chimney was built, and another two-and-one-half more days “finishing.” Work on Louis Bevier, Jr.’s new house officially was completed on 30 October 1751, eight months after it was begun.

Renovations to the old house, 1752

Louis Bevier, Jr.’s new house was actually an addition attached to an existing house that he and his family occupied. Once the new house was completed, the masons and the carpenter were brought back to upgrade this old section. Levi Pawling spent one day in April and five and three-quarter days in May 1752 “making door and window cases” suggesting that the old windows were upgraded to match those in the new section. By the 1740s, the casement windows typical in early Dutch houses, was being replaced by the more fashionable vertical sliding sash windows in both new construction and the alteration of existing houses. This renovation would have required both a

mason and a carpenter, because new window frames were smaller and different in overall dimension than the casements they replaced and the stone opening had to be altered. The locations or characteristics of the doorways in the old house may have been changed as well.

In early July, the masons spent two days “finishing the old house.” As before, the term “finishing” implies interior work, such as plastering where changes had been made in the exterior walls, repairing or adding woodwork, and painting. According to the accounts, Johannis Bevier charged 10% more for “finishing” than for “masonry” (5/0 v. 4/6). John Kittle received an additional 0/6 for finishing work (20% increase in his case), and the apprentice Isaac Low’s pay increased from 1/6 to 4/0. In September 1752, Levi Pawling worked for 6 days “making the sofett.” This was probably an extension of the front or rear eave of the roof of the old house, which was where the kitchen was located. This was the final construction-related entry found in the account book.

LABOUR AND COMPENSATION

The construction schedule followed the annual progression of the farm and the seasons. Trees were felled, rough-cut, and squared in the winter months when farm work was at an ebb and timbers could be more easily transported over frozen ground. The oak and pine timbers were shaped immediately into beams, rafters, and casings while the wood was still green. Other preparatory jobs were undertaken, such as collecting and hauling stone to the site and making lime. The cellar hole was dug in April once the ground thawed, and as soon as it was completed masons quickly began erecting the basement walls. The upper walls were completed in time to build a roof on the house before the workers took a break in June and July to begin the summer harvest. There was a brief time in late August and early September where work on the house resumed to complete unfinished tasks on the exterior and begin finishing rooms on the interior. Another break was taken in September and October to complete the harvest. When that was over, there was time to put the finishing touches of the project before winter came and the cycle for the next construction season began anew.

The stone house represented hundreds of hours of labour for what may have been only a single room (only one chimney was reported to have been built). The three masons worked for a combined total of 142½ days, and 58¾ days were expended by their two tenders, Barent Markill (41 days) and Johannes Vandermerke (17¾ days). Levi Pawling was paid for 23½ days making door and window cases. Jacob Middaugh worked 5½ days squaring beams and rafters. Augustenis Vandermerke worked for 15¾ days raising the roof, laying floors, and other carpentry work. The three roofers – Benjamin Krom, and Augustenis and Frederick Keator – spent a total of 26 man-days on the job.

The masons’ total bill amounted to 26 Pounds, 5 Shillings, and 10½ pence. Louis Bevier, Jr. paid them 15 Pounds on 24 October 1751, when the work on the new house was completed, and the

balance on 8 July 1752 after the renovations were made to the old house. Levi Pawling's account was not settled until 1753, although the method of payment is not recorded. Some of Jacob Middagh's wages were paid in cash, with 8/0 deducted as his share of the minister's salary, which Bevier paid on 6 April 1751. The balance of Middagh's account was satisfied with scheppels of Indian corn and lime. Johannes and Augustenis Vandermerke received most of their payments in cash with the balance coming in scheppels of corn, rye, and bran. Their contributions to the minister's salary was deducted also. It was a similar case with the roofers, although there is no record of them paying for the minister.

Barent Markill led the list of labourers with 59 days spent on a wide variety of jobs ranging from rough cutting timbers, making and riding lime, digging the cellar and tending to the masons, which accounted for 70% of that time. He was also one of Louis Bevier Jr.'s farm labourers. For his work on the house, he was paid the labourer's rate of 3/0 per day, but Bevier paid him 4/6 per day for mowing work during the harvest. Among Markill's payments were an "ABC Book," an evangelist book, two Els [yards] of coarse lining, and a share of the minister's salary. Hendrick Bush worked for 10 days on the new house rough cutting wood and riding stones. The accounts include payments for a month's worth of unspecified work in February 1751 and February and April 1752. Either Bush did not work full time for Bevier or he was paid less for the privilege of steady work and other benefits, such as a dwelling, since his monthly pay of 1/10/3 divided by his daily wage of 3/0 computes to only 11 days of labour.

A rough sum of the time recorded for the abovementioned workmen totals just over 400 days for which Louis Bevier, Jr. would have expended around 75 Pounds of currency, services, foodstuffs, and goods. His use of slave labour would have alleviated some additional costs, but the detailed accounts represent a significant proportion of the work. Materials and fixtures would have increased this figure by a figure of two or three (more than four Pounds was spent on paint, alone).

CONCLUSION

The terse entries in Louis Bevier Jr.'s account book give a multi-dimensional perspective on the construction of stone houses in Ulster County during the mid-eighteenth century. It identifies most of the tasks involved in the project and puts them in seasonal, temporal, labour, and social contexts. The construction schedule was carefully planned by Bevier so that work progressed smoothly and that craftsmen and labourers were engaged at the proper time. Most of the 18 workers employed for the tasks had set timeframes in which to complete their jobs. Only a few were hired for brief periods and these may have been brought in to address immediate needs to keep the project moving ahead.

The ethnic duality that made New York material culture unique in America is illustrated in the construction team. Johannis Bevier, the stone mason, was descended from Huguenots who settled

the New Paltz Patent, which associated him with the Dutch faction in Ulster County society. As such, he would have been familiar with the design traditions that had evolved from Dutch houses and served to express the cultural identity of his clients. The rectangular, one-and-one-half-story, gable roof house was an iconographic form for these people, and they conscientiously preserved it along with interiors with massive ceiling beams and jambless fireplaces. The English portion of the community (Marbletown had an unusually large English population due to some of its land having been granted to English soldiers in the seventeenth century) built fundamentally different houses. Their rooms were stacked in two-story houses and arranged around a single chimney stack rather than stretched out in a line. This dichotomy persisted until the English colony was dissolved in 1783, and European identity was no longer a determining issue. Both groups built stone houses, which were an expression of wealth and class, not ethnicity. Carpenter/joiner Levi Pawling's ancestry was English, but both his grandfather and father married daughters of Dutch families prominent in Kingston's early history. His role in the construction of the stone house was limited, but he may have been a factor in the introduction of vertical sliding sash windows into the design. Casement windows were becoming obsolete in both Dutch and English houses, but an English carpenter may have been more proficient in their construction since the Dutch in Ulster County were reluctant to adopt new or English features.

Louis Bevier, Jr. conveyed the homestead to his eldest son, David (1746-1822) in his will. From David, the house was passed down through a series of heirs, most named Louis, until the seventh generation of the Marbletown branch of the family gave it to the Ulster County Historical Society in 1938. By this time, Louis Bevier, Jr.'s house had gone through many changes, including those caused by a fire in the early 1800s, and had been incorporated into the existing large, two-story house.

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