

RESTORATION HISTORY OF THE ASA WOLVERTON HOUSE

All of the lead paint from ceiling to floors, door frames to doors completely stripped to bare wood interior and exterior. In the process a total examination of any faux finishes, graining, colours studied....and over time recreated as it would have been at the beginning. Wallcovering were printed in California by a company named Carter & Company and another company called Waterhouse out on the east coast. Selections were made from documented/designated historic papers and printed specifically for the Wolverton Manor and in the appropriate colours. In the early 1970's the home was turned into five apartments shortly after the owner died and left the manor to her son. Multiple layers of wallpaper and paint removed from every room. All the floors were scraped and sanded back to bare wood. Most of the floors needed major repair and some floors even replaced with another old floor of same age and red pine where found. All of the floor joists were inspected for stability and rebraced with new 2x4 were needed. The house was divided into four apartments (five at one time) and one by one doors, walls and closets that were not original to the house were removed. The front stairway was blocked off and the upstairs railing/stair buried behind a wall. In the first six months, all new electrical throughout, plumbing, furnaces, A/C, Blown in insulation throughout and most importantly the new roof. (replacing a one year old roof that leaked so badly in the first winter thaw, that we had large green garbage pails in ever window to catch water by the gallons). The roof is the most extravagant part of the restoration. A product used that is made from recycled tires with the look of old shake shingles and a 50 year warranty,

HIGHLIGHTS FOR EACH ROOM

MAIN MANOR

Hallway:

Log cabin floor original to 1900, partially refinished. Faux graining on all the millwork and the doors grained with crotch mahogany pattern (as discovered during paint removal). Note the locking mechanism on the door to the basement, Carpenter lock on the back door with the original lag bolt. The Soldier Blue (teal) was a colour significant of a rare and expensive pigment. Only wealthy families could afford these rich colours. Wall paper is typical of 1850 Greek Revival era. This pattern was found in Thomas Jefferson's daughter's house. Original parts of a bellpull still found at the front door. The door to the basement (servant's quarter) still has the locked latch.

Parlor:

Although the floors were installed in the early 1900's, in an oak log cabin pattern and the ceiling was painted in appropriate colours, the pink is an original colour found. Minimal alteration to mantel. A section was cut off the top frame, perhaps extended with a mantel mirror? The black marble is not original but rather brick face but damage would have ruined the integrity of the clay brick facing the rumford fireplace. (original wallpaper, an entire strip of and printed paper, was saved and stored at the Paris Museum)

Dining Room:

Paint and paper stripped out, the dado was traced off of shadows of exposed millwork and reproduced the tools to create the chair rails. Part of the China Cabinet were found throughout the deconstruction in the mainfloor bathroom, animal stable and barn. Cabinet in the dining room was restored exactly to exact dimensions, shelf placement, paint colours and graining.

Fireplace was dry stripped by picking the paint off carefully to reveal the original faux finish. Artist was hired to duplicate original marbel faux finish The top of the mantel and right side panel is the original finish. The Dumb waiter was also stripped out and restored. The cart is stuck in the shaft and left as found. The pully system is complete and hidden in the floor or the upstairs room. 1840 wall paper. The floor cloth is 50 yards of 24 oz painters canvas with 9 coats of paint and varnish stencilled in a 1820 Humphries pattern from Vermont. The walls were signed by Ballyntine, assuming he was the wallpaper hanger...in 1911 Part of his shipping box was found in the lower level. One of the window is etched with "sophia 1871". Story has it that her father was a social lite and planned a special dinner party with many important people. John Sifton and his wife Kate had three children. Sohpie was 14, her brothers Clifton 11 and Andres 12. Their Father brought home a beautiful and very impressive diamond ring for his wife to wear at the party. Sophie wanted to prove it was real and etched her name in the window...still there today. Any of the original pressed glass is still left in the window frames whether cracked or not. (90% of the glass in the house is original to 1850s)

The Library:

We cut this room in half to included the main floor powder room. We think this room was not originally finished as there was no beaded frame around the windows. There was evidence of a large built in book case, quite stately with a substantial ceiling frameⁱ and signs of shelves on the left side only. There appeared to be perhaps the built in desk on the right side. In 1960 it was used as a kitchen and in the early 70's it was divided in half with a bathroom on north side and other side a small computer room. (interesting find...alluminum down spout was used instead of duct work)

SECOND STORY

In the late 70's the house was turned into apartments. A hole cut into the balcony and staircase added . The hallway was closed off and the upstairs turned into a two bedroom apartment. The first thing we did was open up the staircase, remove the kitchen from the north side and remove a wall that devided the ballroom in half. The closet was removed from the front half bedroom corner. We kept the big closet that was built in the 1880's but later removed it as it was not original to the] house.

"Master's Bedroom" (guest room)

Only bedroom in the home for this childless family. Asa was in his early 50's and Juliet in her many years younger. According to the markings on the floor, there was a $\frac{3}{4}$ bed between the windows, a sewing machine to the north wall and the opposite corner was a corner armour. The floor was painted around the perimeter of 2' only, never any paint in the middle. However it oddly the corner with the armour had not paint and the border neatly painted witha curved return to the wall on either side. Perhaps the cupboard placed into the room before the border painted. We added two small closets on either side of the second floor chimney. The small room off ot the bedroom was a chest room (for blanket boxes, dressers trunks. There was strong evidence of two beaded boards originally set about 5' up on either side of the room with the window in the middle. In the40's this room was used as the Nannies bedroom Later became the kitchen for an apartment in the 80's The wall was signed and dated February 1923

Bathing Room:

We completely gutting this room. Originally this home had an indoor bathing room . There was a small stove in the one corner opposite of the window. We found evidence in the ceiling finding the stove pipe in the attic. There would have been just enough room for a small round galvanized sit -in tub. There is a bellpull still mounted in the door frame. Perhaps a servant would have

heated water for the bath. There are pictures of a water shoot out of the window lying on the roof top. Today there is a passthrough door room turned into a His/Her bathroom accessible for two bedrooms.

Ballroom (Master's bedroom)

This is the warmest room in the house. Windows on the east and west side make it perfect for summer ventilation. The fireplace was bricked in and the hearth boarded over. After three weeks of stripping off the 1880 grained floor with too much over paint to restore, the floor was painted. There is a part of the floor to the right of the fireplace that houses the pulleys for the dumbwaiter. This fireplace is also a rumford. There are three fireplaces lined up from the kitchen, dining room, bedroom (three floors) with a flu approximately 5'x2.5'. All three fireplaces would have to be all working at the same time to get enough draw for each to work efficiently. (On the ravine outside of the basement kitchen is the remains of the foundation for the summer kitchen.) (Part of the 1880 wall with wallpaper sample is at the museum.)

We peeled off five different floors, sanded the original red pine. There was evidence that this room was never completed. What we discovered through restoration: Floors never painted, modest mantel. This room may never have been used by the Wolvertons.

Front Balcony

The railing was restored back to the original. We think in the late 1900's the plantation shutters installed on the balcony. In the 60's, the Hanlon family with seven children walled off the balcony, added two small windows and it became a bedroom for the oldest daughter

BASEMENT

Servants Bedroom (second kitchen)

All research indicates that this is the Irish servants bedroom. Most of the glass in the windows are the original and exterior frame shows one side fitted for hinges. This means there would have been a barn style shutter the floor boards were lifted off and with hydraulics and air compressor the entire house was lifted approx 1 3/4" and leveled out. The cracks all came together and the doors leveled throughout this part of the home. The new foundations was set in place and new 2x4 set with cement before the floor relayed. All new plumbing throughout the the house and the plumbing for the bathrooms installed and connected to mainline sewer system. The kitchen cupboards were built, buttermilk painted and installed.

Original Kitchen (now lower dining room)

This was a major reconstruction from corner to corner as the entire room cutted to the dirt floor, The plumbing under the stairwell was removed including a coffin style velvet box, There was a cement pad in front of the fireplace approx 4x5' that was almost completely bricked over except for a small opening for a small fire place. There was no doubt a finley style cook stove sitting on the cement. The pine boards were as long as the room and 15-22" wide. Many of these boards were well worn and many so worn down and could not be salvaged. When the boards were lifted we discovered the entire space packed with hollowed walnut husks...plus the carcass of the squirrel. We assume probably at the time the new cement patio was poured in 1967 (dated). We removed the board at the threshold of the entrance door. The original board is still there and the original 2" board is worn down by at least an inch and quite well dished showing well over 100 years of wear. The foundation for the summer kitchen is still at the edge of the ravine. We had our mason rebuild the main rumford fireplace once the cement pad was removed, but could not restore the bake oven although it is still very much a part of the original fireplace. We put a door

over the front as we could not remove all of the white paint. The dumbwaiter has been stripped of paint back to the original state however it will have to be dismantled, rebuilt as it has swollen over the years and is now stuck. The wood wall with its very wide boards is restored however warped over the years and now preventing the restoration of the dumbwaiter. The pantry doors were replaced however we do have the originals and the dumbwaiter door has been repaired. (single wooden panel) The tops were cut off to allow for the stove pipe to be installed around the room and installed into the top of the fireplace flu. (now capped off. The room is brought back to its original state including the dry sink placed by the door when a makeshift drain was placed through the wall. There is a small #5 iron burn on one of the shelves in the dumbwaiter...evidence that someone once stood there while ironing linens, we would assume. We have placed an iron on the burn as a reminder of what it is. Before replacing the floor boards (which were recycled throughout the reconstruction) you could see major wear spots where someone might have tended to pots on the fire, churned the butter, or ironed.

Servants Bedroom (main kitchen)

Every thing except the lath and plaster removed, The ceiling fell down when construction started. Layers of flooring was removed to the dirt floor) Foundation was reinforced, new 2x4 construction for the new floor (replaced with a recycled 1840 floor), Lath and plaster saved. This kitchen was installed as the main functioning kitchen, replacing an apartment kitchen, The room, we assume, to be the original servant's room.

Pantry:

The original shelves were all stripped as were the walls. The window bars were stripped and repainted. Missing ones were replaced a very rare carpenter lock is still on the door and encased in a wooden cap which is a very rare and very collectable part of this door. Note the burn marks on the underside of the first and second shelves showing use of candle light. On the side cupboard panel if you look real hard you can see the three screw holes where a large hinge was screwed in, indicating perhaps a swing lantern. There is a wood panel wall which was probably part of the potato bin. You can see the markings on both sides, especially the wall where the lid rested. The original drawings show a fireplace planned however a wall instead dividing the pantry from the larder.

Larder (now laundry room)

This is the coldest room in the house and where the meats and dairy stored. There is also an invoice found showing the owner purchasing casks or barrels of whiskey from the local brew master, Norm Hamilton. 42 gallons of whiskey purchased for \$11.75 . Its no wonder a second lock needed for the door. The Dutch drysink was something we built from a 1920 kitchen and added the hutch. The oak floor board were recycled from the floor found in the second dining room, There were long 2" thick boards used for shelving that we removed and reused in the workshop. You can see the hand ogered holes in the vertical boards which were always installed at time of build so there was something to nail into. The original forged nails have been left where found throughout the house. The smoked meat would have hung on those nails. The interior window opening was installed to allow heat to pass through when the first furnace was installed.

Root Cellar (now mechanics room)

We have turned this into an efficient mechanical room for this home. We have not touched the original exterior door. It is still as we found it, including the large lag bolt. The previous owner called us one day and said that was her favorite part of the old house. It is very useful entrance when doing any mechanical work. The door is still functioning.

Lower Veranda

This part of the house is a mystery. We think there might have been an additional wall built to house a laundry room. The installed window and board with nails suggests in this stone wall suggest a laundry room.

The original posts have been replaced perhaps in the 70's with 4x4's as a time when the cement pad was put in. We have left as it.

Upper Veranda

This was completely rebuilt corner to corner. Barely safe to use by the early 2000's. There is a beam support inside with new 2x4 support, new recycled 1840 floor boards. The windows were installed because of the flying critters from the forested area making this unusable space in the summer time. Now a three season room has great function. There are screens for every window. There are still two original laundry hooks found in one of the corner posts close to the house and a hook in a window sill. We believe the roof to be a rebuilt and not original to this house however it is also restored to code. We had to remove a window and reinstalled the door as it was back in the day.

CARRIAGE HOUSE (also known as granary, drive shed)

This was an apartment built in the 1960's and eventually gutted corner to corner back to the original barn boards. The floor boards which are still in place including a trap door with strap hinges left in place. The boards too worn to use now and amazing thickness of 4", 15-22" wide and most at least 12' long or longer. Now the floor is solid chestnut hardwood flooring. The room is left with all the original beams exposed including the pegs that join the truss. There are no nails in the construction of the main frame of this home. The original front of the carriage house been restored with the barn doors, We found one original door which is now used for the entranceway. During reconstruction liberties were taken to design the east wall, installing large picture windows and the beautiful 1850 fireplace mantel that came from another history manor. This was originally two rooms, visibly different sizes with pass through doors all leading to the barn, One door, now boarded over, is still visible in the barn side.

New Commercial Kitchen (Asa Wolverton's office and Bdrm for George Washington Jones)

At one time this room (only half the width) was used as a bedroom. The built in china cabinet was removed and a door cut through as a new entrance from the main manor. The original door to the back veranda was removed and a ceiling to floor window installed perhaps as early as the early turn of 1900. With the entrance to the main manor restored with the built in china cabinet and a door opened into the small apartment in the carriage house, construction for this new kitchen started with the cutting out of the room including the removal of the stairs to the basement and the wall that was added around 1960's. Gutted to the rafters. The trusses were reinforced with 2x6 and the plywood (1940s) was replaced and a new roof installed. We discovered the shuttered window buried in the drywall and even discovered that some of the original horsehair plaster was still intact. We restored the original room to its original size (minus an interior wall that divided this area into two rooms with a passthrough door. Evidence seen on the beams which are now cleaned and exposed, A trap door was installed in the floor where walls created a stairwell with a door leading down the original stairs, untouched, raw and original from day one leading to the open stable. A passthrough is now created through the china cabinet making it easy serving access to the dining room. A sliding access barn door now covers the passthrough.

Family Room (AKA open stables)

Once an open stable and storage area for fire wood. Unfortunately now the behive oven is no longer visible and hides behind new walls. A sinder brick wall was built as a retaining wall for the upper carriage house. The original dirt floor was covered with skids and carpet until new construction started in 2014. The area was completely gutted. Cement floor poured and a new furnace system installed. A large family room was created with heated porceline floors, picture windows and an 1820 fireplace mantel (from Quebec) that now houses an electric fireplace. This room is complete with a three piece washroom.

BARN

This is the only untouched and still original part of this home. The loft has the original hay drop. The bar doors were already widened back in the mid 1960's and used as a garage

Wood Working Shop (AKA Animal Stable)

This was untouched since the original times. It was the stables for the horse, perhaps a cow. On the south wall there is an entrance door for the animals. Original door is installed on the outside of this building and the north door is still original as found. The original tree supports and water trough was still intact including the wooden floors. Everything was guttered and this large space was turned into a workshop which has prepared all the millwork, doors, etc for the restoration of this manor. The east wall has been altered with new doorway, two large picture windows. The interior was lined with plywood and an elevator installed for easy access of furniture and lumber. There is a separate boiler/rad heat system to keep a dry heat for this shop.

GARDENS

When we moved into the manor, we removed the stairs that were istalled through the middle of the balcony as the only access to an upper two bedroom apartment. The front stoop was nothing more than layers of cement pads which were later jackhammered off . We discovered that the original patio was cobblestone and cement. The centre section was removed but we saved a section and now stored at the museum. The new floor design idea came from the famous stately Draydon Hall, a plantation in Virginia. The entire garden was covered in 12 inches of $\frac{3}{4}$ gravel which was completely removed. All of the original hand cut edging rocks and stepping rocks (eight in total) were still in place. All of the soil was removed, weeping tile placed in the north end of the right garden and quality top soil and compost put back into the garden and the step rocks returned to the original locations. 33 roses were then planted...and only red, pink and white. It is believed from pictures from archives that possibly only pink roses were in these gardens.

The fence design was taken from an original fence surroundiung the Cox Estate at the other end of town. A basket wire fence was relocated to another historic site and the front gate relocated to the historic lawn bowling greens off of the main street. Solid steel fencing was installed around the manor's front rose garden, with two side gates and a front gate. 80 feet of fencing with a large 8foot gate encloses the side gardens which have been carefully designed with historic elements. The gardens are still an ongoing project with only half the gardens established at this time. We assume from research that the side gardens were maintained as vegetable gardens. The edge of the ravine had grape vines (possibly for wine making). The ravine was platteaued for fruit tree

orchard. (where the animals grazed in the 1850s).

Asa purchased the property in February 1851. It took three years to build. There is an original Paris Star Newspaper found in the museum with an ad that says, „Commodius Cottage for rent or sale“. May 1854. We are assuming this couple moved into their new home at that time.

History has reported that the three Wolverton Houses were part of the first known residential area of Upper Town of Paris.(Asa's home, the labourer's home, and the Newly immigrated Minister's Home). Another small cottage was built behind the Church for Asa's staff who arrived from Upper Canada, aka New Canada. This family of four immigrated from Ireland.

This house is documented as welcoming the underground railway slaves and records from the Wolverton Family suggest there were two, Sadie, an elderly woman who was sent from his brother's home to Asa's and George Washington Jones, who looked after the animals and possibly the gardens. Records state that GWJ took Asa to his Brothers home in the town of Wolverton via horse and carriage. Folklore suggests that GWJ later became Asa's best friend.
