

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

DEFREEST-CHURCH HOUSE

HABS No. NY-

Location: The house was formerly located at 621 Third Avenue Extension, East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York. The house sat on the north side of the street, its front oriented to the south. The house was sited on an upland plain immediately to the west of the old Troy Post Road, U.S. Route 4.

USGS Troy South Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
Zone 18 NAD 27 Datum 4,721,945.36N, 606,513.90E

Owner: The house was last owned and occupied by Lacorte Companies, Inc. and was used for its corporate headquarters. The building was demolished on 7 November 2002.

Significance: The DeFreest-Church house was significant as an example of a residence constructed by a successful farmer in Rensselaer County during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. John Knickerbocker “Nickey” DeFreest was a well-known citizen, and a direct descendant of the original European settlers of the area. Walter S. Church, also well-known through his connection to the Anti-Rent wars, was the second owner of the house.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. **Physical History:**

1. **Date of erection:**

The construction of the house is dated to ca.1838 on the basis of deed information, which records the lease of the property to the DeFreests in 1837. An examination of the various decorative elements and the building technologies that went into its construction support this date.

2. **Architect:**

Not known.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses:

The original occupants of the house were John Knickerbocker DeFreest, his wife Catharine Van Alstynne DeFreest, and their family. The history of the occupation of the house is covered more thoroughly in Part I.B., Historical Context.

4. Builder, Contractor, suppliers:

The builder of the DeFreest-Church house has not been identified. Similarities to houses known to have been constructed by John Bard Colegrove, who was active in nearby Troy suggests the involvement of someone from his circle. (Wheeler 2000:71-73)

Little of the original hardware survived in the house. Several sets of original door hinges were identified, however. Two different maker or retailer marks were found: the incuse stamp of “T. CLARKS COM’Y” (Fig. 1) and the partial incuse stamp “..AR...OSS” (Fig. 2), which was obscured by holes drilled for screws into the hinge leaves. Neither retailer nor manufacturer could be positively identified. There were several persons of the name T. Clark active in New York City during the period, some of whom were merchants. No likely candidates were found in the Troy Directories for the period. The Albany Directories contained listings for several “T. Clarks” including a tinsmith and a carpenter. (Albany Directories 1837:78; 1839:92; 1842:37)

Renovations to the building during the 1880s included a new central heating system. The registers associated with this system came from two different manufacturers. One group, which featured rococo revival detailing, was marked with the name “TUTTLE & BAILEY M’F’G. CO. NY.” (Fig. 3) The second group of registers was cast with aesthetic period geometric designs stamped “PATENTED MAY 30 1882/ THE SIMONDS MFG CO. 50 CLIFF ST NY” on one example and “SIMONDS MFG CO. 50 CLIFF ST” on a second example. (Fig. 4) The patent was granted to Richard S. T. Cissel for the design of a hot and cold air register. (Cissel 1882) (Fig. 5)

5. Original plans and construction:

No original plans, contracts, specifications, or early photographs of the house are known to exist. Early twentieth century photographs are known to exist in the collection of Thomas Van Buren of Valatie, Columbia County, New York, but these were not made accessible to us.

An aerial photograph from June 1960 (Fig. 6) and a photograph from a 1974 flyover (Fig. 7) are the earliest images located. Neither provides much information with respect to the house, but both document the locations of some of the outbuildings associated with the house. An interview with Mr. Van Buren yielded much information with respect to the occupation of the house during the first half of the twentieth century. (Miller 2003)

As originally constructed, the DeFreest-Church house was a four-bay wide, two-story tall, gable-roofed brick dwelling of square plan with a one-and-a-half story wing attached on the west. The wing was also constructed of brick, was three bays wide, and had a gable roof. The exterior was severely detailed, the only relief provided by the bold Doric cornice and frieze that extended all around the building. The window and door lintels were unadorned pieces of squared brownstone. The brick was laid in common bond.

Although the house had been altered during the twentieth century, extensive examination of the remaining fabric facilitated the creation of drawings reconstructing each of its floor plans. (Figs. 8-10)

Storage areas and service space occupied the basement. (Fig. 8) The kitchen was located in the space under the wing. A laundry with access to water from a cistern located immediately to the rear of the house was located immediately to the north. A storage room, possibly a pantry, was located to the east of the kitchen along the south side of the main portion of the house. This room was accessed via a plank-walled hallway, which also gave access to a stair leading to the first floor. To the north and east of this stair were the remnants of plank walls, which appear to have served as a coal bin. To the north of this space was a second hall. The two large chambers at the east end of the basement were paved with bluestone laid closely and without mortar. Both of these rooms appear to have originally served to store food. The northern of these two rooms was modified in the late nineteenth century to accommodate the installation of a coal-fired central air heating system.

The first floor (Fig. 9) was arranged to facilitate the separation between the DeFreest family, guests to the house, and the servants. A guest visiting the home entered in the south (front) door, which opened into a square hall. The two parlors were immediately to the east through a single door. These three rooms were fitted with the most elaborate woodwork in the house. These rooms were, in addition, the only spaces in the dwelling, which featured plaster cornices.

Rooms devoted to the service of guests and those occupied by the family were located to the north of the entrance hall and in the wing to the west. The main

staircase was enclosed in a narrow hall immediately to the north of the hall and the family dining room communicated directly with it. The latter room was equipped with a wood-burning fireplace and crane and occupied most of the first floor of the wing. A series of three small rooms were located to the north of the family dining room. The westernmost of these contained a small staircase, which connected an exterior door in the west wall with the servant's quarters in the second floor of the wing. The remaining two rooms appear to have served as small bedrooms.

A rear hall connected both the north parlor and the family dining room to small storage rooms and the stairs leading to the basement kitchen. An interior chamber located to the east of the main stairs appears to have been a storage area, since it did not have any provision for ventilation. To the west of the north parlor was a room whose function remains unclear. It communicated both with the servants' passage and with the exterior, so it may have served as a vestibule. Thomas Van Buren recalled that there was a sink in this room, which he thought was connected to the cistern. He also recalled that the privy was accessed via this door and that a woodshed was attached to the back of the house in this location. Perhaps it served as a washroom and family entrance to the house.

The second floor (Fig. 10) was largely utilized for bedchambers. Two large bedrooms were located over the parlors. Each had a fireplace with a wood mantel and a small closet. The stair to the attic was located in the space above the closets. Two smaller bedrooms were located to the west. Small stoves, the flues of which connected to chimneys in the attic, heated these spaces. The servants' chambers were located to the west of these bedrooms in the second floor of the wing. The largest room probably accommodated the adults of the group since it had direct communication with the DeFreest family's private hall.

The attic remained an unfinished space. No indication that it had ever been occupied was identified. There was no accessible attic over the wing portion of the dwelling.

6. Alterations and additions:

The earliest identified alterations to the DeFreest-Church house occurred ca. 1882 soon after the purchase of the house by Walter S. Church. As noted above (in Part I.A.4), elements from the central heating system installed at that time bear the patent date of "May 30 1882." The pocket doors located between the two parlors were converted to hinged doors at this time, and the empty space between the parlor walls was used for heating duct space. A pocket door located in the wall between the rear hall and the family dining room on the first floor appears to date

to the 1880s. It was removed before it could be photographically recorded, but was constructed of oak, and its upper panel was filled with leaded art glass.

The removal of three of the chimneys in the main portion of the house, which originally vented stoves located in the small bedrooms and in the large bedroom over the north parlor, probably coincided with the installation of the new heating system. These chimneys were left in place below the roofline. Thomas Van Buren recalled a one story porch which extended across the south and east sides of the main portion of the house. (Miller 2003) This feature may have been installed during the ca. 1882 renovations or as late as 1919, when the Van Buren family purchased the property.

The next major renovations occurred after 1957, when Lewis Van Buren took possession of the house. Lewis installed a bathroom in the dwelling in an unidentified location. Between 1957 and 1967, Lewis Van Buren sold the large barn that once was located to the west of the house. It was disassembled and removed from the site. (Miller 2003)

Major remodeling of the house occurred sometime soon after 1967 when it was sold to Jersey Testing Laboratories, Inc. and converted to a testing laboratory for concrete destined for the Empire State Plaza in Albany. A one-story concrete-block wing was added to the north of the house obliterating the woodshed, porch, and outbuildings in that area. A one-story cinder-block garage was constructed to the east of the house at this time. The late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century porch appears to have been removed during the course of this work. The interiors of the house itself were left largely undisturbed and were used as office space. Aerial photography indicates that the remaining outbuildings on the property were razed sometime before 1974. (Fig. 7)

Final alterations to the house occurred during its “restoration” in 1995. Ironically, the most damage to the original fabric of the house occurred at that time. The original six-over-six double-hung sashes were removed from all locations except the north façade, which remained obscured by the ca. 1967 addition. The exterior was sandblasted except for the north wall, which remained covered by the ca. 1967 work. The original staircase was removed and replaced with a steel staircase with wood treads and a wrought iron and steel pipe railing. All of the partitions in the first floor of the house were removed except those bordering the two parlor spaces. (Fig. 11) Woodwork and doors were reused or replicated.

Alterations to the second floor were more limited in scope. (Fig. 12) They included the creation of a passage between the two large bedrooms affected by cutting a door through the north wall of the eastern closet between the two rooms.

The door communicating between the hall and the large front bedroom was moved north to allow for the relocation of the north wall of the front small bedroom. The servant's staircase was removed, as were all of the partitions in the second floor of the wing. As with the first floor, doors and trim were reused or replicated as needed. The only work that was done in the basement was the installation of a layer of pea gravel on the floor of the kitchen and the installation of the furnace in that room. The attic remained unaltered with the exception of the removal of some floorboards made necessary by the new heating ducts installed at that time. Extensive renovations substantially enlarged the ca. 1967 addition, and encased its concrete-block walls in a clapboard skin. The ca. 1967 garage was incorporated into the complex and sheathed with clapboards at this time.

B. Historical Context:

The story of the DeFreest-Church House begins in 1838, the year it was built. The previous year John and Ann Knickerbocker DeFreest conveyed 53 acres of the original 1789, Cornelius Van Everen (Everen, Evers, Inveren, or Jeveren) 204-acre lease and 48.7 acres of the original, also 1789, Jacob Vandenburg (Van Den Bergh, Van Den Bergh, Vandenberg, or Van Denberg), 113.5-acre lease to John Knickerbocker DeFreest (De Freest, Defreest, or Defriest) for \$5,000 and the yearly rents, covenants, and conditions necessary to fulfill the terms of the lease. The lease was not recorded until May 7, 1838, however, which may indicate that the house construction was finished. (Rensselaer County Clerk's Office [RCCO] 1837) While the architect or builder of the brick house is unknown, its design was of a modestly elegant, contemporary, urban, Greek Revival side-hall-and-wing house in a rural setting. What John was actually selling his son, John K., was the built environment: the improvements of the houses and barns, fences and other appurtenances, not the land owned by the Van Rensselaer family. From that \$5,000, the patroon was entitled to the quarter-sales, basically a fine imposed for transferring the title, which could be as high as one-quarter of the sales price. (Black 1968:1410) While this policy was not universally enforced, its presence created resentment among the lessees. (Kim 1978:223-227)

Even before these leases were granted in 1789, the houses of Cornelius Van Everen and William C. A. Vandenburg (who conveyed it to Jacob) (Van Alen 1788-89) were listed on the 1767 Bleeker map. (Fig. 13) Cornelius' house was southeast of the 1838 house, while the Vandenburg house was approximately 500 feet west of it out of the limits of this survey.

While houses were designated on the 1767 Bleeker map, most versions of the 1788-89 Van Alen map of Greenbush generally did not depict them. Instead, they were drawn on the individual surveys of specific leases that are outlined on the map. One copy of the Van Alen map does, however, depict houses. (Fig. 14) The survey for Cornelius' lease is

not available, so it is fortunate that the house was depicted on that copy of the general map. It is safe to assume that the Van Everen house did exist at that time because on the 1790 federal census, Cornelius Van Everen was surrounded by the same neighbors listed on the Van Alen map. He had two “Free white males of 16 years and upward, and, including heads of families;” four “Free white males under 16 years;” three “Free white females, including heads of families;” and three slaves in his household. (Census 1971:38)

From 1823 to 1854, John DeFreest, Jun. paid “18¾ Bu Wheat, 4 Fat fowls & 1 day service,” the last to repair the roads on the Cornelius Van Everen lease on a regular basis. (Rensselaerwyck Manor [RM] 1823-1854) The payment methods appeared flexible as he overpaid some years and substituted oats in other years. In 1848 and 1854, he paid cash instead of produce.

At some point, John K. Defreest’s name was added alongside his father’s in the account ledger headings. Since he was born in 1809, John K. would have been only 14 in 1823. It is likely that his name was added to the accounts when he became 21, a common practice that facilitated his ability to vote. In order to vote without owning property, intent had to be shown that the son would indeed inherit the lease and the improvements (or the deed). The father had to endorse his son’s interest by adding the son’s name to the ledger.

More importantly, the account book supplied possible dates for John DeFreest’s possession of the now-lost Van Everen lease. While 1823 is the earliest year listed, it may not have been the original transfer year. We know that he conveyed his interest in the lease to his son John K. in 1837, a fact not reflected in the ledger.

The other possible date that John K.’s name was added to the account could have been in January of 1834 when he married Catharine Van Alstyne at the Blooming Grove Reformed Church. (DeFreest 2002) Frequently in the nineteenth century, it was marriage that prompted house construction. In this case, the architectural assessment completed by Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. (HAA, Inc.) in 2001 indicates that the DeFreest-Church house was probably constructed shortly after the lease transfer to John K. (HAA, Inc., 2001 and 2002) In any case, by the time the lease was conveyed in February 1837, John K. already had two children and another on the way. (DeFreest 2003) They were probably ready for their own house.

From 1840 to 1854, the rent on the 48 acres of the Jacob Vandenburg lease was listed as 11¼ bushels of wheat, two fowls, and one day’s service, which was paid. The original lessees listed as the account holders are Thomas and Gerrit Burtis with Jacob Vandenburg listed as having purchased the lease in 1789. In small print following the Burtis names are Evert Van Alen and John K. DeFreest as if having acquired the lease at

a later date. Evert leased 65½ acres, which when added to John K.'s 48 comprises the original 113½ acres. (RM 1789; 1840-54) DeFreest and Van Alen are listed as paying the rent. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, because of the common practice of describing a property exclusively by bounds, sometimes with a few metes (measurements), often the property was identified by listing the previous owner: e.g. John K. DeFreest owns "the Burtis farm." In other words, in this case, what was being taxed was the property, not the man. Individuals were individually taxed on their moveable personal property in a separate document.

In 1849, John K. was one of the three Commissioners of Highways in Green Bush, and John E. Van Alen was the Overseer of Highways on Road District No. 14. This road district began at the "Turnpike near Defeest Tavern stand" at what became the intersection of N.Y. Route 43 and U.S. Route 4 continuing south along the Greenbush Road (U.S. Route 4) to the road (Third Avenue Extension) past John K. DeFreest's house toward Green Bush, which is today the City of Rensselaer. John K. DeFreest owed 12 days of roadwork, while his father owed four for the tavern and six on his own property. (RM 1849) The number of work days owed was proportional to the value of the property. It was an early, thinly disguised variant for property taxes.

The 1850 federal census listed John K. DeFreest, age 40, as a farmer with property worth \$14,000. He had 200 acres of improved and thirty-two acres unimproved land, a large farm for a man whose oldest son was only 13. Wife "Catherine" was 35 (born 1814). (DeFreest 2002). They had seven children—Eliza (15), "Mathew" (13), Anna (10), John (8), Catherine (6), Rinier (4), and Mary (2). Household staff Mary Higgins from Ireland, age 24, and Catherine Shurk, age 13, from Germany undoubtedly helped out with the seven children, while John Shurk, age 30, from Germany, was a laborer on the farm. Catherine and John may have been related. (Census 1984)

On the 200 acres of improved land, John K. produced 80 bushels of winter wheat, 400 of rye, 75 of Indian corn, 150 of oats, 200 of Irish potatoes, 280 of barley, and 100 tons of hay. Much of the rye probably went to producing paper used as a commercial wrap in stores, since there were no sheep listed to eat the rye. The large amount of barley was unusual, and was possibly used for making beer. With the high tonnage of hay, most of the land probably was in pasture for the 49 milch cows, 10 "other" cattle, 10 horses, and 22 swine. In all, 55 animals were slaughtered in 1849, an amount exceeding exclusive family use. (Census 1984) The remaining animals were valued at \$1,723, but the 200 lbs. of butter was the real cash crop. Once salted, butter was stored up to a year before selling to a shipper who would send it to New York City via train. (Chandler Press 1987)

In 1855, the Town of East Greenbush was formed from Greenbush. The DeFreests then had eight children, the youngest aged four. Julia Putnam, aged 50 and born in New York County, was listed as a servant. The house was recorded as brick and evaluated at

\$3,000. placing it on the higher end of the assessment list. John K.'s neighbors' homes were all frame worth between \$100 and \$500 with one exception worth \$1,000. DeFreest had reduced his actively farmed land almost in half to 110 acres with 30 unimproved acres. The value of his farm was reduced by \$1,000 to \$13,000. He was listed as a native voter and an owner of land. (Census 1985) The 1854 Rogerson map confirmed the location of the J. K. DeFreest farm. (Rogerson 1854) (Fig. 15)

The DeFreest children were growing up. Anna was not listed as living in her parent's home on the 1860 census. Born in 1836, she may have married during the intervening years since the 1855 census. In 1880, Anna, then "Anna K. Moore" was living in Schenectady. [Rensselaer County Surrogate's Court (RCSC) 1880] The rest of the family remained in the house, and Julia Putnam still worked for them. John, the second son, was then a freight agent, while his older brother, Matthew, helped his father on the farm. Their real estate was evaluated at \$30,240, and John K.'s personal estate was estimated as \$2,860. (Census 2002) While this latter amount, which could have included farm machinery, furniture, etc., as well as investments, such as mortgages, is not excessive, the real estate evaluation was. A comparison with neighbors and previous censuses is inconclusive because the results are mixed; the value of some individuals' properties had increased by \$1,000, while other properties' values had increased by thousands of dollars. (Miller 1986) Although there was a national economic crisis in 1857, the residual effect should have dissipated by this year. (Martin and Gelber 1956:465) The Civil War had just begun, so the economic effects of war production were negligible.

The total value of John K.'s real and personal estates was among the top twenty-five in East Greenbush in 1860. He ranked sixteenth with a total value of \$33,100. Carol Schoolcraft had the largest estate, valued at \$195,000. Her real estate was modestly valued at \$20,000. Volkert P. Douw with the second highest estate value of \$168,430. was a horticulturist. Of the wealthiest twenty-five households, only six had estates worth over \$100,000. (Miller 1986) John K. DeFreest would have been considered comfortable, not wealthy.

In the six years between the 1854 map and the 1861 Lake and Beers Map of Rensselaer County, New York, (Fig. 16) at least two new buildings were constructed on the DeFreest property. Although names were not assigned to them, it is assumed that they were part of the DeFreest complex and possibly constituted tenant housing.

Four household groups were listed after the DeFreest's on the 1860 census. These were probably the farm laborers who were tenants in the three other houses shown on the 1861 map noted above. The first tenant house contained two households from Germany. William Motsnic, a 37-year-old farm laborer living with his wife Christina, age 25, and three children, ages 6, 3, and 1, headed the first. Farm laborer Loren Segler, age 33,

headed the second household. He had a wife Eva, 31, and daughter Syvina, age 7 months. In the second house lived Caspar Streeter, age 44, a farm laborer also from Germany, Mary E., age 41, his wife, and their six children, ages 12, 10, 8, 4, 2, and 1 month. The third house was occupied by farm laborer William B. Austin, age 35, his wife Fanny C., age 24, and their two children aged 2 years and 3 months. Farm laborer James H. Fay, age 15, lived with the Austins. (Census 2002)

By 1865, “John K. Defriest,” 56, and “Cathrin,” 51, were living with their six children and daughter-in-law Ann A., 21. John, 23, had married. Eliza, the oldest was 30 years old (but declared her age as 28) and still not married. (Census 1865) Matthew was not listed as living at home, nor was he located nearby. He was married in 1863 to Rebecca Jane Anderson at the Blooming Grove Reformed Church. Catherine Delora was no longer living with her parents. She would have been 22± (born 1843), so perhaps she had married. The 1880 probate record indicated that Catharine D. Kamer lived in New York City with her husband Theodore. (RCSC 1880) Rinier, 18, Mary, 15, and Louise, 13, all remained at home. The youngest child, Isabella, listed as 5 years old, was born after the 1860 census. (DeFreest 2002)

The 1865 census listed the farm with 116 acres improved and 22 acres of unimproved land. Of the 116 acres, 25 were plowed, 20 were pasture, and 70 were low-maintenance meadowland. From those acres in 1864 came 60 tons of hay, 80 bushels of oats, 80 bushels of winter rye, 60 bushels of Indian corn, 1,000 bushels of potatoes, 30 bushels of apples, two barrels of cider—always hard—and 400 lbs. of butter produced by four milch cows. Six horses were maintained along with nine pigs. In 1864, 12 pigs were slaughtered valued at \$1,800. Butter, potatoes, and pigs probably were the main cash-producing items. The farm had a cash value of \$13,800 with stock worth \$1,200 and tools and implements worth \$500. (Census 1865)

By 1868, wife Catharine was desperate. She and sons Matthew and Rinier requested the New York Supreme Court to duly appoint them “a committee of the person and estate of John K. DeFreest for the purpose of paying and discharging his debts” since he “was incapable of conducting his own affairs by reason of his habitual drunkenness.” In 1870, they were authorized to take out a \$7,000 mortgage for the above purpose using the 151-acre homestead farm as collateral. (RCCO 1870)

The 1870 federal census recorded “John K. Defriest,” age 62, living with his wife Catharine, 52; four daughters, ages 9, 19, 21, and 35; son Rinier, age 25, who had a personal estate of \$4,000; and mother-in-law “Catha[rine Witbeck] Vanalstine,” age 78. (DeFreest 2002; Census 1870) Catharine DeFreest, born in 1814, should have been ca. 56 years old at the time of the census. (DeFreest 2002)

Son Matthew, 33, and Rebecka J., 23, lived in the house west of father John K. with their two girls, Ursela, 4, and Jessie, 2. Mary Hine, 16, was their domestic servant while John Anderson, 17, was a farm laborer. He may have been Rebecka's brother. Matthew was a farmer with a personal estate valued at \$4,000. (Census 1870) They probably lived in the first tenant house on the west side of the property since that arrangement correlates with the order of surnames listed on the census with their map locations on the 1876 Beers' *Atlas*. (Beers 1876) (Fig. 17)

Matthew "Defriest" was listed in Schedule 3.—Productions of Agriculture as occupying a 100-acre farm. He is listed immediately preceding Rinier's name on this schedule yet after William Austin who lived west of the DeFreests on his own farm shown on the 1876 Beers map. (Fig. 17) According to the census, Matthew did not own this farm, so perhaps just managed it. (Census 1870) Rinier, and John K., were listed as farmers next door. According to Child's Gazetteer and Business Directory of Rensselaer County, N. Y. for 1870-71, John K., Matthew V., and R. V. DeFrest jointly ran the 250-acre dairy farm and were milk dealers. (Child 1870:140) It is significant that the \$50,000 value of the real estate was listed after father John K.'s name, while the \$4,000 value of the personal estate was placed after son Rinier's name. (Census 1870) Such a large personal estate could have included farm equipment perhaps indicating that Rinier had taken over the operation of the farm.

In Schedule 3.—Productions of Agriculture, Rinier was listed as the farm "agent, owner or manager." (1870:5) The value the real estate was \$50,000, yet the cash value of the farm was only \$30,000, slightly less than its value ten years previously. While many of the farm products remained the same, attention was now focused on producing milk with nineteen cows yielding 12,800 gallons. Since no butter was produced that year, the DeFreests probably sold whole milk to a freight agent to be sent on the train to New York City. Next door, Matthew's twenty-five milch cows also produced 12,800 gallons of milk. The number of swine on the farm was down to two from nine in 1865. Six horses, the same number as that noted five years earlier, were on the farm.

Most interesting is that this year Rinier paid \$700 in the "Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board." While a portion of this amount reflected actual wages, the tenant houses would typically be classified under the "board" category. Irvin Simmons, 42, a farm laborer, wife Sarah, 30, with their three children and Wilkins Riner, 44, also a farm laborer, with Emily, 40, his wife, lived in one house. (Census 1870)

In 1872, mother Catharine and sons Matthew and Rinier took out another mortgage, this time for \$2,000, also from the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. The same statement regarding John K.'s incapacity was repeated in the documents. (RCCO 1872)

The 1875 New York State census recorded the Defreests with four of their daughters living in a framed house worth \$3,000. Its listing as “framed” contradicts all other census information and the building itself, which stood until 2002. At 67, John K. was still listed as a farmer, but not as the owner of the farm. (102/114) The proceeding listing (101/113) named son Matthew V. Defreest, 38, as a farmer and owner of land living in a frame house worth \$1,400, probably one of the tenant houses. He and Rebecca J., 31, had daughters “Sturcella,” 10, and Jessie, 8, and son Frank D., 5. William Sken, 40, a laborer from Ireland also lived in the house, as did laborers William Anderson, 73, from Scotland, and John Anderson, 21, Rebecca’s father and brother. (Census 1875)

Rinier no longer lived with his parents or in any of the adjacent tenant houses. He was not listed in the agricultural statistics, nor was his father John K. who was listed as “Knickerbocker” in the population schedule. Of the family, only Matthew V. was listed on the agricultural schedules, his 185-acre farm located nearby. (Census 1875)

As a result of the incapacity hearing in 1868, the 1876 Beers atlas listed “Mrs. J. K. DeFreest” near the three structures as owner, a situation usually accorded a widow even though John K. was still living. Of the two structures on the road, Matthew’s may have been the western house and the other the DeFreest house. The structure north of these may have been the farm laborers’ house. (Fig. 17)

When John K. died a year later in 1877, an extensive obituary was published in The Troy Morning Whig: ‘Tragical End of “Nickey” DeFreest—Killed By a Locomotive.’ (1877:3) It included a graphic depiction of John Knickerbocker DeFreest’s death from internal injuries sustained while attempting to cross the tracks in an intoxicated state. He was 68 (DeFreest 2002) and had attained infamy in Albany and Rensselaer County, as an example of a man descending from comfort and stature to a pathetic alcoholic who spent his last years in Albany “flopping”—boarding at different hotels, tormented by both men and boys and liquor. He was “a curse to himself and a disgrace to his family connections.” (The Troy Morning Whig 1877:3)

As a younger man, he was described as good-looking cutting quite a figure on a white horse at the visit of the Prince of Wales. A colonel in the Rensselaer County militia, Nickey had run unsuccessfully for the assembly, and knew Governor Bouck. Nickey loved to tell stories about himself, particularly one about Gov. Bouck confidentially promising a great appointment, which turned out to be postmaster of DeFreestville, a post Nickey rejected because of its insignificance: “Why, there isn’t three letters come there in a month!” (The Troy Morning Whig 1877:3) The job went to one of his relatives, the family hotel serving as the DeFreestville post office in 1876. (Fig. 18)

Between John K.’s death in 1877 and April 1880, widow Catharine and sons “Matthus” V. and Rinier defaulted on the mortgage. While they may have been defaulting for years, the

status was manifested in a referee's deed (190/408-410) in 1880. In reciting the history of the mortgage, John K. was labeled "a lunatic." Under the legal code, alcoholism was considered a manifestation of insanity and the term "lunacy" became synonymous with "insanity" thus acquiring legal significance. (Black 1968:929-933)

The DeFreest family moved soon after their default. According to the surrogate's court files of the John K. DeFreest estate, filed in 1880 Catharine along with Isabella, a minor, and Matthew and his household all lived in the "Village of Bath." (Rensselaer County Surrogate's Court [RCSC] 1880) Matthew was employed as a teamster according to the 1880 census. (Census 1880) (Fig. 18) Bath was about three miles away from the family homestead farm. In May of 1880, sister Mary K., Eliza P., Rachel L. and minor Isabella V. were given probate citations in East Greenbush indicating that it was believed that they were still living there. Rinier was last recorded as living at the homestead in the 1870 census. (RCSC 1880; Census 1870)

Col. Walter S. Church of the City of Albany bought the 151 acres at public auction for \$5,510. (RCCO 1880) As politely implied by Huybertie Pruyn Hamlin, Church was a cad and a rogue.

Colonel Church had "The Begum's Eye," which was said to be an inheritance of the Schuylers from the Staats family. The Colonel was a noticeable figure wherever he went, walking or driving his pair in a wide double buggy. He swore picturesquely, and the black words slipped out so glibly that it took a moment to realize what he had said. His stories were as racy as his life. He had had many love affairs, but he never married. His house was the last one here, as far as I know, where the table cloth was removed before dessert, leaving the lovely bare table with its candles and silver. (Hamlin 1990:91)

Her description is more benign than the facts suggest. Church was the great grandson of Philip Schuyler. John B. Church, said to have been a member of a prominent English family, arrived before the Revolution and eloped with Angelica Schuyler, the daughter of General Philip Schuyler. Their son, Philip, in later life became a judge in Allegany County living between Hornell and Olean at Angelica, a town named for his mother where the family had estates. (Kimball 1942:106-107) Walter S. Church was one of Philip's sons. Angelica's sister, Margaret, married Stephen Van Rensselaer, the last patroon, making Walter a second cousin of Stephen Van Rensselaer, Jr. (Kimball 1942:106-107)

In 1852, the Court of Appeals upheld the (New York) Supreme Court ruling in which the Van Rensselaer title was declared invalid. In a further decision, it was found that quarter-sales in leases drawn up before the Revolution were legal, while those written after 1787

were illegal as the state had outlawed such restraints on the transfer of title. “In the belief of many, this decision established the tenants as the owners of their land, for if the quarter-sale was invalid, then the transfer of a lease was legally a sale, and subsequent rents were invalid.” (Christman 1978:293) Since the DeFreest property was a reconfiguration of two separate leases written in 1789, John K.’s \$5,000 purchase of the improvements from his father in 1837 occurred within the latter period, hence would have been a deed conveyance.

When Stephen Van Rensselaer IV was ready to sell the West Manor, Church bought many of the leases at prices of \$.50-\$.60 on the dollar. (Kimball 1942:106) By the time William P. Van Rensselaer decided to sell the East Manor in 1858, Church had already negotiated to pay between \$.05 to \$.25 on the dollar for his leases. (Christman 1978:295) In 1854, Church started initiating the first of a total of 209 transactions in Rensselaer County. (RCCO 1854-1890) Church expected to make a killing. The plan that he devised would force farmers to settle back rents by declaring that “all who contested payment would be charged a sum which at 6 per cent interest would produce the rent, making a difference of one-fourth in the cost of a release”—basically reinstating the quarter-sales. (Christman 1978:294) A release is a formal discharge of a debt, in this case the annual rent. Such a document was needed before converting the instrument from lease to a deed. (Black 1968:1453)

Church had been courting politicians for years from his home in Albany and spending “lavishly.” (Christman 1978:294) The “Begum’s Eye” referred to Church’s expensive taste beyond his means coupled with an attraction to the elegant. Church also spent lavishly on his expenses when he went to collect back rents. Strapped for funds, he acquired three partners in his collection business: Peter Cagger, a political strategist and secretary of the New York State Democratic Committee, Dean Richmond, the chair of the Democratic party, and James Kidd, an investor. Through these connections and the friendship of a judge at the Court of Appeals, Church managed to get his friend, Henry Fitch, named sheriff. He then had Peter Cagger named legal adviser to the sheriff, and for himself obtained the colonelcy of the New York State National Guard, thus securing his control of local law enforcement. (Christman 1978:296, 298; Kimball 1942:167) In 1865, as colonel, Church set a precedent by ordering the troops to the Helderbergs without authority from the governor. They traveled in a caravan of wagons, some loaded with various meats, bread, crackers, cheese and beers and liquors. (Christman 1978:298) Eventually the Albany County Board of Supervisors curtailed these antics after Church submitted a bill of more than \$6,000 for the expenses of the militia including \$115 for his personal services as colonel. (Christman 1978:300) From that time on, Church had to pay for his own army, which is what the posses that he assembled essentially were.

Although Church never occupied the former DeFreest house, there is a tradition that his agents used the house as a collecting office. Oral tradition recorded by Town Historian

Jo Schweigert states that the “room in the door was rather shallow so that the tenant farmer came to the door and just stepped up to the collectors desk and paid his rent or delivered in kind.” (Schweigert ca. 1980) In 1886, John Hungerford of DeFreestville was listed as a manager for Walter S. Church in East Greenbush. (Haynes & Williams 1886) Later that same year he purchased the Richard L. Vandenberg farm in East Greenbush. (RCCO 1886) Earlier on the 1880 census, John Hungerford, 41, was recorded as a farmer and resident of the Town of East Greenbush. His family included his wife Lucretia, age 37, son Isaac, age 16, daughters Cornealia, age 14, and Lotta, age 4. They had one servant, Ida Secor, age 19. His profession as farmer would typically indicate that he owned the land that he worked, which would not have been the case at the former DeFreest property, which was owned by Church. While some of the names preceding and following his family group were residents of what is now known as Third Avenue Extension, his family’s exact place of residence must remain a speculation until further research can be undertaken. (Census 1880)

Throughout the 1880s, Walter S. Church lived in Albany, unmarried, with his servants Mary McMillen from Scotland, 21, and Mary Ann Wooley from England, 65. Church continued to live in Albany at 112 State Street at the corner of Lodge until his death on December 8, 1890. (Albany Directories 1881-1890; 1891:66) Despite his success in the courts with over 2,000 suits, he died with the few properties that he still retained having been heavily mortgaged to pay off the creditors who had financed his violent attempts at collections. (Christman 1978:303) Kimball sardonically observed: “In justice to Colonel Church it should be stated that the law was always on his side.” (1942:170)

On the 1891 Beers’ Hudson River Valley atlas, the designation “Col. Church Est[ate]”—reflecting his demise—marks the former John K. DeFreest farm. Only two occupied structures were indicated on the property, the second possibly the tenant-house where Matthew had lived. (Fig. 19)

The Defreest-Church house was among Church’s heavily mortgaged properties. In 1894, it was sold again at public auction because the same mortgage that the DeFreests had taken out twenty-four years previously, which Walter S. Church had assumed, was still in arrears. This time the consideration paid up front was \$4,750, \$760 less than the \$5,510 Church had paid in 1880. In addition to this sum, the \$7,000 mortgage was still owed. (RCCO Deeds 244:366-368). Recently deceased, Adda W. Stedman had acquired the mortgage through assignment as an investment; her executor wanted to settle the estate.

Henrietta Church was the Executrix of Walter Church’s will. She was authorized in 1893 to attempt to collect back rents for a property in Troy (Albany County Surrogate’s Court 1893) showing that she was fully empowered to transact legal documents. In the DeFreest

case, she lost the property, which was sold at public auction in 1894 to Charles M. Walrath (244:366-368). In 1909, Charles deeded the property to his wife, Maggie, along with a property in Rensselaer (328:153-155). In 1912, Maggie conveyed the property to Augustus Smith of Colonie who only kept it until 1919 when he sold it to Lewis Van Buren and his wife Mary (339:75-76; 379:278-279). Since Charles and Maggie lived in Rensselaer, their names are not on the 1900 or 1910 censuses indicating that they rented the farm to tenants. Because Augustus Smith resided in Colonie, the farm may have been rented yet again. The names of the occupants of the house during this period are unknown.

The Van Buren family, however, did own and occupy the DeFreest-Church house beginning in 1919. It was under their auspices that the property was last worked as a farm. Thomas Van Buren, a grandson of Lewis, lived next door in a bungalow at 629 Third Avenue Extension near U.S. Route 4 during his childhood. (Miller 2003) He recalled that his grandparents primarily lived in the southeast parlor of the DeFreest-Church house using a wood stove to cook meals. His grandmother ceased farming after his grandfather's death in 1944 and continued to live there until her death in 1957. Mr. Van Buren remembered that there was no indoor plumbing, but there may have been water pumped from the cistern to a sink. His uncle Lewis installed an indoor bathroom during his family's ownership from 1957 to 1967. Lewis died in 1964 and his wife Yvonne sold the property to Jersey Testing Laboratories, Inc. in 1967. (Miller 2003; RCCO Deeds 1182:93-94)

From that time to the date of this survey the property was reduced to twelve and one-third acres. That portion of the farm still retaining the house and most of the outbuildings was conveyed to Walter Kidde & Company, Inc. in 1974 (RCCO Deeds 1267:385-386), thence to Angelo J. Bucciero and Joseph Bucciero, Jr. in 1986. (RCCO Deeds 1401:117-120) The Buccieros conveyed 12.37 acres to Kenneth P. LaCorte and Eileen N. LaCorte in 1995. (RCCO Deeds 1756:342-345) Eileen N. LaCorte conveyed the property to Nigro Companies in 2002, who subsequently sold it to Target Stores later that same year. (RCCO Deeds 352:1808)

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General statement:

1. Architectural Character:

The DeFreest-Church house was an excellent example of a residence constructed for a successful Rensselaer County family engaged in agricultural pursuits during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The separation of the house into

three zones, i.e. those for family, visitors, and servants, inscribed social class and status into the building fabric.

2. Condition of fabric:

The house has been razed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:

The main block of the house was 30'-6" x 34'- 6". The wing was 18'-9" x 28'-3". The north walls of the two sections of the house were aligned.

2. Foundations:

The foundation of the house was comprised of irregular blocks of bluestone laid in lime mortar. Bluestone is a locally available sedimentary rock and is the common fieldstone of the area. Brick was used to square the rough openings of the bluestone foundation in preparation for the installation of windows and doors. The foundation was two feet in thickness in all locations except the wall shared by the wing and main portion of the dwelling, which varied between 2'-4" and 2'-8" in thickness. A brownstone watertable surmounted the foundation on the south and east walls of the main portion of the house. The west foundation of the main portion of the house together with that of the south and west facing surfaces of the wing foundation were pargeted over the bluestone. The north side of the foundation remained untreated and did not have a watertable.

3. Walls:

The exterior walls were laid in common bond brick with header courses every sixth row on the front of the main portion of the house and every eighth row in the remaining exterior walls. The lower courses of the west wall of the wing were laid in common bond with eleven rows between headers. The brick walls were three wythes thick on the first and second floors, and two wythes thick in the gable ends of the house. Walls were reduced to two wythes in thickness under those first floor windows which had recessed underpanels. The bricks were probably produced in the immediate vicinity and had no manufacturer's marks. They measured 2-3/8" x 3-5/8" x 8".

Lintels and sills for all doors and windows were squared brownstone blocks. The stone used for the lintels was 10" high, ranged between four and eight inches in thickness, and was backed by wood lintels. Brownstone is not a locally available material and so would have had to have been transported some distance to the site. The most commonly used sources for this type of stone in the early nineteenth century were the quarries located in Nyack, New York. (see for

example Wheeler 1993:97-99) The stone was probably shipped via steamboat and brought to the site on sleds or carts.

4. Structural system, framing:

While the exterior walls of the house were load-bearing masonry, all of the interior walls with the exception of that between the wing and main portion of the dwelling were wood-framed. The first floor was supported on 2-7/8" x 9-1/2" sawn joists set approximately 1'-4" apart from center to center, in an east-west orientation. Stringers supporting the fireplace hearths were slightly larger in size at 4" x 9-1/2". The crib support was secured to the stringers by two 2" x 4" tenons, with through-cut mortises. The second floor structure was substantially the same. The attic floor was supported on 8-3/4" x 3" joists spaced between 11-1/4" and 1'-0-1/2" on center.

The roof of the main portion of the house was supported on ten pairs of sawn rafters between 6" and 8" tall and 3" and 4" wide spaced at distances varying between 2'-3-1/2" to 2'-7" wide in the clear. The rafters were connected at their apex by one of two methods. The majority of these were pegged, but three of the five westernmost pairs were butted and spiked together with large cut nails. The rafters sat on hewn 6-3/4" x 7-1/4" purlins, which were supported at their midpoints by braced sawn columns, 4" x 7-3/4". These were secured top and bottom by pegs and supported by three cross braces. The columns rested on a hewn 5-1/4" x 6" cross beam, which extended north-south and was tied into the front and rear façades. A pair of hewn beams approximately 5-1/4" x 7" were pegged at each of their ends into the north and south purlins giving additional support to them.

The first floor joists of the wing were generally 9-1/2" x 2-3/4" (varying up to 9-3/4" high and almost 3" wide). They were spaced at variable distances apart ranging between 1'-0" and 1'-2" in the clear. The second floor joists were not accessible at the time of the survey. The rafters of the wing were not accessible during the recordation phase of the project, but observation during the building's demolition confirms that they were substantially similar in size and spacing to those used to support the roof of the main portion of the house. (Fig. 20) The joists from which the ceiling was hung on the second floor acted as collar ties stabilizing the roof structure. They were located within approximately four feet of the roof apex.

The interior walls were framed using 3-3/4" x 2-7/8" sawn studs, spaced 1'-0" on center. Secondary walls including the walls containing the pocket doors and those bordering the stairs to the attic were 2" x 4" sawn studs set along their longer axis at a distance of 1'-0" apart. (Fig. 21) The studs were secured to sill and plate by 3-1/4" or 3-3/4" square machine-cut nails.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads:

The late nineteenth or early twentieth century porches were removed during alterations that occurred ca. 1967. A bulkhead with stone foundation walls gave access to the door leading to the laundry in the west wall of the wing. The steel bulkhead doors were of recent date and were probably installed ca. 1967. Changes to the grade surrounding the house in 1995 necessitated the removal of all remaining exterior stoops. A semicircular concrete platform with a brick surface replaced the front stoop at that time.

6. Chimneys:

There were originally five brick chimneys surmounting the roofs of the house. Each was approximately 3'-5" x 1'-5" in plan. A single rectangular chimney was centered on the east and west extremities of both the north and south slopes of the gable roof totaling four chimneys in all on this part of the building. The fifth chimney was centered at the peak of the west end of the gable roof of the wing.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

There were originally five exterior doors on the house. All of the original doors had been removed during the course of renovations and additions to the building. The west door to the first floor of the wing was removed and replaced by a window. The basement and first floor doors on the north side of the house were removed during the course of work ca. 1967. The basement door leading to the laundry on the west side of the wing was replaced at an undetermined date during the twentieth century. The front door was removed in 1995 during the course of renovations and replaced with a door suggestive of the Italianate style. The original door was retained in the basement, where it was examined. It was 2" thick and 3'-3" wide; its height had been modified. It featured eight 11-¹/₄" wide panels arranged in two rows of various heights. It retained its original hinges, which were unmarked. It is now in the collections of the Rensselaer County Historical Society, Troy, New York.

b. Windows and shutters:

No evidence for the presence of shutters or shutter hardware was found. Thomas Van Buren recalled that when he was a child the house had shutters. (Miller 2003) The windows were chiefly six-over-six-light, double-hung sash. Two six-over-three-light, double-hung sash were located in the gable end of the wing. Tripartite windows in the gable ends of the attic of the main portion of the house were comprised of a single six-over-six-light, double-hung sash flanked by fixed four-light sash. The three south- and two north-facing windows were single six-light sash.

Their method of operation is not known since the sash frames were removed before this study was conducted, but it is thought that they were hinged on one side. The basement windows in the wing were of the same form. The remaining basement windows were three-light single sash which were hinged at the top with hook and eye hardware used to keep them open.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering:

Both the main portion of the dwelling and the wing were covered with gable roofs, the ridges of which extended in an east-west direction. The slopes of both roofs were roughly 1 over 2. The roof boards were $\frac{3}{4}$ " sawn planks ranging in width between 1'-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and 1'-3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " gap between. The nailing pattern formed rows 6" apart alternating 1" and 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart within each row. Judging from the spacing, the original roof sheathing appears to have been slate. The roof was covered with asphalt shingles at the time of the survey.

b. Cornice, eaves:

Bold Doric cornice and frieze assemblies supported the eaves of both roofs. The frieze extended across the south façade of the wing and the main portion of the house and across the top of the north wall of the main portion of the dwelling. The frieze had returns on the gable end of the wing and both gable ends of the main section of the house. (Fig. 22) Removal of one of these returns facilitated closer examination. It was assembled from $\frac{3}{4}$ " boards and was attached to the house by nailing to wood blocks embedded in the wall. (Fig. 23) The cornice was finished with cyma recta molding and followed the roofline of both the wing and main sections of the house and raked along the gable ends. A simplified version of the cornice surmounted the north wall of the wing.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. The Basement (Fig. 8)

As originally occupied, this house had its kitchen in the basement under the wing to the west. Remains of a large fireplace and domed bread oven were in this room. The remainder of the basement was divided into a hall, a coal bin, and two large rooms, which were paved with bluestone. These were probably used to store food. The northern of these two rooms was

later fitted with a chimney to enclose a flue for the furnace, also installed ca. 1882. The basement rooms averaged 6'-7" in height.

b. The First Floor (Fig. 9)

The basement was relatively plain when compared to the first floor of the house. Entering the front door, the visitor stepped into a 12'-6" x 10'-6" entrance hall. The stairs to the second floor were enclosed and located in a small hall immediately to the north. This unusual feature, a holdover from the vernacular of the seventeenth century, was rare in new construction at the time having been abandoned except in rural locales during the eighteenth century. (Figs. 24 and 25) Its inclusion may have been indicative of DeFreest's preferences and would have been evocative of his childhood home, which had been constructed during the eighteenth century. Such a decision carried cultural as well as class implications. More typically, a formal house of the era would have had an open well stair with bold newel post and turned balusters supporting a continuous hardwood railing. The enclosure of the stair and the presence of a partition wall effectively zoned the house into public and private areas—the two parlors and entrance hall being the only spaces open to the visitor.

Most of the money spent on the interior finishes of the house was lavished on this suite of three rooms. The parlors, each 15'-4" long and 14'-9" wide, could be thrown open into a single space by opening a pair of pocket doors. Door and window trims in the parlors and entry hall had stepped corner blocks, and the windows had recessed panels under them. Heavy cornices and baseboards made it clear that the DeFreests spent a lot on the decoration of these rooms. (Fig. 26)

The two parlors and entry hall had ten-foot high ceilings bordered by bold plaster cornices. No evidence of ceiling medallions survived since the plaster and lath had been removed from these rooms. The woodwork of these three chambers was the most elaborate featuring stepped corner blocks and pilaster trim, paneled window wells, and baseboards in excess of ten inches high with a molded top and recessed panel.

Second in terms of lavishness of detail was the large room which constituted the greater part of the wing section of the first floor. (Fig. 27) This 17'-0" square room extended across the south side of the wing and was warmed by a large wood-burning fireplace. Its ceiling was 8'-2" high and it is thought that this space served as a family dining room. It was connected to the main portion of the house via two doorways. The first of these was in the small hall that communicated with the main staircase and

the entry hall. The second led to the service hall in the rear of the house and facilitated access to the north parlor and the staircase ultimately leading to the kitchen below.

Three small rooms were located to the north of the family dining room. The westernmost served as a stair hall in which a small circular staircase extended up to the second floor of the wing. This staircase communicated directly with the outside via a door in the west façade of the wing. The other rooms were possibly sleeping chambers.

c. The Second Floor (Fig. 10)

The second floor of the main block of the house had two large bedrooms and two small bedrooms. Wood mantles were located in the larger bedrooms, which were each about 14'-9" wide and 14'-0" long. Small stoves heated the smaller bedrooms. While there were no chimney breasts in either of the small bedchambers to record the location of the stoves, chimneys in the attic above attested to the original heating technology. The ceiling height of these four bedrooms and the adjacent hall was 9'-6".

The second floor chambers in the wing were the site of the servants' living quarters. The 1995 renovations made the determination of original dimensions of some of these rooms difficult. The large chamber approximately 13' x 17' in dimension was located above the family dining room and may have served as a parlor and bedchamber for the adults. This room communicated with the main stair hall of the house. Two small bedchambers and a staircase completed the suite of rooms apportioned to the servants. The rooms on the second floor of the wing were 7'-4" in height.

d. The Attic

The attic was never occupied but was floored with wide planks of varying widths. Tripartite windows located in the east and west gables lighted the space, which remained unfinished. A single chalk inscription "Marian" was scrawled on the eastern cross-beam.

2. Stairways:

There were originally four separate stairways in the house. Only two of these remained in place when the building was recorded. Of the two destroyed stairways, only one (the main stairway) had been recorded photographically. The stair leading from the first floor to the servant's quarters on the second floor of the wing was removed in 1995. From removal plans generated in preparation for that work, it appears as a two-foot wide enclosed stairway with winders. The main

stairway can be described generally from the photographs (Figs. 24 and 25) and from the removal drawings of 1995. It was enclosed on the first floor with the exception of the first tread and riser. The stair was open to the second floor; the stair opening surrounded by a railing with turned balusters ending with a bold turned newel.

The stair connecting the basement kitchen and the first floor and that leading to the attic from the second floor remained in place at the time of the survey. The basement stairway was 2'-8- $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide. Its risers were 8" high and it had 9- $\frac{3}{4}$ " treads with a 1" nose. The stair had been painted only once, a robin's egg blue distemper paint.

The stairs to the attic were 2'-8- $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, had 10- $\frac{1}{2}$ " risers and 7- $\frac{1}{2}$ " treads with a 1" nosing, beveled on both the top and bottom edge. Both stairs were constructed of 1" thick boards.

3. Flooring:

The basement was floored using three different materials. The kitchen and laundry had a brick floor, the bricks laid flat in a running bond pattern. The two rooms under the parlors (the easternmost rooms) were floored with square cut bluestone paving stones in a range of sizes from 4" x 6" up to more than 3' x 3'. The remaining rooms in the basement had wood flooring placed on wood sleepers. The wood floors were poorly preserved so only a rough estimate of board width could be made. They appeared to be 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide in the vicinity of what has been identified as the coal bin.

The floors of the superstructure of the building were all wood plank oriented north-south. Those of the first floor were typically 7", 8", or 9" wide and were approximately 1" thick. The flooring of the parlors was 1" x 7" tongue-and-groove boards. The flooring of the first floor of the wing portion of the house was between 5" and 7" wide and 1" thick tongue-and-groove boards.

The floors of the second story of the house were 8" tongue-and-groove boards, 1" thick in the main portion of the house. The floorboards in the second floor of the wing were not accessible at the time of the survey. The floorboards in the attic were 1" thick and varied in width between 7- $\frac{1}{2}$ " and 1'-1- $\frac{5}{8}$ ", and were at their greatest length 14'-8" long. The attic boards were squared, sawn planks secured by two square-cut nails at each joist.

4. Wall and ceiling finish:

With few exceptions, the rooms of the DeFreest-Church house were finished with plaster on lath for their walls and ceilings. The lath was 1- $\frac{3}{8}$ " x $\frac{3}{8}$ " and

machine cut. Binding in the plaster appeared to be horsehair. The spaces occupied by the DeFreest family were finished in this manner.

The walls adjacent to the exterior were furred out from the masonry walls in all of the spaces occupied by the family with one exception. (Fig. 28) The surface of the masonry wall separating the wing from the main portion of the house was finished with plaster laid directly on the surface of the brick on both of its sides. The spaces adjoining this wall included the entry hall, main staircase, family dining room, rear hall, and the two small bedrooms on the second floor. All of the exterior walls in spaces occupied by the servants were finished in a similar manner. The interior walls and ceilings in the servants' rooms were finished with plaster on lath.

Among the basement rooms, the kitchen, laundry, pantry off of the front hall, and the rear hallway at the north-center of the house had plastered surfaces, at least in part. The kitchen, pantry, and laundry walls and ceilings, and the ceiling of the rear hall were all plastered. The partition located between the coal bin and the rear hall was constructed of 3-³/₄" x 2-⁷/₈" wood studs apparently covered with plank. The partition between the kitchen and laundry had been removed before this survey was conducted. Remaining evidence indicated that it was a stud partition, approximately 4" thick. Three of the walls in the pantry southeast of the kitchen were plaster laid on masonry. The remaining plaster surfaces in the basement were all laid on wood lath.

The remaining walls in the basement did not receive a plaster finish. The walls bordering the two easternmost rooms remained exposed masonry. The interior partitions including the north-south bearing wall under the partition between the hall and parlor above and that extending east-west between the two rooms were constructed of two wythes of brick in mortar laid in common bond. The remaining internal walls were beaded plank partitions.

The most elaborate plasterwork was reserved for the entry hall and two parlors, which had plaster cornices and likely had ceiling medallions. Every room of the first and second floors and the kitchen in the basement had baseboards. These are more thoroughly described in Part II.C.6.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors

The first floor doors in the main portion of the house had six panels arranged alternately vertically and horizontally, and were 1-¹/₂" thick. (Fig. 29) The second floor doors had five panels. (Fig. 30) These doors bore a

marked resemblance to those published in 1830 by Asher Benjamin in his The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter. (Fig. 31) A single four-panel door survived in the basement. Its narrow width suggests that it was originally used in the rear hall on the first floor. Two plank doors survived in the basement. These were constructed of beaded planks nailed to boards at their top and bottom. Their hardware indicated that they were contemporary with the construction of the house. Examples of each door type were collected by the architectural historian and retained by Rensselaer County Historical Society, Troy, New York.

b. Windows:

The interior door and window trim was briefly discussed in Part II.C.1 and is described in more detail in Part II.C.6 below. Every occupied space was lit and ventilated by at least one window. Storage rooms typically had no or minimal provision for natural light or ventilation. The main stairway and that leading to the servants' rooms were each lit and ventilated by a window on the second floor. Illumination of the main stairway may have been supplemented by borrowing light from the adjacent bedroom on the second floor. Illumination of the stairway connecting the basement and first floor was accomplished by borrowed light from the kitchen in the basement.

6. Decorative features and trim:

The decorative features and trim in the house reflected the status of the occupants. The most elaborate trim was reserved for those spaces intended for reception of guests. These rooms, which included the entrance hall and two parlors, had 11" high baseboards assembled from three elements nailed together. The door and window architraves were in the form of 7"-wide flat pilasters with stepped panels sitting on plinths and stepped blocks at their upper corners. Recessed panels with molded trim were under each window. (Fig. 32) The design of these architraves was substantially the same as that published in Minard Lafever's Young Builder's General Instructor in 1829. (Fig 33) Examples in nearby Troy, New York suggest the popularity of this style of woodwork during the period 1830-40. The Hollister house at 132 First Street (c.1829-31), the Knox house (120 First Street, c.1835-45), the Ross house (110 Third Street, 1835), the Carr house (57 Second Street, 1837), and Washington Place (1837-42) all have similar architraves. Plaster cornices extended about 6-½" down from the ceiling and were about 7" wide. (Fig. 34)

Each parlor had a marble mantelpiece with cast iron insert featuring caryatids. (Fig. 35) The north parlor mantle retained its screen, which featured a bacchanalian feast in an architectural setting composed of Greek and Egyptian

Revival elements. (Fig. 36) These marble mantles would have been made in a larger city—probably New York—and shipped to the site. Mantles of this type cost about \$200.00 each in the 1830s—a lot of money at that time. “Egyptian” marble was the name given to the black marble with gray and gold streaks. The gold appears to have been added by filling open seams in the stone with colored plaster. The solid black stone (actually a type of limestone) was referred to as “Irish” marble. (Wheeler 2000:86) The Knox and Carr houses mentioned above have mantles of similar form but of light gray marble. A similar example is shown in the HABS drawings for 132 West 4th Street, New York City.

The larger bedrooms on the second floor were fitted with woodwork that was slightly simpler in form than that in the parlors below. The pilaster-form architraves had a single step recess, and were narrower than those in the parlors at 5-1/2" wide. (Fig. 37) The baseboard was 11" high and constructed in three pieces, as was that in the parlors. The window architraves continued to the floor, and sat on plinth blocks like their counterparts in the parlors. Instead of recessed panels under the windows, the space was flush with the wall surface. Although plastered, the space was painted to match the woodwork. (Fig. 38) The mantles and trim on the second floor were simpler than those on the first floor and utilized details from both the Federal and Greek Revival styles. (Figs. 39 and 40)

The secondary bedrooms in the main portion of the house had stepped trim 6-1/4" wide. (Fig. 41) The baseboards in these spaces were about 8" high and were simple boards 1/2" thick with a 1/2" bead at the top edge. The baseboards in the servants' quarters was identical. Door and window architraves in these spaces were 5" x 1" boards with a 1/2" bead.

The trim was assembled and secured by using square machine-cut nails of various sizes. The smallest nail, 1-1/8" long, was used for securing the small stops at the ends of the stepped pilaster trim and for assembling the corner blocks. More generally 2-1/8" nails secured the baseboard and architraves. Nails 2-15/16" long secured the corner blocks and the baseboards.

Joints in the woodwork were handled using three different methods. The door and window architraves in the first floor rooms were square cut and butted against the corner blocks before nailing. Baseboards were mitered at room corners, but scribe-cut around the chimney breasts. The remaining door and window trim was miter cut, as was the edge trim on the corner blocks.

Samples of each of the decorative elements and doors were removed from the house and are now in the collection of the Rensselaer County Historical Society in Troy, New York. The mantle, hearth, and cast iron insert from the north parlor and the two mantles from the second floor were also retained for the historical society's collection. The former owner removed the south parlor mantel, one of the decorative heating grilles and some of the decorative trim and doors.

7. Hardware:

Little of the original hardware survived in the building at the time the survey was conducted. Three second-floor doors retained their original hinges; their manufacturer's marks have been discussed in Part I.A.4. The door to the attic retained its walnut or cherry knob and escutcheon plate. Bennington type knobs comprised of a mixture of brown and buff clays were on the remaining two doors, which had retained their hinges. (Fig. 42) These doors were located in the bedroom over the north parlor. Although an early installation for this type of doorknob, similar knobs are seen in nearby buildings dating to ca. 1840. The front door, which was stored in the basement, retained its original hinges, which were unmarked. These doors and their hardware are now in the collection of the Rensselaer County Historical Society in Troy, New York.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation

As originally occupied, this house had its kitchen in the basement under the wing to the west. Remains of a large wood-burning fireplace and domed bread oven were in this room. The remainder of the basement was divided into a hall, a coal bin, and two large rooms, which were paved with bluestone. These were probably used to store food. The northern of these two rooms was later (ca.1882) fitted with a chimney to enclose a flue from the furnace, which was installed at that time. No components of the furnace, which probably burned coal, remained in place, but most of the flues which conducted the warmed air throughout the building remained and had been reused when a new forced air system was installed in the building in 1995. The nineteenth century hot-air ducts were circular pipes of sheet iron with crimped edges and a single folded joint running their entire length. They were approximately 8" in diameter. The flues conducted the air to grilles in the two parlors and two major bedrooms. Four of these grilles survived at the time the building was recorded. The two in the parlors were geometric in style, their detailing inspired by the Aesthetic Movement. The remaining grilles had been in the rear second floor chamber and were rococo in style. Their appearance suggests a date

of c.1855 for their initial manufacture, but it is known that designs remained in production for long periods of time.

The fireplace in the family dining room was also proportioned to burn wood. It retained a wrought-iron eye for the support of a crane, suggesting that it, too, was used in connection with cooking.

The two parlor fireplaces were designed to accommodate coal-burning stoves. The rear parlor fireplace retained the decorative grate that covered the fire box during the summer months when the coal burner had been removed by the stove-mounter. Neither coal-burning stove was present in the building at the time of the survey.

The bedrooms on the second floor of the house were probably fitted with small coal-burning stoves as well, but evidence for these was inconclusive. The secondary bedrooms were heated with stoves. Their flues entered into the undersides of the chimneys, which rested on wood beams in the attic. These stoves were abandoned at an early date and the chimneys were truncated below the roof. This was indicated by the fact that the wood used to patch the roof was nearly as oxidized as the adjacent roof boards.

The largest room in the servants' chambers may have been heated with a small stove, but a flue hole was not located in the chimney. Alternately the room may have been heated by radiant heat from the flues associated with the two fireplaces below.

b. Lighting

No evidence for early lighting systems was found within the building. The house was entirely rewired during the course of the 1995 renovations.

c. Plumbing

No early plumbing systems were found within the house. A section of seamed copper downspout, 3-1/2" in diameter, was found during the course of archeological excavations. It extended from the cistern to a point near the north wall of the house, turning 90° upwards toward the roof, and was truncated at grade level when the ca. 1967 addition was constructed. Its joints were soldered. The pipe was collected, and is part of the DeFreest-Church house archeological collections anticipated to be deposited at the Rensselaer County Historical Society, Troy, New York.

A second pipe extended from the cistern in a westerly direction. It was fabricated from sheet lead and was 1-½" in diameter. It was evident from the surrounding soils that this pipe had been added at a date subsequent to the construction of the cistern, thus it was tentatively identified as an overflow pipe. Alternately, it may have formed part of the plumbing connecting to the laundry within the basement immediately to the south.

9. Original furnishings:

No original furnishings were retained in the house.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design:

Seven 30" diameter sugar maples were located to the south and west of the house at the time the building was recorded. These trees were the remnants of the original landscaping of the property and appear to have been planted soon after work on the house was complete in ca. 1838. An aerial photograph from 1960 (Fig. 6) permits a general reconstruction of the overall landscape plan. As initially laid out a row of trees planted approximately twenty feet on center extended along the southern edge of the property bordering Third Avenue Extension. Three parallel rows of trees planted at the same interval intersected this first row, and extended in a north-south direction. Two of these rows flanked a driveway, which until ca. 1995 paralleled the west side of the house. The third row extended along the east side of the house toward a wood lot located at the northern edge of the property. The trees created a shaded carriage approach to the house and helped to delineate exterior rooms to the north and south of the dwelling. The row to the east of the house also screened the view of the kitchen garden. All of the trees were destroyed within a week of the razing of the house.

2. Outbuildings:

No outbuildings associated with the house remained standing at the time the property was surveyed. Thomas Van Buren recalled in an interview that a large barn was located between 100 and 200 feet to the west of the house and that this structure was removed sometime between 1957 and 1967 when its materials were sold. He recalled that the privy was located approximately twenty-five feet north of the house. Its site was destroyed when the addition of 1967 was erected. Additional structures included a milk house located near the barn, a chicken coop

sited to the north of the house, and a “one or two room house...on stilts” located to the west of the barn. (Miller 2003) It is possible that the partial foundation encountered during the course of archeological investigations was that of the chicken coop. The south end of that foundation was located forty-five feet north from the northwest corner of the house and was just less than ten feet wide along its east-west axis.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings:

Maloney, Craig A., P. E. Building Renovations/New Offices for LaCorte E. C. M. Inc.
Third Ave. Ext., NYS Rte. No. 43, Towns of N. & E. Greenbush, NY. 5 July 1995.

Wheeler, Walter Richard. Reconstructed floor plans and details of the DeFreest-Church house,
621 Third Avenue Extension, East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York.
January and April 2003.

B. Early Views:

Chicago Aerial Survey. Rensselaer County, New York, orthophotos. Des Plaines, Ill.: Chicago
Aerial Survey. Prepared by Cole, Layer, Truble Co., Dayton, OH. (image 144.00) Flown
in April 1974.

United States Department of Agriculture. Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation
Districts, Aerial Photographs. Plates DPY.1AA-15 and DPY.1AA-16.
Flown in June 1960.

C. Interviews:

Miller, Tracy S. Interview conducted by Tracy S. Miller by telephone on 6 February 2003 with
Thomas Van Buren of Valatie, Columbia County, New York.

D. Bibliography:

Albany Directories. Hoffman's Albany Directory, and City Register, for 1837-8.
Edited by L[ewis] G. Hoffman. Albany, New York: L. G. Hoffman, 1837.

Hoffman's Albany Directory, and City Register, for 1839-40. Edited by L[ewis] G.
Hoffman. Albany, New York: L. G. Hoffman, 1839.

Hoffman's Albany Directory, and City Register, for 1842-3. Edited by L[ewis] G.
Hoffman. Albany, New York: L. G. Hoffman, 1842.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1879. Albany, New York: Sampson, Davenport &
Co., 1879.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1881. Albany, New York: Sampson, Davenport &
Co., 1881.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1882. Albany, New York: Sampson, Davenport &
Co., 1882.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1883. Albany, New York: Sampson, Davenport &
Co., 1883.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1884. Albany, New York: Sampson, Davenport &
Co., 1884.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1886. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1886.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1887. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1887.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1888. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1888.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1898. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1889.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1890. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1890.

The Albany Directory for the Year 1891. Albany, New York: Sampson, Murdock & Co.,
1891.

Beers, F.W. County Atlas of Rensselaer, New York. New York, New York: F.W. Beers & Co., 1876.

Beers, F.W. and C.E. Atlas of the Hudson River Valley from New York City to Troy. New York, New York: Watson & Co., 1891.

Atlas of Rensselaer County, New York. New York, New York: F.W. Beers and Co., 1876.

Benjamin, Asher. The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter. Boston: The Author, 1830.

Black, Henry Campbell, M.A. Black's Law Dictionary. St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Co., 1968.

Bleeker, John R. "A Map of the Manor Rensselaerwick" (1767) in The Documentary History of the State of New-York edited by E.B. O'Callaghan, M.D. Albany, New York: Weed, Parsons & Co., Public Printers, 1850.

Census. Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790. Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1971.

Schedule 1.—Inhabitants in East Greenbush Rensselaer County, New York, 1870, Nos. 213/240; 214/241.

Schedule 3.—Productions of Agriculture. East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York, 1870, No. 3:5.

I. Population. Census First Election district of the town of East Greenbush [*sic*]. Rensselaer County, New York, 1865, No. 77/78:10.

VIII. Agricultural Statistics The First Election district of the town of East Greenbush [*sic*]. Rensselaer County, New York, 1865, No. 22:37-38.

I. Population. Census First Election District, East Greenbush. Rensselaer County, New York, 1875, Nos. 101/113 and 102/114:14.

IV. Agricultural Statistics First Election District East Greenbush. Rensselaer County, New York, 1875, No. 31:36.

1850 Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York census [*sic*]. Troy, New York: Philip Schuyler Chapter, Inc., National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), 1984.

1855 Clinton, North Greenbush, and Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York census [sic]. Troy, New York: Philip Schuyler Chapter, Inc., NSDAR, 1985.

1860 Census of The Town of East Greenbush, Rensselaer Co., N.Y.
<<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyrensse/census43.htm>> November 19, 2002.

1880 United States Census Household Record. East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York. Fifth Ward, Albany, New York. North Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York.
<<http://www.familysearch.org>> January 2, 2003.

Chandler Press. A Country Kitchen, 1850. Maynard, Massachusetts: Chandler Press, 1987.

Child, Hamilton. Gazetteer and Business Directory of Rensselaer County, N. Y. for 1870-71.
Syracuse, New York: Hamilton Child, 1870.

Christman, Henry. Tin Horns and Calico. Cornwallville, New York: Hope Farm Press, 1978.

Cissel, Richard S. T. Hot and Cold Air Register. United State Patent Office, Design Patent
258,629, 30 May 1882.

DeFreest. The DeFreest Family Genealogy. <<http://www.defreest.com/ged/fam00152.htm>>
November 21, 2002.

Descendants of Gaspard de Forest. <<http://www.defriest.com/jeandeforeest.html>>
April 9, 2003.

Hamlin, Huybertie Pruyn. An Albany Girlhood. Edited by Alice P. Kenney. Albany, New York:
Washington Park Press Ltd., 1990.

Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. Architectural Assessment, The DeFreest-Church House,
Third Avenue Extension, East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York. Prepared by
Walter R. Wheeler. On file at Waterford, New York: Office of Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation (OPRHP), 2001.

DeFreest-Church House Archeological Data Recovery Proposed Retail Development,
DeFreest-Church House, Town of East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York. On
file at Waterford, New York: OPRHP, 2003.

Phase IA Literature Review and Archeological Sensitivity Assessment. Proposed Retail
Development Third Avenue Extension and US Route 4 (Troy Road), Town of East

- Greenbush, Rensselaer County, New York. On file at Waterford, New York: OPRHP, 2002.
- Haynes & Williams Compilers & Publishers. The Rensselaer County Business Directory for the Year 1886. Haynes & Williams, Albany, New York, 1886.
- Kim, Sung Bok. Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York, Manorial Society 1664-1775. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.
- Kimball, Francis P. The Capital Region Of New York State: Crossroads of Empire. Vol. II. New York, New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc., 1942.
- Lafever, Minard. The Young Builder's General Instructor. Newark, New Jersey: W. Tuttle & Co., 1829.
- Lake, D.J. and S.N. Beers. Map of Rensselaer County, New York. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Smith, Gallup and Co., Publishers, 1861.
- Light, Sally. Canals & Crossroads. Albany, New York: The Evangelist Newspaper, 1997.
- Martin, Michael and Leonard Gelber. Dictionary of American History. New student ed. edited by A.W. Littlefield. Ames, Iowa: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1956.
- Miller, Richard Joseph. "Patroons of modernization: the economic elite of Rensselaer County, New York, 1800-1860." Unpublished B.A. thesis, Department of American Studies, Williams College, 1986.
- Rensselaer County Clerk's Office (RCCO), Troy, New York. Deed Liber Index, 1854-1890.
The following transactions are listed in chronological order:
- John DeFreest and Ann to John K. DeFreest. Deed Liber 46:230-232, 1837.
- Catharine V. DeFreest, Matthew V. DeFreest, and Rinier V. DeFreest to The Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. Mortgage Liber 124:210-212, 1870.
- Catharine Defreest, Matthew V. Defreest, and Rinier V. Defreest to The Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. Mortgage Liber 133:63-65, 1872.
- Samuel Foster, Referee, to Walter S. Church. Deed Liber 190:408-410, 1880.
- Richard L. Vandenbergh to John Hungerford. Deed Liber 216:376-377, 1886.

Samuel S. Hatt, Referee, to Charles M. Walrath. Deed Liber 244:366-368, 1894.

Charles M. Walrath to Maggie Walrath. Deed Liber 328:153-155, 1909.

Maggie Walrath to Augustus Smith. Deed Liber 339:75-76, 1912.

Augustus Smith to Lewis Van Buren and Mary Van Buren. Deed Liber 379:278-279, 1919.

Lewis Van Buren, Executor of the Estate of Mary Van Buren, to Lewis Van Buren and Yvonne Van Buren. Deed Liber 1024:222-224, 1957.

Yvonne Z. Van Buren to Jersey Testing Laboratories, Inc. Deed Liber 1182:93-94, 1967.

Jersey Testing Laboratories, Incorporated to Walter Kidde & Company, Inc. Deed Liber 1267:385-386, 1974.

Walter Kidde & Company, Inc. a.k.a. Kidde, Inc. to Angelo J. Bucciero and Joseph Bucciero, Jr. Deed Liber 1401:117-120, 1986.

Joseph Bucciero, Jr. and Angelo J. Bucciero to Kenneth P. LaCorte and Eileen N. LaCorte. Deed Liber 1756:342-345, 1995.

Eileen N. LaCorte and Lorraine LaCorte to North Greenbush Associates [Nigro Companies] Deed [microfilm] 352:1808, 2002.

Rensselaer County Surrogate's Court (RCSC), Troy, New York. Proof of Will and Testament: probate proceedings concerning the disappearance of John K. DeFreest's will dated April 15, 1862. Drawer 406, Estate 71, 1880.

Rensselaerwyck Manor. East Manor Rent Ledger B. Albany, New York: New York State Library (NYSL), 1823-54:523.

East Manor Rent Ledger B. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1840-54:51.

Green Bush Road assessment [*sic*]. Special Collections 7079. Box 209. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1849.

Greenbush Survey Book: Volkert Van Den Bergh. Special Collection 7079. Box 2. Albany, New York: NYSL, ca. 1789.

Greenbush Survey Book: William Van Denbergh. Special Collections 7079. Albany, New York: NYSL, ca. 1790.

Lease: Stephen Van Rensselaer, Esq. to Cornelius Van Iveren. Special Collections 7079. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1789.

Lease: Stephen Van Rensselaer, Esq. to Jacob Van Denbergh. Special Collections 7079. Box 2. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1789.

Letter from Henrietta Church to E. S. and A. A. Bunce attached to Manor Rent Ledger D. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1893.

Map of That Part of the Manor of Rensselaerwyck Which is Called Greenbush. Surveyed by John E. Van Alen. Special Collections 7079, Box 2, Folder 1. Albany, New York: NYSL, 1788-89.

Rogerson, A.E. Map of Rensselaer County, New York. Troy, New York: E.A. Balch, 1854.

Schweigert, Josephine. Building-Structure Inventory Form, DeFreest-Church house, Unique Site No. 083-03-0026. ca. 1980. On file at OPRHP, Waterford, New York.

Sylvester, Nathaniel Bartlett. History of Rensselaer Co., New York. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Everts & Peck, 1880.

The Troy Morning Whig. [Troy, New York] 'Tragical End of "Nickey" DeFreest—Killed By a Locomotive.' The Troy Morning Whig, 3 November 1877:3.

Van Olinda, E.S. "State and Pearl Streets Of the Gay 90s Recalled." Times-Union [Albany, New York], 25 February 1941:17.

Wheeler, Walter Richard. "59 Second Street: Its Design and Construction," in The Marble House in Second Street: Biography of a Town House and its Occupants, 1825-2000. Troy, New York: Rensselaer County Historical Society, 2000.

Wheeler, Walter Richard and Douglas G. Bucher. In a Neat Plain Modern Stile: The Architecture of Philip Hooker and His Contemporaries, 1796-1836. Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

During the course of Ms Miller's interview with Mr. Van Buren, he indicated that he had photographs of the property. These likely date to the 1920-60 era, and include images of the house with its front porch, the rear of the house, and the "house on stilts" and barn located to the west of the house. The occupants of the house from ca. 1880 to 1919 have not been identified. Additional research in censuses and tax lists may provide information on the tenants and the building during this period.

F. Supplemental Material:

Conjectural restoration drawings were generated from field observations and removals drawings dating to 1995. Walter Richard Wheeler executed the drawings between January and April 2003.

Additional material that is supplemental to this report is presented on a set of two CD-ROMs and three DVD disks accompanying this documentation. The information on the CD-ROMs includes digital copies of photographs taken in 1990, 2001, and 2002 of the building, an archive of newspaper coverage of the effort to preserve the building, architectural and archeological reports created for the house and its site, and additional support documentation. The DVDs preserve film footage taken during the public education days, archeological investigations, and protests against the destruction of the house. They also include a video tour of the house with narration by Walter Richard Wheeler and footage documenting the destruction of the building on 7 November 2002.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This report was assembled by Walter Richard Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler wrote all sections of the documentation except Part I.B (Historical Context), which was written by Sally Light. Field notes and measurements of the house dating August 2001 were collected by Mr. Wheeler with the assistance of Kim Crosier. Subsequent field notes and measurements were collected by Mr. Wheeler in the autumn of 2002. HABS photographs of the house were taken by Stephen Penson Ross. Reference drawings of the floor plans and several construction details of the house were drawn by Walter Richard Wheeler between January and April 2003. Archeological investigations were headed by Tracy S. Miller, Project Director, under Karen S. Hartgen, RPA, President of Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. of Rensselaer, New York.

The digitization and CAD work for the electronic version of this report and the supplemental material was performed by H. Bernard Gerling and Casey Michasiow. Credits for the various video components of the supplemental information are listed at the end of each segment.