

Freed-Hoopes-Wilson-Brown House

New Garden Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Begun c. 1735-50; Demolished December, 2002.



Southern View from Southwood Rd.

The Freed-Hoopes-Wilson-Brown House, New Garden Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, reflects four major construction periods between the second quarter of the 18th century and the late 1830s. Changes continued to be made after this period including an upgrade of interior finishes during the 1930s consistent with other colonial revival projects in the region. The house was demolished in autumn of 2002.

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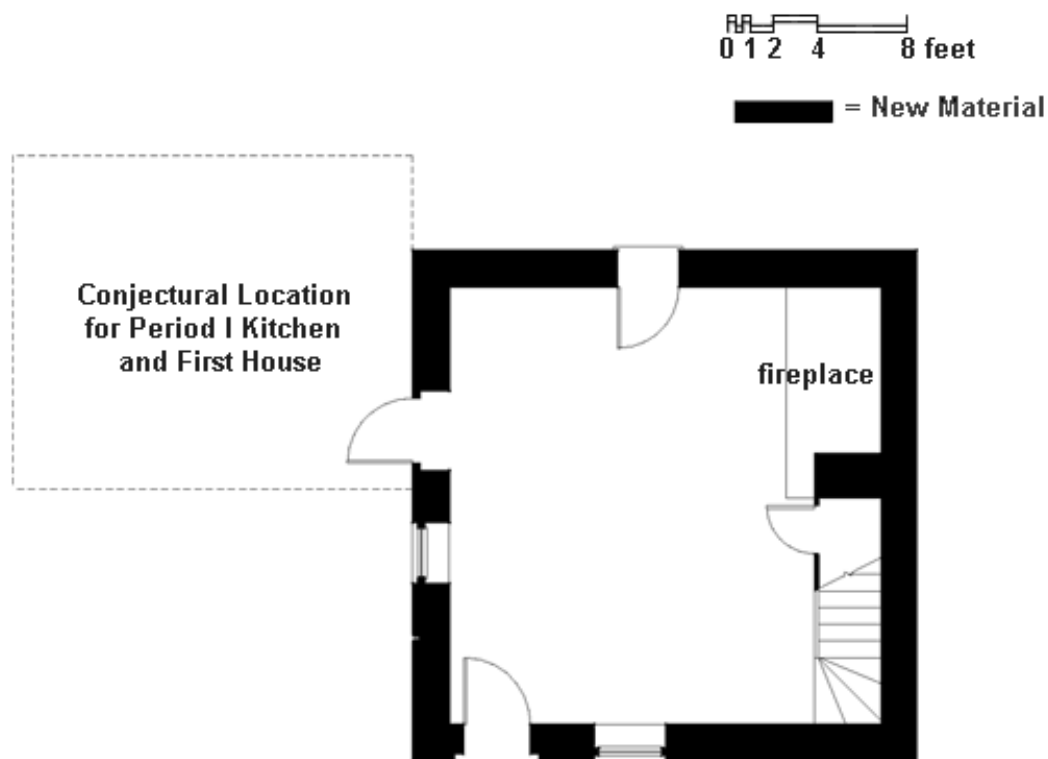
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Western view

Period I, 1735-1750:

Joseph Freed was the cousin of Benjamin Freed who purchased the tract of 300 acres on August 16, 1715 from Thomas Garnet who had the patent granted March 20, 1714. About 30 of the 300 acres were in New Castle County. (From map of William Penn, Jr.'s Manor.)



Reconstructed Ground Floor Plan, Period I

The earliest visible construction phase for the house likely dates to the second quarter of the 18th century. The earliest phase of the existing house, however, represents an addition to an even earlier structure that abutted the west gable. No conclusive architectural evidence for the appearance of the older building survived, and it disappeared in the third quarter of the 18th century with the construction of the Period II wing.

The period I house consisted of a two-story stone structure with a fireplace in the northeast corner. The masonry walls were coursed rubble construction laid in a clay mortar and finished with finger-struck joints. The quality of the mortar joints on the front and back are markedly different indicating a clear hierarchy of finish and the inferior status of the back wall. The mortar joints on the west wall are less clear, but the surviving elements are consistent with the front elevation to the point where they met the wall of the pre-existing structure. The front elevation (south side) was pierced with a door and a window on the ground floor. A single window in the west gable provided additional light. A door, also in the west gable, gave access into the older house, which was likely downgraded in use to a kitchen with the construction of the stone dwelling. A door in the rear or north wall opened into a back workyard. A winder stair in the southeast corner led up to the second floor and down to the cellar. Both stories were finished with plaster walls and exposed ceiling joists of hewn and planed oak. The ceiling joists were finished with simple straight edges and were whitewashed.



Period I Entrance

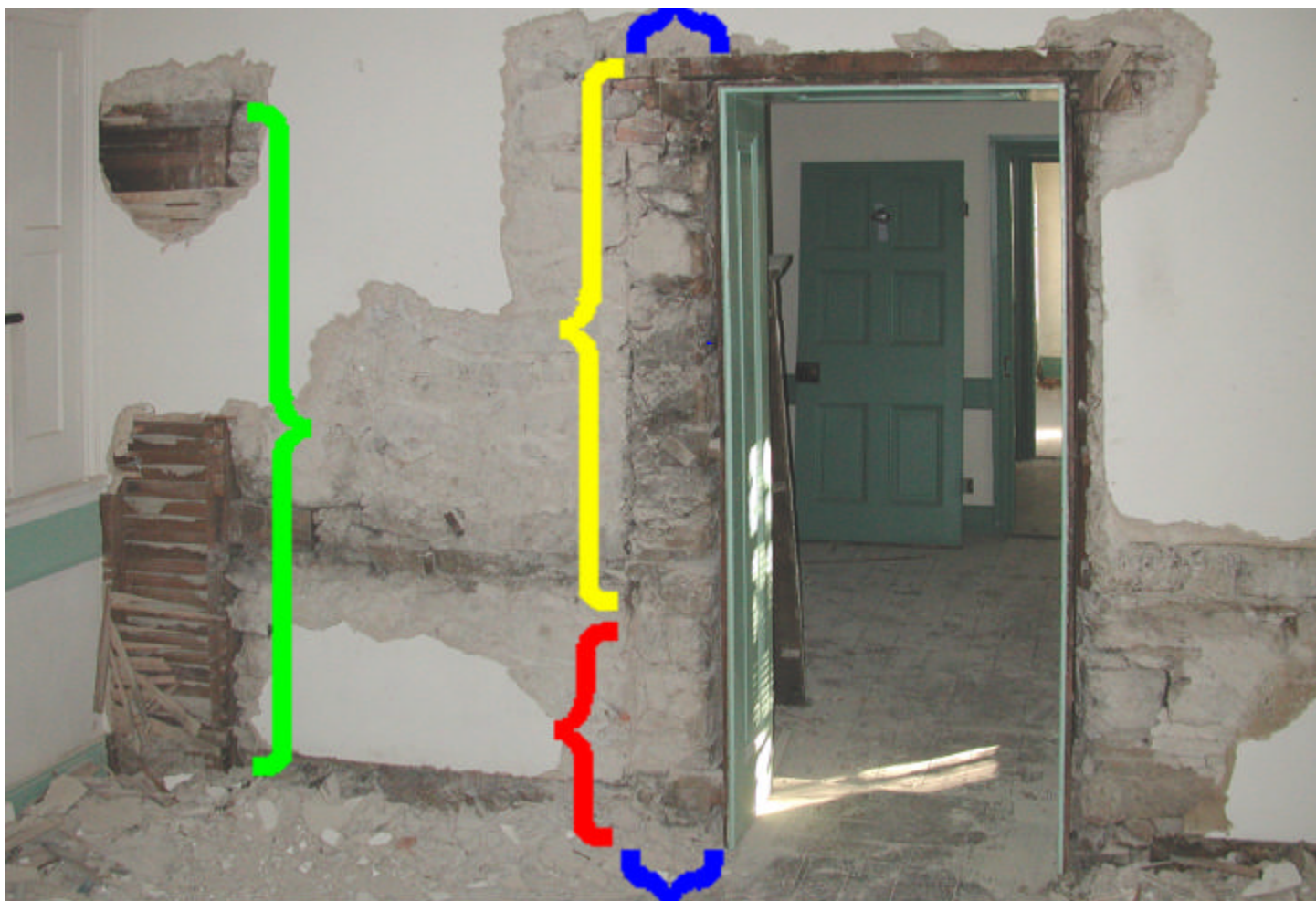
The section of the front (south) wall showing the location of the original period I entrance. Stucco has been removed to reveal the seams where the opening was filled in during the period IV remodeling.

Period I Rear Door

Exterior view of the back (north) wall window that was originally the period I rear door. Stucco has been removed to show the seams where the opening originally went to the ground. The door was converted to a window during the period II rebuilding, when the door was moved to the right of the window and put on axis with the front door.



Period I West Wall Door and Window



The view from the westmost front room looking through the house to the east. This was the western wall of the period I house. Stucco and molding were removed during the investigation to reveal the construction record.

- To the left can be seen the original west doorway of the period I west wall, which presumably opened into an older wooden structure. It was covered over with lathe and plaster during the period II renovations.
- This was a window opening in the period I house. The line in the stone forming the left side of the window from the sill to the top of the window was a clean line.
- This opening was converted to a doorway during the Period II renovations. The line in the stone forming the left side of the door from the former sill down to the floor was irregular.
- The doorway was moved eight inches to the right to make room for new fireplace in the next room during the period IV renovations. The gap was filled with stone.

Although the only evidence for the chimney in the northeast corner is the relieving arch in the cellar, its placement suggests that the original fireplace wall for period I included not only doors to the stairs, but also a closet adjacent to the fireplace jamb.

Period I Relieving Arch



This massive relieving arch in the basement supported the original fireplace and chimney stack in the period I house. To the right are stairs leading down to the subcellar dairy constructed in period IV.

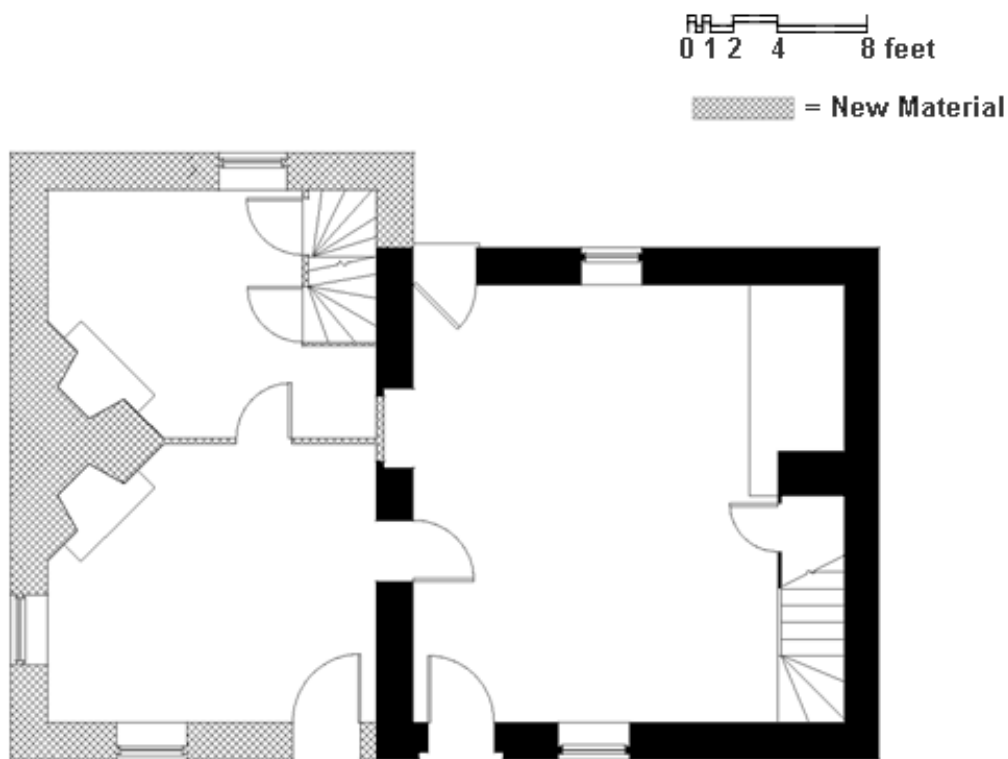
The 1752 will and inventory of Benjamin Freed provide additional evidence about the internal organization of the house. Benjamin Freed willed "this plantation I now live upon containing three hundred acres" to his wife Deborah for life and then to his cousin Joseph Freed. Following Deborah Freed's death, Joseph also received a number of high status objects from the "Parlour." These included a desk and book case, clock and clock case, chest of drawers, large oval table, six walnut chairs, two arm chairs, and large looking glass. All of these objects appear clumped together in Benjamin Freed's inventory along with linens and tableware. Notable in this constellation of objects is the best bed and a close stool, both suggesting the parlor served as a chamber, at least in Benjamin Freed's final illness. Three other additional clusters of household furnishings emerge from the inventory. Beds, chairs, chests of drawers describe the contents of one or more chambers; a couch, table, chairs, another bed, and spinning wheels indicate a common room; cooking implements and other items related to shop work record the presence of a kitchen.

The evident quality of the period I dwelling (stone, two-stories, plaster finishes, and a large fireplace) suggest that the oldest portion of the dwelling is Benjamin Freed's parlor. Given the size of the house, it is also likely that the upper story contained two or more chambers. The inventory's implication that there are two additional rooms (a kitchen and common room) support the idea that the earliest surviving fabric of the house may well be an addition to an earlier structure erected following Freed's 1715 purchase of the property. The off-center west gable window and door opening provide evidence that the "first" house stood against the northwest corner.

Period II, 1765-1785:

X-2-443. 26 February 1765 Joseph Freed to Isaac & Lydia Allen. Three tracts: 151 acres and 24 acres in New Garden, 132 acres in Millcreek Hundred. Bounding neighbors: Isaac Jackson, Isaac Allen, late William Rowen, Andrew McIntire, late William Roe, late Simon Hadley, George Beale, Great Road to Newport.

X-2-167. 22 September 1769 Isaac and Lydia Allen to David and Esther Hoopes, 205 acres.



Reconstructed Ground Floor Plan, Period II

During the third quarter of the 18th century (likely c. 1765-1775) the house was dramatically changed through the addition of a two-story stone wing on the west gable and the reworking of period I doors and windows. This phase also likely resulted in the demolition of the "first" house that the Freed's had converted into a kitchen.

The addition consisted of a two-room block with each room served by a corner fireplace. An exterior door opened directly into the front room lit by two windows, but the rear room seems to have possessed only a single window in its north elevation. The construction of the new wing required the builders to modify the pattern of access between the two portions of the house. The southern door was created by the removal of the period I window frame, which was sawn into nailing blocks, and the removal of masonry to the floor. The old period I door that opened into the former kitchen was studded in and lathed and plastered on both sides. The infilled door remained recessed in the period I parlor and would very likely have been fitted out as a cupboard.

Period II Relieving Arch



The relieving arch in the basement that supported the period II fireplaces and chimneys at the west end of the house.

The wing achieved several architectural and social objectives for the family. First, the addition created not only a larger house, but also a house with more specifically defined interior spaces. The period I parlor became a common room that opened onto the new ground floor parlor that communicated in turn with the new back room in the addition. The southwest parlor was clearly the best of the two and may have served business as well as social needs. The demoted parlor in the period I portion of the house, was downgraded to the status of a common room and likely received a new fireplace inserted into the old one. The period I house may have served variously as a kitchen and general family space. The new room in the northwest corner with its lone window probably served as a downstairs chamber.

Part of the period II enlargement process also led to the insertion of a new door in the northwest corner of the period I house and the conversion of the old door into a window. These changes created a "cross-passage" through the house defined by the opposed openings at the upper end of the old period I house. At this point in the building's history the house contained two stairs. The old stair in the period I house still provided the means for moving from the ground floor to the second story and attic. The new stair in the northwest back room rose to the second floor chambers in the period II addition. The presence of two stairs suggests two conclusions. First, the construction of the wing included no direct second-story access between the two portions of the house. Second, the presence of two stairs posits a domestic arrangement for servants that required segregated access, at least to the second floor backroom in the addition.

Period II Rear Door

The old period I rear door was converted to a window during the period II rebuilding, and the door was moved to the right and put in line with the front door. Stucco has been removed near the right edge of the wall to reveal the lines in the masonry (between red arrows) of this new doorway. This doorway was closed up during the period IV rebuilding



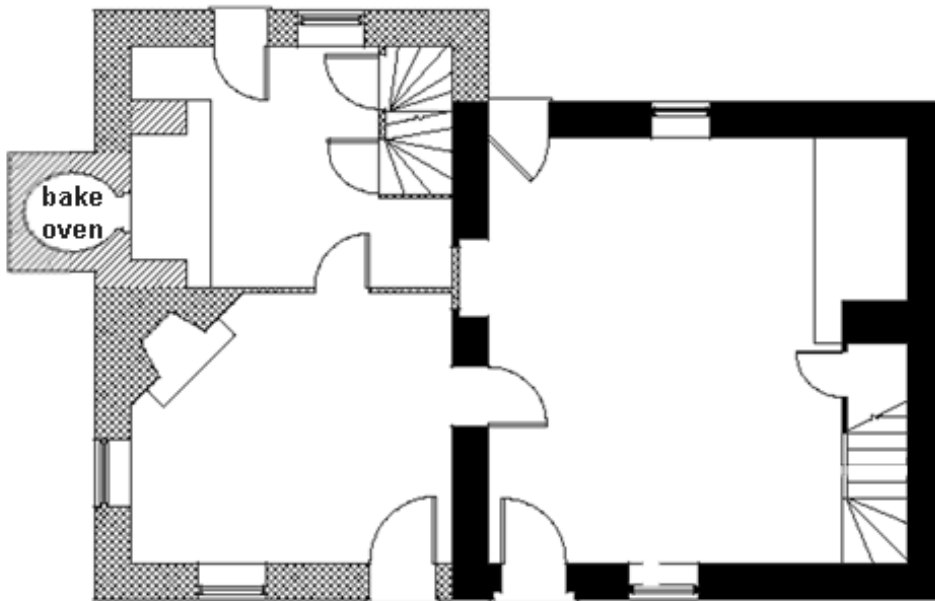
Period III, 1800-1810:

X-2-171. 7 Oct 1803. David & Esther Hoopes to Thomas & Mary Wilson 2700 pounds for 40 acres in New Castle Co. and 150 acres in New Garden Township for a total of 190 acres, house, plantation, tract & tanyard. Plus 7 acres from Moses & Hannah Rowen

C-2-140. 26 June 1784. Excepting water privileges of Moses Rowen. David & Esther Hoopes to Samuel Walker 23 acres in New Castle County, DE. bounding neighbors: Isaac Jackson, Wm. Thompson, John McIntire, Moses Beam, Thomas Moore, Samuel Walker, Newport Road.

0 1 2 4 8 feet

//// = New Material



Reconstructed Ground Floor Plan, Period III

The house stood in its period II form until the first decade of the 19th century when its owners decided to reconfigure the interior spaces within the existing walls. Their efforts changed the house in significant ways that largely disappeared under the changes to come in the 1830s.

The northwest room was the focus for most of the c. 1800-1810 alterations that remade this ground floor space into a kitchen. The corner fireplace was cut back and a new fireplace inserted using the remnants of the existing stack for the south jamb and erecting a new supporting pier in the cellar for the north jamb. A bake oven was added to the exterior of the house, an amenity that required cutting through the exterior wall, inserting the bake oven door and part of the dome inside the wall and continuing the oven structure outside the house. In addition to the changes in the fireplace, the builders punched a back door through the north wall, creating direct exterior access between the domestic work spaces and a kitchen yard.

The fact of a new kitchen placed in the back of the house transformed the old three-room arrangement of a common room, front parlor, back chamber into a very different sort of house reflecting emerging sensibilities about the organization of everyday life. The period I house very likely saw its fireplace closed down into an even smaller, more "refined" opening and the status of the room upgraded into a large parlor with no direct access to the new kitchen. The period II front parlor assumed the role of a

Period III Bake Oven



Stucco was chipped away to reveal remnants of the arched brick roof of the period III bake oven that extended out from the west wall of the house.

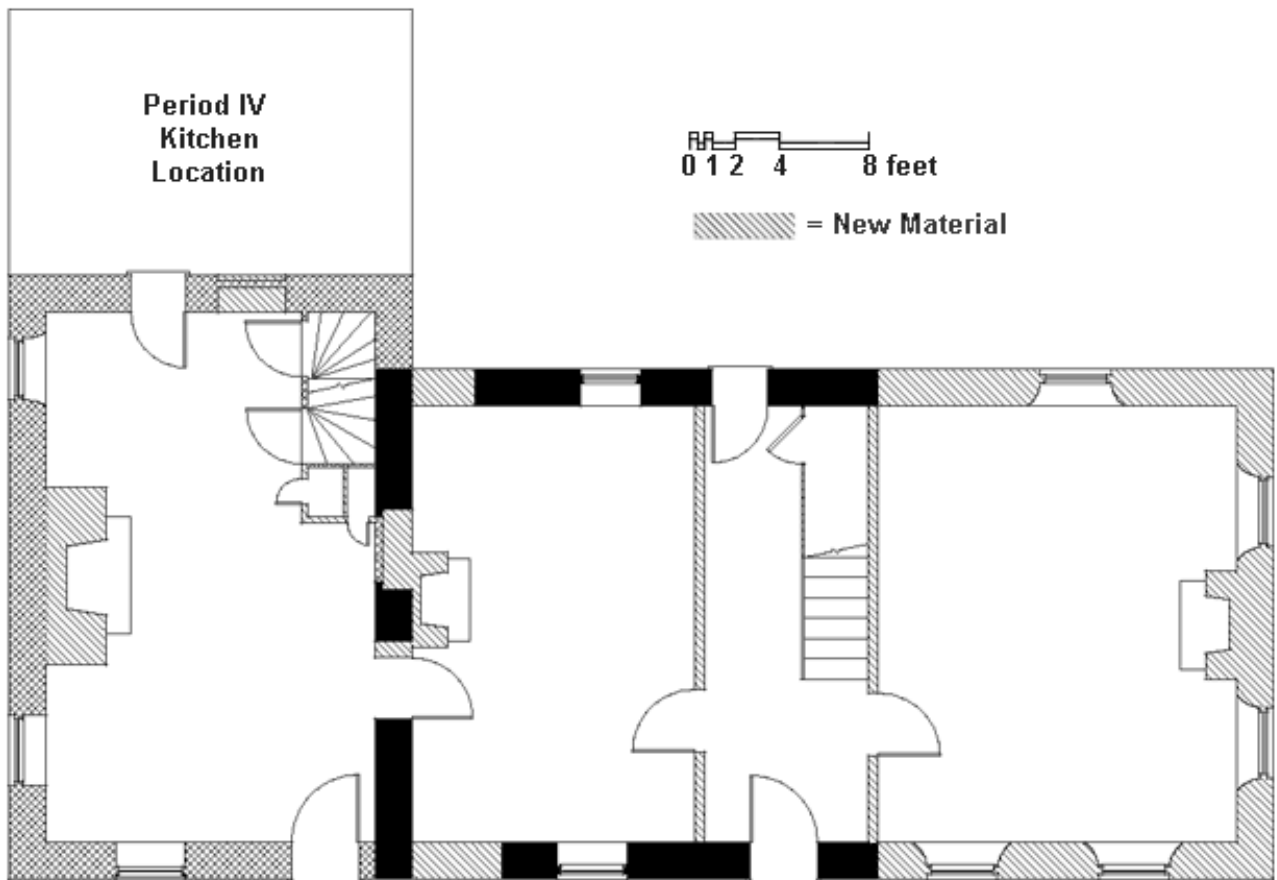
dining room directly served by the kitchen behind it. The net effect of these changes made the house conceptually more linear in its progression from best room to dining room to parlor. The changes also pushed service and domestic work to the back of the house and at the farthest remove from the newly rehabilitated best room in the period I dwelling. The changes reinforced the social hierarchies and concern for domestic segregation reflected in the new plan.

Period IV, c. 1830s:

G-3-351. 25 March 1812. Thomas and Mary Wilson et ux to Joseph Roman, \$7472 for 145 +/- acres. Probably rented by Thomas Brown, who purchased the property in 1834.

At the same time a parcel was separated from the main property and sold:

N-4-17. 25 March 1812. Thomas and Mary Wilson to James Walker \$3210 tanyard and a parcel of land. 1 April 1836 30 acres and a tanyard deeded to Hiram Walker "along said line to land sold to Joseph Roman." This parcel contains the house now known as the Glover House.



Ground Floor Plan, Period IV

The building episode that resulted in the present appearance and organization of the house occurred in the 1835-1845 period. This episode wrought extreme changes in the fabric of the house and all but erased much of its earlier history. While some of the period II and III woodwork (notably doors) survived these changes in the west end of the house, virtually nothing from period I endured.

**Period IV -
New Center Stairway**



The builders' goal centered on converting the old house into a fashionable center-passage dwelling. To do this masons and carpenters gutted the period I house, demolished the original two-story east gable, and pulled up the floor joists in the east end of the house. They then extended the house to the east and inserted two new partition walls to create a center entry and stair hall on top of the period I relieving arch in the cellar. The original front door and period II back door in the oldest part of the house were sealed, the period I bulkhead entry on the north face of the house was infilled and a new cellar entry introduced to the front of the house, two new door openings were cut through the masonry of the front and back walls providing access into the stair hall. Finally, the builders inserted a new fireplace against the former west gable of the period I house. This required shifting the period II door between the old common room and period II front parlor eight inches to the south.



The period IV fireplace on the easternmost wall of the house, first floor. It was the most elaborate in the house and served the new period IV parlor.

New Period IV Fireplaces on new eastern wall



Second floor period IV fireplace, east end

Period IV - New fireplace against the former west gable of the period I house

The period IV fireplace inserted into the west wall of the period I house. It occupies part of what was the original doorway from the period I house into the earlier wooden structure.



Period IV Roofline



The period IV renovations included a new roof which spanned the entire length of the house. The dormer windows were in a very elegant classical revival style, which suggests that they also dated from this renovation.

The entire length of rafters was uniform and looked like the product of a single building episode.



The changes to the house did not stop with the radical reconfiguration to the oldest section, but continued into the already extensively reworked period II end of the building. A new window introduced into the west gable end matched the other period IV windows with its round reveals. Period IV also appears to be when the two rooms in the west end of the house were made into one and a new kitchen (possibly a frame shed addition) added to the north side of the period II elevation. Changes made in period V (1930s) however, may account for these changes as well. In either case, the period III kitchen space appears to have been upgraded and abandoned. This also appears to be the moment when the new subcellar was excavated in the floor of the period I cellar.

Doorways in Western Front Room

The doorways to the winding staircase at the western end of the house. The door at left leads to a winding staircase to the second floor; the door in the center to a winding staircase to the basement; the doors at right to storage closets.



First Floor West Wall Fireplace



The fireplace on the first floor at the far west wall of the house. This fireplace was supported by the period II relieving arch and replaced the back-to-back fireplaces that served the front and back rooms of the period II addition. The wall that divided the front and back rooms during periods II and III has been removed. At right a stone ledge jutting out from the wall served the bake oven installed in period III.

Period IV Dairy At approximately the time of the period IV renovations, a subcellar dairy was added.



The view down the stairway leading from the cellar to the subcellar dairy.



The arch inside the dairy.



The arched roof of the dairy.

Second Floor Closet Interior



At the conclusion of the period IV remodeling, the house bore little resemblance to its former self. What it did reflect was a continuation of social changes begun in period III. The new parlor in the east end of the house was even more distant from domestic work spaces and screened from them by the creation of two new spaces (stair hall and sitting room) carved out of the oldest parts of the building. Access to the upper stories was now contained in the unheated stair hall and no longer in a principal living space (the old common room). As the site of everyday life the 1830s house was even more attenuated, more hierarchical, and more specialized in its internal organization.

Appendices:

Deed Run for the property known in 2002 as the Glover place, located on Southwood Road, owned in 1883 by John Speakman. Compiled by Margaret Jones, November 2002.

L-8-146 16 March 1874. Thomas & Hannah Marvel to John Speakman (on Breous map) \$4900 for 31+/- acres

Y-6-373 1 March 1863. Evan & Joanna Brown to Thomas & Hannah Marvel \$3525 for 31+/- acres

M-6-130 1 April 1857. Hiram & Mary Walker to Evan & Joanna Brown \$3500 for 30 acres and a certain tanyard (in 1859 bounded by Joseph Roman now David M. Brown, in 1859 bounded by land of Joseph Roman now Evan Brown)

N-4-17 25 March 1812. Thomas Wilson to James Walker \$3210 tanyard and a parcel of land. 1 April 1836 30 acres and a tanyard deeded to Hiram Walker "along said line to land sold to Joseph Roman," held (rented?) by Thomas Brown.

M-3-3 20 March 1812. Thomas Wilson & Mary Wilson sold to James

Walker \$2528 for 30 acres. (This was when the so-called Glover place was split off from the property to the north eventually known as the Brown place.)

G-3-351 25 March 1812. Thomas & Mary Wilson et ux to Joseph Roman \$7472 for 145 +/- acres (bounding neighbors Wm Thompson, John McIntire, Isaac Chambers, land sold to James Walker)

X-2-171 7 Oct 1803. David & Esther Hoopes to Thomas & Mary Wilson 2700 pounds for 40 acres in New Castle Co. total of 190 acres, house, plantation, tract & tanyard. Plus 7 acres from Moses & Hannah Rowen

C-2-140 26 June 1784. Excepting water privileges of Moses Rowen. David & Esther Hoopes to Samuel Walker 23 acres in New Castle County, DE. bounding neighbors: Isaac Jackson, Wm. Thompson, John McIntire, Moses Beam, Thomas Moore, Samuel Walker, Newport Road.

X-2-167 22 September 1769 Isaac & Lydia Allen to David & Esther Hoopes 205 acres, i.e. tanyard and tract to the north.

X-2-443 26 February 1765 Joseph Freed to Isaac & Lydia Allen. Three tracts: 151 acres and 24 acres in New Garden, 132 acres in Millcreek Hundred. Bounding neighbors: Isaac Jackson, Isaac Allen, late William Rowen, Andrew McIntire, late William Roe, late Simon Hadley, George Beale, Great Road to Newport.

Joseph Freed was the cousin of Benjamin Fredd who purchased the tract of 300 acres on August 16, 1715 from Thomas Garnet who had the patent granted March 20, 1714. About 30 additional acres were in New Castle County. (From map of William Penn, Jr.'s Manor.)

Supplementary information:

The Great Road from Newport to Lancaster was known by the name of the Limestone Road.

From original road papers: Vol. 25, documents 71-74. In 1807, a petition was made to have a road from Septimus Evans' lime kiln, beginning at the Newark Road and terminating at the State Line near Limestone Road, near Thomas Wilson's house. When built, this road was known as Southwood Road.

Verified title search for Evan Brown property (14 December 1933; 1417B)

David Hoopes 1780-1803

Thomas Wilson 1703-1812

Joseph Roman 1812-1834

Thomas Brown 1834-1853

Evan Brown 1853-1883

Francis Walker 1883-1923

Mary/Henry Ewart 1923-1923

William Ford 1923-1929

Harry Ford 1929-1933

Howard Ford 1933 to date

Verified title search for David M. Brown property (12 May 1909; 1332) property to the west of the Speakman place and part of Thomas Brown's holdings

Caleb Pusey 1750

Joseph Jordon 1799-1805

John Way 1804-1806

William Chambers 1806-1811

Thomas Brown 1811-1853

David M. Brown 1853-1886 intestate

Alice T. Brown widow, d. 1895

Anna Brown Kelton & William N. Kelton 1886 to date (Kelton sold in 1950 to Leon Wilkinson)