

Architectural Inspection of Wayside at 252 North Main Street

This 1833 house is a charming example of the transition from the complex lightness of the late Federal period to the boldness of the new Greek Revival period. This early house beautifully confirms our awareness of the master craftsmen that were working in Hudson at the time.

The upstairs dramatic vaulted ceiling, the split fan windows facing the street, the original doors throughout and the delicate newell posts and banister are some of the details that are truly exciting and notable.

The exterior of 252 North Main Street has drop siding. The house is sited on the north hill of the main road leading into downtown. The retaining wall is probably not original but is early. The doorways are on the north façade give strong evidence that there was a porch, now enclosed, on the south side facing the town.

The wing on the north side was the town's Post Office. It appears to have been a small separate building with no basement. It was either located here originally or moved here while the house was being built in 1833 when it only took one horse to move these small post and beam buildings. The main street-facing doorway of the Post Office has been blocked up inside to provide wall space in the present day kitchen.

East Façade

The East façade has the lightness of the Federal period with narrow corner boards and articulated cornice boards with delicate returns. The split fan windows reflect the fact that on the second floor there is a beautiful vaulted ceiling over the stairwell and the main bedroom.

North Façade

The surround of the main door that leads into the entry hall has a graceful Federal entablature and pilasters with a reeded top. The door is a six-panel door, narrow with bold trim.

The door to the middle, more utilitarian part of the house is a Greek Revival door with heavy molding. There is evidence of a wooden porch at this entrance with a chamfered post on a stone block. Of interest, as you stand in this location, is to notice the joining of the Post Office to the back wing of the house.

Entry Hall

Through the main doorway, you are in the entry hall with its charming staircase. The cherry pegged newell posts, banisters and spindles are extremely elegant examples of the skill of the master craftsmen working in Hudson at this time.

These craftsmen had come here with copies of the same pattern books that were being used by the carpenter-joiners in New England. There was a desire to show that Hudson was an exciting new place to live with gracious buildings, and not a rustic wilderness. *The newel posts are plate 43 from the Asher Benjamin pattern book.*

The post and beam construction is evident throughout the house.

The beads on the corner posts in this hall are bolder, signifying a transition between Federal and Greek Revival.

Parlor

This room would have had a fireplace on the west wall with a cupboard beside it. We think that the door on the south side of the room went to the porch, now enclosed for a bathroom. The doors are early and have elegant dimensional detail. The windows are 6/6. Further examination of the window frames throughout the house would show if they were originally 12/12 as we think.

The baseboards and moldings are very dimensional. The floor is carpeted.

Archway

The reason for the arch in the doorway connecting the parlor to the middle room needs further investigation. The basement stairs go down from here.

Middle Room

This is the more utilitarian part of the house. The fireplace chimney has been rebuilt. We think there were originally 3 fireplaces in the house. The boxed fireplace surround is a lovely Adams design. It is old but probably not original and not from Ohio. At the time that the porch was enclosed, the south end of this room was extended. There are three lovely 6/6 windows on the west wall, which were probably originally 12/12. The cornerposts of the post and beam construction are evident. The floor is carpeted.

Backroom

The backroom connects the Post Office to the main house. The horizontal beam of the post and beam construction is evident at the ceiling. The wainscoting is not original. A careful inspection of the crawl space under the room would indicate when the buildings were joined.

Post Office

The present day kitchen has the chimney for the stove that would have heated this room. The back door was probably the back door of the main block of the house and was reused with glass put in place of wood.

Upstairs

There is a wonderful vaulted ceiling over the stairwell and the bedrooms. This is very unusual and we do not know of any others that were built in Hudson at this early date. Once again, this indicates the exceptional craftsmanship available in Hudson at this time. There is no attic, so we could not see the framing, but the curve in the ceiling is what inspires the quarter round windows in the bedroom and hall/closet. The windows are hinged on the long vertical side and swing out. There are two doors into the front bedroom from the hall and there may have been a fireplace on the west wall. The second bedroom has an original closet and closet door and has an eyebrow window, as do the front bedroom and hallway atop of the stairs. The third bedroom is now the upstairs bathroom.

Basement

The chimney has been rebuilt. There were probably three fireplaces from the original chimney: one in the formal parlor, one in the utilitarian middle room and one in the large bedroom. The foundation is sandstone. It is concrete block on the rebuilt west side under the back room and kitchen. There is an old 8/8 window on the south side. The stairs to the basement were originally much steeper. The beams are 8" by 8". The joists are sawn. All of the doors in the house are original or very early.

The barn behind the house is board and batten from 1860 or 1870.

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