

BRUCE CORLEY HERITAGE DOCUMENTATION

John Lawrie Farm

8262 Highway 27 Vaughan Ontario

B CORLEY MBA RPA CAHP

15/07/2015

John Lawrie Farm

Location

8682 Highway 27 in Vaughan Ontario. The house is located on the west side of Highway 27 just north of Langstaff Road.

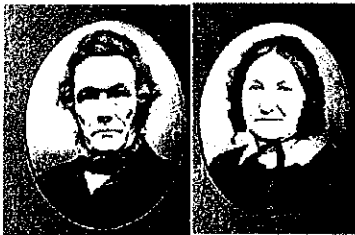
Legal Description

Concession 9, Lot 12 in Vaughan Township.

Ownership

The land was originally patented to Richard Gamble in 1800 along with Lots 9 and 10. It was later purchased about 1837 by John Lawrie (16 May 1802- 23 April 1887). He was the son of Gavin Lawrie and Margaret Paterson. John Lawrie married to Isabella Reid (16 March 1808- June 1891), daughter of James Reid and Ann Steel, on 30 April 1830 in Lesmahagow Lanark Scotland. John Lawrie and his wife emigrated from Stonehouse, Larnarkshire, Scotland in 1830 right after they were married. They lived in Scarborough for five years before moving to Vaughan. Their first three children; Margaret (15 Sept 1833), Isabella(1834) and Gavin (27 November 1836) were born in Scarborough. The next three children; Jane (9 April 1844), Mary Ann (25 January 1846) and Agnes (5 November 1847) were born in Vaughan. On January 7th 1850 John Lawrie was elected, by 62 voters in an open ballot, to the first Vaughan Township council representing Ward 5 in 1850 and 1851. He was chosen over William Kersey, Alfred Jeffrey and John Dalziel.

John Lawrie's son Gavin carried on the farm and had five children. His son, William married Janet Bell, inherited the farm and had three children. The barn burnt while he owned the farm and again when his son William Jr. owned the farm. William Jr. married Gwen Northcott and moving to Vancouver selling the farm to Frank Chapman in 1952¹.



John and Isabella Lawrie

Overview

The original rectangular storey and a half was built of snecked granite field stone with tooled limestone quoins lintels and sills on the east elevation. The stone work is very similar to the John Jeffery house which was built in 1838 on the west half of Lot 5 Concession 8 at Woodbridge. A storey and a half brick veneer addition with porches was built to the rear followed later by an attached brick garage. The house faces east to Highway 27. A stream fed pond is just to the south of the house. The genealogy and the trim profiles suggest the house may have been built about 1837. There are two very well-made built-in cabinets beside the fireplaces in the parlour and the dining room. The exterior may have been parged all over save for the cut stone.

The house has been greatly modified to incorporate a number of apartments. The house has recently been vandalized.

Construction

¹ Reman G. Elmore; *A History of Vaughan Township* (Toronto George C. H. Snider: 1971)pp 73, 205

Cellar

The foundation wall currently sits about 16" above grade evenly around the house except at the south side where it gradually drops away to the 72" door on the south. 24+" thick foundation is well built of large squared split field stone laid as coursed rubble. The main interior basement 9" wall is double wythe may be a later addition to support the 14" wide by 13" high summer beam as it is not let into the stonework. This wall separates off the parged north half of the cellar from the exposed stone south half. On top of the brick rests the summer beam which is tied into two beams running the length of the east and west walls. The 3"X10" @ 24" floor joists run north south to the summer beam and are set into the stonework at each gable end. The bearing surface for the joists on the summer beam is divided in two. The top 5" of the joist are let in 4" and the bottom 5" only 1". This was done to maintain the bearing capacity of the beam under tension. Most of the joists have come away from the lower 1" bearing surface on the summer beam and split. The ceilings and the walls appear not have been finished on the south side. The small windows were set in the stone walls with 2.5" thick sawn frames just below the 4" thick sill plate. The ceiling height is currently 6'-1" but the original height appears to have been somewhat higher. There is a portion of the south fireplace foundation with brickwork to admit the furnace pipe but there is no evidence that the cellar was extensively used as a kitchen or living space. There was no trim work present in the cellar.

Ground Floor stone section

The centre hall, with the stairs on the right divides the main house in two. The two principal rooms of the four room plan are the large parlour on the north (right) side and the dining room on the south (left). Behind each are two smaller rooms about 8 feet across. These smaller rooms may have been bedrooms or a kitchen. The smaller room behind the dining room has a closet or pantry built in.

The historic interior is split lath and plaster with stud walls. The clear 1 1/4' tongue and groove flooring is original.

The front entrance was modified with the central door side and transom lights removed. The current door offset to the left accommodates a hall closet. Evidence of the front door design is apparent in the moulding.

Second Floor stone section

The second floor in the original stone building consists of four bedrooms and an original large closet at the east end of the hall. In the last forty years a closet was introduced to the west end of the hall at the top of the stairs and the south west bedroom was subdivided to incorporate a bathroom, lit by a dormer window. The two bedrooms on the north side were originally one large room and may have been open to the hall below. The south bedrooms had fine six panel doors and the north rooms had simpler plank doors. The lath in the centre wall and hall wall on the north side is sawn. The door and window casings have the same applied back band but are simpler than the ground floor without the intermediate bead. The baseboards are simple casings finished with a bead.

Rear Additions

The rear addition is covered in brick veneer. The internal structure is 7/8" rough sawn board either side of 4" by 4" posts.

They may have always been some kind of rear addition, probably used as a kitchen. Demolition may reveal the original plan. The current addition blocks the west cellar windows. The space consist of a large room with a rear stair to a couple of bedrooms and a bath room above. The original configuration is unknown. The remains of a stove chimney are evident on the west elevation. The windows and doors on the ground floor are missing and all evidence of trim profiles are gone. The trim upstairs on the bedroom windows is stock late Victorian. The doors are twentieth century and factory made.

All evidence of the original porch design was lost when they were enclosed. A double wythe brick garage with a room in the rear may have originally been a carriage house. It may have been built when the addition was bricked. The west wall is badly heaved and bowed from frost and structurally unsound.

A single solid wood column was found on site along with two wood pilasters placed later on either side of the garage door. The pilasters are quite old and may have been placed originally at the front of the house. The column may have come from the rear porch.

Heating

The house was originally heated by fireplaces with a stove introduced later in the room behind the parlor. The ground floor trim is all similar. The original windows were robust and finely made. (5/8" W 1 1/4" L with a ovolo ending in a 1" fillet). The small panes of glass are 8" by 10". The fireplaces have been extended to incorporate a field stone front probably obscuring Rumford fireplaces behind.

The second floor attic loft is supported on 2" by 6" joists with 1 1/8" tongue and groove floor boards.

The roof framing is 4" by 5" joist at 36" on centre which rest on a plate.

Condition

The building retains its basic form and much of the original trim including baseboards, casings, wainscoting and window paneling. Much of the front door is missing and the door at the rear of the hall may be the original front door. Many of the interior panel doors have been destroyed but the pattern remains. The cellar windows are undamaged but all the other windows have been badly damaged. The interior configuration of the rear of the building on the ground floor has been repeatedly altered over the life of the building. The house may have originally been parged all over except the quoins and east lintels. The rear ground floor window is closed off in the wall as a cupboard. The exterior is visible through the broken plaster and is in very exceptionally good condition. The surrounding wall is parged.

Photographs



Figure 1: View northwest from Highway 27 showing tree lined laneway.



Figure 2: View North on Highway 27 showing house and drive.



Figure 3: View of Highway 27 from the farm facing south.



Figure 4: East Elevation.



Figure 5: South Elevation.



Figure 6: West Elevation.



Figure 7: South Elevation.



Figure 8: View south east.



Figure 9: View to north east.



Figure 10: View to northwest.



Figure 11: View to south west from drive.



Figure 12: View north across the pond.



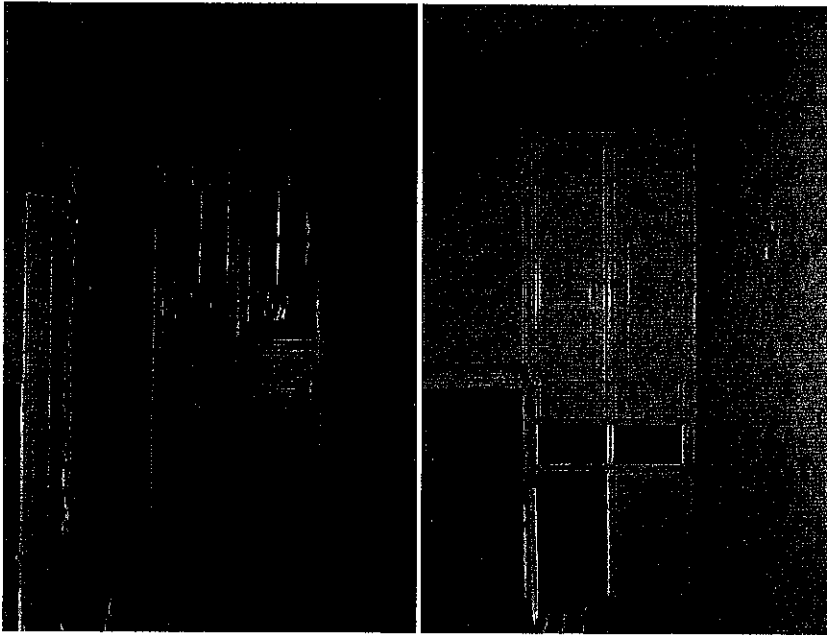
Figure 13: Original Front door casing. Typical exterior trim at all openings.



Figure 14: Front Hall.



Figure 15: Parlour north side.



Figures 16 and 17: Built in cabinet in parlour and dining room.

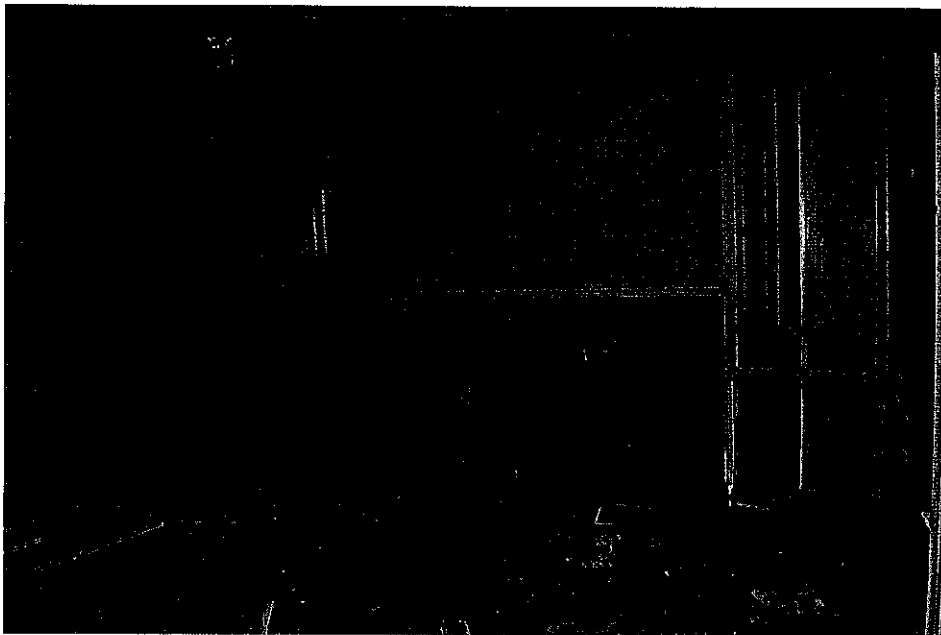


Figure 18: Dining Room with built in cabinet.

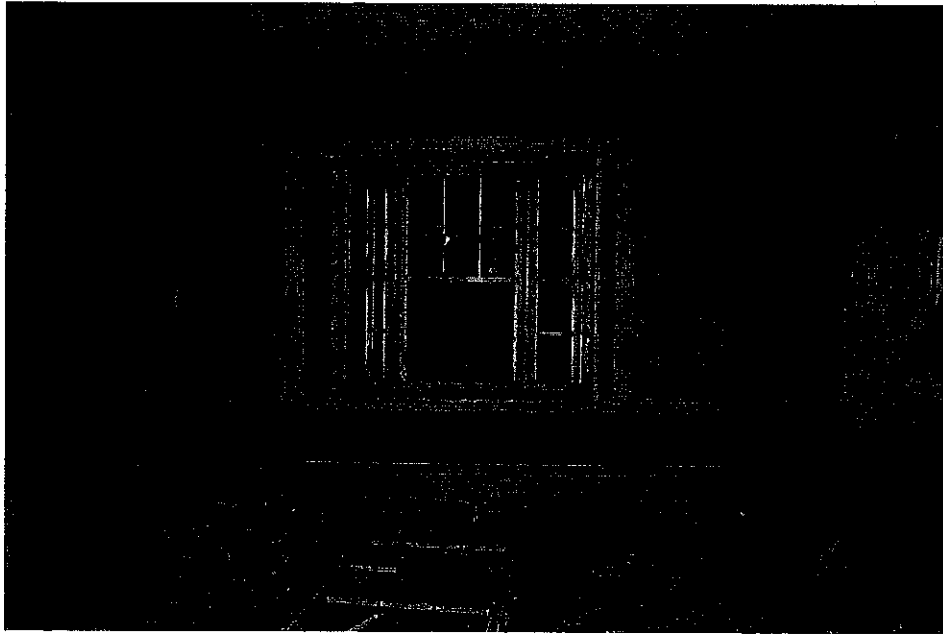


Figure 19: Dining Room with Greek revival window.

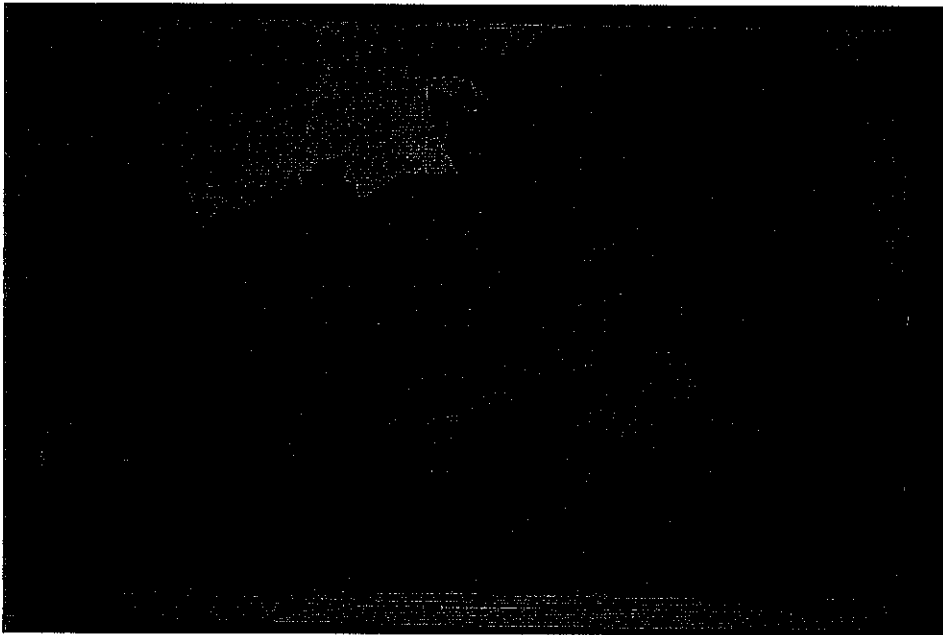


Figure 17: 26" wide split lath boards in dining room.



Figures 18 and 22: Original front door at rear of hall and door to cellar.



Figure 23: Stair Detail.

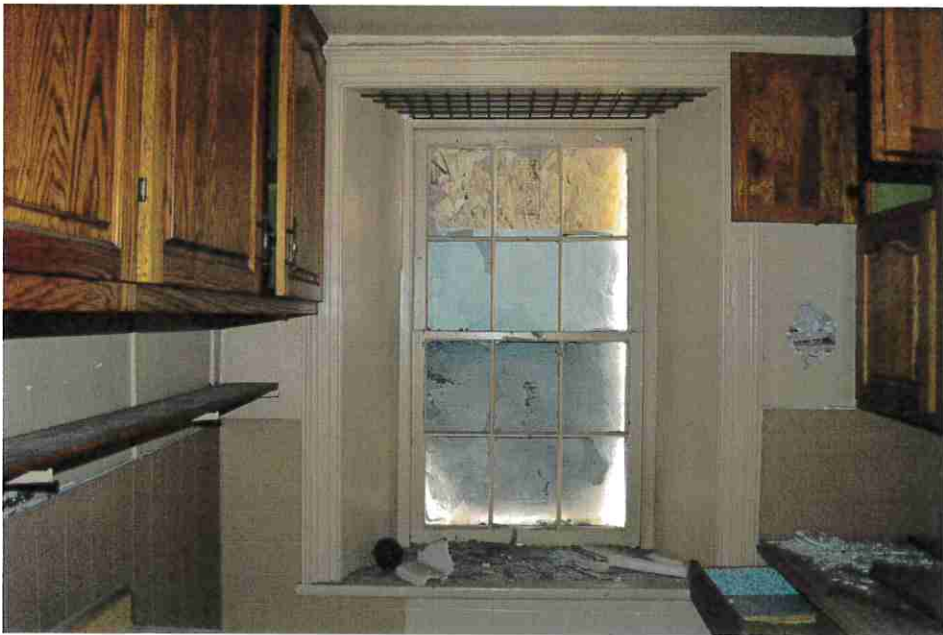


Figure 24: South west kitchen.



Figure 25: Stair from second floor hall.



Figure 26: North bedroom at top of stair.



Figure 27: North West Bedroom Note sawn lath. The north two bedrooms were originally combined.



Figure 28: Stud and lath of north bedrooms.



Figure 29: North wall of South east bedroom showing split lath.



Figure 30: North and south bedroom doors. Note plank north doors compared to six panel south bedroom doors.



Figure 31: Second floor Hall looking west.



Figure 32: Second floor Hall looking east.



Figure 33: Detail of second floor window casing.



Figure 34: Ground floor door casing.



Figure 35: Hall looking east to front door.



Figure 36: North west kitchen - Window in wall used as a cupboard.



Figure 37: Stone pipe thimble support to parlour from north kitchen.



Figure 38: Roofing framing to cellar entrance.



Figure 39: Cellar summer beam on a later brick wall. Note typical joist split because of the insufficient bearing.

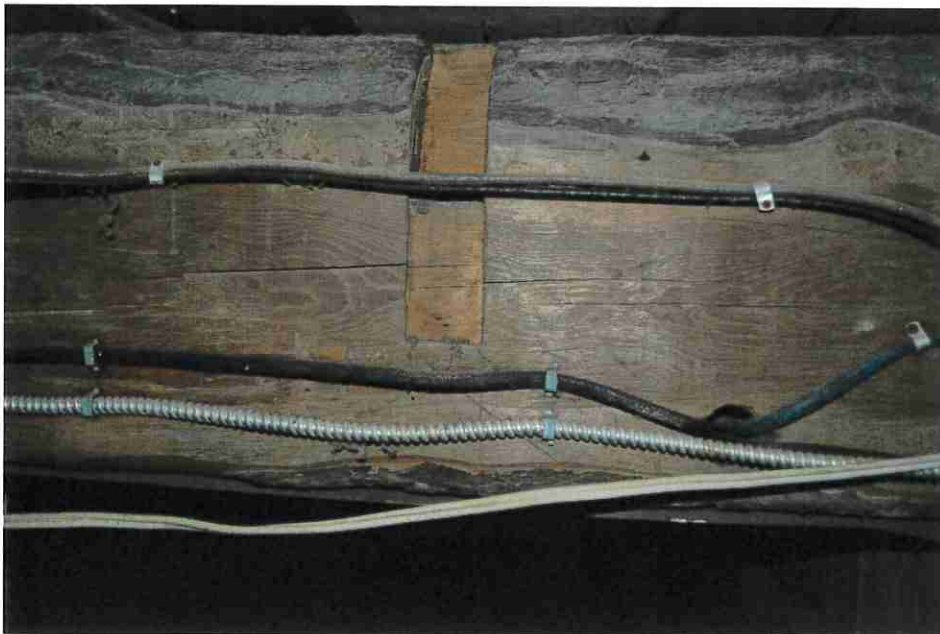


Figure 40: Beam pocket with one and four inch bearing.



Figure 41: 3" by 10" Floor Joists at 24" set into stone south side.



Figure 42: Cellar window North room Note Rough cast parged walls.

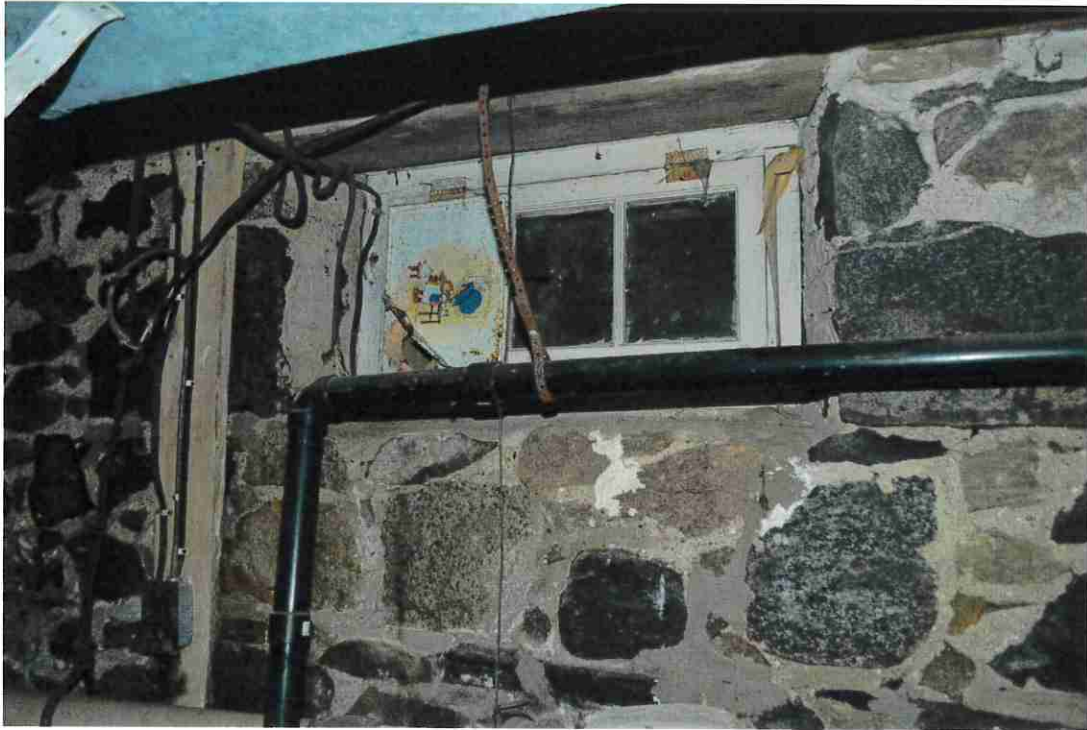


Figure 43: Cellar window south room Note lack of parging on granite walls.



Figure 44: Brick wall under summer beam note attached to stone walls.



Figure 45: Attic framing. Note offset chimney.



Figure 46: Tooling detail and benchmark 46-70



Figure 47: Coursed granite stone work with tooled limestone quoins.



Figure 48: Stonework on north wall random rubble granite.



Figure 49: Enclosed south porch.



Figure 50: Ground floor of brick rear addition looking north west to enclosed north porch.



Figure 51: Brick addition hall looking east.



Figure 52: Brick addition second floor west and east bedrooms.

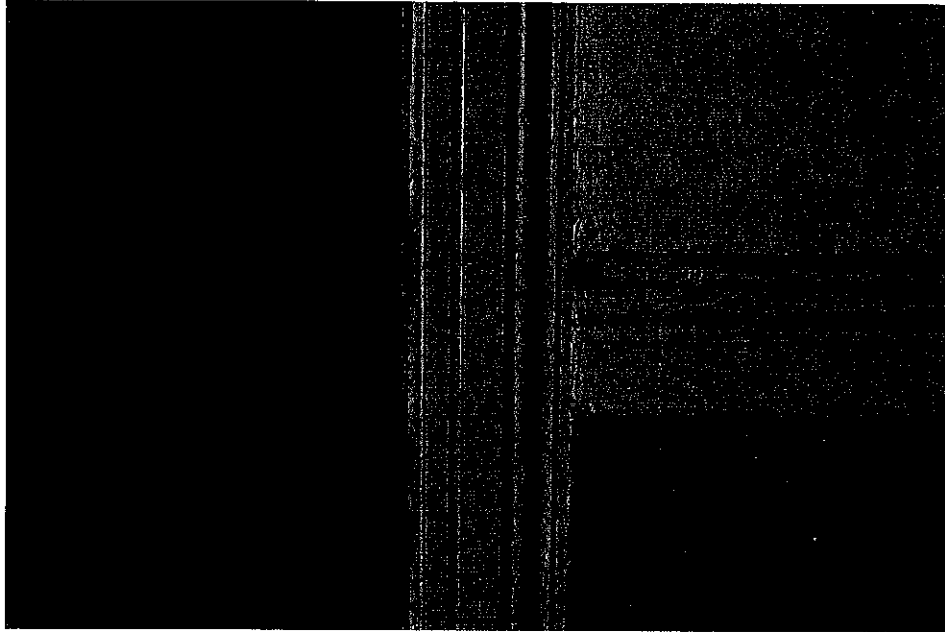


Figure 53: Dining room wainscoting detail.



Figure 54: Original shutter screwed to wall. Note: Shutter is upside down and on the wrong side



Figure 55 and 56: Garage. Note pilasters attached later.

