

REPORT ON BUILDING ARCHEOLOGY
AT THE

ISAAC DAMON HOUSE

NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

FOR

HISTORIC NORTHAMPTON
PAMELA TOMA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AND

THE INSTITUTE FOR MUSEUM SERVICES (IMS)

PREPARED BY

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IN
PRIVATE PRACTICE

1992

DESCRIPTION

No. 46 Bridge Street was probably constructed in or slightly after 1813, when the land was purchased by carpenter-builder Isaac Damon (deed in HNH archives). The ornament and general character of the building are Federal, and Damon erected other important Federal-style buildings in Northampton around the same time. Jenny Damon had the first of her eight children in 1813 and four others within the next decade.

There was another house on this property when Damon purchased the lot. The family of the grantor, Thomas Lavake, had owned the property since 1770, and the earlier house presumably dated to that decade. The 1796 Massachusetts census (copy in HNH archives) describes Lavake's house as two stories tall, containing 1,100 square feet, and having 14 windows. This suggests a single-pile house perhaps similar in plan and general appearance to the Parsons House next door.

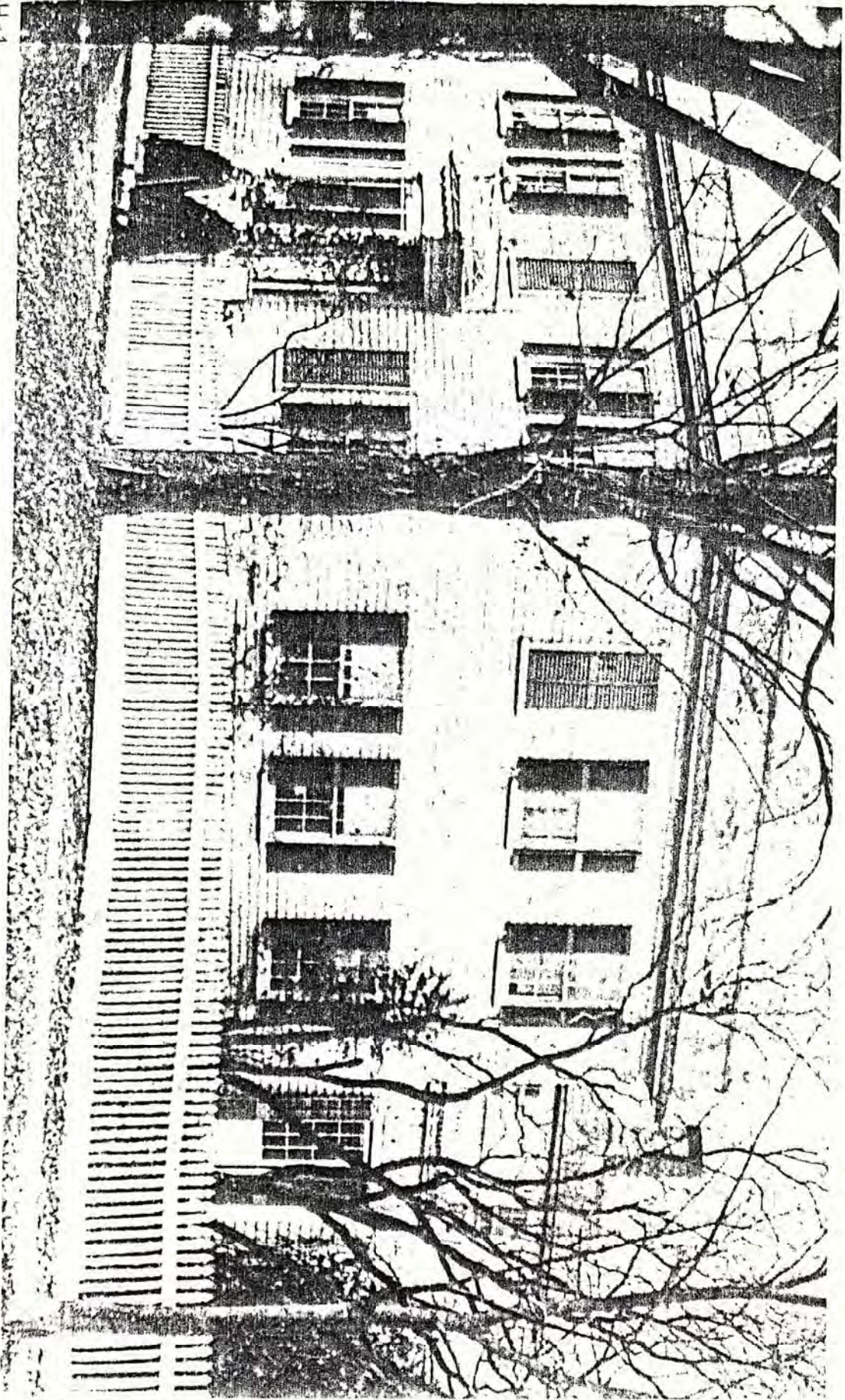
Some commentators have speculated that the Damon House is simply the Lavake House remodeled. We found no physical evidence to support this thesis, although our ability to fully access the frame was admittedly limited. The plates and other framing of the attic floor are covered with blown insulation, making inspection nearly impossible, while the first floor (basement) framing is masked from view by a modern plaster ceiling. The one area of framing we could inspect in its entirety - the roof - was clearly constructed in the early nineteenth century, although many of the timbers had been reused. Photographs taken of the first floor frame (basement framing) in 1980 (HNH archives) show that all of the members were sawn, which one would expect only after about 1790.

More evidence was provided by an excavation we conducted through the east wall, which exposed a post and studding of nineteenth century origin (see **Excavation Ext-A**). The joint between the post and one of its braces was marked "26", meaning that at least that number of joints were marked and cut in the early nineteenth century. This evidence, together with the very regular arrangements of posts and the absence of any eighteenth century finish or other material on the interior suggests that the present frame was raised by Damon, although likely re-using some rough material from Lavake's earlier house.

The most interesting feature of the plan is the one-story shed which runs along the rear wall - an integral part of the original house (A in photos 2 and 3, and plans). Rather than enclosing a separate space, the shed houses the excess portion of the rear first-floor rooms as they extend beyond the main block. It would be interesting to discover whether this arrangement was common in the Connecticut Valley in this period, or was peculiarly favored by Damon. It was made possible by constructing the second floor rear wall as a truss (B on plan), perhaps using iron tie rods, a principal Damon would have been familiar with from the construction of churches and public buildings.

The house originally had fencing around the perimeter of its roof, similar or identical to the fencing which survives atop the portico. There was also a simpler rail on the roof of the kitchen vestibule.

H-1



Dinner House 1866
 (Enlargement of small photographs)



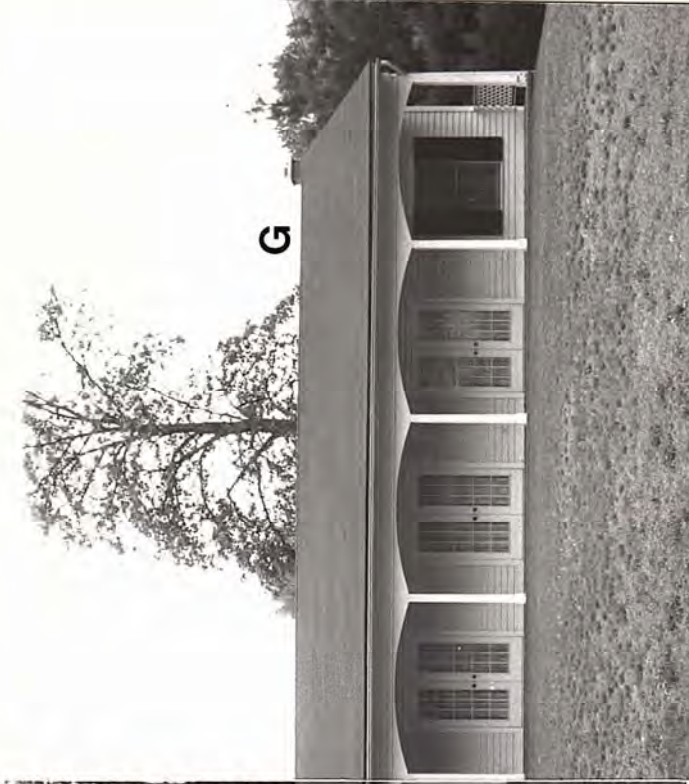
DES - 1



DES - 2



DES - 3A



DES - 3B



DES - 4



DES - 5



DES - 6

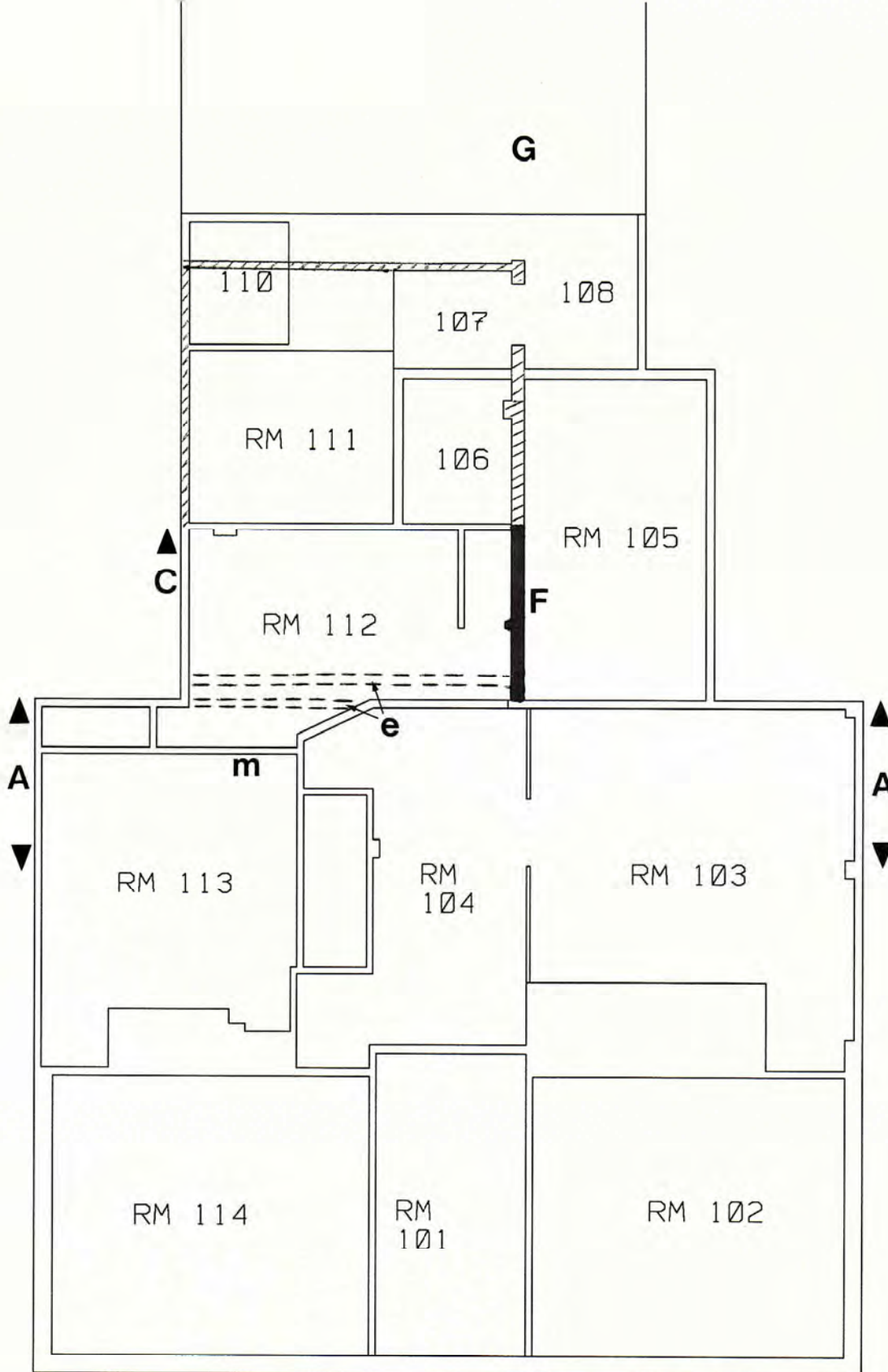
FLOOR PLAN

The original section of the house has changed very little since the early nineteenth century. The only substantial alterations have been:

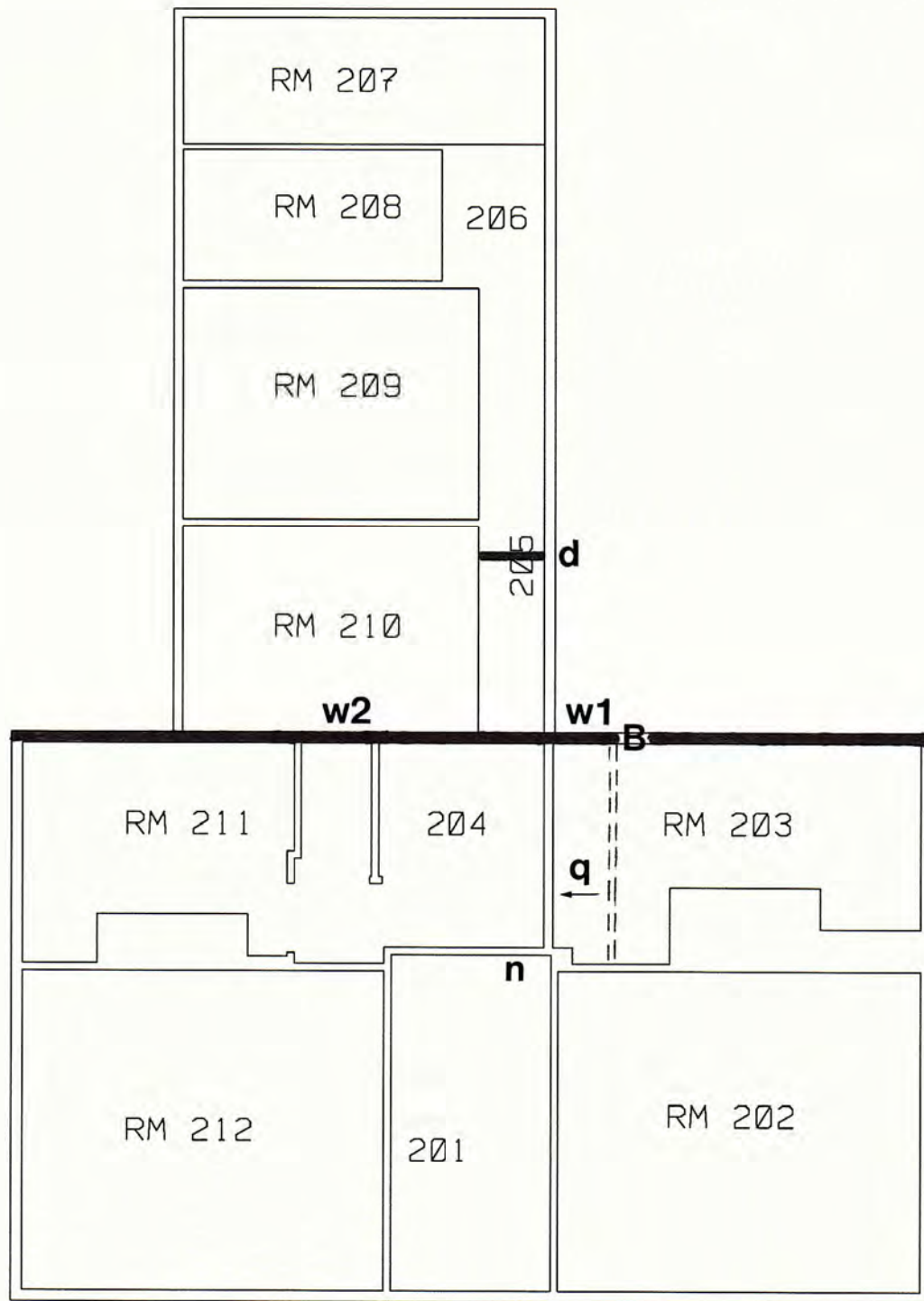
- The cutting of a door between rooms 113 and 112 (**m on plan** ; see **Excavation 113-A**), c. 1900.
- The cutting of a door between the front hall (rooms 101-201) and rear hall (rooms 104-204), also c. 1900 (**n on plan** ; see **Excavation 101-A**).
- The movement of the partition between rooms 203 and 204 (**q on plan**). This occurred very early in the house's history, and seems designed to give more light (**window w1**) and space to room 203. Perhaps the constant increase in the number of Damon children (and /or domestic servants) in the decade after the house's construction created spatial needs not apparent when the house was designed.

Additions to the original floor plan are as follows:

- Rooms 110, 111, 106, and 107 may or may not have been added to the house after c. 1813 (see discussion under Description).
- Room 105 was added in the late nineteenth century. The room covers an outside wall (**F**) which still holds a window. The two windows on the outer wall of 105 are both earlier ones, re-used from elsewhere on the ell.
- Room 108 and the addition to the north (**G**) are of recent date (1980s)
- The second floor of the ell - rooms 205-210 - was added in the mid-nineteenth century (see discussion under Description above). There may have been a window over the rear staircase (**w2**) prior to the addition of the ell's second floor. We could not gain sufficient access to this area to conduct an excavation.



DAMON HOUSE
First Floor



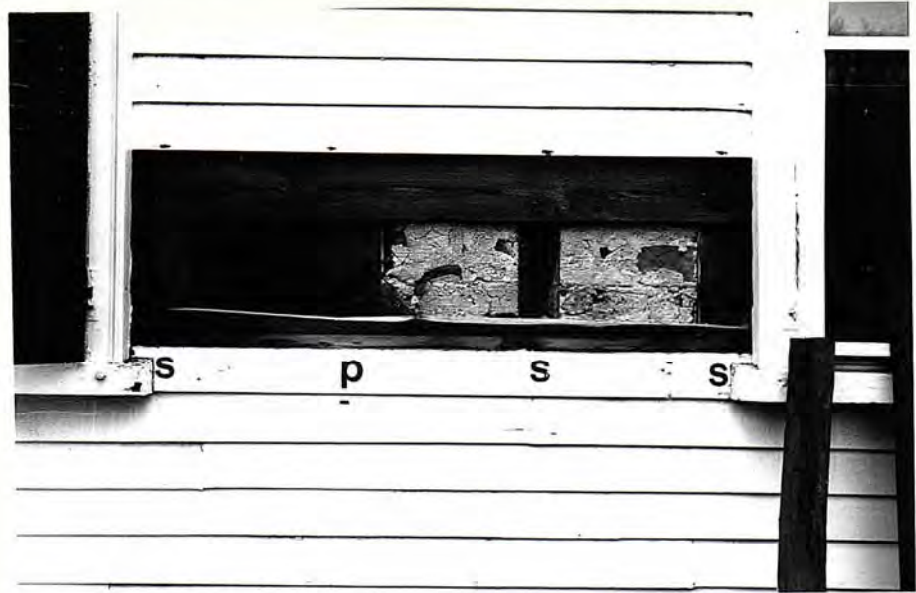
DAMON HOUSE
Second Floor

EXCAVATION EXT-A: Nineteenth Century Framing and Nogging

In an effort to date the frame of the main portion, a section of clapboards and sheathing boards were removed in the center of the east wall, astride a post (**k**, photo 3). There had been speculation that the Damon house was a remodeled eighteenth century frame, but all of the material we discovered through this excavation was clearly early nineteenth century in date. In other words, the house was clearly constructed in the early nineteenth century, although evidence in the attic and ells indicates that a great deal of material from an earlier house was pieced into the frame.

The post (**P**) is the central one of three along the east side of the house. It measures 8"x 8" and is sash-sawn, as is the adjacent brace (**B**) and the three exposed studs (**S**). The joint between post and brace is labeled "26" with black ink, an interesting change from the earlier method of chiseling Roman numerals.

The wall to the north of the post is filled with a nogging of under-burned bricks in a lime stucco. We are unsure how far the nogging extends, but this view suggests that it may only cover the outer walls of the kitchen. This would conform to a practice in many (though not all) 18th century houses of only nogging the walls of the kitchen and those other spaces where food was stored, perhaps as a rodent-proofing method.



EXT - 1



EXT - 2

ARCHEOLOGY OF THE INTERIOR

The interior paint and wallpaper stratigraphy of the Damon Houses has been stripped away in most places by over-zealous restorers. Newspaper articles and other records mention major work to the interior in 1960, 1963, 1966, and 1967. Accompanying photos show whole walls of plaster removed from lathing, and a 1967 description mentions that "several coats" of wallpaper were stripped from at least one room, while the woodwork was sanded by volunteers. A report by an anonymous Historical Society member in 1960 sums things up nicely: "The recent repainting of the house received much favorable comment from both local and out-of-state visitors. Such comments as 'It looks like a new house' and 'marvelous' are noteworthy."

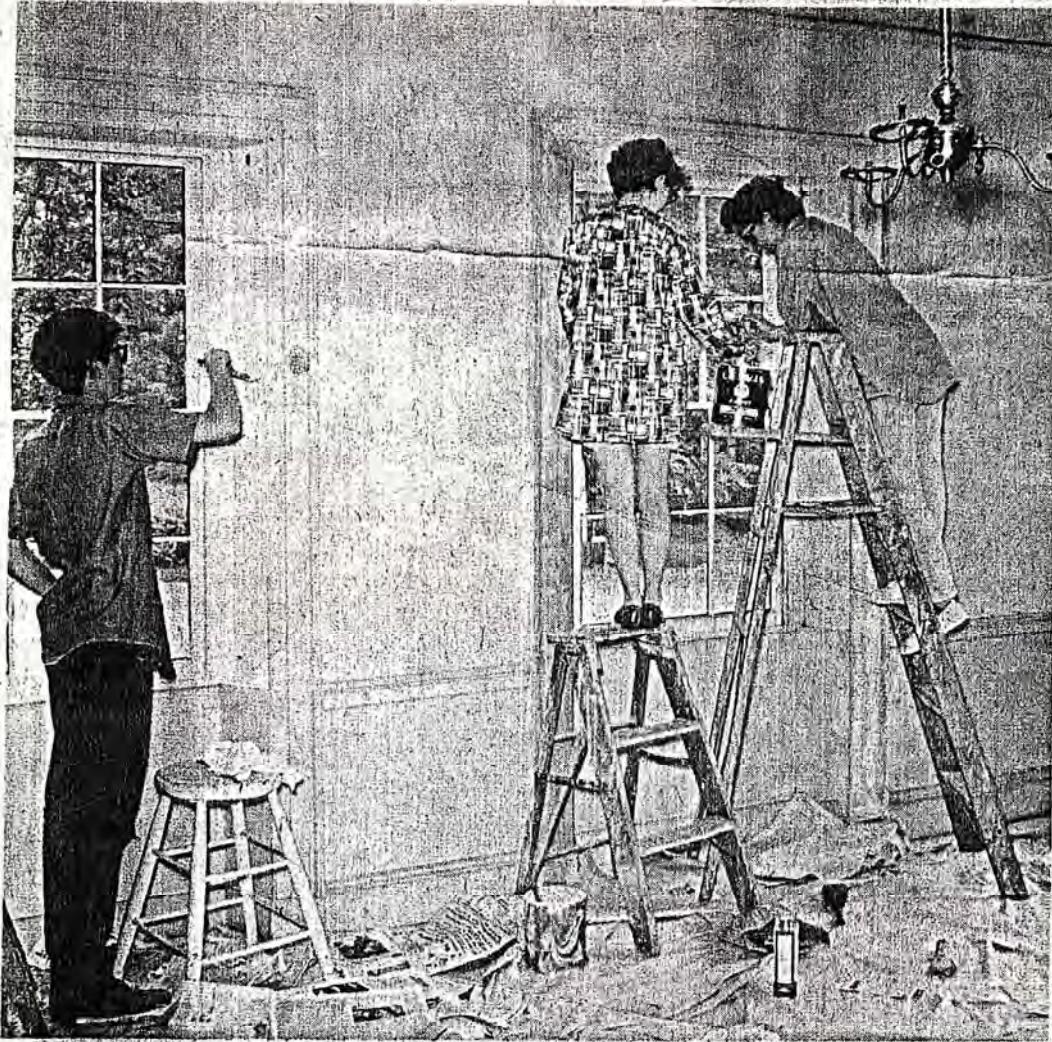
A few samples of early wallpaper and paint were nonetheless discovered by removing door casings and cutting through walls which had been added after initial construction. Opportunities for these excavations were fairly few in number (compared to those in the Parsons House next door), but they suggest certain broad conclusions about the early interior:

- The rooms in the front of the house - i.e. the hall, two first floor parlors, and perhaps front chambers - were probably wallpapered from the beginning. The second floor rear hall, and perhaps the rear chambers and other ancillary rooms, had their plaster painted with distemper and their woodwork left unfinished (bereft of paint).
- The floors were never painted, except perhaps the kitchen floor, which was entirely removed and replaced in the 1960s.
- The interior woodwork colors seem to all be variations on yellow, brown, or grey. Although one often finds bright blue or green used in this period, we found no such samples in the Damon house.
- Finish changes during the nineteenth century were widely spaced. Behind the two casings where wallpaper was discovered, we found two and three layers of paper respectively. Given that both casings dated to about 1900, the pace of refinishing in both rooms was slow. This is not to say that the two parlors or chambers, where we found no evidence, were not remodeled more frequently.

14.

Aug - 9 - 1967

Junior Heritage Society Members At Work



HAVING REMOVED all the wallpaper, (several coats) and paint and sanded the latter, these young people are now painting the woodwork in the Damon room of the Historical Society's Isaac Damon House, Bridge St. Papering, and ceiling will be finished by a professional at cost. Left: chairman Richard Cote; Sally Greal and Donna Tessier, both 17 and Hamp High seniors.

The Busy Teens are part of a youth organization, the Junior Heritage Society, with about 15 members, all of whom have a deep and active interest in preserving Northampton's and other historical backgrounds. Any teenager with a like interest is invited to join, says Richard, chairman of the group, and any and all contributions are always welcome. He greets and guides callers around the Damon House on Saturday and Sunday, from 2-4:30. Adjacent Parsons House is open Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, 2-4:30, and Me-

morial Hall's top floor, where other historical items are displayed may be visited Thursdays from 2-4.

Damon House is practically the young society's clubhouse, according to Richard, where they hold Sunday meetings. They hope to visit other museums and do similar jobs, where there is need, all volunteer of course. Most work either part or full time during the summer. Miss Jeannette Tomlinson, 35 Woodlawn Ave., director of the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, has been advisor for the young people's activities.

ROOMS 103/104: THE KITCHEN

These two spaces, now separated by a board partition, were originally a single large kitchen. The partition was probably added to make the western portion into a buttery or pantry, perhaps when room 112 - likely the original pantry - was remodeled for other purposes. Paint evidence suggests that these changes occurred quite soon after the house was constructed.

Like the front rooms, the kitchen was quite thoroughly "restored" in the 1960s, and little or no early finish remains on the walls or woodwork. Most of the woodwork appears unaltered, a noticeable exception being the fireplace surround, which is entirely modern. The fireplace and ovens were also completely rebuilt.

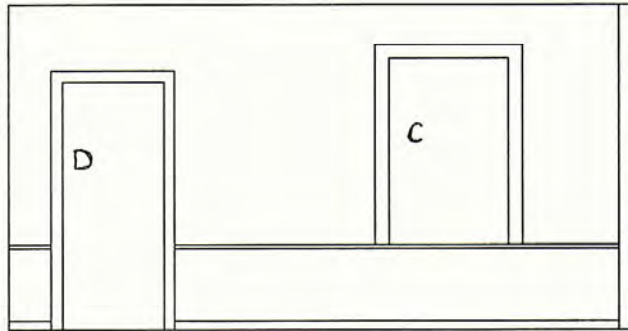
The present wide opening in the board partitioning (A) is a fairly recent alteration. Evidence on the floor indicates that the partition was originally breached by a regular-sized door opening.

The floor in this room seems to date to the modern restoration.

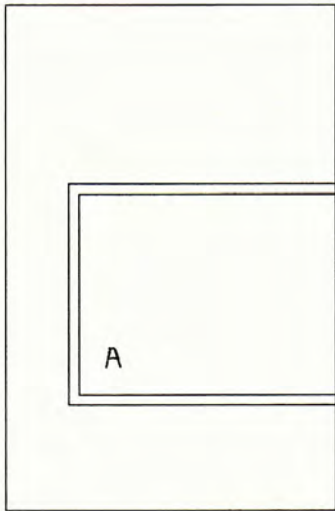
The exterior door (B) is a late 19th-early 20th century replacement in an original opening.

The north window (C) contains two sash very different in style from the others in the main section of the house, and from each other. There is no break in the wainscot to suggest that this bay contained an earlier door opening, but, lacking paint evidence confirming the age of the wainscot, some alteration in this corner cannot be ruled out.

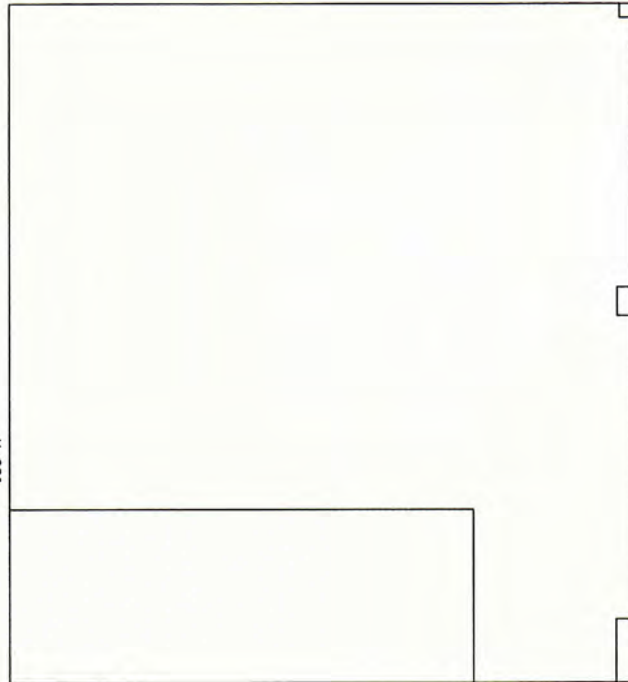
The door to room 105 (D) was a window opening originally. The dimensions of the window lintel are clearly visible in the plaster above the opening. The door is early - paint lines describe a latch - and has been re-used in this opening from elsewhere in the house.



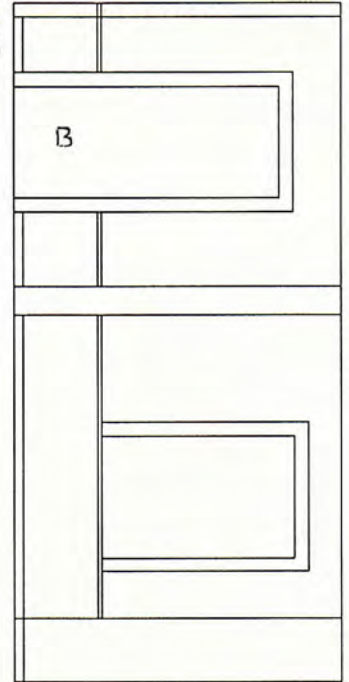
103 N



103 N

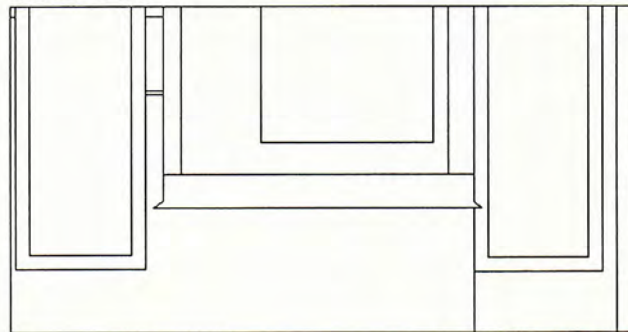


103 E



RML 103

103 S

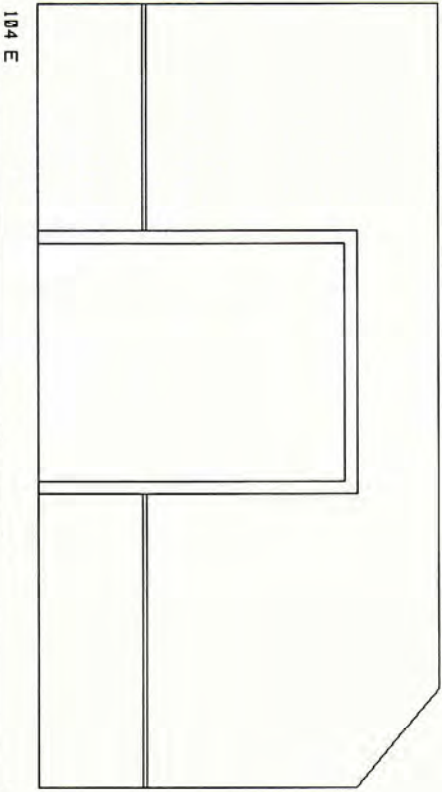
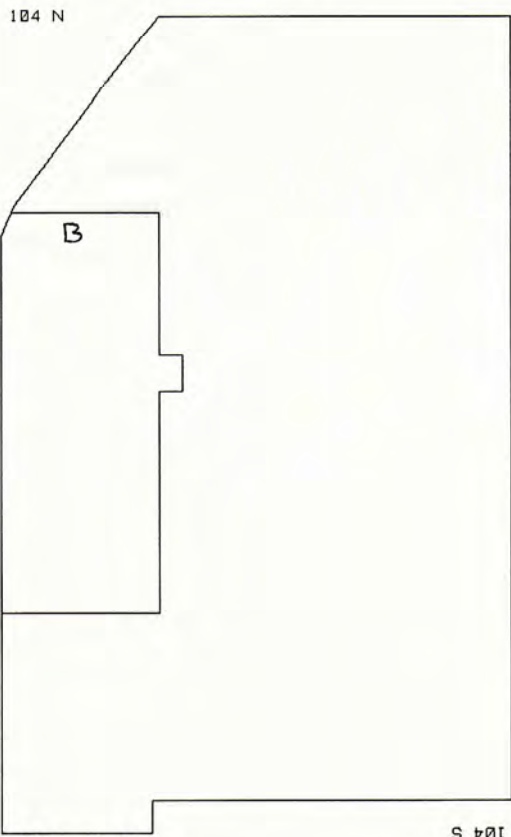
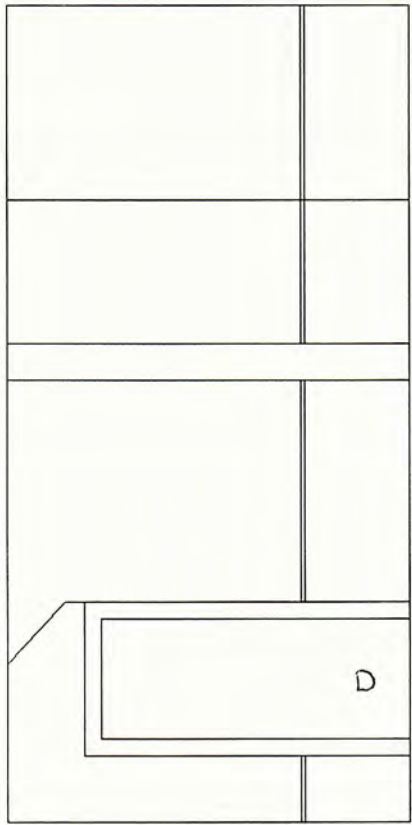
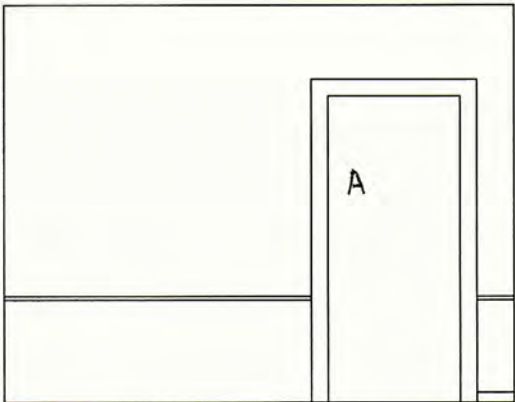


The West End of the Kitchen, now Room 104

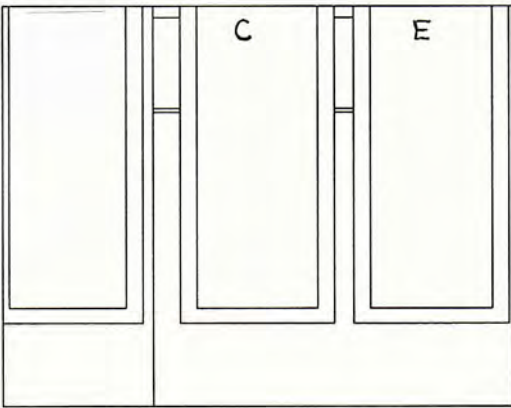
The door to room 112 (A) was originally fitted with a Norfolk latch, now visible only as paint lines. This door was also re-hung on new hinges in the late 19th/early 20th centuries.

There was once a door at the base of the staircase to the second floor (B), although it is difficult to date from its hinge marks.

Doors also stood in the openings to the hall (C) and room 113 (D). The door to the cellar (E) still retains one half of its original Norfolk latch; the other half is still in the house and should be re-attached to the door.



RML 104

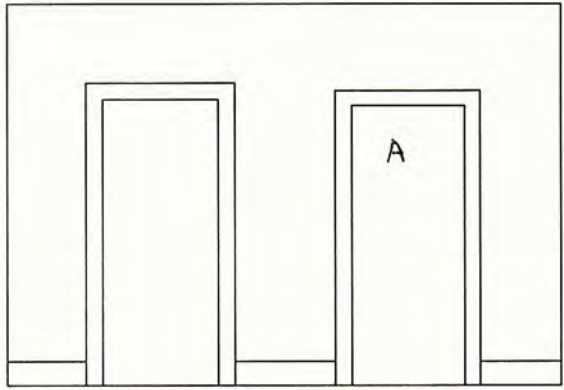


ROOM 113

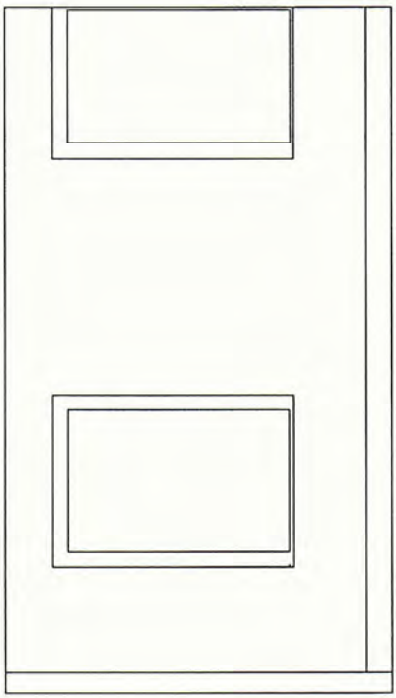
The closet and cupboards in this room suggest it may have been an extra chamber.

Most of the woodwork is original and unaltered. An exception is the door to room 112 (A), which was cut through in the early 20th century. The surround molding is different than the others in the room and is fastened together with wire nails. The door is earlier - there are paint lines indicating earlier knobs and hinges - and was presumably relocated here from elsewhere in the house. There seems to have been no connection between these two rooms in the 19th century.

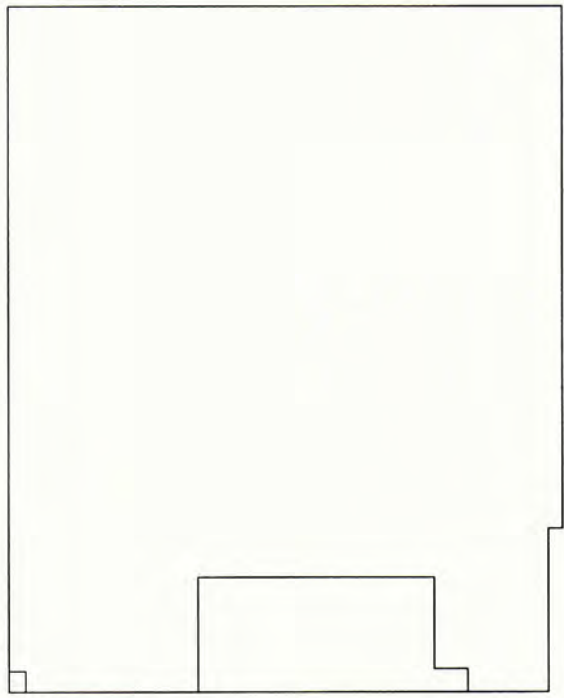
The windows in this room are modern replacement sash, but the openings are unchanged.



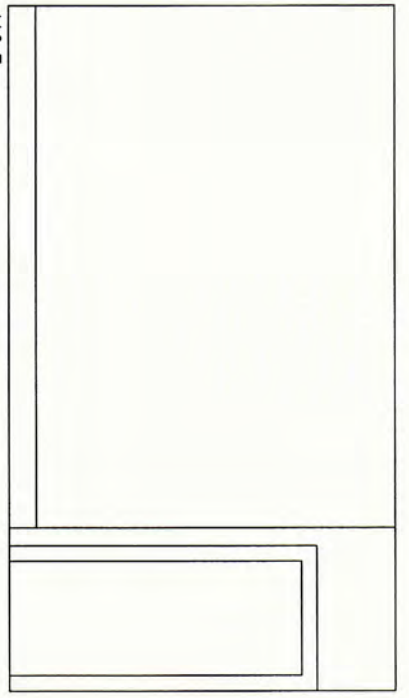
113 N



113 W

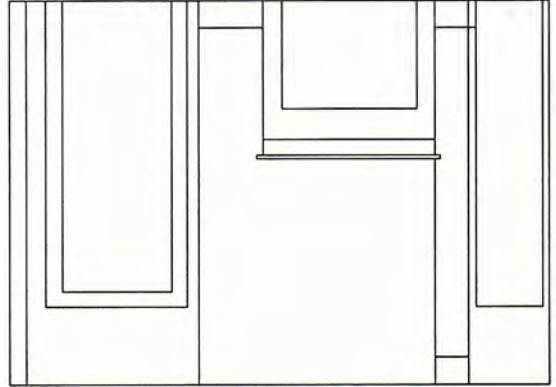


113 E



RML 113

S 111



EXCAVATION 113-A

We removed the casing of the door to room 112, added in the early 20th century, and discovered a number of wallpaper fragments. The top paper is a roller-printed Roccoco design typical of the period 1900-20 (R. Nylander). The sample seems badly faded. Beneath this were two other papers so closely bound to the top fragment that we did not separate them. These fragments might still be separable by a wallpaper conservator. More samples will likely be found under the other two pieces of casing.



113 - A

ROOMS 101-201: THE FRONT HALL AND STAIRCASE

The only major change to this space since c. 1812 has been the cutting through of a door linking the stair landing with the back hall. This occurred in the first quarter of the twentieth century (see **Excavation 101-A** below).

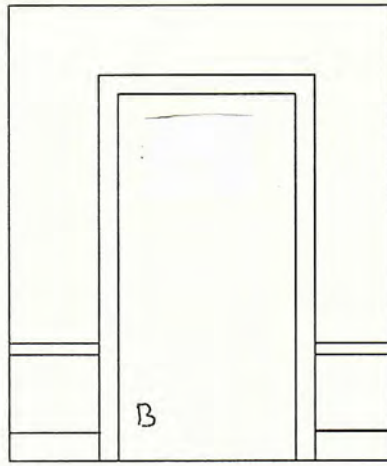
The front door (**A**) seems to be original to the space, although the latch and hinges are 20th-century reproductions. This door was probably fitted with butt hinges from the beginning, as there are no paint lines describing strap-hinges. The location of an earlier latch is marked by paint lines, but these are too unclear to trace to profile. A dutchman repair in the left-hand casing is evidence of a now-missing bell pull.

The doors and surrounds to the flanking rooms on the first and second floors are identical and unaltered. Like the front door, they all have applied moldings and are hung on early butt hinges. Although now fitted with knobs, paint lines describe earlier Norfolk latches on all of these doors, except the one to room 102, which always had a knob (though not the present one). The latches were probably identical to the one still on the door between rooms 203 and 204.

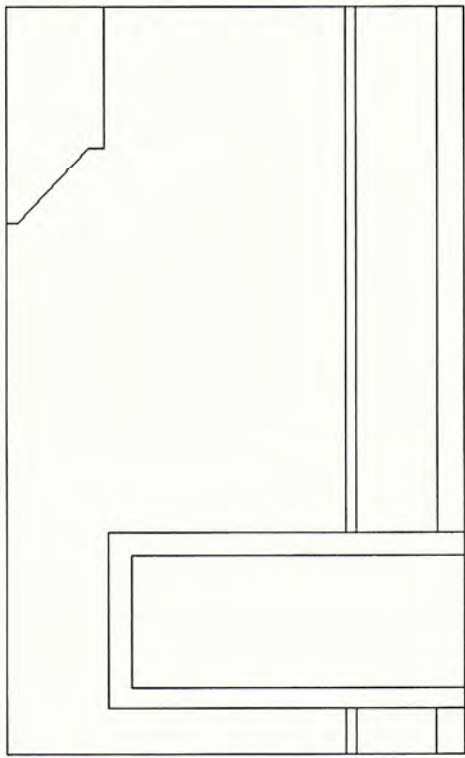
There was originally a door at the back of the first floor hall (**B**), but it has now been removed.

The floors and steps were probably always carpeted. We found no evidence of floor paint, but there are numerous carpet tack-holes around the perimeter on both floors.

The floor on the first story seems to have been taken up and re-laid at some point, as the cut nails there are larger and newer-looking than those on the second floor.



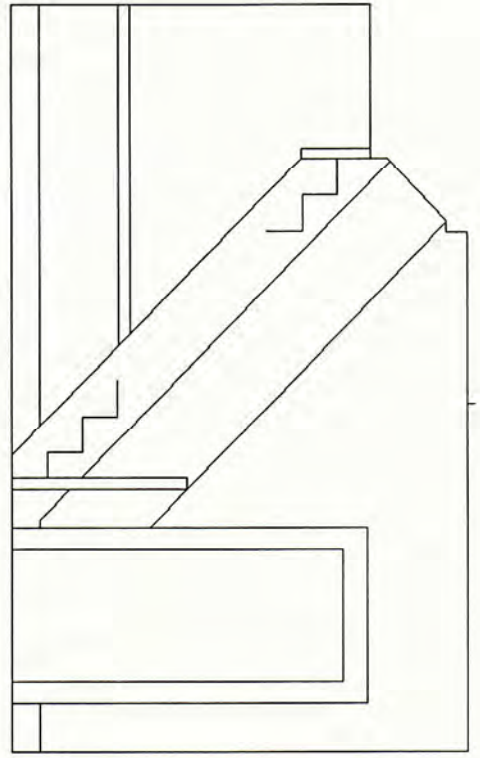
101 N



101 E

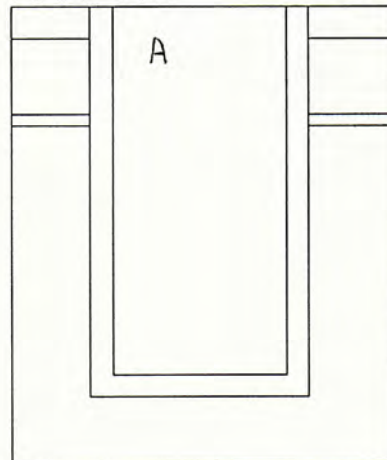


101 E



RML 101

s 101



EXCAVATION 201-A: Hall Wallpapers

Three hall wallpapers were found under the door casing at the stair landing. The door was cut through in the early 20th century to connect the front and back halls, a connection which did not exist in the 19th century. The casing and all of its surrounding woodwork is machine-planed and fastened together with wire nails.

The paper directly under the casing (**photos 4 and 6**) is a pale green roller-printed design probably dating to the 1870s/80s (R. Nylander). This paper was still hanging when the door was cut through. It was applied to the plaster dado as well as the wall (**photo 2**).

Directly under this sample, but only above the chair rail, is an elaborate Federal-period paper printed in multiple shades of grey (**photos 4 and 5**). This is applied directly over the plaster, and could well be the original hall paper of c. 1813 (R. Nylander)

The third paper is a very powdery and deteriorated fragment (**A in photos 2 and 3**) attached only to the dado plaster. This likely dates to the 1850s/60s (R. Nylander).

The absence of the early grey hall paper below on the dado has two possible explanations: the dado was originally painted with a distemper, washed away before the brown & grey floral pattern was applied; or the original paper extended to the floor, but was later removed from the dado and replaced with the brown & grey paper. In either event, the brown and grey pattern likely covered the dado, while the original paper stood on the wall above, for a number of decades in the mid-19th century.

More of the grey pattern would likely be revealed by removing the lintel piece of the door casing.



201 - 1



201 - 2



201 - 3



201 - 5



201 - 4



201 - 6

ROOM 102: RIGHT PARLOR

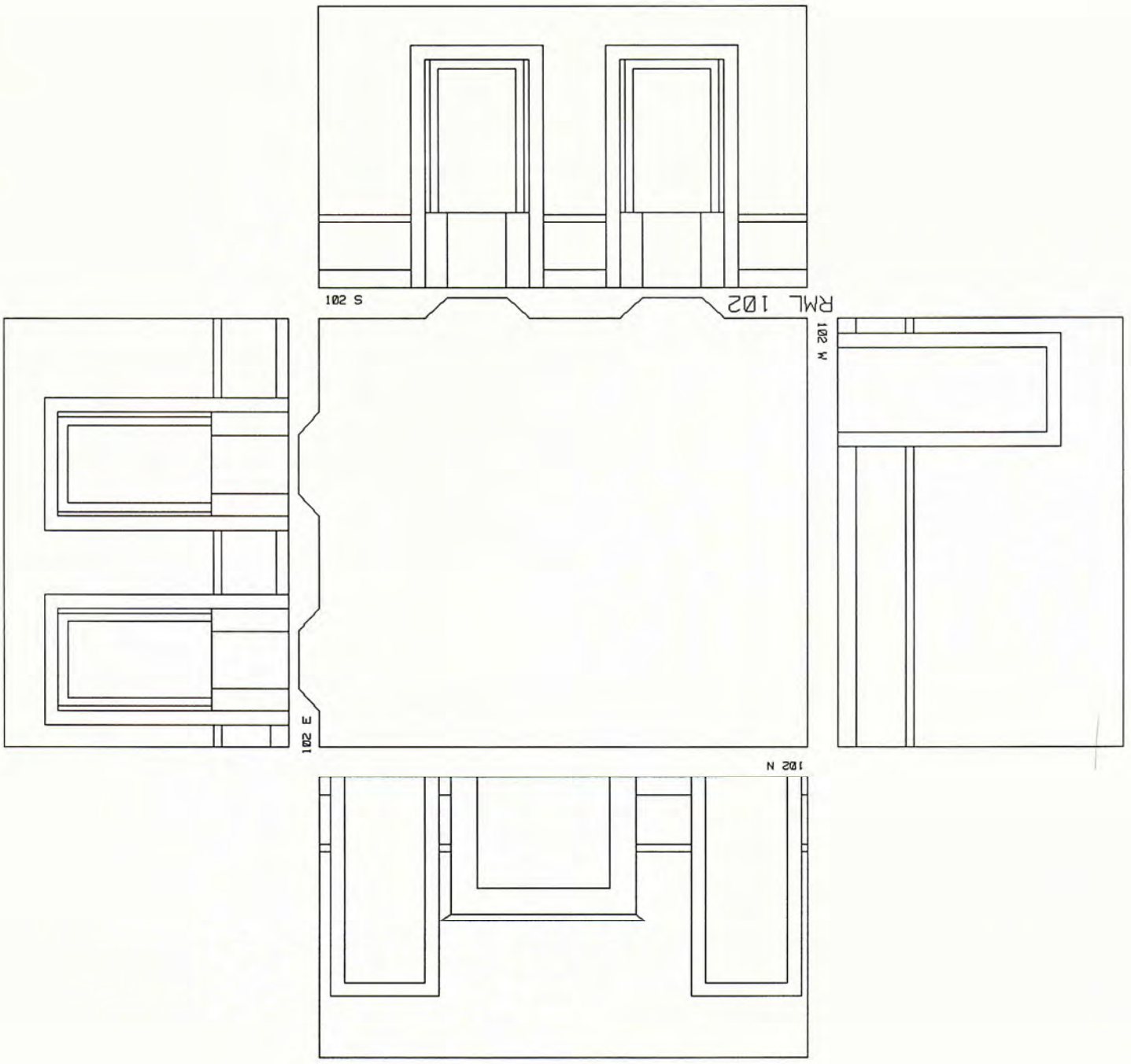
This room was quite thoroughly stripped of woodwork and plaster finish in the 1960s. The only early paint to survive in the room is on the back side of the small door in the cupboard (photo 1). This yellow - the door's original layer - is likely one of the early room colors as well.

Given that an early paper has been found in the hall, this room was probably papered as well in the Federal period. The present wall colors are too light and subtle to reflect the taste of the period.

The woodwork appears to be original, intact, and unaltered. An exception are the folding shutters, original features which have all been removed. The Norfolk latches on the two room doors have also been removed and replaced with knobs, probably a later 19th century alteration.

There are carpet tacks around the perimeter of the floor.





ROOM 112

This is the only room we can be certain existed within the original ell. Its foundation, framing, and finish is fully integral with that of the main section of the house. The rooms behind it (no. 111 and 106) are too altered to be explained without serious excavating.

The cellar stair which descends from the northeast corner (A) was added sometime in the later nineteenth century, and connects with a small brick enclosure, probably a cold storage room. The rest of the room was remodeled when the stair was added, but the stairwell sealed off the northeast corner from any alteration, preserving a small section of the room's original finish.

The wall in the stairwell (photo 1) is sheathed with simple wainscoting, below an unmolded window surround. This ancillary space appears to have been unpainted originally; the paint now covering sections of the woodwork looks to have been daubed on after the corner became a stair hall. There was also no coating on the plaster. An early cellar window sash also survives in this enclosure.



112 - 1

DAMON HOUSE: INTERIOR WOODWORK PAINT ANALYSIS

This sampling project involved all of the first floor rooms in the main portion of the house, and two of those on the second floor. Small cubic sections of wood were removed from various features in each room, and examined microscopically in the SPNEA Conservation Center paint lab in Waltham, Massachusetts. The first (and sometimes second) paint layers in each space were then matched to chips in the Benjamin Moore color system.

We looked for evidence of early wall paint in most spaces, but found only a single early distemper, within a partition cavity on the second floor. Most of the rooms were likely wallpapered from the beginning.

Room 102 (Front Parlor)

WOOD

1. D. Brown (BM 1099)
2. L. Brown/ Putty (BM 235)
3. Cream
4. Grey
5. Cream
6. White

The layering on most samples had been sanded away during a prior repainting. Only one sample (from a door casing) retained the full stratigraphy described above. Given the sanding, it is unclear if the full stratigraphy survives even in this sample. There is an additional, yellow color within the closet beside the fireplace, which does not show up in the list above.

Room 114 (Front Parlor, now Director's Office)

WOOD

1. Light Brown (BM 1062)
- 2.+ Multiple Whites and Off-Whites

Layer no. 1 is identical (or nearly so) to the first layer in the adjacent front hall.

Room 101 (Front Hall)

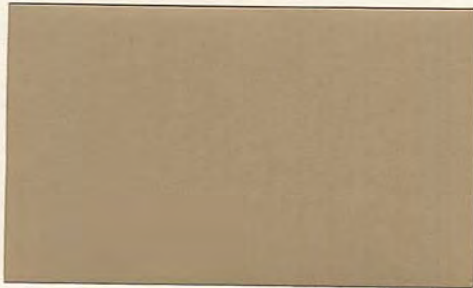
WOOD

1. Light Brown (BM 1062)
2. Off-White (perhaps two or more layers) (BM965)
3. Yellow
4. White (perhaps two or more layers)

RM 102



BM 1099



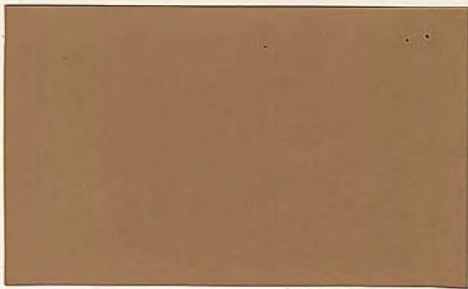
BM 235

RM 114

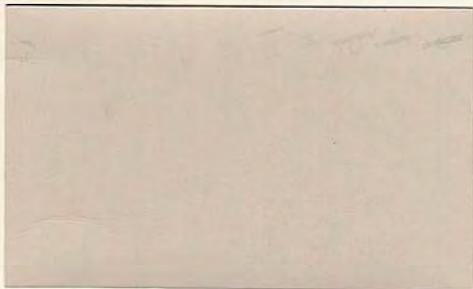


BM 1062

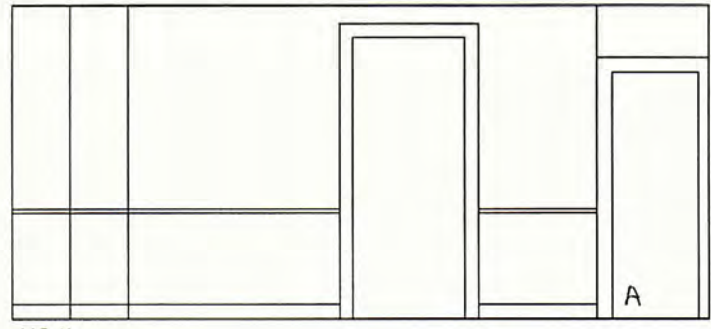
RM 101



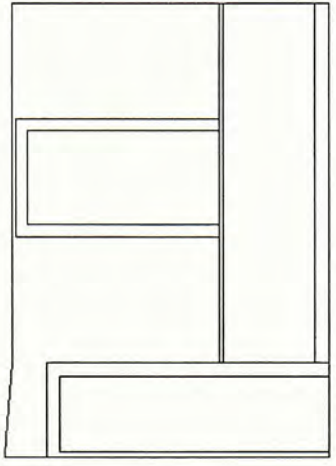
BM 1062



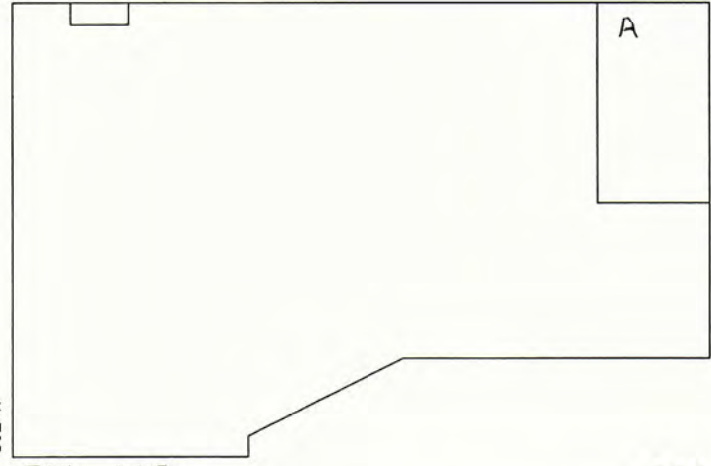
BM 965



112 N

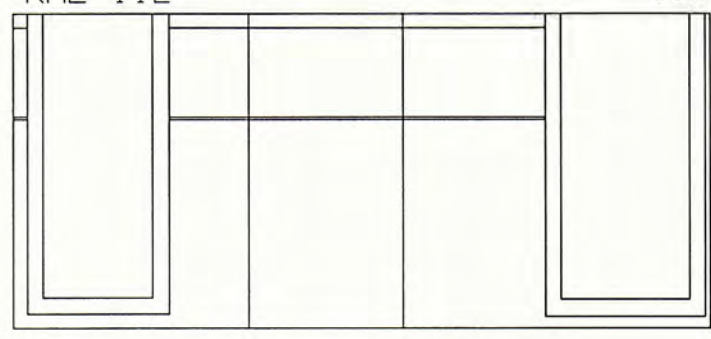
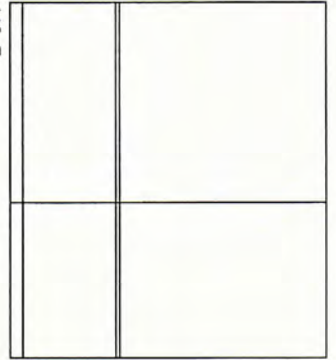


112 W



RML 112

112 E



112 S

ROOM 204: THE BACK HALL

Before the door to the front hall was cut through in the early 20th century (A) this hall was connected with the first floor only via the back (kitchen) stairs (B). The staircase itself is original but the balustrade is likely the same age as the front hall door opening.

We know a bit more about the early finish in this space than others in the house, because its east wall (C) was moved in the 19th century, entombing sections of finish plaster and flooring within the partition (see excavation 204-A). Moving the partition increased the size of room 203 at the expense of the hall, but the central consideration was probably providing more light to the room by capturing the hall window (D). The hall may have still been lit by a second window over the stair (E), which would have been closed up when the ell was extended. The existence of this second window is conjectural, however, as the area was not excavated.

The door to the ell (F) appears to have been cut through later in the nineteenth century, when a second floor was added to the ell.

The door to room 203 is identical to those opening off the front hall and is clearly an original feature. Its Norfolk latch (photo 1) is the only one in the house to survive in situ, the others having been replaced by knobs later in the nineteenth century.

The door to room 213 is a narrow 4-panel type, originally fitted with a (probably late) Suffolk latch. Its narrowness is partly a function of the staircase, but it also suggests that there was no partition here when the house was built.

There are carpet tacks all around the perimeter of this floor. Evidence gathered from excavation 204-A indicates that the floor was never painted.

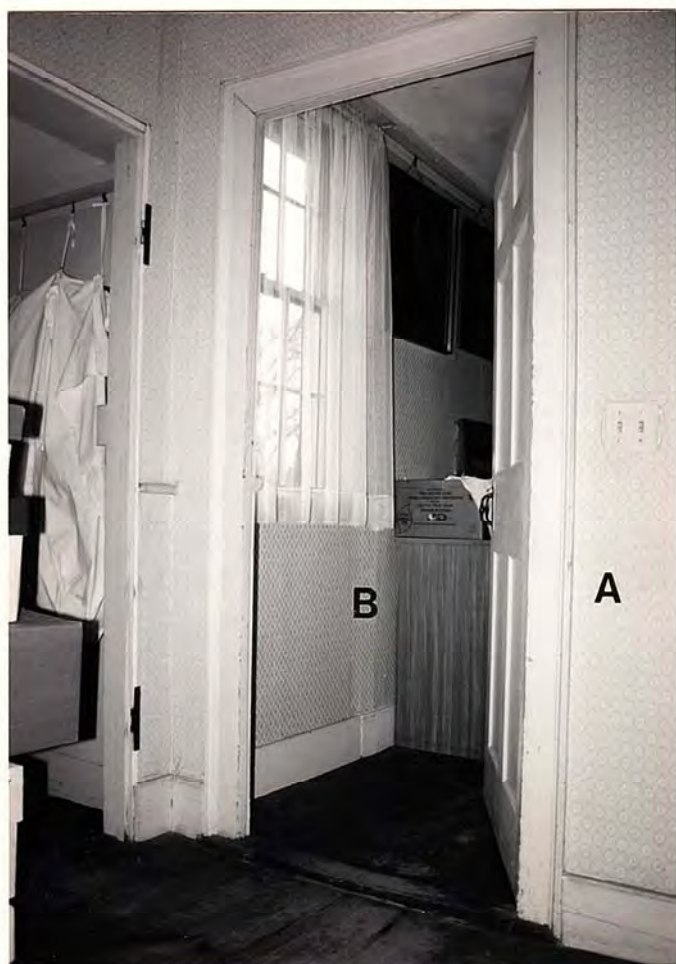


EXCAVATION 204-A: EARLY WALL PAINT

The plaster partition between rooms 203 and 204 originally stood a few feet east of its current location. The original partition line is clearly visible in the plaster and flooring of room 203 (**B** in photo 2). The intention was likely to transfer the hall window to the underlit bedroom. The hall probably had a second window over the kitchen stairs until the raising of the ell covered it in the later 19th century.

An excavation made into the room side of this partition uncovered an area of early, perhaps original hall wall paint (**C** in photos 4 and 5). Solubility tests indicated that the paint is a distemper, a standard 19th century wall coating. Residue of the same wall paint is also under the modern wallpaper to the right of the partition. Interestingly, the baseboard in the same cavity (**D**) is unpainted.

We also removed the baseboard on the hall side of the partition to examine the floorboards (photos 6 and 7). These were unpainted at the time the partition was moved, likely indicating that the hall was carpeted from an early date.



204 - 2



204 - 3



204 - 4



204 - 5



204 - 6



204 - 7

Three or four layers of a contrasting light brown/grey paint was applied over the plastered wainscotting in this space, then it was papered, and then three or four more similar layers were applied, including the present white.

Room 104 (Formerly part of the kitchen, now an office)

WOOD

1. D. Yellow (BM 259) with Red Baseboard (BM 1253)
2. Grey (difficult to match) with Red Baseboard (BM 259)
3. Cream (red color on baseboard may have survived)
4. Grey (BM 1537)
5. Grey
6. L. Green (BM 522)
7. Cream
8. Cream
9. Cream
10. Cream
11. White

This room likely shared its color scheme with the kitchen, whose historic paint layers have been thoroughly stripped. The board partition separating the two spaces was added between the application of the seventh and eighth paint layers. The persistence of red baseboards in this ancillary space is interesting - they were not detected elsewhere in the house. The original yellow color is also quite typical in kitchens and simpler rooms in the later eighteenth century, and persists here into the nineteenth.

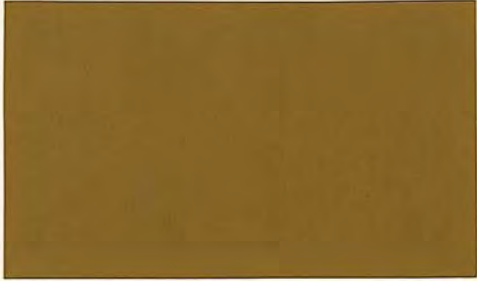
Room 103 (The Kitchen)

The woodwork in this room has been too thoroughly stripped to leave stratigraphic evidence. See room 104.

Room 113 (Chamber?)

The samples from this room have ten layers of creams, whites, and off-whites which have not yet been separated or matched.

RM 104



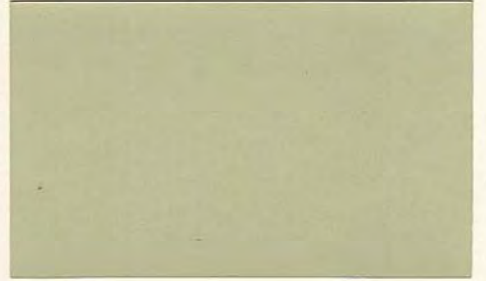
BM 259

R



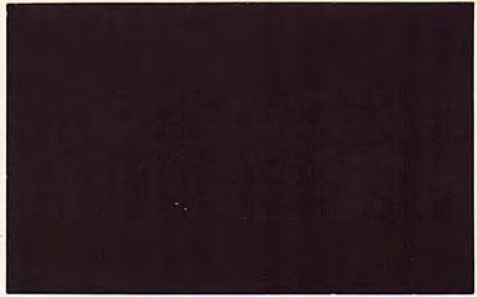
BM 1537

R



BM 522

RM 104 baseboard



BM 1253

R



BM 259

Room 204 (The Back Hall)

WOOD

1. L. Brown (BM 235)
2. Cream
3. Yellow
4. Cream
5. Cream
6. D. Cream
8. White
9. Cream

The first layer is similar or identical to the second layer in room 102.

This is the only space in the house which has yielded an early distemper wall paint, a yellow (BM HC-8). This appears to have been applied before the first layer of woodwork paint (i.e. it accompanied unpainted woodwork for some period of time).

ROOM 203 (The Kitchen Chamber)

WOOD

1. Yellow/Brown (BM 1096)
 2. L. Brown (BM 235)
- Multiple Layers, similar or identical to back hall.

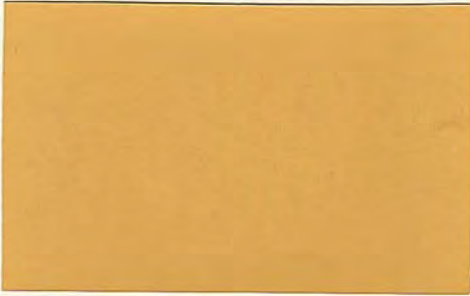
The first layer in this room was applied before the woodwork in the adjacent back hall was painted for the first time.

RM 204



BM 235

RM 204 wall



BM HC8

RM 203



BM 1096

APPENDIX: EXTERIOR PAINT ANALYSIS, DAMON HOUSE

Ten paint samples were collected from the Damon House exterior and analyzed at the SPNEA Conservation Center. The intent of the project was to explain the house's exterior paint history and frame recommendations for exterior repainting. As the exterior of the main section appeared to be little changed since initial construction, the comparative dating of discrete features was of only incidental concern.¹

The two samples with the deepest stratigraphy were from a weatherboard on the south elevation and from one of the pilasters of the front door surround (see microphotographs of cross-sections). It is apparent from comparing the two samples that the house was painted polychromatically - i.e. the body and trim painted different colors - over a number of episodes. The pilaster layers, with only a few exceptions, are whites or off-whites. Some of the early body colors, however, are dominated by non-white pigments, either yellows or greys. The last eight to ten paintings have been unifying white schemes. Twentieth century photographs confirm that the exterior has been white for most or all of this century; the polychromatic schemes are likely nineteenth century in date.

Matching these two samples layer for layer is a difficult task, as the pilasters appear to have been painted more frequently than the weatherboards - a common occurrence with accessible areas of decorative woodwork. The outer row of numbers on the photograph of the pilaster stratigraphy represent an educated guess as to which trim layers correspond to the siding layers - numbered on the previous microphotograph. Some of this cross-referencing is based on evidence from other samples, but the remaining samples are not nearly as deep as the two illustrated. Also note that the microphotographic process distorts true color readings, and the color designations in the discussion below are based on observation of the sample rather than the image.

The earliest recorded scheme appears to have been yellow ochre on the body of the house and a cream or off-white on the trim. The house was then unified with whitish paint through at least two episodes, before the body was painted a light grey/brown (no. 4 in the weatherboard photo). If the dark grey layer 6 on the pilaster accompanied the grey on the body, then the house's second polychromatic scheme was a dark/light combination of the same color.

We can get a clearer picture of subsequent layers by turning to microphotographs of two other samples - from a weatherboard on the east elevation, and a window surround on the south wall. These are representative of most of the remaining body and trim samples, in that they lack the earliest layers of our two deepest cross-sections. The window surround sample was also painted far less frequently than the portico pilasters. Indeed, beginning with layer no. 5, these two samples show a much clearer synchronicity of painting episodes

¹Changes in the configuration of the ell, which still remain unclear, could not be addressed through paint analysis. Most of the ell cladding is replacement material post-dating the earliest structural remodelings.

than do our deeper samples.

Body layer no. 5 appears under the microscope as "putty-colored", perhaps some combination of yellow, brown, and even black pigment. Layer 6 is much more definitely yellow. These body layers seem to have been combined with cream or off-white trim layers visible in the window surround photo.

The dark grey body color on the south elevation weatherboard (no. 7), which also shows up on the pilaster, is missing from all of the other weatherboard and trim samples.² It may have been loosely bound and was scraped off during prep work. Our sampling was restricted to a few areas, and this layer might have shown up with wider collection.

Subsequent layers were all identical on both body and trim, all quite close to white.

We could not find sash or shutter paint samples of any depth in our brief survey, but we did locate a relatively deep area of paint on the east entrance door. This door likely dates to this century, but it preserves a sequence of white/dark brown/green. These may have been the window sash colors as well.

Recommendations for Repainting

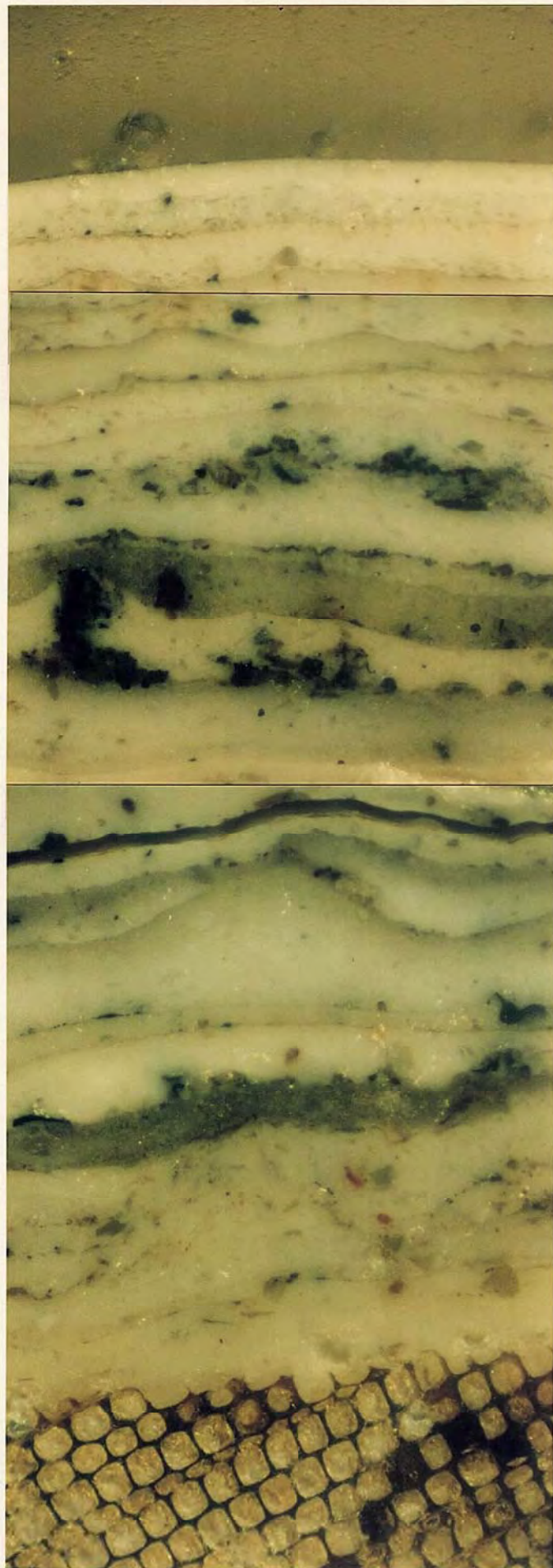
If the Damon House interior is to be re-painted in early nineteenth century colors, this presents a good opportunity to restore an earlier exterior color scheme as well. The best two choices - on purely technical grounds - are the yellow/off white schemes (layers 1 and 6). The yellows are more easily exposed and matched than the greys and putty (layers 4,5, and 7), and one can be more certain about their accompanying trim color. The earlier yellow corresponds to Benjamin Moore no. HC-8, and the later to no. 222.

The trim colors which accompanied these yellows are more elusive, as they are extremely light. The easier of the two to match is layer no. 1 (BM 941). Layer 6 appears to be a slightly lighter version of the same - a "muddy" white - but cannot be closely matched to any of the chips in the Benjamin Moore system. If layer 6 is chosen for recreation, we suggest using BM 941 as a starting point, and adding measured amounts of white until a good aesthetic balance is achieved.

Educated speculation will have to be relied upon for the door, sash, and shutter colors. For the shutters, borrowing BM 686 from the Shepherd House would not be unreasonable. We do not know how early that color is, but nineteenth century shutters were most often painted some shade of green. The doors might be painted the same color as the trim, based on the evidence that the side door was originally off-white. The window sash could be

²There is a thin grey line over layer 6 in the photograph of the east elevation weatherboard, which might either be layer 7 or a dirt layer. The later is much more likely, given the line's extreme thinness, but a very thin paint layer can't be ruled out.

Painted a very dark red or brown, which experience also shows was a common treatment throughout the nineteenth century. BM 1253 (enclosed) is a common nineteenth century sash and baseboard color.



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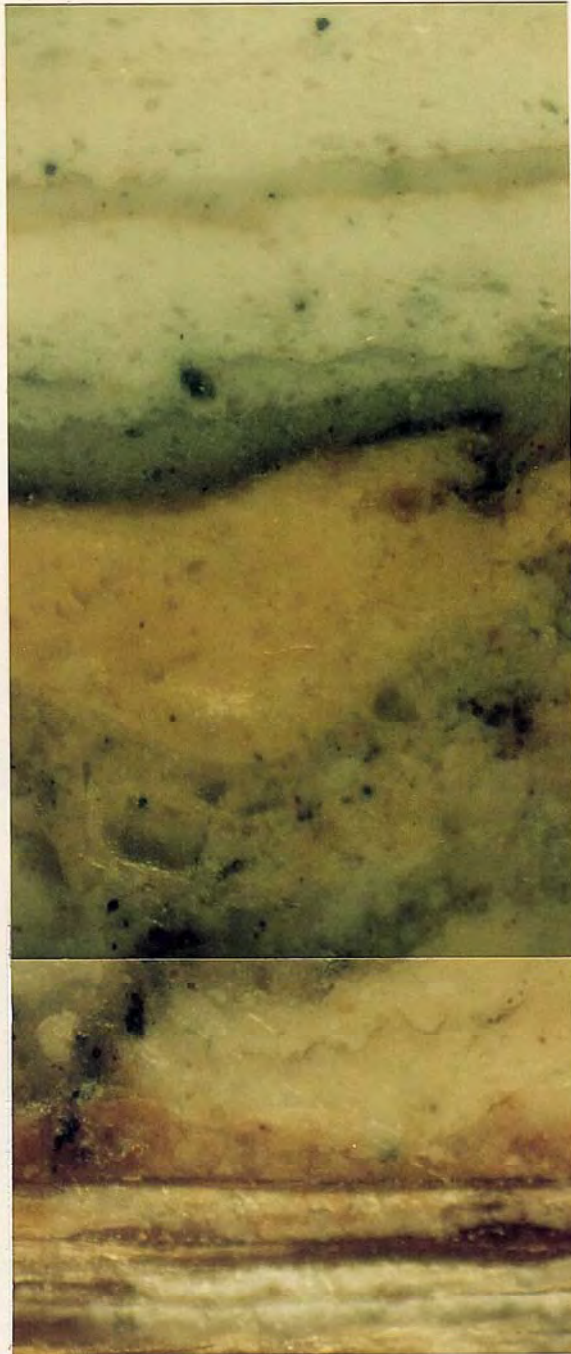
7

6

1

Front Door Pilaster
South Elevation
Damon House

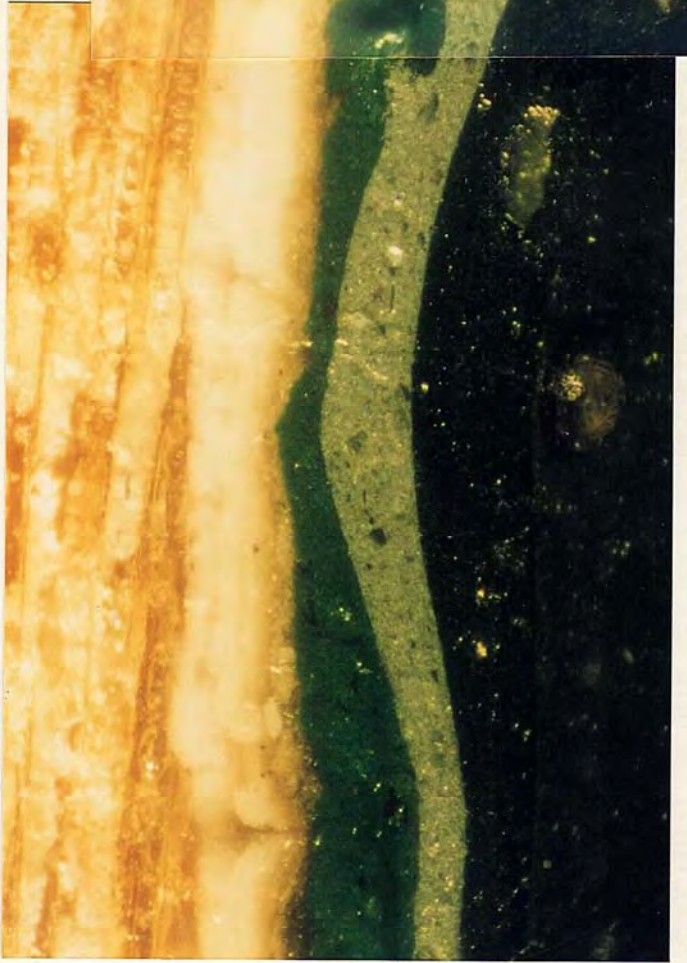
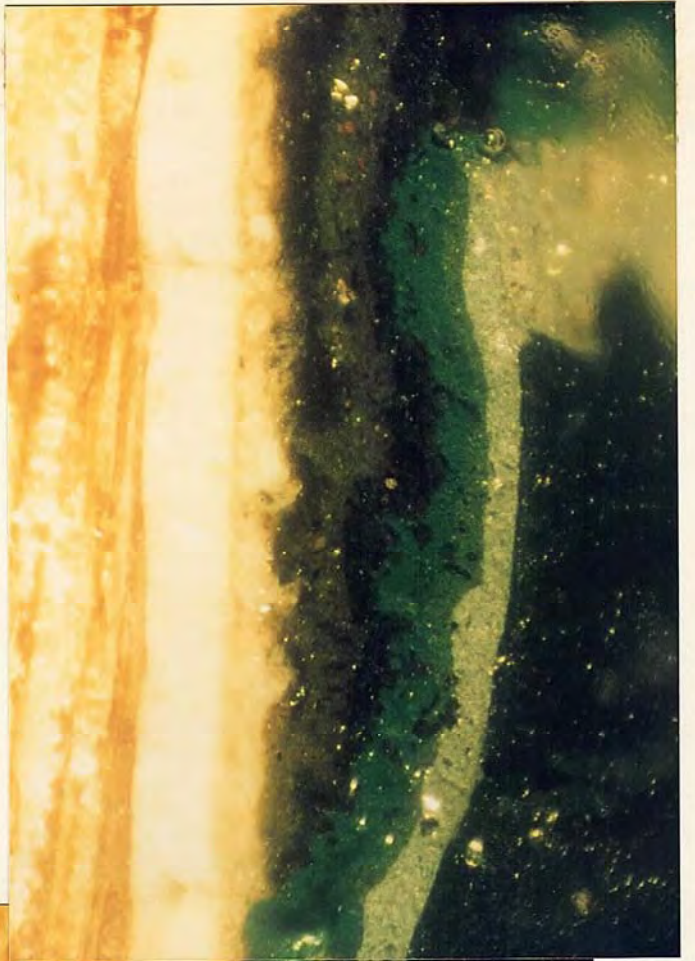
(*) These light greyish layers could represent a 'bleeding' of excess oil from the layer above. They might also be finish layers over primers.



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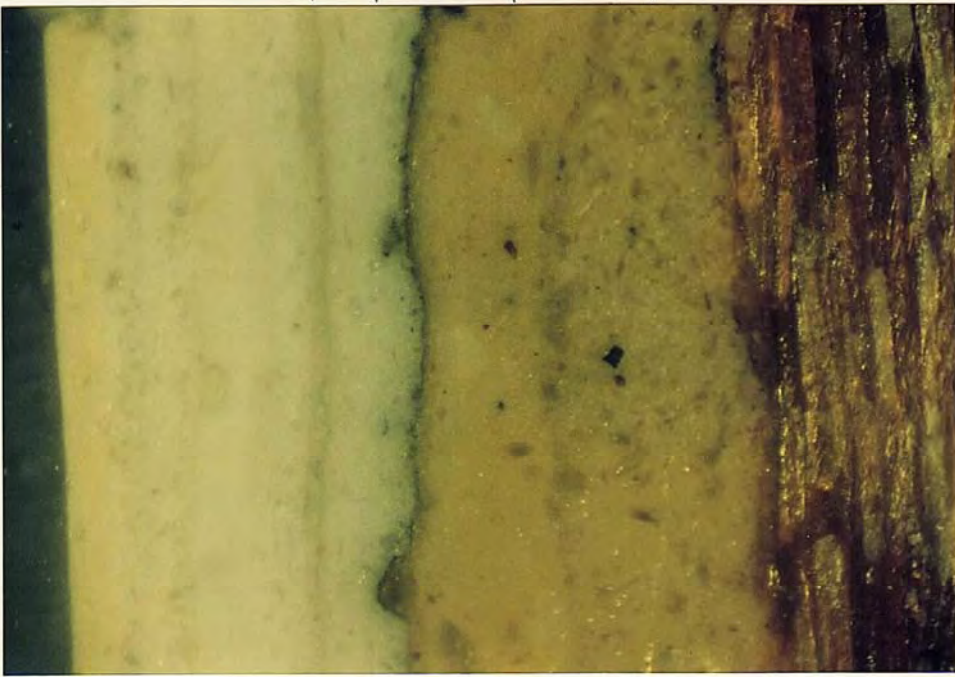
Weatherboard, South Elevation,
Damon House

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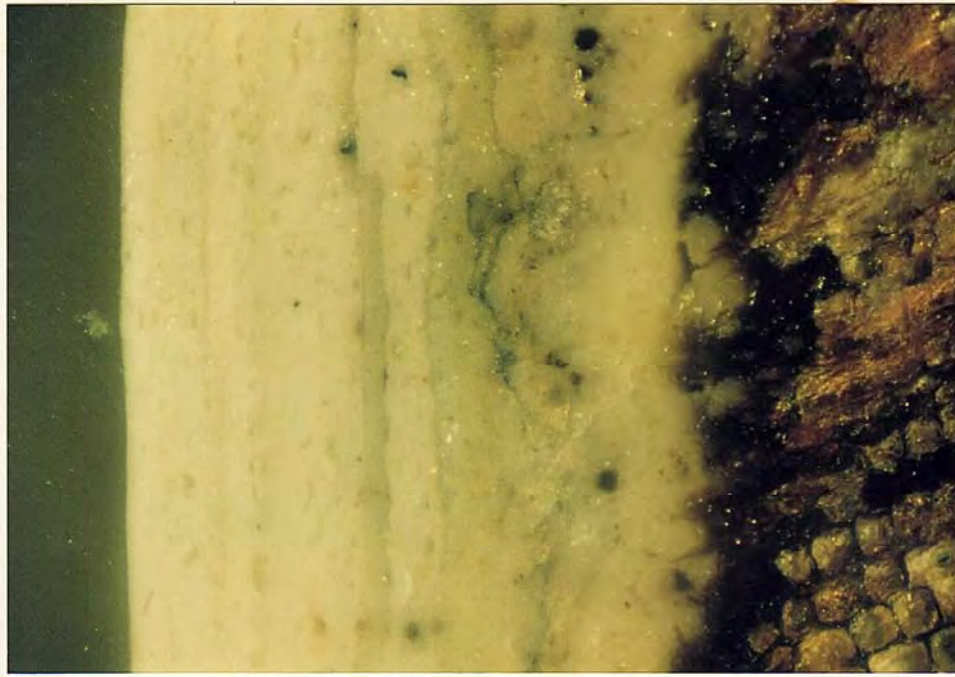
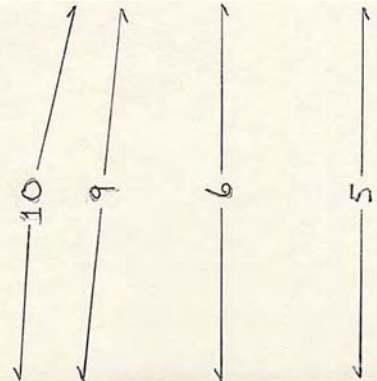
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Slide Door, East Elevation
Damon House



Weatherboard
East Elevation, Damon

D2



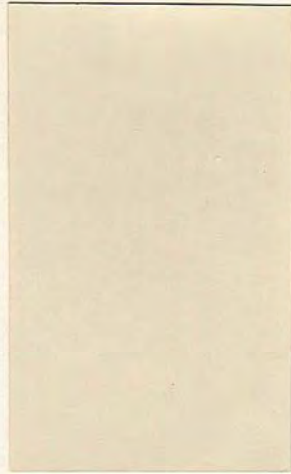
Window Surround
South Elevation, Damon

D4

Comparison of typical siding and trim samples, Damon House. The numbers correspond to layers on the weatherboard sample, south elevation (previous image)



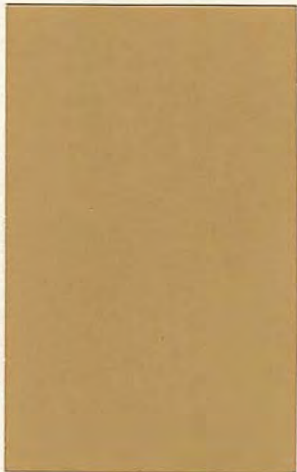
Body color (layer 1)
BM HC-8



Trim color (layer 1)
BM 941



Sash color (speculative)
BM 1253



Body color (layer 6)
BM-222