

Hanson House

**53 Marshall Road
August 2021**



At Risk Historical House Documentation

**Prepared for the
Kingston Heritage Commission**

Hanson House

At Risk House Report

Assembled by:

Bob Bean

Also Contributing:

Susan Ayer

Marghi Bean

Carl Goodwin

Ernie Landry

Walt Roy – (Photography)

Special Thanks also goes to:

Kingston Police Department

Kingston Heritage Commission

Copies of this book can also be found:

Nichols Museum Building

Kingston Community Library

Published during 2021

Kingston, NH

Hanson House

At Risk House Report

<u>Table of Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	3
Hanson Family History	3
Why is this house “At Risk”	5
House Inspection	6
Building Floor Plans	7
Discussion on Age	9
Hanson House Unusual Framing	13
Final Days of the House	14
Photo Gallery	16

Hanson House on 53 Marshall Road

Introduction

The Hanson House on Marshall Road has an unusual history. It was put on the Heritage List of "At Risk" properties due to it being empty for so many years, and its deteriorated condition by 2015.

As a property, it shows up on the (earliest) 1856 maps as a house owned by S. (Samuel) Hanson. The house is located on the north side of Kingston, right along the Brentwood line. It is on the north side of Marshall Road, and at one point consisted of many acres of land in both Kingston and Brentwood.

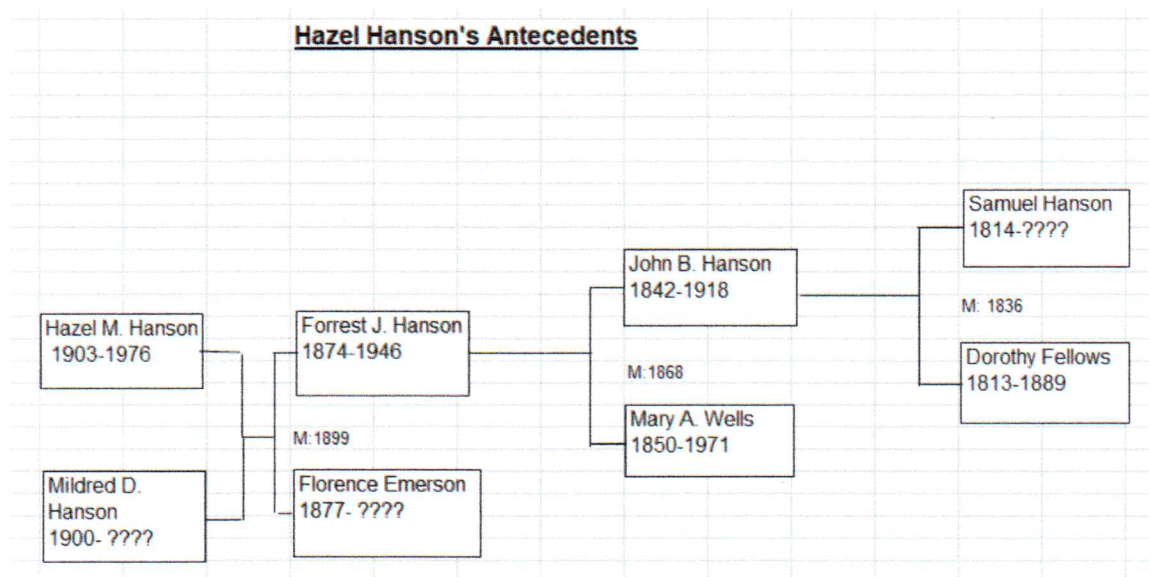
Hanson Family History

Researching the ownership and transfer of the Hanson family home turns out to be fairly hard because the Hanson family over the years had many real estate transactions registered. There are listings of the Hansons owning land in Brentwood, Poplin (Danville) and Kingston. But there are also transactions of them buying lumber rights on land in East Kingston as well. Many of these transactions are listed as for \$1, and represented them swapping land for other considerations. Sometimes the land involved was extensive, but often it was an acre or two to adjust lot lines.

Samuel, John, and Forrest Hanson were very busy, and the transactions only show a part of what they must have been doing.

We found no record of when the Hanson family first took ownership of that property.

The Hanson family is listed as residing in Kingston possibly since the early 1800s. From the genealogy records it was possible that would be from about 1836. The family tree that leads to Hazel Hanson can be seen below:



Hazel was the daughter of Forrest Hanson and the Granddaughter of John and Mary Hanson, and great grand daughter of Samuel and Dorothy Hanson. All had lived in this house at one time. Over the years there are stories of a box mill, and a brick yard being in operation on this lot. Several deeds mention a saw mill, so there was something there. Also, there were several timber deeds registered to the Hanson's so they were buying timber for something. From the fact that there is no running water on the site, it is likely it was a steam mill. The Hanson family seems to have prospered in the north end of Kingston.

Forrest died in 1946, and by the 1970s Hazel was the sole resident of the house. By 1975 when this writer moved to Kingston and lived a block away from the Hanson house, the Hanson House was one of the nicest houses in the neighborhood. It's gardens were well planted and quite beautiful.

Hazel died in a car accident in December of 1976. And with no spouse or children, her house went into her estate. The estate was managed by Ann and Richard West of Contoocook, NH. The estate chose to leave the house empty while still paying all the taxes. Over time it deteriorated.

Why is this house "At Risk"

In 1983 it was listed in the Cultural Survey. It was stated that it was built c. 1809 on the survey.



Picture from the 1983 Cultural Survey

Since 1976 the house was left empty and has deteriorated even further. One infamous episode in Kingston's history was when it was vandalized. In 2002 a teenager, Elijah Wallace aged 18, broke into the house and proceeded to vandalize it. He prepared and

sent letters to prominent politicians. He claimed they had anthrax in them and created a major national story.

Over the years the fields surrounding the house were maintained by the Magnusson family. While commendable, it only made the deteriorating house condition stand out. About 2010, the Renaissance Faire needed parking and the West family generously allowed them to use the fields around the house. As a result the Ren Faire cut the fields and kept them clear from 2010 to 2016. In 2017 the Faire moved out of town, and the Magnusson's picked up the field clearance again. But the house remained untouched, and trees and shrubs grew up around it. So, in 2019 the front of the house looked like this:



Picture of the House Front taken in 2019 by Walt Roy

By 2019, the Heritage Commission had been trying to get into the Hanson House to document it for posterity. From its outward appearance, it was obviously deteriorating beyond repair.

When we first started the “At Risk” property efforts in the Heritage Commission, we had problems getting permission to enter the house due to liability issues.

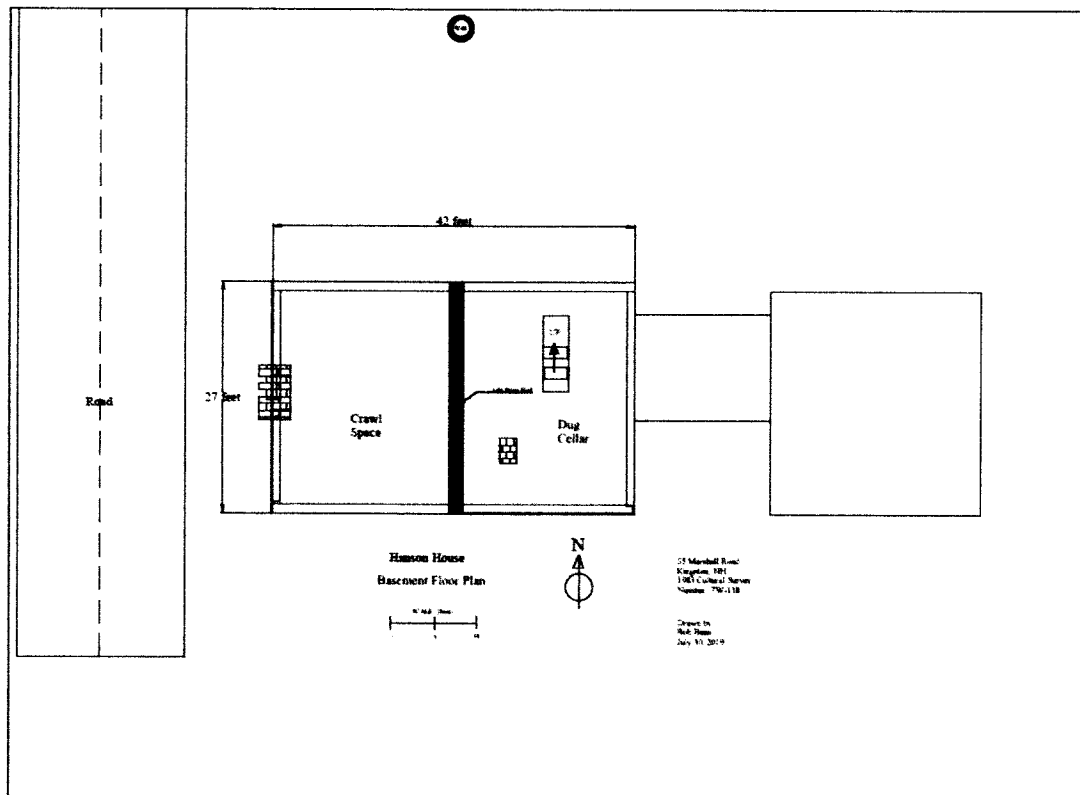
House Inspection

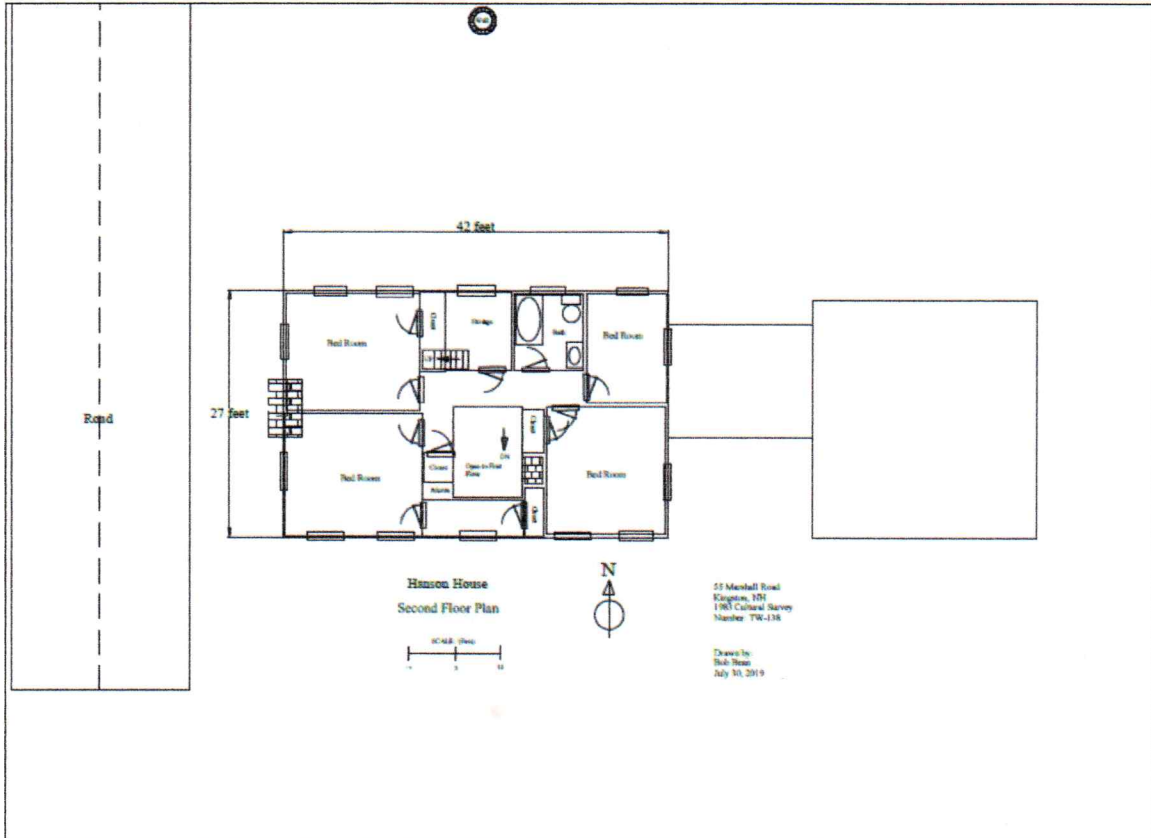
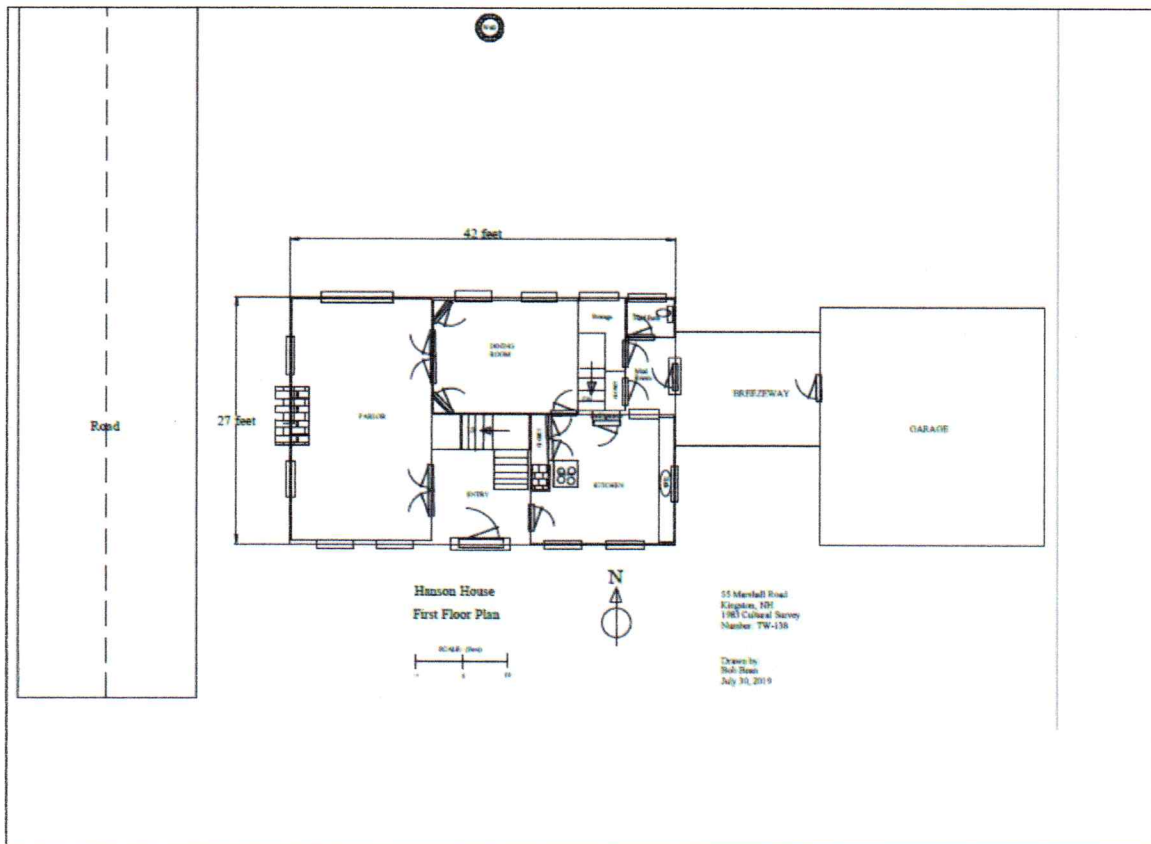
During the preparation for Kingston’s 325th celebrations, this writer was approached by Chief Briggs, and an offer was made to allow us to enter the house and document it. On July 30th, Walt Roy and this writer entered the house.

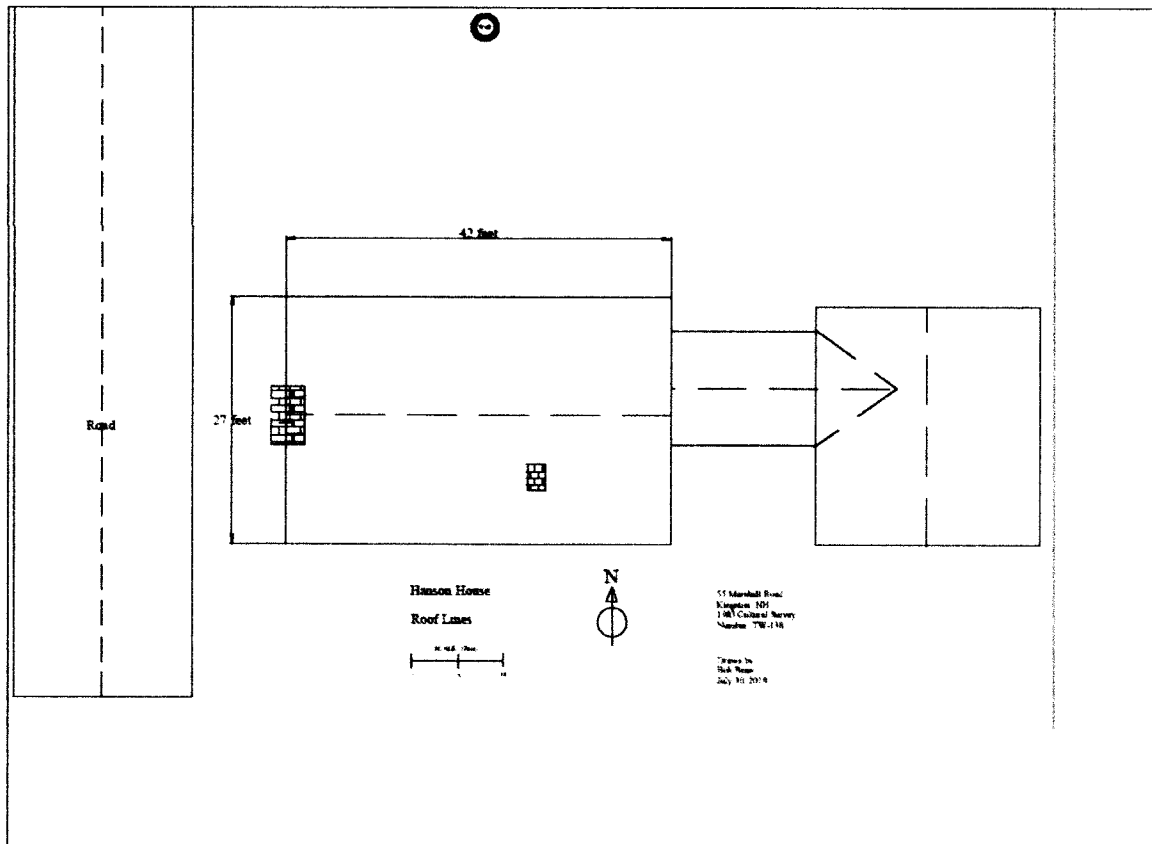
Unfortunately the interior was in very bad shape, but the “good bones” of the house remained. Attached is a floor plan of the house. There are several features that are noteworthy:

- The main entry on the south side is quite large, and showcases a grand staircase to the second floor.
- On your left as you enter the hallway are French doors leading to a grand parlor on the west end of the house. Measuring 15 x 26 it has a large fireplace dominating the street side wall.
- In the rear (north side) of the house, entered from the parlor by another set of French doors is a 12 x 16 dining area.
- On the right (east side) of the house is a large kitchen and a ½ bath.
- On the second floor there are four bedrooms a bath and a large storage room leading up to the attic.
- In the basement, centered about midway in the house is an old stone foundation that is no longer being used for support of the house structure. In fact the front of the house was built over a crawl space only, while the back had a full basement. (See Floor Plan attachment)
- In the attic, there was a very unusual structure used to span the distance from the road side outer wall to the center wall by the main staircase. It is some sort of support. Probably to allow the very large rooms in the house.

Building Floor Plans

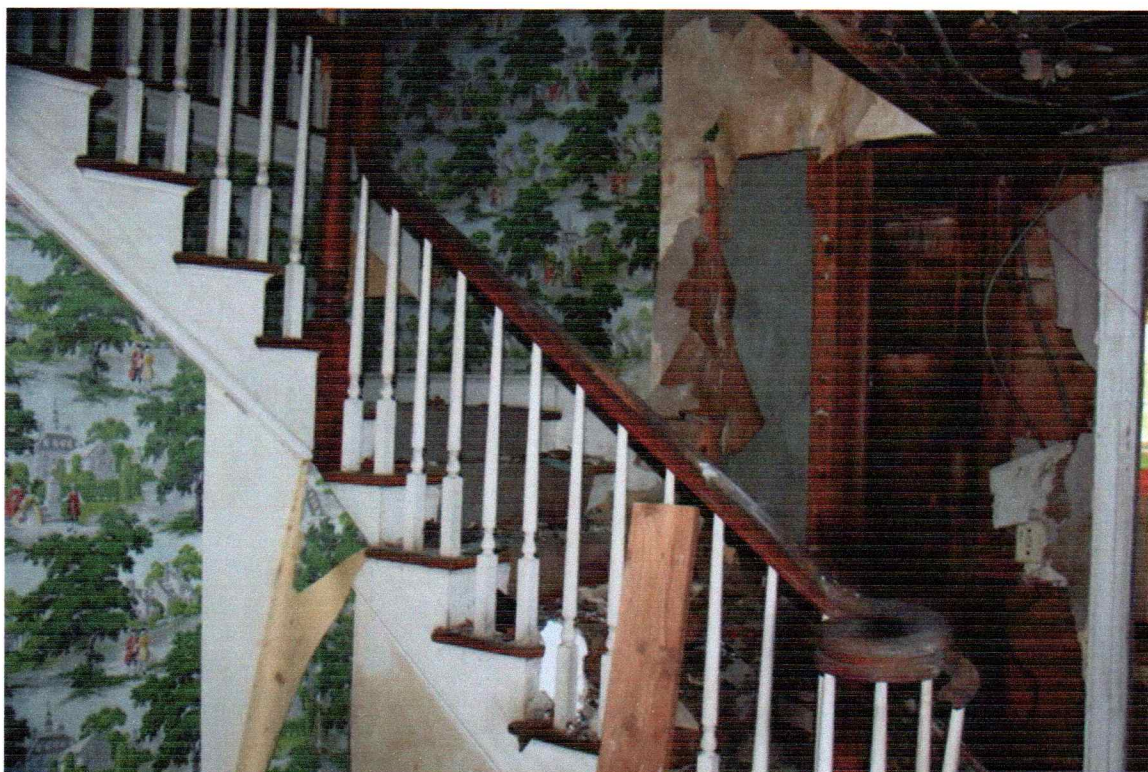






Discussion on Age

From the nature of the windows, walls and framing this writer doubts this house is original 1809. It appears to have been significantly rebuilt sometime in the early 20th century as a Colonial Revival style house. It is quite grand in its size and scope. Some facts that support this theory are that the chimneys are not proportional, and the front view shows a lack of symmetry side to side. Both of those facts are evidence of multiple build points in time.



Picture of the banister and stairs in the Front Entry, taken 2019 by Walt Roy

Note the formal front staircase with the ornate banister and fancy wallpaper. Both are typical late Victorian or Colonial Revival style.



*Muntins on 8 over 1 downstairs window
Photo by Walt Roy(2019), modified by Bob Bean(2021)*

The window muntins have a flat outer surface and overall shape typical of after 1888 and still common today. However the original windows could have been changed.



Non supporting stone wall in basement. Photo by Walt Roy 2019.

In addition there was as old stone wall in the basement that was not in use. I believe it was evidence of an earlier foundation.



Truss used to hold up ceiling in bedroom below. By Walt Roy 2019.

Further there was an early truss-like beam in the attic. I don't believe that structure is typical of an 1809 Federalist structure as proposed by the 1983 survey.



View of the Parlor from the front entry in 2019, Photo by Walt Roy

View of the French doors opening from the front hallway into the parlor. Note the fireplace on the far wall.

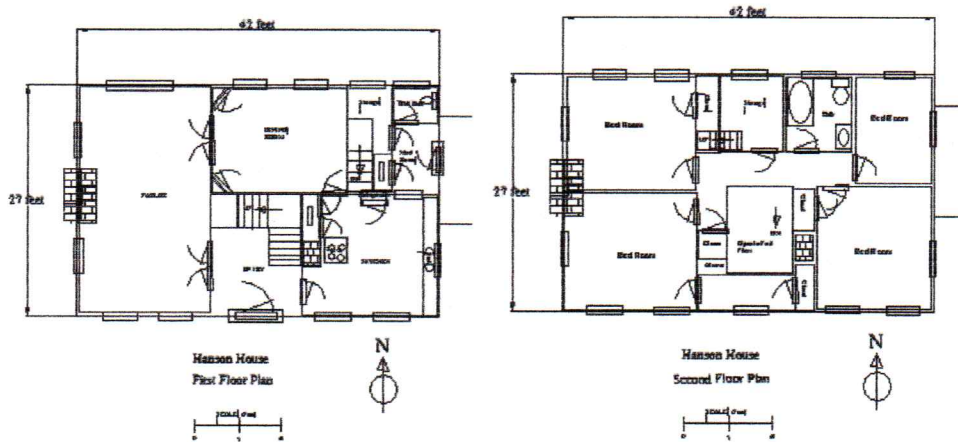


View from the dining room looking into the Parlor in 2019, photo by Walt Roy.

Note the built in cupboards, and fancy French doors. A very formal entry.

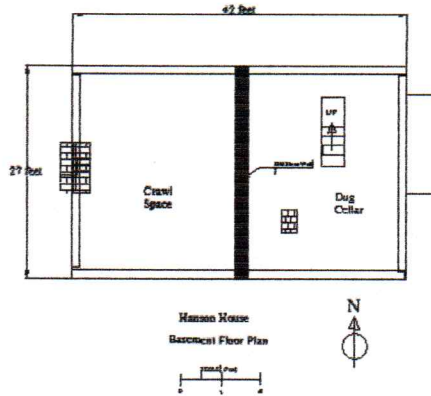
All told, it is a shame this house was allowed to go to ruin. In its day it must have been a very beautiful and comfortable house.

Hanson House Unusual Framing



On the first floor we had a room (Parlor) that ran the whole width of the house (27 feet). But on the second floor we had a wall across the middle, between the two bedrooms. The second floor wall and the ceiling on the ground floor were held up by steel rods that were hung from the beam in the attic shown in the picture. A close look at the beams shows them to be Up & Down saw cut with wide kerfs. That could have been made at any date, and the beam could just have been reused.

This support technique is not common. In addition the roof rafters and floor joists seem to have been cut with a circular saw. That alone could date this building to ca 1900 when circular saw mills were just coming into use and popularity. The Cheney mill was built in 1919 and was considered state of the art with its new circular saw.



In the basement there was an old stone foundation about the midpoint of the house. I think it was evidence of an earlier smaller house. There are stories that the house burned at one point, and was rebuilt. I suspect the rebuild was done ca 1900 in the Colonial Revival style.

Final Days of the House

In 2020/21 the Hanson house was torn down, and multiple houses were built on the parcel.



Photo of the House being demolished in July 2020. Photo by Ernie Landry.

In July of 2020 over a 2-3 day period the Hanson house was torn down. Replacing it is now a grouping of modern houses.



Photo of the approximate location of the original house. Taken from the corner of Thorne Road in 2021 showing one of the new houses. Photo by Bob Bean

Attached to this report is a disk containing all the assembled pictures and documents we were able to assemble.

There are several areas where further research might be very helpful, namely:

- We were unable to confirm when the house first was owned by the Hanson Family, or how the family came into ownership.
- Research into genealogy brought us back to Samuel Hanson (1814-????), but we were unable to find his ancestors.
- The construction details, especially that standing bridge in the attic should be further researched. It is a very unusual feature, and this writer has no knowledge of when or how it came to be used.

Written by: Bob Bean

Initial write date: July 14, 2021.

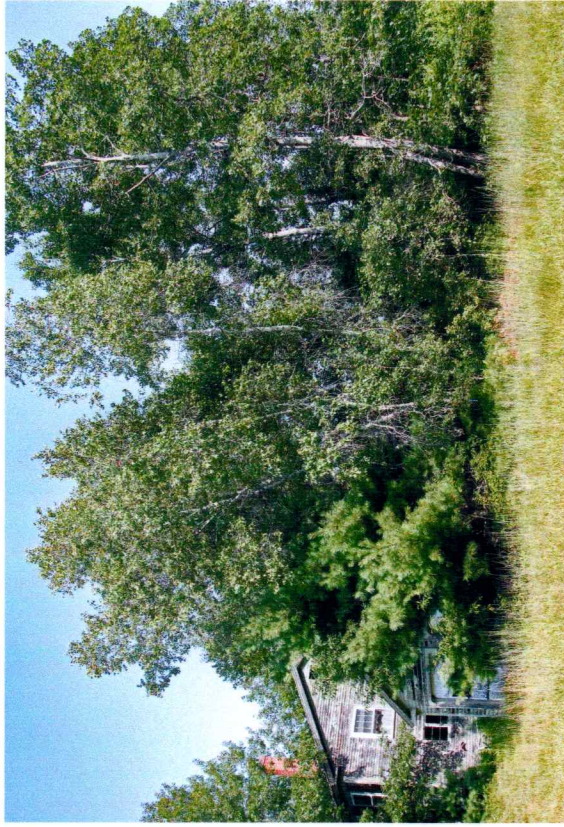
Photos by: Walt Roy, Bob Bean, Ernie Landry, & Marghi Bean.

Video by: Carl Goodwin

Photo Gallery

Note: These are a selection of the photos taken. There are many more photos on the attached CD disk.

Hanson House Photo Gallery
2019



North Side of House 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Street Side View - 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Garage 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Inside Garage, 2019, photo by Walt Roy

Hanson House Photo Gallery 2019



Dining Room looking into Parlor, 2019, photo by Wally Roy



Front Parlor Fireplace, 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Wallpaper 2019, photo by Walt Roy

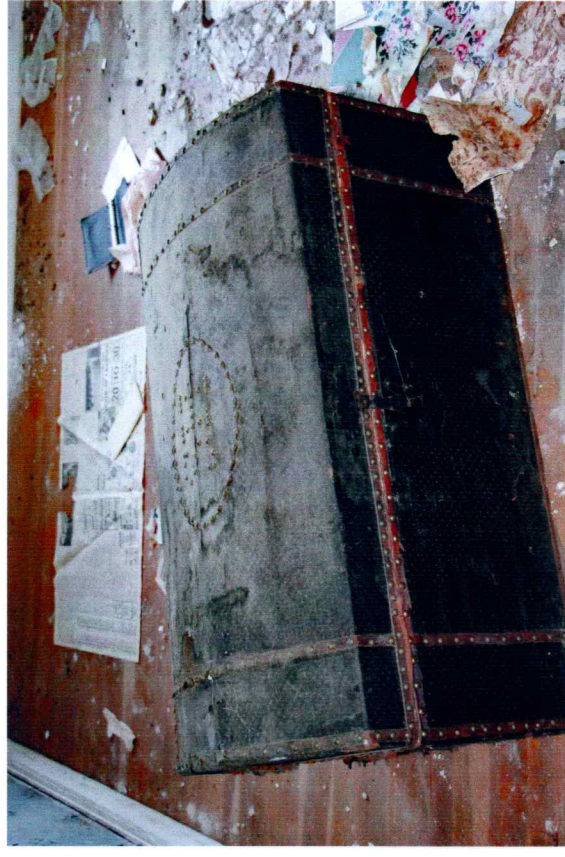


Second Floor Hallway, 2019, photo by Walt Roy

Hanson House Photo Gallery 2019



Staircase to first floor from second floor, 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Trunk found on Second Floor with initials "SH - Samuel Hanson?", 2019,



Upstairs Bedroom South, 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Stairs Newall Post and Volute, 2019, photo by Walt Roy

Hanson House Photo Gallery
2019



Six Panel Door, 2019, photo by Walt Roy



Kitchen, 2019, by Walt Roy



Front Door, 2019, by Walt Roy



Dining Room Windows, 2019, photo by Walt Roy