

BERGEN COUNTY STONE HOUSE SURVEY

INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE SURVEY FORM

(3)

GENERAL

HISTORIC NAME: Blackledge-Kearney

COMMON NAME: "Cornwallis' Headquarters"

LOCATION: Alpine Landing
(~~Lot 2, Block 4~~)

MUNICIPALITY: Alpine

OWNERSHIP: Public Private

OWNER/ADDRESS: Palisades Interstate Park
U.S. Highway #9W
Alpine

REFERENCE

MAP REFERENCES:

- Erskine (1778-80)
- Hopkins-Corey (1861)
- Walker's Atlas (1876) Saloon
- Bromley (1912)
- Other

RECOGNITION:

- National Register BCHS Marker
- HABS #6-115 Bailey
- Other (In National Register Park)

ENVIRONMENT

HOUSE ORIENTATION: East

IMPORTANT RELATED STRUCTURES:
Overlooks boat basin

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Agricultural
- Open Space
- Other

COMMENTS: In park off Palisades Interstate Parkway (Highway).

USE

ORIGINAL: Residence

PRESENT: Museum, Tavern at one point.

THREATS

THREATS TO STRUCTURE:

- Roads
- Development
- Zoning
- Deterioration
- Other
- No Threat

COMMENTS:

CONDITION

CONDITION:

- Excellent Good
- Fair Deteriorated

STATUS:

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Work in Progress

ACCESSIBLE:

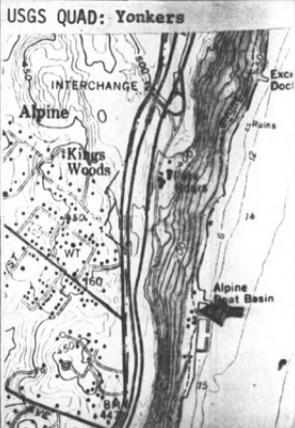
- Yes, Restricted
- Yes, Unrestricted
- No

There is no doubt that the stone section was built first and the frame wing added later. (c. 1845). It appears that it was originally built as a 2 story house.

PHOTO



MAP



DESCRIPTION

CONSTRUCTION DATE/SOURCE:

c. 1750 / HABS & Architectural evidence

BUILDER: Unknown

FORM/PLAN TYPE: "C" 3 bay, 1 room, side door w/ gable end fireplace (26'2 1/2" x 16'4") w/ frame story above. Frame wing to north.

FRAMING SYSTEM:

- Intermediate Summer Beam
- Intermediate Bearing Wall
- Clear Span
- Other

EXTERIOR WALL FABRIC:

Red sandstone rubble, first level.
Weather boarding above on 2nd level.

FENESTRATION:

2'0" x 41" M:O. (6/6) with wood lintels.

ENTRANCE LOCATION/TYPE:

North end bay on east front. 34" x 6'1" split leaf batten door.

NUMBER OF STORIES: 1 1/2 stone, 2 1/2 total

CELLAR: Yes (No "cellar", 1st level is habitable.)
 No

CHIMNEY FOUNDATION:

- Stone Arch
- Brick Arch, Stone Foundation
- Other Corbelled hearth support, stone foundation.

FLOOR JOISTS:

Original dirt floor, now has wood floor (no cellar).

FIRST FLOOR CEILING HEIGHT:

6'5"

FIRST FLOOR WALL THICKNESS:

18"

GARRET FLOOR JOISTS: 5-5 1/2" x 8"

deep, 25-32" apart.

GARRET:

- Unfinished Space
- Finished Space (Frame level above)

ROOF:

- Gable
- Gambrel
- Curb
- Other

EAVE TREATMENT:

- Sweeping Overhang
- Supported Overhang
- No Overhang
- Boxed Gutter
- Other

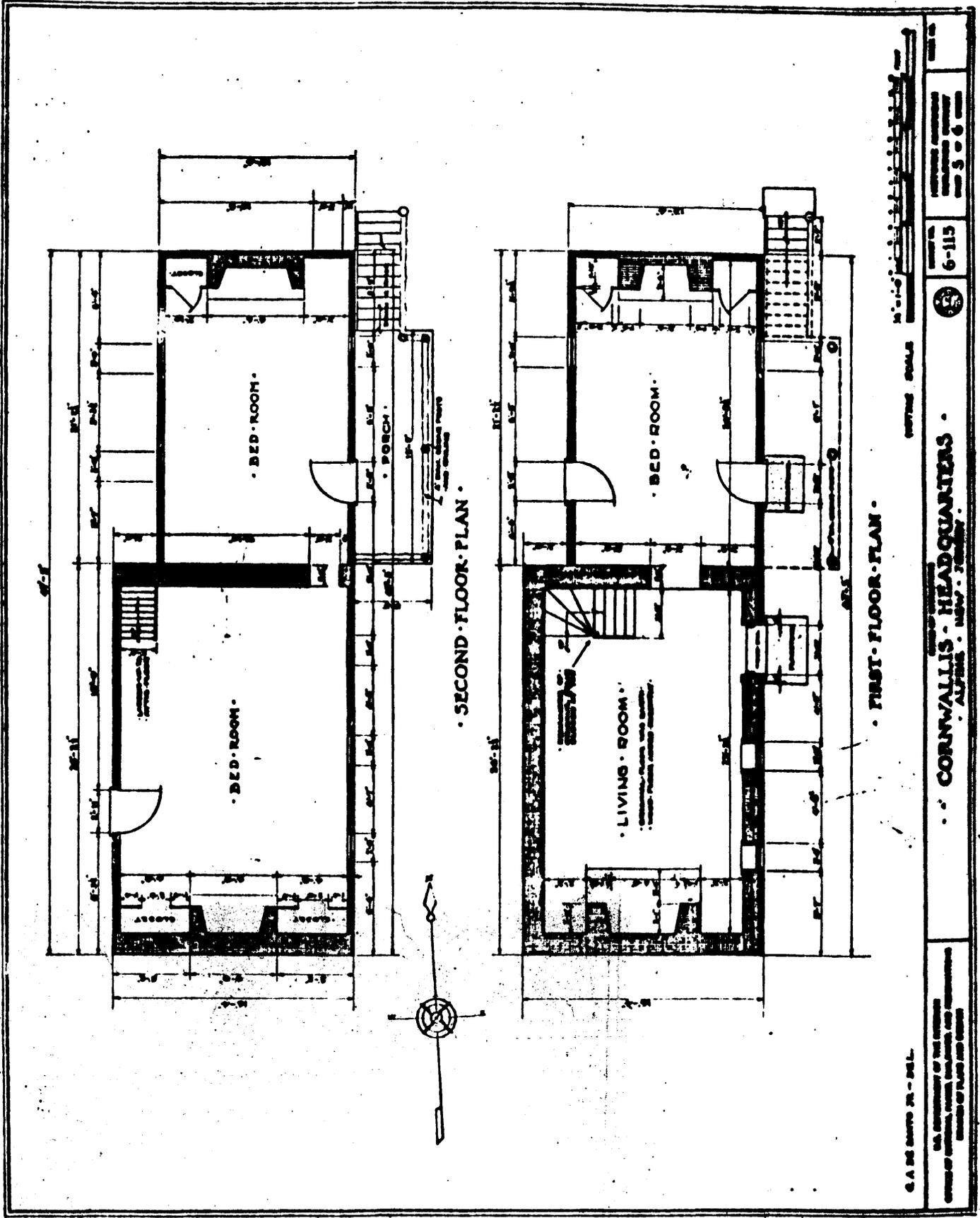
This house is significant for its architecture and its association with the exploration and settlement of the Bergen County, New Jersey area. It is a reasonably well preserved example of the Form/Plan Type as shown and more fully described herein. As such, it is included in the Thematic Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Early Stone Houses of Bergen County, New Jersey.



BERGEN COUNTY STONE HOUSE SURVEY
 HISTORIC NAME: Blackledge-Kearney House
 LOCATION: Alpine Landing, Alpine

4

FLOOR PLANS



SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

6-115

CORNWALLIS - HEADQUARTERS
 ALPINE - NEW YORK

G.A. DE BARTO, JR. - DEL.
 ALL DIMENSIONS OF THIS PLAN
 GIVEN IN FEET, INCHES AND FRACTIONS
 UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED

HABS says that the first person associated with the house was a Rachel Slot and that it was built about 1750. It also said that soldiers' buttons, etc. were found in the dirt of the first floor and that a cannon ball was dug out of the stone wall, which would tend to prove its pre-Revolutionary existence. However, a search of the records brings us no further back than about 1800. On April 26, 1802, Benjamin Blackledge and his wife Cathalynty sold the property to Peter Demarest, Jack DeClark, Benjamin Westervelt and Hendric Demarest. On August 16 of the same year, they sold it to Thial Yacocks and Daniel A. Vervalen for \$725. Jacob Powles bought it from them on December 10, 1808 and they, in turn, sold the house and about twelve acres of land to James Kearney on December 4, 1823. The Rachel Kearney, associated with the house, was born in 1780, married Abraham Powles (who died in 1815 and was probably a brother of Jacob Powles) and apparently married, second, James Kearney. Rachel lived in the older portion of the house and died in 1870. Apparently, after her death the house became a tavern, but not before she died as has been wrongly stated. This is according to her granddaughter, Mrs. Maria Demarest Kearney Myers of 520 Teaneck Road, Teaneck, New Jersey, in an interview in 1935 in the Bergen Evening Record. Mrs. Myers states that her parents, Gilbert Kearney and Lavinia Bogert were married October 9, 1845 and he was the captain of the sloop "Lady Tompkins" and owned quarries south of the point, using the sloop to transport stone. When they moved to the house they added the north wing. Regarding the Cornwallis connection with the site, it seems to be a story concocted in this century as it was previously well known that the British invasion took place one and one-half miles down the river at the present Huyler's Landing. Since they were both known as "Closter Landing" - one the "upper" and the other the "lower" - and, since the lower came into disuse, it is understandable that confusion occurred between the two places. All four County histories, as well as more recent research (BCHS 1975, 1976 Annuals), support the landing site as being at the lower landing, so it is highly unlikely that Cornwallis was even near this house.

There is no doubt that the south stone section was built first and the north wing butted to it - even the clapboards of this section's gable end still exist below the roof line of the north wing. It appears that the roof was raised on the stone section for living accommodations in that garret, but it was probably always a 2-1/2 story house, as both north and south stone walls are carried up to the same height. The wing is said to have been added shortly after 1845 which agrees with our findings. It is likely that it became a saloon after Rachel Kearney's death in 1870 and it seems to have been a tavern in 1876. The Palisades Interstate Park began acquiring land on the Palisades as of Christmas, 1900 and this was one of the early parcels; hence the building was adapted as Park Headquarters.

(Deed search done by Louise H. Burnett)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Property included as part of Palisades Interstate Park listed on National Register, 1966.

Lot 2, Block 4 - Alpine Tax Map
+ 423.72 acres

U.T.M.

18 590 4533 200
Yonkers, New Jersey-New York