

**Private Property and Public Virtue:
Quaker Identity of Robert Barber of White Springs
(Part Two)
by
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Note to Readers: This article is Part Two of an article presented in two parts in order to facilitate a workable download rate for the reader, while accommodating an important strength to the article: abundant use of photographs and drawings. Part 1 was published in the preceding February issue (Vol. 5, No.1). – ed.

Replacing Houses

For the first 35 years after settling at White Springs the Barbers, like most of their neighbors, lived in houses constructed of horizontal logs. The township tax assessment of 1799 lists improvements to the property of Robert^{III} Barber³³ as: ‘Dwelling House hew’d log, Stone barn straw roof, Grist Saw Mill, other small buildings’. The assessor ranked Barber’s log house as ‘first rate’, a standout in West Buffalo Township where most houses were ‘third rate’ or less. The same assessment lists log ‘cabbins’ on the farm of Robert’s brother Thomas^{III}. About 38% of the tax-paying residents of West Buffalo Township lived in single story ‘cabbins’ in 1799, while 42% owned more substantial ‘houses’, all of log construction. The remaining 20% of taxpayers were assessed without a dwelling. They lived with employers or relatives, or were tenants on property rented from others.³⁴

A generation later both size and quality of building stock reported in tax assessments had increased and the pattern of tenancy was changing. The tax assessment of 1817 lists a log house and barn for Squire Barber, as well as for his sons Robert^{IV}, Thomas^{IV} and Samuel^{IV}.³⁵ By 1820 only about 11% of township dwellings were assessed as cabins; while 89% were assessed as ‘houses’ or ‘small houses’, nearly all still constructed of

³³ The names Robert, Thomas and Samuel were given in successive generations of the Barber family. To keep them straight, the generation is indicated after the name. Robert^{III} Barber, also known as ‘Squire Barber’, was the patriarch of the White Springs Barbers, who moved to Buffalo Valley in 1785.

³⁴ Northumberland County Pennsylvania Tax Records for West Buffalo Township, 1796 and 1799, PA Historical and Museum Commission microfilm LR91.5. At the time of these assessments, White Springs was part of West Buffalo Township, which also encompassed most of present day Limestone, Lewis and Hartley Townships.

³⁵ *Eighth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1817*, Union County Pennsylvania Tax Records, PA Historical and Museum Commission microfilm LR113.3.

log. At the same time as this improvement in housing, the proportion of township taxpayers who did not own a house or land increased to about half of those assessed. Large family size in the generation following settlement resulted in population growth that outstripped the supply of arable land in the township. Property-less individuals included a few itinerant laborers and tradespeople, but about a quarter are listed in assessments of this period as ‘Single’, indicating an unmarried male adult working in his parents’ household or hired out to a neighbor. The remaining two-thirds were tenants, who rented the dwellings they lived in and the farms they worked.³⁶

What did it mean to own property in this young and rapidly growing society? Tax records open a window on the evolving community of Buffalo Valley in the period when Robert Barber^{III} was building his milling enterprises. The triennial tax list for 1820 shows large disparity in the distribution of wealth among tax payers of West Buffalo Township, (figure 11), but also reveals opportunities for economic upward mobility. The richest 1/5 of tax payers in the township controlled 69% of the assessed wealth, while the poorest 3/5 of tax payers possessed less than 7%. Farms produced wealth for those who could afford

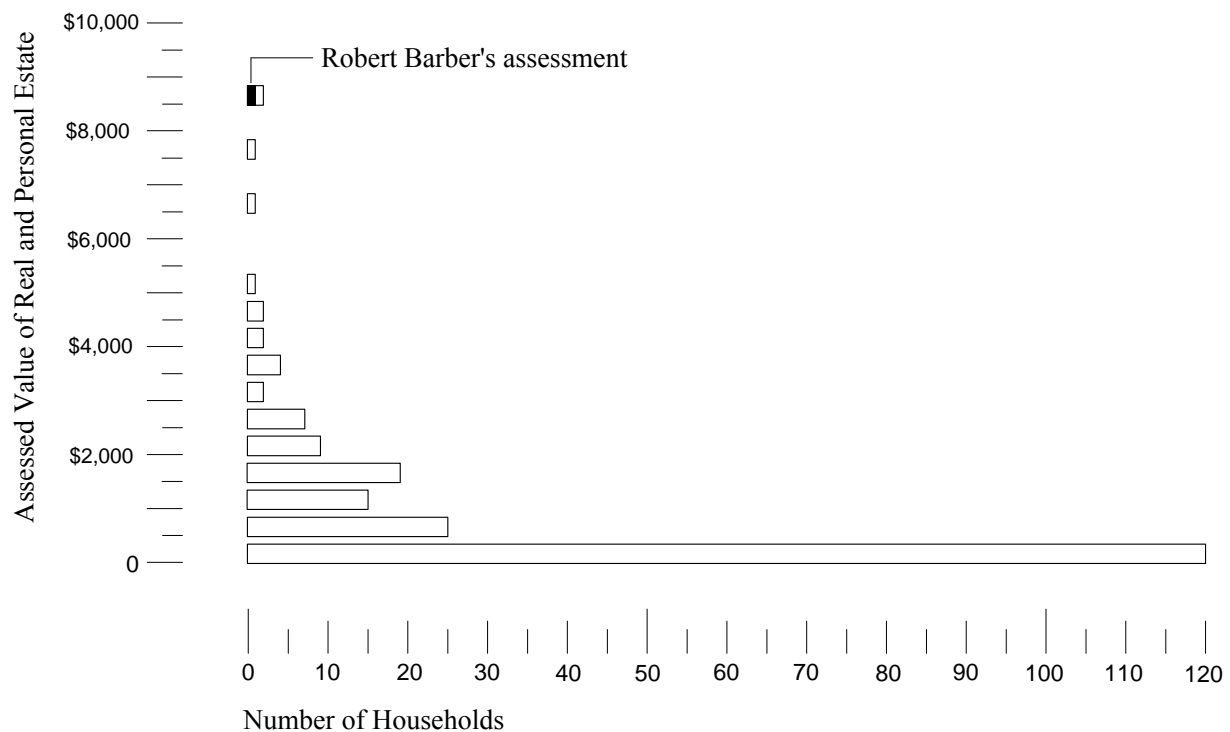


Figure 11 Distribution of assessed wealth in West Buffalo Township in 1820³⁷

³⁶ *Ninth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1820*, Union County Pennsylvania Tax Records, PA Historical and Museum Commission microfilm LR113.3.

³⁷ Assessed value of taxable property data, *Ninth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1820*.

Quintile of Population	Share of Total Assessed Wealth	Classification of Taxpayer			Listed Occupation of Taxpayer		
		Landless	Tenant	Owner	Laborer [†]	Tradesman	Farmer
Richest 20%	69.0%	--	28%	72%	--	9%	91%
Next 20%	24.2%	--	24%	76%	2%	17%	81%
Middle 20%	5.9%	--	29%	71%	32%	40%	28%
Next 20%	0.9%	17%	64%	19%	48%	40%	12%
Poorest 20%	--	69%	31%	--	73%	22%	5%

Figure 12 Land Ownership and Occupation in West Buffalo Township in 1820 ³⁸

[†] Including 'Single' tax payers, most of whom worked for wages

to rent or acquire good land. In the top quintile on the tax rolls, 91% listed their occupation as 'farmer' (including Robert^{III} Barber), and the top two quintiles included over 78% of the township's farmers, (figure 12). In all, slightly less than one-half of taxpayers owned land, while an additional 36% rented property as tenants. The 1820 tax records list four tenants of Robert^{III} Barber. Blacksmith James Brooks, shoemaker Isaac Gill, and wagon maker Thomas Jackson had cabins on his land. Cooper John Rehrick, assessed with 20 acres of his own, rented an additional 60 acres of farm land from Barber.³⁹ Tenancy did not equate with poverty in West Buffalo Township. While many tenant families in the township were poor, a significant number of tenant farmers were relatively well off, and some of the largest farms on the best land in the valley were rented.

This situation encouraged social and geographical mobility: some tenants were able to climb the 'agricultural ladder' to eventual farm ownership in the community, while others left to find more affordable land elsewhere. Tenants often paid rent in shares of crops rather than cash, but like other farmers throughout the valley who used Barber's grist and flour mills, they were increasingly oriented to cash markets, nurturing the growth of rural capitalism.⁴⁰ The thriving flour and grain trade in the first two decades of the nineteenth century created a strong agricultural economy in Buffalo Valley, and with it a sense of optimism that encouraged property owners to improve farms and enlarge or replace houses.

³⁸ Occupation and land ownership data, *Ninth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1820*.

³⁹ *Ninth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1820*.

⁴⁰ Tenancy and the transition to market-oriented agriculture in central Pennsylvania is discussed at length in Peter C. Mancall, *Valley of Opportunity: Economic Culture along the Upper Susquehanna, 1700-1800*. (Cornell University Press, 1991), pp 185-204.

Toward the end of his active farming and milling career and after nearly three decades as a county magistrate, Squire Barber embarked on an ambitious campaign to replace his family's log dwellings in White Springs with more substantial houses. This flurry of building activity included his own house, but centered on building new houses for his two middle sons. Township property tax assessments date construction of the stone house on the farm occupied and eventually owned by Thomas^{IV} Barber by 1820.⁴¹ Family stories indicate Samuel^{IV} Barber moved into the stone house on what became his farm by 1823.⁴² County building histories attribute the construction of both stone houses to Robert Barber.⁴³ He certainly financed their construction, since he owned both farm properties until 1829, and he also had time to devote to the project as he transferred management of his farms and mills to his sons. While the houses were made for his sons' families, Robert Barber was their author. Built to serve needs well beyond mere shelter, the Barber houses convey an unmistakable message of refinement, permanence and status. Like his father sixty years before in Wright's Ferry, Squire Robert^{III} Barber used architecture to express the identity of his wealthy and successful family.

Building in the Local Vernacular

The Barber houses combine traditional vernacular plans with distinctive elements that set them apart from the other houses in their community. At the most basic level, their stone construction separated the Thomas and Samuel houses from those of their neighbors. Stone masonry was an integral part of local building practice, used for foundations of nearly all houses and barns built in Buffalo Valley prior to the 20th century, but less than 2% of these structures extend stone masonry to the upper walls, since this was slow and costly work. Only the wealthiest families in the valley could afford stone houses, and among these, the masonry workmanship of the Barber houses stands out as the finest in the region. They are made from grey limestone quarried from the ridge on Samuel^{IV} Barber's farm, split, squared and laid in even, parallel courses on the front wall

⁴¹ The 1817 assessment lists a 'log house and barn' for Thomas^{IV} Barber, which changes to 'stone house and barn' in 1820. *Ninth Triennial Assessment of West Buffalo Township for the year 1820*, Union County Pennsylvania Tax Records, PA Historical and Museum Commission microfilm LR113.3.

⁴² The 1820 assessment lists only a 'frame barn' for Samuel^{IV} Barber. The next four assessments list 'house and barn' without indicating material, but Samuel Barber's great granddaughter relates that the family moved into the stone house around 1823, when her grandfather was still a very young child. *Private correspondence from Gertrude Metheny to Mrs. Stanley Keister*, April 10, 1975.

⁴³ See entries 142 and 143 in *Historic Preservation Plan of Union County Pennsylvania*, (Union County Planning Commission, 1978); Mary Belle Lontz, "Old Houses of Union County", (Union County Historical Society, 1965).

of the buildings, with less precise work on the side and rear walls. There are no records to identify the builder, but it is intriguing to note that Squire Robert's nephew, (also named Robert Barber, 1771-1853), was a stone mason and house builder active in Lancaster in the 1820s.⁴⁴ It's possible his uncle retained him to build the White Springs houses.

The symmetrical five-bay, central door facade that was novel in western Lancaster County in 1760 when Robert^{II} Barber commissioned the Wright's Ferry house, had become widely used by central Pennsylvania builders by 1820. Introduced to the colonies in houses of the gentry, the formal facade composition grew into a visual trope for upward mobility in the new republic. Executed in log, frame, brick or stone and garnished with a veneer of fashionable trim, symmetrical five-bay facades graced the houses of successful farmers, merchants, forge masters, mill owners and lawyers. The entrance hallway containing an open stairwell likewise entered common usage in the repertory of vernacular builders in this period. The Barber houses combine the popular façade and entrance hall motifs in different ways, however.

The house located north of White Springs built for Samuel^{IV} and Mary Barber⁴⁵ repeats the two room deep, central hall plan used for the Wright's Ferry house. The walls are limestone rather than brick masonry, the rooms larger and the story heights taller, but its plan arrangement is otherwise similar to the house in which Robert^{III} Barber was raised (see figure 7 in Part One of this article). The rooms are heated by fireplaces built into the gable end walls, decorated with wood mantels and flanked at the first floor rooms by paneled doors of built-in cupboards. The Samuel^{IV} Barber house embraces symmetry and precision in layout of its front façade, with the focal feature of a stone arched, elliptical fan light positioned over the wide front entry door. The back of the house breaks symmetry to accommodate functional considerations such as the extra large window to illuminate the kitchen workspace by the main cooking hearth. The kitchen was the largest room on the first floor, with its own door out to the back porch. Otherwise, all circulation into and through the house passes through the central hall, with its open stair ascending all the way to the attic. Differences in level of trim between formal and everyday rooms are minor.

⁴⁴ Barber, *Genealogy of the Barber Family*, p.105.

⁴⁵ Confusingly, this house is known as the 'Thomas Barber house', because it was owned in the latter half of the 19th Century by Samuel Barber's son, Thomas VanValzah Barber. Charles M. Snyder identifies the 'stone mansion of Samuel Barber' as the other stone Barber house 'just west of White Springs Run' in *Union County, Pennsylvania: a Bicentennial History*, p. 75, but property title records and personal accounts of Thomas Van Valzah Barber's grandchildren indicate that Samuel^{IV} Barber owned the stone house and farm on Bretheren Church Road north of White Springs, while his brother Thomas^{IV} Barber owned the house and farm west of White Springs.



Figure 13 South front of the 1823 Samuel^{IV} Barber house in 1983 photo showing a late 19th century porch.



Figure 14 Rear of the Samuel^{IV} Barber house in 1985 photo showing less formal fenestration with low doorways. Large window with low sill on the left illuminates the kitchen.

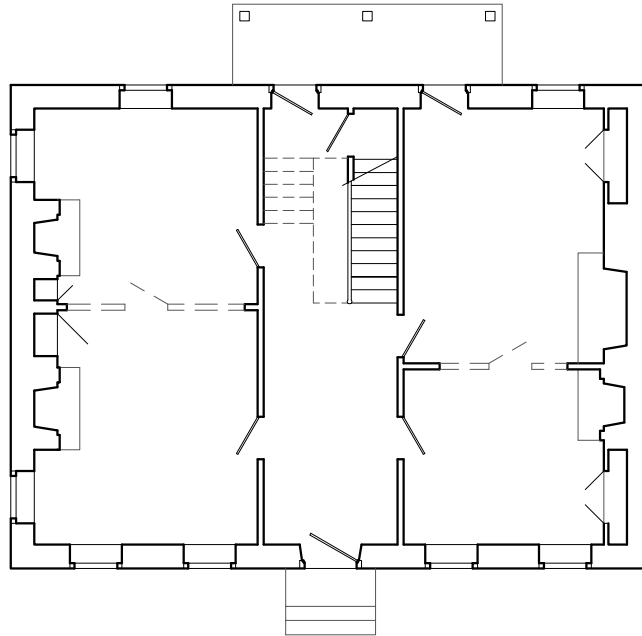


Figure 15 First floor plan of the Samuel^{IV} Barber house showing central hallway flanked by four rooms. The kitchen at right rear has a separate door to the back porch. (Long dash lines indicate original partitions which have been removed; short dashes show continuation of stairs and stairwell above).

The two room deep ‘Georgian’ house form⁴⁶ with a central hall plan and five bay façade exemplified by the Samuel^{IV} Barber house is termed a ‘house type’ by architectural historians, and the thousands of 18th and 19th century Pennsylvania houses which share its essential arrangement are considered instances of the same type.⁴⁷ Like rural communities throughout the eastern United States, Buffalo Valley in the early 19th century was a tradition-centered society in which builders and their clients valued proven solutions to the problem of housing. House types are culturally and regionally specific conventions of what a house should be and how it should look - concepts that guided builders working according to traditional practices, without need for architectural plans. With its ethnically diverse population of Scots-Irish, English, and German families, Buffalo Valley’s tradition-centered society exhibited several distinctly different approaches to the house builder’s task of organizing domestic space according to culturally specific notions of homely comfort and order.

⁴⁶ Named for English monarchs reigning when the symmetrical center hall house form was introduced to America, builders in Pennsylvania constructed ‘Georgian’ houses long after the end of the colonial period.

⁴⁷ This definition and discussion of ‘house types’ is based on Henry Glassie, ‘Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building’, *Winterthur Portfolio* 7 (1972), p. 29-57.

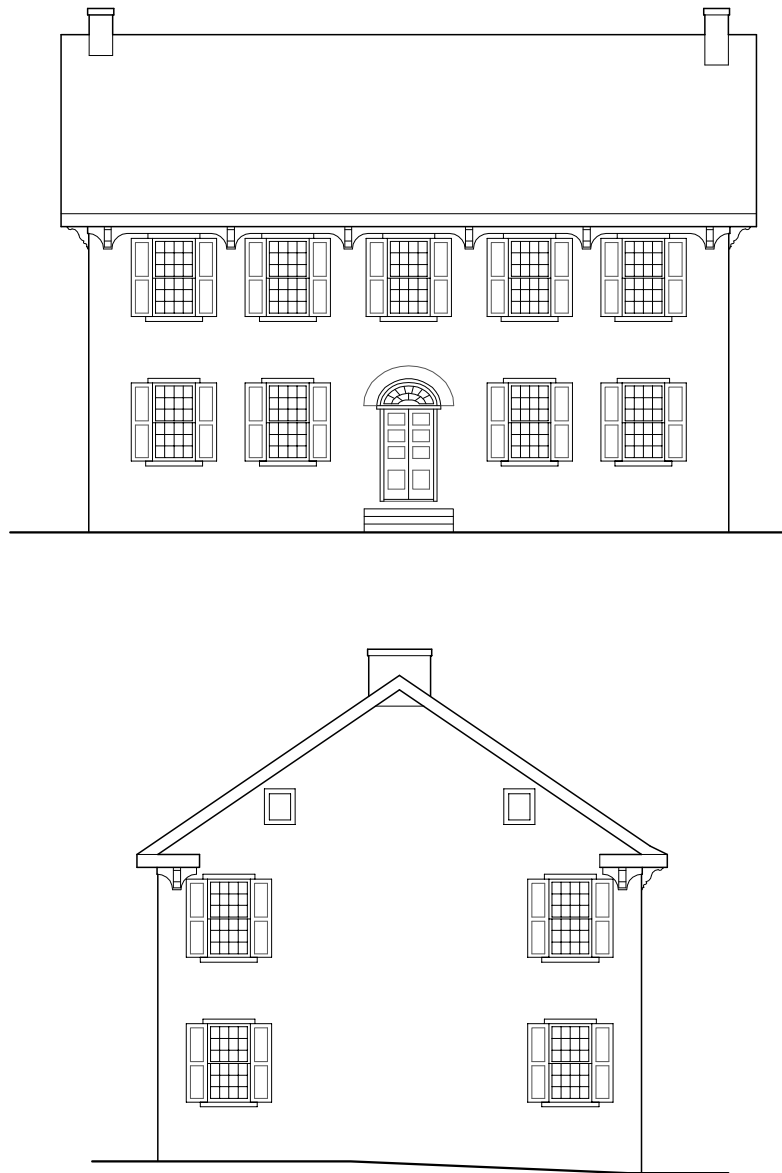


Figure 16 Samuel^{IV} Barber house in White Springs, drawing of south front and west gable elevations, showing original shutter and 12 over 12 window sash. The bracketed cornice may be a later alteration.

Builders in Union County constructed houses using the central hall Georgian plan from the late 18th through early 20th centuries. Mapping instances of the house type in the county, one finds it widely used in towns and on farms (figure 17). While the roots of this house type in Pennsylvania draw on English aristocratic fashion copied by well-to-do families like the Barbers and other Quakers in the southeastern counties, by the 1820s Pennsylvania German farmers were beginning to adopt the form as well, which they often built with a large kitchen taking up one side of the hall, sometimes with a second front door into the kitchen which broke the façade symmetry.

On close inspection, many central hall houses turn out to be built in two phases rather than all at once, consisting of an initial ‘two-thirds’ house containing two rooms and a stair hall per floor, which was subsequently expanded with a ‘one-third’ addition (see figure 18). The side-hall house type is a conceptual sub-division of the full central hall plan, and was built by households that could not afford, or did not require, the full Georgian plan but desired entry into a stair hall plan arrangement. Side hall houses implied expansion to the full symmetrical form, and most were probably built with this

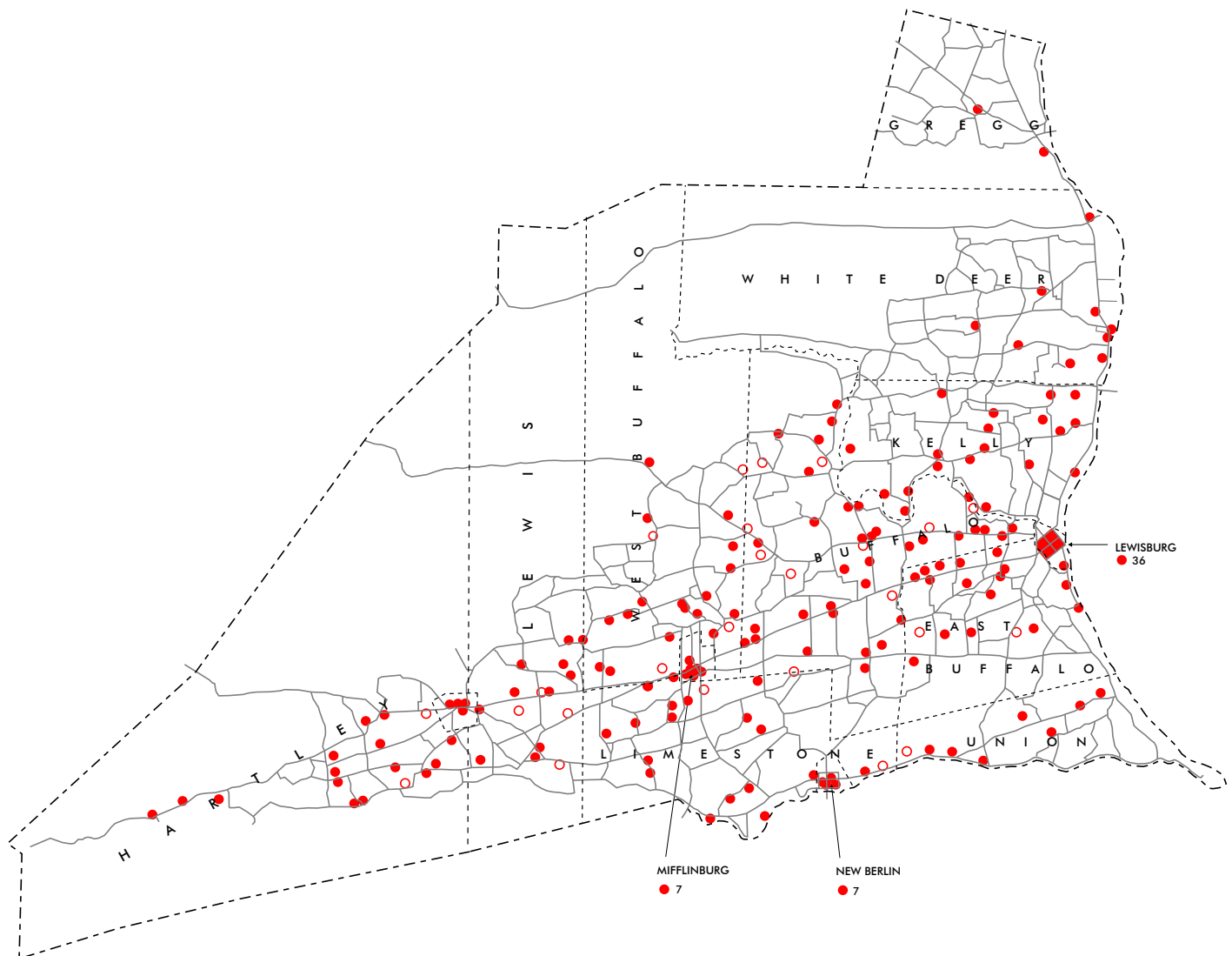


Figure 17 Map of five-bay central hall houses in Union County based on survey of surviving pre-20th century buildings. Solid dots indicate houses built in one phase. Open circles indicate side hall houses subsequently enlarged to the full Georgian plan. Georgian plan houses account for about 14% of the surveyed housing stock. (Survey data for Gregg and White Deer Townships is incomplete).



Figure 18 Dr. Robert Van Valzah house, Buffalo Crossroads, in 1983 photo. An original side-hall brick house (on right) expanded to the full five-bay Georgian form, plus an additional two bays.

eventuality in mind, but many remain in their ‘two-thirds’ configuration. The frame house that Robert^{III} Barber built on his farm around 1826 to replace his earlier log dwelling is an unexpanded side hall house (see figure 19). This house is reputed to be built on the same foundation as the late 18th century log house which preceded it, and it used the original 1772 cabin erected by Barber as an out kitchen.⁴⁸ Barber’s house is not grand compared to the dwellings constructed for his sons, but it contains large 12 over 12 windows identical in size to those used in the stone Barber houses, a conspicuous indication of wealth compared to the size of windows used in most houses from the same period. The house at the head of White Springs is similar in size, plan and fenestration to the 1802 log house built in Mifflinburg by Adam Gutelius, who like Barber was a Justice of the Peace.⁴⁹ Built when Squire Barber was in his early seventies and no longer managing a large household, he may have envisioned his two daughters who lived with him expanding the house when they inherited it after his death.

⁴⁸ Barber, *Genealogy of the Barber Family*, p. 38. The original 20’x25’ one room cabin was still standing in 1890 when the *Genealogy* was published, and shows up in a 1939 aerial photo, but has since been replaced by a more modern kitchen wing. See also entry for site 145 in *Historic Preservation Plan of Union County, Pennsylvania*, (Union County Planning Commission, 1978).

⁴⁹ Gutelius House Museum, 432 Green Street, Mifflinburg. The Gutelius house has a gable end fireplace, whereas Barber’s later frame house does not. It may always have been heated by stoves, in the manner of Pennsylvania German houses.

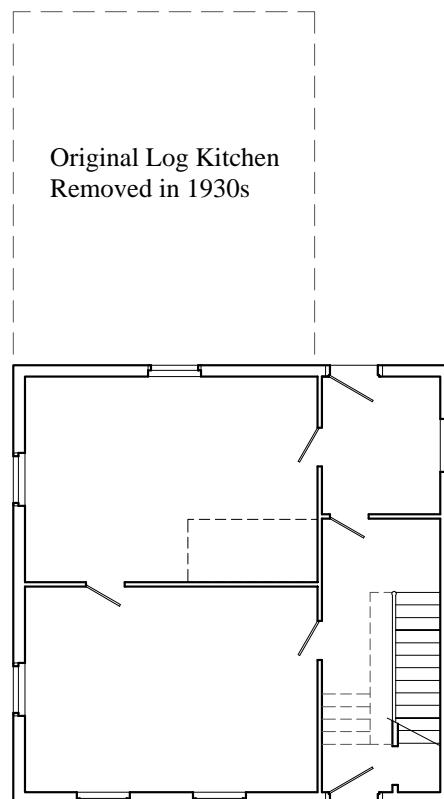


Figure 19 Robert^{III} Barber frame house at the head of White Springs in 1985 photo, and first floor plan. Township tax records indicate this house was constructed around 1826, replacing an earlier log house. (Dash line in the middle of the plan shows conjectural location of an original central fireplace since removed, though the house may always have been heated by stoves without a fireplace. Front porch and small gable wall windows in photo are subsequent alterations that are not depicted on the plan).

The most elaborate of the Barber houses, built in 1820 for Thomas^{IV} and Elizabeth Barber, sits on a hillside overlooking one of the Barber mills and the village of White Springs. Behind the mask of its similar façade, Thomas Barber's house is quite different from the nearby house of his brother Samuel. The main wing of the house is one room deep, consisting of a large formal room to either side of the entry hall, with a three-story kitchen wing projecting to the rear (figures 20 to 23). Entry into the house follows a sequence of elaborately composed settings, starting with the entry door itself, flanked by sidelights and surmounted by a semi-circular fan light transom that bring generous daylight into the entry hall. The wide hall contains a gracefully ascending spiral stair framed within an arched opening, in what must have been the grandest domestic space of its day in the county (figure 24). The parlor and dining room that open off the entrance hall continue the sequence into high ceilinged rooms with large windows. The finishes in these formal public spaces of the house crisply frame door and window openings with deeply profiled moldings and line the walls with base trim and sill-height chair rail, articulating the room's edges, joints and openings, and drawing attention to the fireplaces with their elaborate mantels centered on the wall opposite the hall doorway (figure 25).

The arrangement of interior space around formal and workaday activity is treated in a very different manner in Thomas^{IV} Barber's house from that of his brother. Where Samuel's house uses the central hall and stair to connect all the rooms of the house, kitchen and parlor alike, Thomas Barber's house is divided into formal front rooms and separate back-of-house work spaces, each with its own system of circulation. The grand front hall stair connects the parlor and dining room on the first floor to two large bedrooms on the second floor. Completely independent sets of simpler enclosed stairs connect the back kitchen with its large cooking hearth fireplace (figure 26), down to the basement work room, also with a large open hearth, and up to two floors of small bedrooms above the kitchen, as well as to attic storage over the front wing of the house. The kitchen wing extension at the back of the house has lower floor heights and smaller windows than the formal front of the house. While two story gable-roof kitchen wings are common in Union County houses, the three-story shed roof form of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house is unusual in Buffalo Valley. It is, however, typical of kitchen wings of farm houses in western Lancaster County in the vicinity of Columbia.



Figure 20 1820 Thomas^{IV} Barber house viewed from south-east, revealing single room depth.

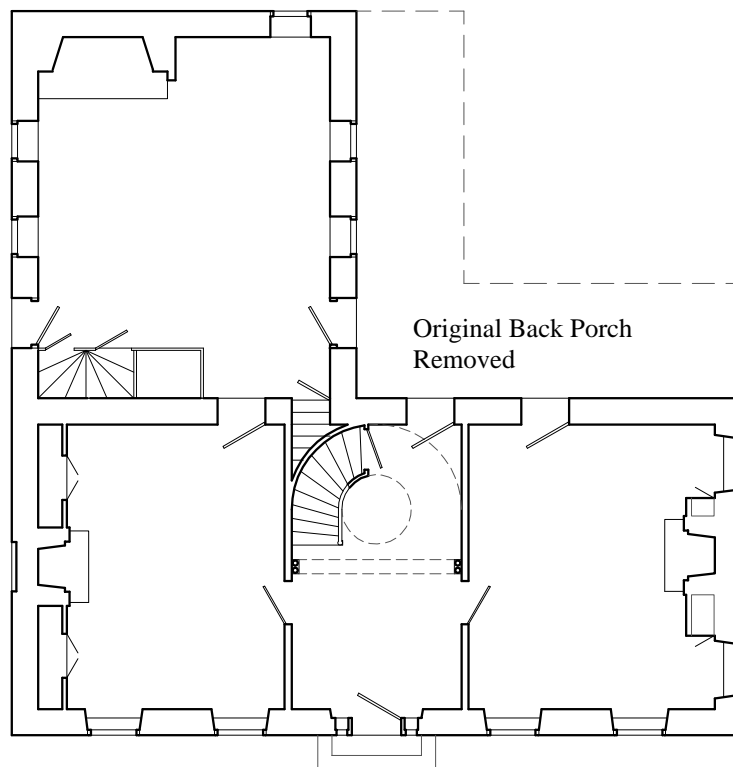


Figure 21 First floor plan of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house showing separation of front rooms and formal stair hall circulation from the back kitchen wing and service stairs.

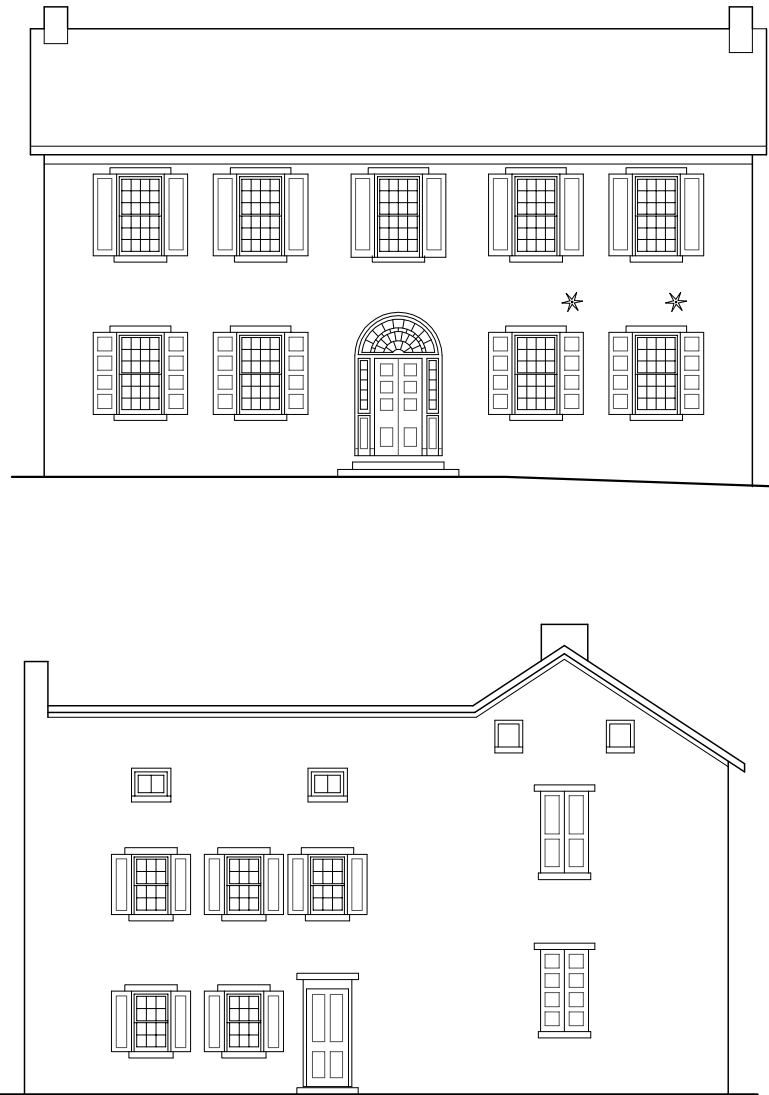


Figure 22 Thomas^{IV} Barber house, drawing of the south facing front and west gable elevations.



Figure 23 The kitchen wing extending in back of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house has a shed roof rather than the typical gable roof, providing a third floor of back bedrooms tucked under the sloping eaves. Closed false shutters that give the impression of windows below the chimney are a curious original feature of the house.



Figure 24 Entrance hall of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house with spiral staircase and elliptical archway. The double columns which support the archway rest on a carved wood ledger book.



Figure 25 Dining room of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house with fireplace flanked by paneled cupboards.



Figure 26 Wide cooking hearth of the original kitchen in the back wing of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house.

Let us consider Thomas^{IV} Barber's complex house as a vernacular building type. One room deep houses are historically and ethnically distinct from the two room deep Georgian house form. Houses one room in depth and two or more in length have a long history of use in the folk cultures of Ireland, England and Scotland. British settlers built the elemental form of the one room deep dwelling—a rectangular cabin—as their first shelter, and some perpetuated the single room depth in larger houses which replaced it. Scots-Irish families in particular continued to build one room deep houses, often only 16 feet across the gable, but aligning several rooms in length. The impact on this folk house type of the 18th century preference for symmetry led to adoption of a central stair hall and five bay façade applied to the traditional one room depth, creating the 'I-house' type that looked fashionably modern on the outside while feeling comfortably homelike inside.

One room deep five-bay houses were favored by Scots-Irish families in Buffalo Valley but not adopted by Pennsylvania Germans, which accounts for the distribution of I-houses in Union County, concentrated in Kelly Township and along Buffalo Creek, but sparse in the heavily German southern townships (figure 27). This Scots-Irish house type was adopted by the Barber family however, initially in the Thomas Barber house, and subsequently in several houses of the next generation, such as the brick house in White Springs on the farm of William^V B. Barber, Samuel Barber's son, (figure 28).

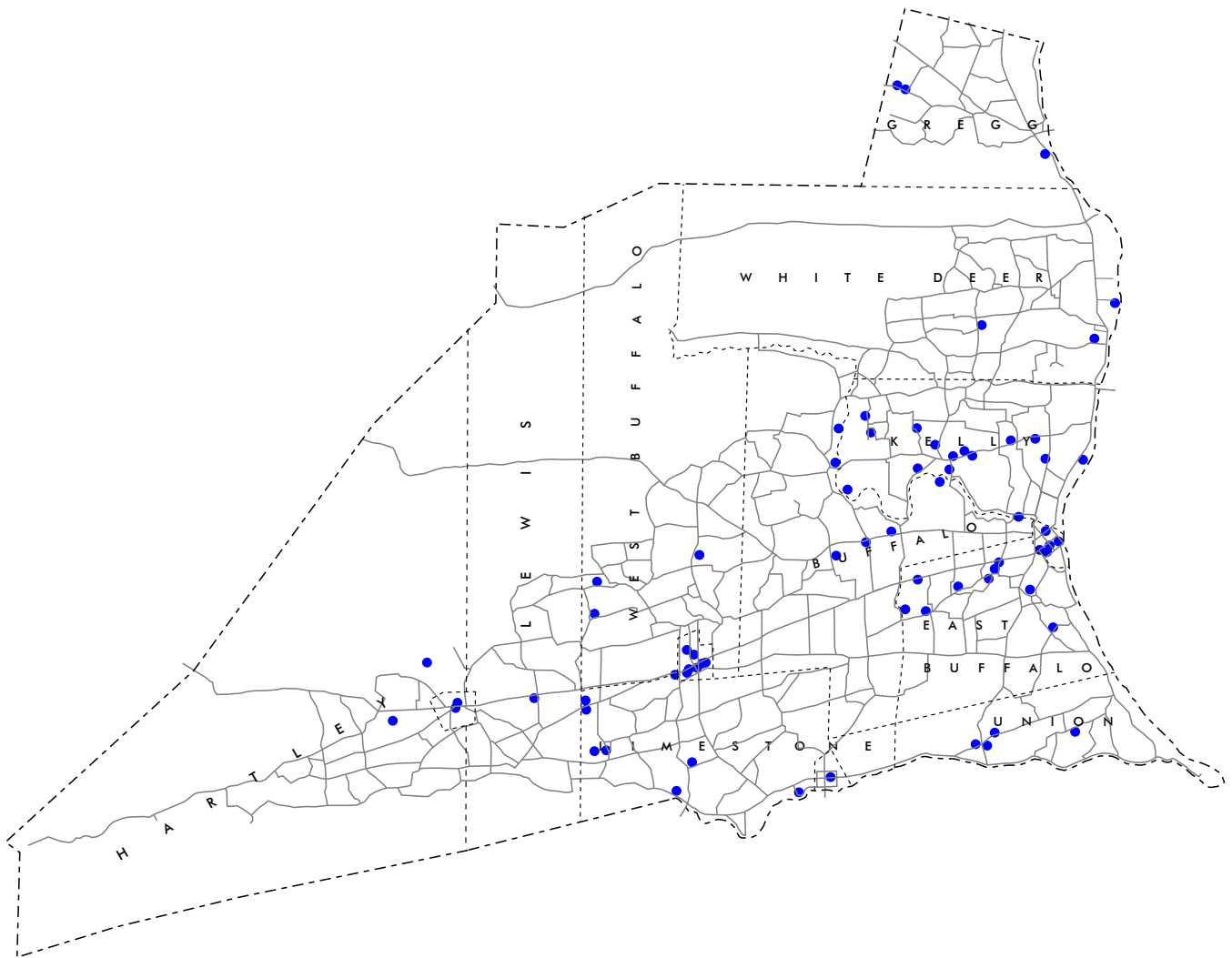


Figure 27 Map of five-bay central hall I-houses in Union County based on survey of surviving pre-20th century buildings. They comprise about 4% of the surveyed housing stock, significantly less numerous than the two room deep Georgian house type, and are most concentrated in areas of early Scots-Irish settlement.



Figure 28 Brick I-house of Robert Barber's grandson William B. Barber, White Springs, in 1985 photo.

Reading the Barber Houses

To understand the Barber houses as cultural artifacts, we have examined their context within the local building tradition. The central hall Georgian plan and I-houses plotted in the survey maps of Union County illustrate the tenacity of vernacular building types and the perpetuation of English and Scots-Irish building forms within a predominantly Pennsylvania German society. House forms introduced to eastern Pennsylvania in the 18th century persisted for more than a century and a half in the tradition-oriented culture of Buffalo Valley. In their floor plans and general appearance, the Barber stone houses conform to these local cultural patterns, but as residences of one of the wealthiest families in the county, they also display a deliberate effort to stand out from this context, constructed to be outwardly larger and finer than the log structures which were the norm in Buffalo Valley in the 1820s. In addition, Robert Barber's two stone houses present an intriguing contrast in the organization of interior domestic space, one reflecting English Quaker and the other Scots-Irish cultural preferences. Both of these observations merit further examination.

In his ambition to stand apart, Squire Robert^{III} Barber mirrored the Lancaster County Quaker elite of his father's day, but as one of a generation whose experiences and values were shaped by the Revolution, the houses he built reflect a change in the nature of privilege. Historian Richard Bushman describes the emergence of a new type of elite in the young republic, "successful professional men, merchants, industrialists, high military and government officials, and large planters", whose grand houses "embodied their wealth, achievements, and cultural aspirations, notably the desire for genteel culture."⁵⁰ The entrepreneurial and successful Squire Barber fits squarely within this group. The new elite were capitalists, with notions of genteel culture that embraced change. A generation after Robert^{III} Barber, Lewisburg's leading industrialist Eli Slifer built his house completely outside of the local tradition, hiring Philadelphia Architect Samuel Sloan to design a Tuscan Style villa.⁵¹ But in the 1820s, the development of a capitalist ethos still kept one foot within the vernacular, while flirting around the edges with fashionable styles. This interplay of tradition and novelty is central to understanding the identity presented by the houses built by Robert^{III} Barber.

⁵⁰ Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*, (New York, Vintage Books, 1992), p 242.

⁵¹ Eli Slifer House Museum, 1 River Road, Lewisburg.

Using buildings to display status is a recurring theme in the American landscape, but this motivation does not explain departure from Barber family tradition in adopting the I-house plan for Thomas^{IV} Barber's house, or continuing to use it for later Barber houses. Why did the Barbers switch to what could be considered a Scots-Irish cultural preference? Conversely, why did Samuel^{IV} Barber's house continue adherence to the Georgian plan type? Samuel and Mary's larger house eventually sheltered a larger family (ten children who survived adolescence vs six), but the two households were of similar size when their respective houses were constructed. Evidence of the careers of Robert's sons preserved in the historical record portrays quite different personalities: Thomas was a successful but reserved farmer who did not engage in politics, while Samuel led a notably public career as a militia officer, politician and well regarded community leader.⁵² Yet this does not clarify the matter, since Thomas owned the more ornate and formal of the two houses; one might expect them to be switched.

A more compelling explanation of the differences between the houses points to the women that Thomas and Samuel married, suggesting a design process that involved collaboration between Robert Barber and his daughters-in-law. Elizabeth Clingan, whose wedding to Thomas^{IV} Barber was noted in Flavel Roan's journal, grew up in a stone central hall I-house in Kelly township built in 1795 and owned by her wealthy father William Clingan, a pillar of the Scots-Irish community (figures 29 and 30). Like the neighboring 1793 Samuel Dale stone house on the opposite side of Buffalo Creek, it has a one room deep plan with a rear kitchen wing, making it an exact precedent for the plan of Thomas Barber's house. Samuel^{IV} Barber's wife Mary Van Valzah, although raised in Buffalo Crossroads practically next door to the Presbyterian church, inherited cultural preferences from parents with Dutch and English backgrounds. Her childhood house is no longer extant, but her father, Doctor Robert Van Valzah, replaced it around 1840 with a Georgian plan brick house (figure 17), indicating preference in the Van Valzah household for the two room deep house form. As with foodways, cultural traditions regarding domestic space were passed down primarily from mother to daughter in Pennsylvania. Therefore it is likely that the stone houses Robert^{III} Barber built for his sons' families had interior plans that were shaped to reflect the inherited cultural traditions and preferences of his daughters in law.

⁵² Barber, *Genealogy of the Barber Family*, p.67-68; Lynn, *Annals of Buffalo Valley*, p. 529.



Figure 29 The 1795 Clingan House in Kelly Township, a stone central hall I-house, viewed from south



Figure 30 Back of the Clingan House showing stone kitchen with two story porch. The rear of the Thomas^{IV} Barber house has been extensively altered and added on to, but it probably had a covered porch at the ground floor, and possibly a two-story porch similar to this one on its rear wing.

Land-owning families like the Clingans, Chambers and Roans were leaders in the early Buffalo Valley Scots-Irish community. Scots-Irish Presbyterian settlers were numerous enough by 1780 to form a congregation that built the first church in the valley at Buffalo Crossroads. While the Van Valzah family did not share ethnicity with their Scots-Irish neighbors, they joined the Presbyterian church and became highly respected members of the community. Following the Quaker tradition of marital alliance with politically elite families--but lacking a Quaker community--Robert Barber's children and grandchildren married into this Presbyterian establishment. Robert^{III} was the last of the Barbers in Buffalo Valley to identify as Quaker; his children all became Presbyterians.

Samuel^{IV} Barber followed most closely in his father's footsteps, serving as a colonel in the local militia, which launched a career in politics as a Jacksonian Democrat. He was an eloquent advocate for progressive causes: active in the temperance movement, founded the Mifflinburg academy, was a delegate to national Presbyterian assemblies, and as a farmer was active in the county agricultural society. Persistence in the habits of public life inherited from their Quaker forebearers actually drew the Barbers of Thomas^{IV} and Samuel^{IV}'s generation into the Buffalo Valley Scots-Irish Presbyterian community. Rather than withdraw from public life, the Barbers withdrew by degrees from Quaker discipline and identity. This transition played out over several generations and was certainly apparent to Squire Robert by the 1820s. But if he had regrets, he did not express them.

Indeed, the Barber houses celebrate personal and family identity with an assurance that reaches outside the conventions of the local building tradition. For example, the complex geometry of the curving front hall stair in Thomas^{IV} Barber's house appears to be based on a design of Owen Biddle, a Philadelphia architect who published the design manual, *The Young Carpenter's Assistant* in 1805, extensively reprinted in the following decade, becoming an influential resource for early 19th century builders (figures 31 and 32). House clients like Barber who sought to display status pressed builders to incorporate novel elements, and traditional builders obliged by seeking assistance from carpenter's guides and pattern books such as Biddle's. Entrance doorways, stairs and fireplace surrounds all became stages for conspicuous display of fashionable taste and the builder's ingenuity. These displays add visual emphasis to the experience of the house, drawing attention to the element that they ornament and alluding to elevated cultural values, such as using columns and molded trim to reference classical antiquity.

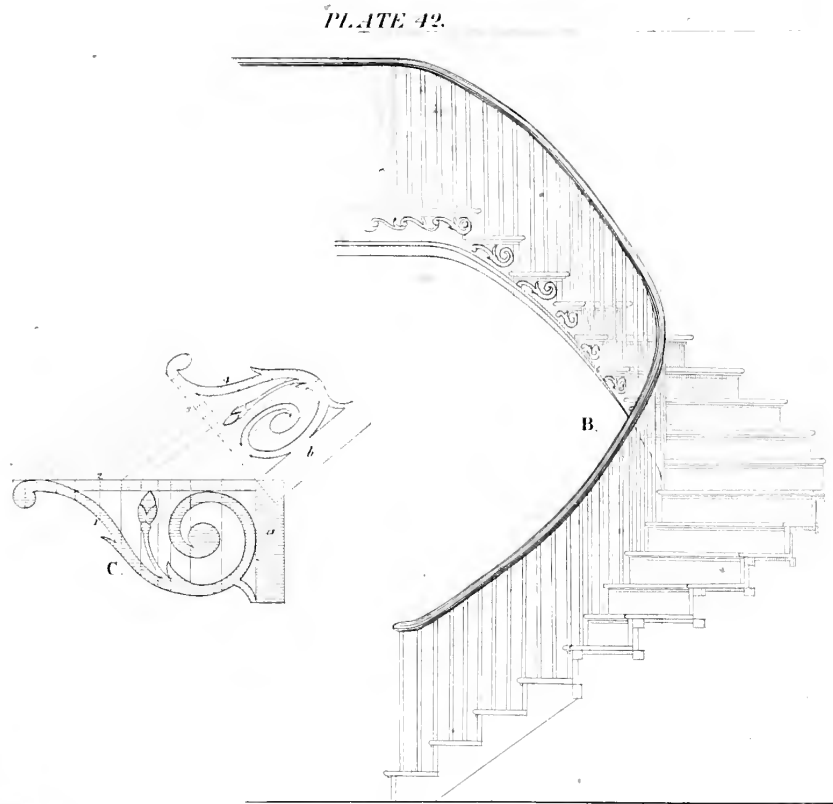


Figure 31 Detail of circular stair from Biddle's *The Young Carpenter's Assistant*, an influential early 19th century builder's manual.⁵³ Biddle explained how to use geometry to lay out the carpentry of curved stairs.



Figure 32 Step bracket trim of circular stair in the Thomas^{IV} Barber house, based on builder's manual.

⁵³ Owen Biddle, *Young Carpenter's Assistant; being a Complete System of Architecture for Carpenters, Joiners and Workmen in General, Adapted to the Style of Building in the United States*, (Philadelphia: Benjamin Johnson, 1805, republished 1833) from Internet Archive Open Library, [<https://archive.org/details/improvedenlarged00bidd>].

There is often a workmanlike earnestness to the execution of ornamental trim in vernacular houses that lends it character and individuality, offsetting the conventionality of copied forms. Builder's manuals offered rules and examples of tasteful design, but didn't encourage originality. Yet examples of ornamental references that are idiosyncratic and personally meaningful to the Barber family occur in both of the stone houses in the form of the carved books that take the place of column capitols supporting mantels over the fireplaces (figure 32). The proportions of the books are slender, lacking the substantial heft of a Bible, modeled instead on legal volumes. They allude, thus, not to scripture but to law, to the magistrate's ideal of society supported and protected by just laws fairly applied. This ideal is the product and the essence of Robert^{III} Barber's Quaker identity. Having shed many of the restrictive aspects of the Quaker Discipline, and forging a worldly network of connections well outside of the Society of Friends, he nevertheless appears to have retained an inner set of convictions, motives and behaviors that perpetuated the Quaker culture of his family.



Figure 32 Carved book at fireplace mantles of Thomas Barber House, right and Samuel Barber house, left.

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