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"LINDENWALD" THE PRESIDENT MARTIN VAN BUREN
HOMESTEAD, NEAR KINDERHOOK, NEW YORK

by

MELVIN J. WEIG

11/1936

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**"LINDENWALD," THE PRESIDENT MARTIN VAN BUREN
HOMESTEAD, NEAR KIDDERHOOK, NEW YORK**

BY
MELVIN J. WEIG
ASSISTANT HISTORIAN
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
Introduction -----	1
Biographical Sketch of Martin Van Buren -----	3
"Lindenswald," the President Martin Van Buren Homestead -----	13
Progress of Efforts to Preserve "Lindenswald" as a Public Property -----	24
Recommendations and Suggestions -----	29
Appendices -----	51

INTRODUCTION

This report on "Lindenwald," the President Martin Van Buren Homestead, near Kinderhook, New York, has been prepared for the purpose of bringing together, in one place, the essential facts concerning this historic site. The sources upon which it is based are mainly secondary in character, since the writer, who has had numerous other official duties to perform, did not possess the time necessary for an exhaustive survey. Sufficient research has been accomplished, however, as is believed, to warrant an accurate presentation of the general picture.

The writer made a personal inspection of "Lindenwald," in the pleasurable company of Associate Architect C. Stephen Pierpont, whose comments on the trip are appended to this report, on August 3, 1936. He has talked at length with various people interested in preservation of the Homestead as an historic shrine. Some of these have supplied him or Associate Historian Roy E. Appelman, his predecessor in District B, Region I, with factual data. He is particularly grateful to Mr. Richard Schenckman, Jr., Secretary of the recently organized Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald," and to Mrs. C.S. De Russo, present owner of the property, for assistance of this nature.

The report proper is divided into several sections. It begins with a biographical sketch of Martin Van Buren. This is followed by a study of the Homestead itself as an architectural and historical reman.

Efforts to preserve the place as a public property are outlined in the third section. A fourth has to do with recommendations and suggestions. The final section contains several appendices: (1) the footnotes, which are arranged in consecutive order, (2) a series of labeled "Lindemans" photographs, (3) Associate Architect Pierpoint's comments in his letter to the writer under date of October 8, 1936, (4) an inventory of the Van Buren furniture remaining in the Homestead, as prepared by Mrs. De Proesse, and (5) the bibliography. The appendices constitute important supplements to the textual material and should be considered accordingly.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

MARTIN VAN BUREN

Early Life and Training:

Martin Van Buren,¹ who became Eighth President of the United States, was born in Kinderhook, near Albany, New York, the third of five children of Abraham and Maria (Hoos) Van Buren, both of whom were Dutch in descent. Abraham was descended from Cornelis, who was the son of Eneas of Surinamesa and came to New Netherland in 1631 as a leaseholder of Van Rensselaer. Maria Hoos was the widow Van Alen and mother of two children when she married the bachelor Abraham. Martin's parents were frugal truck farmers and keepers of an inherited tavern. The future President gained a fair knowledge of English and a smattering of Latin in the inadequate schools of Kinderhook. After graduation, at the age of fourteen, he became a clerk in the law office of Francis Silvester, a Federalist, but inclined from the beginning to have Republican sympathies. He campaigned for Jefferson in 1800 and for reward was made a delegate to the congressional caucus in Troy. In 1801 he entered as a clerk the office, in New York City, of young William P. Van Ness, who was a staunch adherent of Aaron Burr.

Returning to Kinderhook in 1803, Van Buren was licensed to practice law and became a partner of his half-brother, James I. Van Alen. He annoyed the Van Ness family by championing the Clinton-Livingston faction, as against Burr, and began to acquire a competence from the pockets of Jeffersonian-Republican small landholders whose cases he often handled in court. In 1807 he married the sweetheart of his youth,

His kinsman Hannah Boes, who bore him four sons: Abraham, John, Martin, and Smith Thompson. Soon he moved to Hudson, New York, where, as the newly appointed Surrogate (1808-1813), he launched himself upon an ambitious political career.

Activities in State Politics:

From this time until 1821, Van Buren was engaged in State politics, moving in a maze of intrigue and bitterness, but always remaining a partisan Republican. He was elected State Senator on an anti-Bank platform in 1812, chosen Regent of the University of the State of New York in 1815, and both re-elected State Senator and chosen Attorney-General of New York in 1816. His home was then moved to Albany. Hannah Van Buren died in 1818. Her widowed husband never tried to marry again until late in life, when he was rejected by the spinster, Margaret Silvester, the daughter of his old preceptor.

Van Buren's fight for political leadership in the State eventually brought him into rivalry with the faction of De Witt Clinton. The latter was elected Governor of New York in 1817, and in 1819, gaining control of the Council of Appointment, he removed Van Buren from the Attorney-Generalship. Van Buren bitterly attacked Clinton for co-operating with Federalists but himself secretly worked for Rufus King's election to the United States Senate so as to gain Federalist aid against his enemy. He asked for a State Constitutional Convention, which convened in 1821, largely because he opposed the arbitrary power of Chief Justice Ambrose Spencer and favored a reorganization of the judicial system. His

chief work in the Convention was the establishment of an agreement between extreme Radicals and Conservatives. As chairman of the Committee on Appointments, he advocated decentralization of powers held by the old Council of Appointment, to this end advising a redistribution of appointive functions among local authorities, the State Legislature, and the Governor. He was unsuccessful in his opposition, probably for the sake of patronage, to the popular election of all judicial officers.

Entry on the National Political Scene:

Clinton was re-elected Governor in 1820, but the "Blacktails," as his opponents were known, won control of the State Legislature, and in the following year they made Van Buren a United States Senator. In August, 1820, Van Buren's brother-in-law, Moses I. Cantino, and Isaac J. Loake bought the Albany Argus. This paper was given the State printing contract. Edwin Crosswell, who became editor in 1823, made it a highly influential organ. Van Buren himself was chief of the so-called "Albany Regency," which included Crosswell, other members being William L. Harcy, Asariah C. Flagg, Benjamin F. Butler, Michael Hoffman, and later Silas Wright and John A. Dix. These men were formidable in solidarity and achieved extraordinary success. The new Senator's primacy among them was owing, not merely to his amiability and caution, but also to his shrewd judgment of measures and men, to his power of analysis and exposition. His political philosophy was practical and sincere. Needless opposition to public sentiment seemed to him inconsistent with good statecraft, and he thought that those who dispensed the public bounty would, in greater or less degree, influence and control the public mind.

He believed that a good administration would choose capable men, however, and, to their credit, he and other members of the "Regency" faithfully performed the duties of important offices which they obtained.

Van Buren was still preoccupied, during his term as United States Senator, with factional struggles from which he hoped to emerge as the leader of a unified national party. In Washington, by 1824, he was considered the leader of William H. Crawford's group, and he was active in the last and well known Congressional caucus, which was called to nominate Crawford for the Presidency. Andrew Jackson, at this time, he considered unpromising. In the Senate he voted affirmatively on the tariff bills of 1824 and 1828, guided partisan opposition, and served on the Finance Committee and as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He opposed American participation in the Panama Conference and argued against Federal construction of commercial roads and canals within State borders. In 1827, with the aid of Clinton's friends, such was his political adeptness, he was re-elected United States Senator.

The Swing to Jackson:

By this time, however, Van Buren was definitely aligning himself with Jackson. He told the latter to refrain from answering defamatory pamphlets, himself read each pamphlet and planned the replies, and advised editors here and there what to say about campaign issues. After pronouncing a touching eulogium on Clinton, who died in 1828, he ran for Governor of New York in order that, in the event of his election, a "cocktail" administration would be sure to control the State after he

should enter Jackson's Cabinet. Once in the gubernatorial chair, he resigned it to become the latter's Secretary of State, returning to Washington society, of which he was enamored, and becoming at once the most influential of all Jackson's advisers.

As a member of the Cabinet, Van Buren so completely won the President's confidence that Jackson, before the end of 1830, proposed to him that they run on the same ticket, he to resign after a year and leave Van Buren to carry on his policies. This the Secretary of State refused to do and, in connection with discussions within the Cabinet, persuaded Jackson that it was best for him, Van Buren, to resign so as to permit the reorganization of that body. This resignation brought about that of other Cabinet members and enabled the President to eliminate the supporters of then Vice-President John C. Calhoun, while his prompt appointment of Van Buren as American Minister to Great Britain, ostensibly taking that gentleman out of politics, showed that the latter was still in his confidence. Though Van Buren seems deliberately to have kept himself ignorant of the Jackson-Calhoun quarrel, he was accused of causing it, and there were heaped upon his head such opprobrious terms as "Flying Dutchman," "Red Fox of Kinderhook," and "Little Magician."

Van Buren's unusual tact stood him in good stead as Secretary of State. He maneuvered Jackson into appointing young and energetic ministers, soon establishing order and confidence in his Department, and quieted the fears of foreign diplomatic corps, the expected trouble from the frontier President. He settled the old dispute over the West Indian trade between Great Britain and the United States, secured an agreement with France by which that country ultimately and reluctantly paid claims

for compensation for injuries inflicted upon American commerce during the Napoleonic Wars, negotiated a treaty with Turkey providing for free access to the Black Sea and a most favored nations clause, and tried to buy Texas from Mexico, arguing that it was a necessity for development of the Mississippi Valley and that Mexico would finally lose it through revolution if she did not sell it to the United States. Jackson's Maysville Road veto was also largely the work of Van Buren. In August, 1831, the latter was on his way to London as Minister to Great Britain, but in January, 1832, his appointment was rejected by the deciding vote of Vice-President Calhoun. He then took his son John with him to travel in France and Holland.

The Vice-Presidential and Presidential Periods:

Van Buren's return from abroad, purposely timed to follow his nomination for Vice-President in May, 1832, was celebrated extensively in New York City. During the Presidential campaign he aided Jackson in defeating a bill to recharter the United States Bank and opposed the theories of nullification, as he did also internal improvements at national expense, but he intentionally remained vague on the tariff issue.

Elected Vice-President in 1832 as Jackson's running mate, Van Buren proved an able and fair presiding officer of the Senate. Not once did he lose the President's confidence. Accepted by his party as Jackson's protégé, he was nominated for the Presidency at Baltimore in May, 1836, and in 1836 given a large electoral majority over a field of candidates which included Hugh L. White, Willie P. Mangum, and William

Henry Harrison.

The slavery question had attained proportions enough by this time to give Van Buren some trouble. He was against extension of the Southern labor system but acknowledged the right of slave-holding States to control it within their respective boundaries. The activities of Garrison and other abolitionists he condemned, and in 1838, in the Senate, he had given a casting vote in favor of the bill barring their propaganda from the mails. Abolitionist agitators, as well as those who wished to silence them, continued to plague him as President.

The new executive's chief problems, however, were economic in character. Soon the panic of 1837 burst upon him. Despite clamor against it, he held fast to Jackson's specie circular, and, in his message to the special session of Congress, he properly said that the depression was the result of over-action in business and over-expansion of credit. Adherent in his determination to divorce the "money-power" from the Federal Government, and distrustful of the "pet banks" as well as of a central institution, he urged the establishment of an independent treasury system. The first bill for this purpose failed of passage, and not until 1840 was Van Buren able to secure, with some compromise regarding specie payments, the necessary legislation. This was repealed by the Whigs in 1841, however, and the system was not effectually established until 1845. Denied Democrats denounced Van Buren for his part in bringing this to pass, although the independent treasury establishment has generally been regarded as distinctly creditable to his foresight, while the Whigs censured his "heartlessness" in not undertaking

relief measures and particularly his failure to sponsor inflation. He followed his lifelong policy of refusing to answer vilifiers, believing always that "the sober second thought of the people" would uphold him.

Van Buren was blamed, nonetheless, for the economic debacle, while his foreign policy, temperate and commendable though it was, cost him supporters in both North and South. Calhoun's co-operation, Blair's influential Globe, and Jackson's fidelity could not overcome the obstacles to his re-election. As President, Van Buren had been far more than a wily politician, but perhaps no amount of courage, patriotism, and ability would have availed to carry through an effective program or to gain popular approval in such troublous times. "Little Van" was a "used up man" in the "hard cider" campaign of 1840. The Whigs, evading issues and appealing to emotions, triumphantly elected William Henry Harrison over the decorous President, with an electoral vote of 234 to 60 and a popular plurality of 160,000. Van Buren even failed to carry New York.

Retirement and Last Days:

Following the inauguration of Harrison, whose accession he greeted with gentlemanly grace, Van Buren retired to the old William Van Ness farm at Kinderhook. This he had but recently purchased. He now repaired the homestead and gave to it the name of "Lindenswald." His home remained here until death overtook him in 1862.

While denying, presently afterwards, that he would not again run for the Presidency, Van Buren informed the public that he would take no step to secure another nomination. He toured the West and Southwest,

stopping at "Ashland" to see Clay, and at "The Hermitage" to visit Jackson. Many Democrats throughout the North and West rallied to his support. His frank utterances on political issues during this period, particularly his opposition to the annexation of Texas, which he thought would mean a war with Mexico, probably cost him the Democratic nomination for President in 1844, when James Polk was chosen as his party's standard bearer, subsequently to win the election.

The new President soon let it be known that Van Buren's friends were not in favor with him. He offered his rival the London mission, purposely to affect his political exile, but Van Buren, aware of this, refused to accept it. Discontent engendered by the former President's defeat at the Baltimore Convention of 1844, accentuated by factional strife within the party in New York, turned half the Democrats of that state against Polk. The Wilmot Proviso of 1846 offered a rallying point for this discontent and the latent anti-slavery feeling that had been steadily increasing. Next year the "Barnburners" seceded from the State Convention, and, meeting at Herkimer, adopted a platform, drafted by Van Buren's son John, opposing the extension of slavery to the territories to be acquired from Mexico. In June, 1848, assembled at Utica, they nominated Van Buren for the Presidency. Two months later the Free-soil Party was organized at Buffalo, and Van Buren, already nominated by one of the constituent groups, was chosen to head its ticket. He had become convinced, perhaps at the Convention of 1844, that Northern Democrats had yielded to the "slaveocracy" long enough, but he accepted

the nomination reluctantly, preferring to remain a farmer and to write his memoirs. The Free-soilers ^{helped} held to defeat Lewis Cass, the Whig ? candidate, by splitting the ticket. Van Buren himself, by supporting the Compromise of 1850, soon lost favor with them. He returned to the Democratic fold in 1853, thinking he could trust Franklin Pierce, who was elected President in that year, but before long changing his mind again. He was indignant at the "half baked politicians" who repealed the Missouri Compromise in 1854 and hoped the Union would be saved by the election of Buchanan. Deeply shocked by the Civil War, he found his only solace in Abraham Lincoln and refused to be associated with Buchanan, whom he had by then come to despise, in holding an ex-Presidents' meeting to decide on some course relative to the Union cause. After months of suffering with asthma, he died in the summer of 1862, despondent over the situation of the Union armies. Funeral services were held at Kinderhook, in the Dutch Reformed Church, of which he had been a faithful member. Some few of his writings have been published, while others, the great bulk of them in fact, remain in manuscript at the Library of Congress.

"LINDENHALL"

188

PRESIDENT MARTIN VAN BUREN

HUNTSBROOK

The Village of Kinderhook:

When the explorer Henrik Hudson, in September of 1609, sailed up the lordly river that today bears his name, it is said that some miles south of what is now Albany, on the east bank, he or some members of the Half Moon's crew observed great numbers of Indian children gathered on a point of land to gaze in wonderment at the unwonted sight before their eyes. This place, therefore, they called Kinderhook, or Children's Corner, and today, a few miles inland from the river, the little village of Kinderhook, with its population of less than a thousand souls, perpetuates that name.²

The powerful Dutch West India Company, formed in 1621 to promote, among other things, the colonization of New Netherland, eight years later inaugurated the feudalistic patroonship system for the Hudson Valley. But however wisely and beneficently some of the patroons may have ruled their vassals, men of means and spirit, with great frontiers before them, rebelled at the idea of calling them lords and masters. The Kinderhook district, being for a long time free from domination by these feudal barons, attracted men of independent calibre. Numbers of these settlers came direct from Holland and New Amsterdam, probably as early as 1640, while others, as the Van Rensselaer manuscripts reveal, were such as had profited by their contracts with the patroon and were thus in time able to set up for themselves. Joost Margers in 1651, and

Van Der Donck in 1666, allude to Kinderhook as a principle settlement on the river.³

Aside from these associations with early Dutch settlement in America, the little village has a further historical heritage, one which is national in importance. There was born, in a humble dwelling and wayside inn long since removed, the Eighth President of the United States, Martin Van Buren. Not far from Kinderhook, some two and a half miles southward on the old post road from New York to Albany, is "Lindemald," a pretentious old homestead originally built by Judge Peter Van Bess in 1797, one of Van Buren's haunts as a youth and the haven to which he retired after leaving the nation's chief public office in 1841. There he died. In the little cemetery at Kinderhook is a simple granite shaft marking his last resting place. Washington Irving, also, spent at Kinderhook some portion of a life filled with notable achievement, and the originals of his Ichabod Crane, Katrina Van Tassel, Bron Bones, and Firk Schaylor were all well known local celebrities.⁴

Building of the Homestead and the Van Bess Residency:

In 1667 Jan Martense Van Aelsteyn and his wife, Dorekje, purchased from the Indians and the "Thomas Fowell Patent" various pieces of land, aggregating about 3,000 acres, mostly paid for in beaver skins and grain. Jan's granddaughter, Dorekje, married one Martin Van Buren in 1720, and these two were the grand parents of President Van Buren. Lambert Van Aelsteyn, son of Jan, was in 1682 living on 698 acres across the creek from his father's house and had by that time built a home of his own. There is pertinent reference in a deed of this period to an "old stone house." This land included the "Lindem-

and" property of today and descended to Thomas, later to Lambert, Van Aelsteyn, son and grandson respectively of old Lambert.⁵

According to tradition, there came to Kinderhook in about 1780, from that part of Claverack which is now the town of Ghent, one Peter Van Hoes, who purchased Lambert Van Aelsteyn's farm. On a knoll overlooking the creek and "Fly" at "Lindenswald," in a small pine grove, is a marble monument marking the graves of this man and his good wife Elbertie. We learn from the inscriptions thereon that Peter was "a high minded, honourable, sensible man - fearing none but his God - and a distinguished and influential patriot in the most trying times, having served his country with great credit in numerous public stations, both civil and military, among which were the command of a company at the age of 19 years by the unanimous choice of his men, in the invasion and conquest of Canada by the British; the command of a reg.^t at the capture of Burgoyne in 1777; that of a member of the State Convention which adopted the Federal Constitution; and a long service as a State Senator, member of the Council of Appointment, and Chief Judge of this [Columbia] county." Elbertie his wife was "a pattern of a virtuous, affectionate, amiable, and sensible wife and mother."⁶ This couple had the rare distinction of being the parents of three sons, John P.,⁷ William P.,⁸ and Cornelius P. Van Hoes,⁹ each of whom achieved renown in public life. The first was many times elected Mayor of Washington, D.C.; the second became Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York; and the third was for three terms

Governor of Vermont, United States Minister to Spain, and Collector of the Port of New York. There were also two daughters, Catherine and Gertrude P. Van Ness, both of whom married locally.¹⁰

The first home of Peter Van Ness on the site of "Linderauld" was probably a much less pretentious abode than the present building and may even have been established in the "old stone house" referred to above.¹¹ Whatever the history or character of this structure, however, which is not important for present considerations, it seems to have been demolished when the new Homestead was erected seventeen years later. The date 1797, indicating the time when Peter undertook to enlarge his borders in keeping with improved circumstances and the elegant fashion of that day, is engraved on a silver plate, over a head in relief, on the brass knocker still attached to the old Dutch door as it was when the builder placed it there.¹²

The new Homestead was erected several hundred feet back from the old post road, whence it was approached by drives from two widely separated gates, each of which now has a gatehouse.¹³ It was of brick, with white woodwork, and when completed must have been an admirable example of late Georgian domestic architecture. The cornices and other exterior details displayed all that delicacy and restraint in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Through the main portion of the house runs a wide central hall, at the back of which, and at one side, the staircase is reached through an unobtrusive archway. The hall was thus unimpeded and afforded an excellent place for dances, receptions, and other social gatherings, in addition to the spacious rooms on either side. All the interior woodwork is elaborate and of exceptional beauty

in its details, plainly reflecting the subtle influence of Henry Holland and his school in England.¹⁴

William P. Van Ness inherited the property on his father's death in 1804. The new owner was a graduate of Columbia College, had studied law in the office of Edward Livingston, and began practice in New York about 1800. He labored with enthusiasm on Aaron Burr's behalf in the election of 1800 and in this connection published a series of political articles, under the signature "Aristides," which for their vigor and brilliancy won him wide acclaim. He acted as Burr's second in the latter's notorious and fatal duel with Alexander Hamilton at Weehawken, July 11, 1804, and afterward, when Burr was under the cloud of obloquy which subsequently shadowed his career, afforded him refuge at "Lindenswald." President James Madison, in 1812, appointed "pikky" Van Ness - as his good friend Martin Van Buren used to call him - Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, a position which he continued to hold with honor until his sudden death in 1826. During this period, it is important to observe, he resumed his residence at "Lindenswald," much enlarging and otherwise "improving" the house.¹⁵ Washington Irving, who was a frequent visitor there, acted for a time as private tutor for the Van Ness children and also wrote portions of his delightful works while resident at the Homestead. The whole Irving story is, indeed, one of many fascinating sidelights on the history of "Lindenswald" and its environs.¹⁶ At some later time, presumably following the death of his brother William, John P. Van Ness came into possession of the property, evidently selling it

to Martin Van Buren between 1835 and 1841. Van Buren thus regained for his family land which had been previously in its possession.¹⁷

The Van Buren Period:

Following his retirement from the Presidency in 1841, Martin Van Buren came to take up residence at the Homestead, where he had often visited with the Van Ness family as a youth, and called it "Lindenwald" in token of the lindens there. Possibly he hoped that the American people would some day group this name with Monticello, Montpelier, and the Hermitage. However, this may be, he lived at the Homestead, excepting for two years spent in foreign travel, until his death in 1862.¹⁸

Van Buren made extensive alterations at "Lindenwald," some of them hardly for the better, architecturally speaking, during the course of his residence there. Some of these reflected his apparent admiration for Continental taste. While the interior of the Homestead was not much modified and still bears eloquent witness to the good sense of form possessed by the designer, as well as to the fine craftsmanship which went into its building, the exterior, to use one writer's phrase, "fell a victim to the Victorian mania for 'improvement.'"¹⁹ Two additional kitchens were built at the rear. A new pump was installed outside the original kitchen door and the old well cleaned out for use when the pump should freeze. A lodge or gatehouse at either end of the arched driveway, together with pine trees marking the Homestead from the old post road, served to lend memorial tone. New chicken houses, a stable, and a cattle shed were erected. To make room for his servants,

Van Buren introduced dormers on the top floor, thus damaging the beauty of original roof lines. A library wing to the south and rear, an Italianesque tower rising four stories above the old gables and overlooking the Hudson, and a decidedly incongruous front porch were yet further additions.²⁰

The interior of "Lindenswald," as noted above, was not much changed by the former President, and it is today pretty well preserved as he left it. Entering the mansion through a fine doorway, in which is used the Palladian motif of an arched opening flanked by two square-headed openings, one finds himself in the large and beautifully appointed hall previously mentioned in this report. Here is a colored French wallpaper, Paysage à Chasse (Landscape of the Hunt), printed by Jean Zuber in 1851, with its blue-green sky (evidently painted over), a strip of sunlight above the horizon, and, below that, groups of hunters and dogs, horses, trees, and rocks, in warm tones of brown and green, with bright colors in the costumes.²¹ Other rooms of the mansion are in keeping with this delightful interior hall. Wallpapers in at least two or three of them appear to be French also. In two instances fireplaces are faced with mantels that may prove to be Italian importations, while two others are of stock character, typical of later periods. The original mantels which these replaced are said to be stored on the premises. An archway in the double room to the hall left also appears to be of Italian design. Silver, or silver-plated, and brass hardware is on many, if not all, of the interior doors. The second floor hall and rooms are in attractive architectural keeping with those immediately below. In the

basement are a servants' dining quarters, Van Buren's kitchen, and an old wine cellar.²²

Hardly less interesting than the architecture of "Lindemald," from an historical viewpoint, are many genuine Van Buren furnishings still contained in the house. An inventory of these items, prepared by the present owner, is appended to this report, but it may be well to mention here a few of the more important pieces. There are two large mirrors, set in gilt frames, between windows facing the old post road, in the two first floor front rooms; much mahogany furniture of the Empire period, some of it hand-carved, other pieces inscribed with cabinet-makers' names; Van Buren's personal secretary and his study chair; the mahogany sleigh bed in which he died, along with several other beds of the same type; his shaving stand and wardrobe; some heavy, printed window drapes; Brussels carpets; an old square piano; a framed tribute to Andrew Jackson; and a large card table in the upstairs hall, the same over which, in 1863 or 1864, John Van Buren, a nephew of Martin, lost "Lindemald" to Lawrence Jerome in a gambling game.²³

In his native village of Kinderhook, where he spent those years of life which followed retirement from the Presidency, Martin Van Buren was respected and admired. At "Lindemald" his time was divided between his desk and his farm, and he is said to have ridden into the village every day on his favorite mount, Durco, a gift from John Randolph of Roanoke. There was a smile and friendly greeting for all whom he met. On Sundays he would be seen in his high-backed pew at the little Dutch Reformed Church, invariably accompanied by his son Smith, who served as

his annuities when Van Buren resumed his literary labors, and the latter's family. Others of his sons were also with him occasionally. Weather permitting, he would drive his faded English coach; and when snow covered the countryside he came in a high-fronted sleigh, horse and vehicle jangling with shining brass bells, and himself muffled up in a buffalo robe. Entering the par on wintry Sundays, he would set a small foot stove in a convenient spot, shake the snow from one of his huge bear-skin gloves, and then carefully place it on his head for warmth, for his shock of yellow hair was by such time only a memory.²⁴

The former President lived thus simply in his latter days, not wholly divorced from political activity, it is true,²⁵ but by and large carrying on to the end as a country gentleman come home to live with those who had started him on the rise to rank and station. In the Homestead's big entrance hall, or in the tower, from which one could see the Hudson, he probably spent many a warm afternoon, taking the breezes from the rolling Berkshires to the Catskills. Much did he have to think about in those last years, sadly reflecting, perhaps, upon the loss of his long dead wife, or "looking upon wayward, brilliant, or brain-wrought sons, hearing the wind moan and locusts drone."²⁶

By June, 1862, Martin Van Buren's time was near. All through that month, stricken with asthma, he remained in the second floor room which had been the sleeping chamber of old Peter Van Ness before him, and there, in the mahogany sleigh bed which still remains at "Lindensald," he became one of the nation's eminent dead on the morning of July 26 following. For three days afterwards his friends and neighbors entered the big hall, where the deceased President lay in a simple rosewood

coffin, to pay their respects to his memory. And then, attended by hundreds of persons, many of whom were prominent in public life, came the funeral. From the little church of his ancestors, his kindred, and his own reverent attendance, Martin Van Buren was buried. A plain granite shaft in the village cemetery, simply inscribed, marks his grave. In accordance with his wishes, there was no ringing of bells, and no music, save the hymn, "O God Our Help in Ages Past." As the final burial services were taking place, cannon thundered throughout the land, some of which became silent, in accordance with Abraham Lincoln's proclamation, after they had fired a Presidential salute to the memory of Martin Van Buren. Others continued on, in the smoke and flame of civil conflict, for three years more, until the great debate between North and South, in which Van Buren had himself played a hand, was decided by the test of battle.²⁷

Subsequent History of the Homestead as a Private Property:

Following the death of their father, Martin Van Buren's two sons, Abraham and Smith F., conveyed the property with about 250 acres to their cousin, John Van Buren, by deed dated May 6, 1863, for \$20,000. On April 11, 1864, after losing the place in a gambling game with Lawrence Jerome, John Van Buren conveyed it to him. From Jerome, on January 23, 1867, it passed to George Wilder. John Van Buren and James Van Alstyne purchased "Lindemald" from Wilder for \$35,000 on November 7, 1873. From then it passed to Adam E. Wagner, for a consideration of \$30,000, by deed dated April 29, 1874. Wagner held the property until November 15, 1917,

when he and his wife sold it to Sazoon H. Birney, with about 220 acres, for a consideration of \$1.00, though the actual price paid is said to have been \$15,000. Mrs. C.B. De Frosse, the youngest daughter of Dr. Birney, is the present owner of "Lindemald" and resides there with her husband.

Generally speaking, the Homestead remains in much the same condition today, as the writer has indicated above, as it was in Van Buren's time. Some utility bathrooms, water system, hot air heat, and a slate roof have been added by the De Frosse family. Until their ownership, also, the mansion was never opened to the general public. Structurally, except for the later additions, the building appears to be in a satisfactory state of preservation, and no serious settlements seem to have occurred in the walls or foundations. It could therefore be restored, from all indications, with great success.²⁸

PROGRESS OF EFFORTS
TO PRESERVE "LINDENFELD"
AS A PUBLIC PROPERTY

Early Efforts to Save the Howstedts

Many efforts have been made since the first decade of this century to have "Lindenwald" preserved as a public property. An appropriation bill for this purpose was vetoed by New York State's Governor (Charles E. Hughes (1907-1910)). Similar bills were introduced in the New York State Legislatures of 1911 and 1913 and subsequently defeated. A fourth bill for preservation purposes was introduced in the 1914 State Legislature. In this it was proposed to make "Lindenwald" the Governor's summer home, with the State purchasing the twenty acre plot on which the Howstedt stands, and also adjacent land if advisable, at a cost not exceeding \$35,000. This bill was not reported out of committee. More recent appeals to the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, and to the State Park Commission of New York as well, in their individual characters, have been equally without tangible results.²⁰

The Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald":

Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., of New York City, began to make investigations in 1954 as to the feasibility of renewing efforts to save the Howstedts. He contacted patriotic and historical societies, various public commissions and boards, and also individuals who might have been interested in contributing financial or other aid toward the accomplishment of his purpose.²⁰ A state organization, the Association

for the preservation of "Lindemald," was eventually formed, with Mr. Schumacher as its Secretary. This body is the driving force behind present efforts to preserve the Homestead as a public property. Its membership representation includes the following groups: United States Daughters of 1812, Daughters of Founders and Patriots, American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, Green County Historical Society, Holland Society of New York, Sons of the American Revolution, New York State Historical Association, Order of Colonial Lords of Honor in America, Society of the Cincinnati, Columbia County Association in the City of New York, General Society War of 1812, Daughters of the Revolution, New York State Daughters of the American Revolution, Ulster County Historical Society, Mohawk Valley Historical Association, Columbia County Historical Society, Albany Institute of History and Art, American Order of Plowmen, Dutch Settlers Society of Albany, Saint Nicholas Society, Dutchess County Historical Society, Westchester County Historical Society, and the New York Historical Society. The first meeting of representatives from various of the organizations named was held in New York City on November 16, 1936. Several other meetings have been held since. The Association was definitely formed at that of April 18, 1936, and, on June 12 following, temporary officers were elected.⁵¹ At the meeting of September 6, 1936, which was held at the Homestead under sponsorship of the Columbia County Association in the City of New York, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Association on motion from Dr. Alexander C. Flick, State Historian of New York: "RESOLVED that it is the sense of the meeting that the individuals

present, and the organizations they represent, endorse the movement to effectuate the establishment of 'Lindenwald,' the home of President Martin Van Buren, as a public property, and that they pledge their efforts to bring about this result." The Association proposes to have a bill introduced in the New York State Legislature at its next session, which will be early in 1937, for the acquisition of "Lindenwald" by the State, and is soliciting the interest of the National Park Service in possible restoration and administration of the site thereafter as a historic shrine.⁵²

Co-operation of the National Park Service:

Interest in the "Lindenwald" question was expressed by the National Park Service as early as November 4, 1936, and on May 20, 1936, it was personally discussed with Mr. Schermershorn by Associate Historian Roy E. Applemann. A report on this interview, made to Acting Assistant Director Verne E. Chastelain, is in the Service files under that date, attached thereto being some informational data supplied at the time by Mr. Schermershorn.

Justice Vincent S. Lippe, President of the Columbia County Association in the City of New York, wrote to President Roosevelt concerning the problem on April 24, 1936. The President, in his acknowledgment and reply of June 1 following, briefly explained the scope and character of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 636); assured Justice Lippe that the National Park Service, which was engaged in making a survey of historic sites throughout the United States, would include the Homestead in its study program; and stated further that a

representative of the Service would call on him during the next two weeks. Mr. Appleson was unable to get in touch with Justice Lippe previous to his transfer to Richmond, Virginia, in July, 1936. This was the situation when the writer, who entered on duty as Assistant Historian in District 8, Region I, on July 7, 1936, took over the "Lincolns" problem. He has since talked at some length with Justice Lippe, Mr. Schormerhorn, and other members of the Association, and has reported the nature of these discussions to the Washington and Regional Offices. Acting Assistant Director Chatelain, under date of July 30, 1936, and by Historian Donald F. Lee, authorized and instructed him to study the Lincoln question and submit a detailed historical report thereon. This present report constitutes the result of researches accordingly undertaken.

RECOMMENDATIONS

AND

EXCEPTIONS

Summary Evaluation of "Lindenwald" as a National Historic Site:

There is no doubt, in the writer's opinion, that "Lindenwald" is a historic site of enough national importance to be preserved as such. Architecturally, notwithstanding the Van Buren "improvements," it has both exterior and interior details of such delicacy and beauty. The surrounding grounds and location are likewise attractive. Considered from a historical angle, the *Honesta* constitutes unquestionably the best remaining memorial to Martin Van Buren, whose only other physical monument is the single granite shaft in Kinderhook Cemetery. Its connections with the Van Buren family and Washington Irving are also significant. "Lindenwald," properly restored and administered as a public property, could well become a physical focus for the story of Dutch settlement, of Irving and his notable literary achievements, and of a President whose life and work, important as they were, are not too well known by modern America. There, as in other historical areas developed and administered by the National Park Service, actual remains might considerably assist in reconstructing for American citizens, with far more reality than the printed page alone, important events in the growth of a great nation.

Research and Records:

This report has necessarily been prepared without opportunity for the writer to make an exhaustive study of "Lindenwald" or the non

who lived there and endowed it with historical significance. There is reason to believe, however, that a wealth of source material exists and could be drawn from to elaborate upon it. The Van Buren Papers are of particular importance in this connection. In 1904 - 1905 Mrs. Smith F. Van Buren and Dr. Stayvozent Fish Morris gave to the Library of Congress several thousand manuscripts left by the former President. Among them were an unfinished autobiography in six folio volumes, some 250 or 300 letters of his correspondence with Andrew Jackson, and many semi-personal, semi-political papers, including a few from eminent writers and journalists like Irving and William Cullen Bryant. A calendar of these papers, numbering over 4,000, was prepared by Eliza West and published by the Federal Government, in a volume of about 650 pages, in 1910. The earliest paper is a copy of Martin Cornelisse's (Van Buren) will, dated 1703; the last is dated 1862. These manuscripts should be carefully studied by any agency which undertakes to restore and administer the Homestead as a public property. Much research also remains to be done in old deed records and other pertinent papers.

Concluding Observations:

Efforts are now being made by the Association for the Preservation of "Lindemulder" to effect the purchase of this property by New York State during the coming year. Mrs. C.B. De Fosse, present owner of the estate, is apparently willing to give an option on the Homestead and a portion of the land, probably twenty acres, for \$50,000. The sum of \$50,000 might be acceptable. It is thought that whatever is eventually acquired ought to include the mansion and the Van Buren

furnishings in it, the approaches from the old post road, protective plots to the sides and rear of the house, all minor historical structures associated with "Lindemald," particularly the gatehouses, and the Van Ness burial ground.

In presenting its plea for preservation to the State Legislature next year, the Association will have to ask for funds to purchase, restore, and administer "Lindemald," unless the Federal Government meanwhile expresses its willingness to assume, under the Historic Sites Act, one or more of these obligations. A good restoration, including proper administrative facilities, would cost approximately \$20,000. Whether the State will prove willing to go this far, not to mention the matter of caring for the property in future, is at least questionable. It could probably be induced, the Association believes, to purchase "Lindemald" on condition that the National Park Service, under the Historic Sites Act, would restore the Homestead and administer it thereafter. The Association wishes to learn, therefore, as soon as possible, whether the Service can be expected to assume this proposed obligation. It is hoped that the present report may prove helpful in formulation of an authoritative opinion on this important question.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Footnotes:

¹ This biographical sketch is based very largely on William E. Smith's article, "Martin Van Buren," in the Dictionary of American Biography, ed. by Dumas Malone, Vol. XII (New York: 1936), pp. 152-57. The article contains a very good bibliographical introduction to the study of Van Buren's life.

² Edward A. Collier, A History of Old Kinderhook (New York and London: 1914), pp. 1-2. The first known appearance of the name is on what is called Adrian Block's (possibly Cornelis Hendrick's) "Carte Figurative," dated 1614-1616. No present-day place-name in New York State is known to be of earlier record. The story is told that Martin Van Buren, when attending a royal reception in England, was asked by Queen Adelaide how far back he could trace his ancestry, to which question he replied, "As far back as Kinderhook, Your Majesty." (Ibid., pp. 1-2, 7).

³ Ibid., pp. 40-41.

⁴ Russia. See especially the authorities cited in note 16.

⁵ "Notes on Martin Van Buren Property by Mrs. Van Alstyne," given to Associate Historian Roy E. Appelman on May 29, 1936, by Mr. Richard Schermohrn, Jr., Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of "Lindemulder." Cf. Collier, op. cit., pp. 49, 94-96, and 99.

⁶ The monument was erected by Peter's oldest son John, "on behalf of himself, and other children and grandchildren." Photographs of it are appended to this report.

⁷ John P. Van Bosc "was born in the town of Ghent; was graduated at Columbia College, studied law in the office of Brodtholst Livingston in New York; began the practice of law in Claverack in 1799, but soon retired on account of ill health. In 1801 he was elected a member of Congress. About a year later he married Maria Barn, a very wealthy woman and of exceptional charm of person and character. Washington was thenceforth his home. President Jefferson appointed him Brigadier-General of the District Militia, and Madison made him Major-General. He was many times elected mayor of the city, until he declined re-election. Largely through his efforts the Bank of the Metropolis was established, in the presidency of which he continued until his death.

His wife, by her manifold charms, charities, and devotion, won the highest respect of all who knew her. She established the Protestant Orphan Asylum, gave the land for two churches, and was abundant in her beneficences. Years ago when the interior of St. John's Episcopal church was remodeled all the pews were re-arranged except that row to be occupied by General and Mrs. Van Ness. That was left unchanged. On her death both Houses of Congress adjourned out of respect to her memory; an honor given to no other woman. The mausoleum in which repose the remains of both was modeled after the temple of Vesta at Rome, and cost \$34,000." (Collier, op. cit., p. 304).

⁸ William P. Van Ness "was born in Ghent (Dr. Bryn said Kinderhook) in 1778. He was a graduate of Columbia College, 1797; studied law in the office of Edward Livingston, New York, and began practice there in 1800. In his office in 1802 Martin Van Buren completed his preparatory legal studies. In the Jefferson and Burr presidential campaign (1800) Mr. Van Ness labored for the election of the latter (his intimate friend) as President. In one of the Hudson papers of the time appeared a series of articles bitterly attacking the Livingstons and Clintons, and signed 'Aristides.' Their vigor and brilliancy were widely recognized, and when Mr. Van Ness came to be known as the writer he was hailed and honored as a second but discovered Junius. His intimacy with Burr led him to consent to act as Burr's second in his fatal duel with Alexander Hamilton, July 11, 1804. In 1812 President Madison appointed Mr. Van Ness Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York; a position which he continued to hold with much honor until his sudden death in 1826. While Judge he resumed his residence at Lindersmaid, much enlarging and otherwise improving the house. Washington Irving was a frequent visitor there, and acted for a time as private tutor of the children. Portions of his immortal works were written there. The published writings of Mr. Van Ness were (jointly with John Woodworth): Laws of New York, with Notes, Albany, 1815; Reports of Two Cases in the Prize Court of New York District, 1814; and Concise Narrative of General Jackson's First Invasion of Florida, 1826." (Ibid., pp. 304-05).

⁹ "Cornelius P., the third son of Peter Van Ness, was born in Kinderhook, January 26, 1782. Although prepared for college, he decided in the first instance not to study for a profession, but when about eighteen he changed his mind and entered his brother William's law office in New York City. He was admitted to the bar in 1804 and two years later moved to St. Albans, Vt., and began practice, but three years thereafter moved to Burlington and was made postmaster there. In 1809, President Madison appointed him U.S. collector of the port of Burlington; in 1816 one of the Commissioners to settle the northeastern boundary; in 1818-'21 a member of the Vermont General Assembly; in 1821, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; 1823-'29, three times re-elected Governor of Vermont; 1823-'27, U.S. Minister to Spain, and in 1844 Collector of the

part of New York. In 1823 the University of Vermont awarded him the degree of LL.D. In 1848 (Washington, D.C.), he published a 'Letter to the Public on Political Parties, Caucuses, and Conventions.' One of the daughters married Judge James Roosevelt, of the New York Supreme Court, a grandnephew of ex-President Roosevelt." (Ibid., pp. 395-96).

10 Ibid., pp. 392-93.

11 Ibid., p. 392. Harold D. Eberlein, The Honors and Historic Homes of the Hudson Valley (Philadelphia and London: 1924), pp. 215-16.

12 Ibid.

13 "The land runs down to the creek, with fine views of the Catskills. On the fields south of the house used to be a small lake, and these fields are noted as an ancient Indian campsite, - many arrow heads and implements having been found there. The 'old stone house' referred to, was apparently near the road leading to the creek and perhaps near the farm barn and where the tenant house stands. There are two quaint gate houses, an interesting outtage and barn, and back of the house facing a plateau Van Buren's old coach barn." ("Notes on Martin Van Buren Property by Mrs. Van Alstyne"). See also Collier, op. cit., p. 377. Whether the gatehouses were built by Van Ness, or later by Martin Van Buren, the writer does not know.

14 Eberlein, op. cit., p. 216. Cf. photographs and comment of Associate Architect C. Stephen Pierpoint appended to this report, also Collier, op. cit., p. 377.

15 Supra, note 8.

16 Ibid., Collier, op. cit., pp. 24, 232, 360-62, 395, and 426. Eberlein, op. cit., pp. 220-21. On the old Albany post road, which one travels in coming from Kinderhook to "Lindenwald," is the site of a schoolhouse where Jesse Merwin, the original "Ichabod Crane," pursued his pedagogic labors when Irving knew him. Merwin and Irving frequently went fishing together on a small pond, now known as Merwin's Lake, which is nestled among the hills behind the schoolhouse site. Photographs of the schoolhouse site, the Merwin farmhouse, Merwin himself, the Merwin monument at Kinderhook, and part of a letter from Irving to Merwin referring to the fishing trips and the character derivation of "Dirk Schuyler" from local celebrity John Moore appear in Collier, op. cit., facing pp. 24, 360, 362, and 426. On the post road, also, and somewhat closer to "Lindenwald," is the old Adam Van Alen homestead, where once lived Katrina Van Alen, prototype for the Irving-created "Katrina Van Tassel." This house was built in 1736 and still stands in a state of apparently good preservation. Photographs of the building appear in ibid., facing p. 360; and in Eberlein, op. cit., pp. 220-21.

17 "Notes on Martin Van Buren Property by Mrs. Van Alstyne."

18 Collier, op. cit., p. 420. A description of Van Buren's home-coming to Kinderhook appears in Denis F. Lynch, An Epoch and a Man: Martin Van Buren and His Times (New York: 1929), pp. 474-75.

19 Eberlein, op. cit., p. 216.

20 Ibid. Lynch, op. cit., pp. 475-76. Cf. the following: "Van Buren was not without a few conveniences. The North side of the house was heated by a hot air furnace, which is still in the cellar. Also there are bits of lead piping running throughout the back part of the house, proving that he had running water in some rooms at least. A large copper boiler in the cellar has Martin Van Buren painted on it and an old zinc lined bath tub used by the former President is still here." ("Description of 'Lindenwald,' the Van Buren Homestead, by the Present Owner, Mrs. C.S. de Proesse," given to Associate Historian Roy F. Appleman on May 29, 1936, by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald").

21 A coat of varnish on this paper has somehow added to the richness of its tones. The present owner informed this writer that he was once offered \$3,000 for it, and that, on another occasion, when asked whether he would not sell it for \$10,000, he indicated that it could not be had even for that price. The paper is unquestionably very valuable, though in need of some restoration. A full description of it, with introductory notes on famous French landscape papers and Jean Zuber, the manufacturer, is to be found in Henry McClelland, Historic Wall-papers, from Their Inception to the Introduction of Machinery (Philadelphia and London: 1924), pp. 167-69, 168-68, and 336. This work also contains two photographs of the hall, showing the paper very clearly, and the writer has copied them for this report.

22 Personal observations of the writer at "Lindenwald," August 3, 1936. Comments of Associate Architect G. Stephen Pierpont, as appended to this report.

23 Personal observations of the writer at "Lindenwald," August 3, 1936. Inventory prepared by Mr. William L. De Proesse and sent by him to the writer on September 24, 1936. The inventory, as mentioned in the text, is appended to this report.

24 Collier, op. cit., pp. 422-23. Lynch, op. cit., pp. 473 and 531.

25 Among the more noted visitors at "Lindenwald" during this period were the following: John L. Stephens, Thomas Hart Benton, David Wilcox, Charles Sumner, Silas Wright, Commodore Nicholson, Frank Blair, W.L. Hovey, William Allen Butler, A.C. Flagg, General Winfield Scott, the Earl of Carlisle, Henry Clay, Washington Irving, Samuel J. Tilden, and John Bigelow. (Collier, op. cit., p. 376).

²⁶ Ibid., p. 370. Lynch, op. cit., p. 609, contains a description of a New Year's Day celebration at "Lindenswald."

²⁷ Ibid., p. 545. Collier, op. cit., p. 423.

²⁸ Personal observations of the writer at "Lindenswald," August 5, 1936. "Notes on Martin Van Buren Property by Mrs. Van Alstyne."

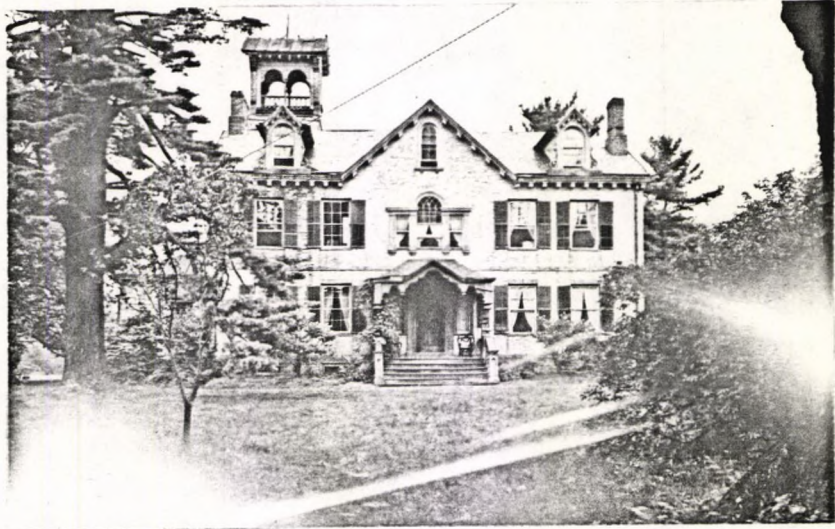
²⁹ "Activities to Affect Preservation of Martin Van Buren Homestead," a summary of informational data given to Associate Historian Roy E. Applana by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., on May 29, 1936.

³⁰ Mr. Schermerhorn was apparently convinced, as a result of this work, that the only real hope of financial aid lay in the possibility of assistance from the State or Federal Governments, or both.

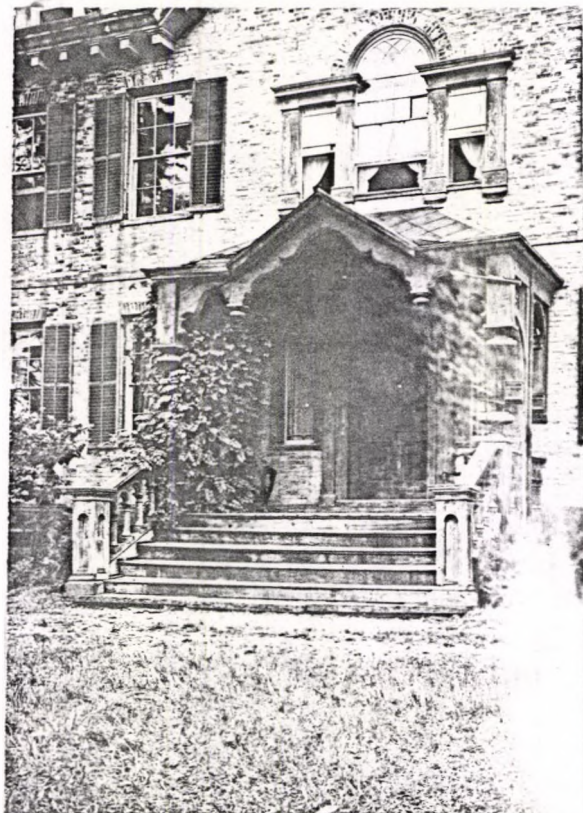
³¹ "Activities to Affect Preservation of Martin Van Buren Homestead." "Facts in Regard to 'Lindenswald,'" furnished to the writer by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., on August 6, 1936. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., "Report of Association Meeting at Van Buren Homestead, Kinderhook, N.Y., September 6, 1936," furnished to this writer by Mr. Schermerhorn.

³² Ibid. Mr. Schermerhorn's report on this meeting was forwarded to the Washington and Regional Offices upon receipt of the same in the District 3 Office. Copies of all the writer's correspondence and reports on "Lindenswald" to date have also been sent to those Offices. Hence they are not included in this report.

Appendix II - Photographs



Front elevation of the mansion house at "Lindenwald."
The old post road from New York to Albany is behind the
photographer. Photo taken 8-3-36.



Portico and entrance doorway at front elevation of the
mansion house at "Lindenwald."
Photo taken 8-3-36



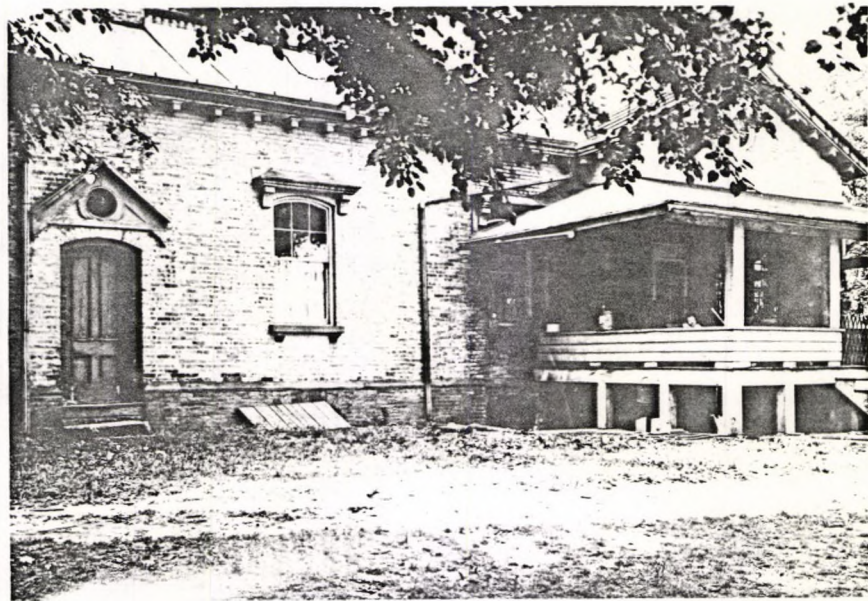
Front and left side elevations of the mansion house at "Lindenswald." Photo taken 8-3-36.



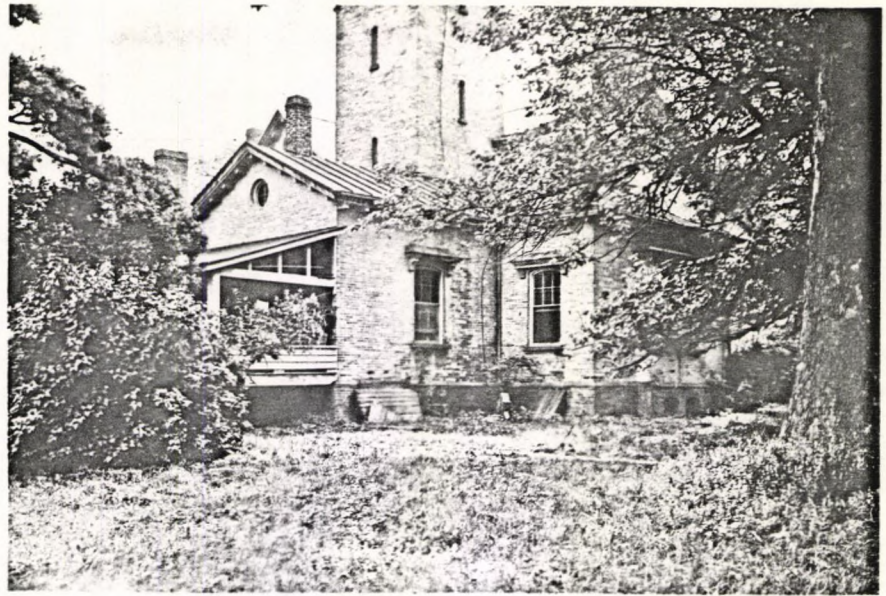
Right side elevation of the mansion house at "Lindenswald." Photo taken 8-3-36.



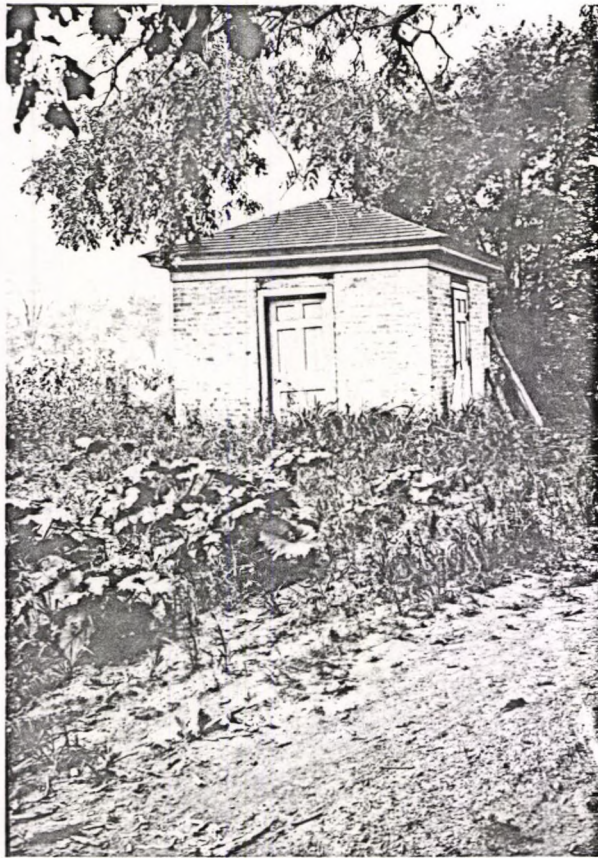
Detail of rear right
side elevation of the
mansion house at "Lin-
demald." Photo taken
8-3-36.



Rear view of the mansion house at "Lindemald" from
toward the right side. Photo taken 8-3-36.



Rear left corner of the mission house at "Lindenswald."
Photo taken 8-3-36.



Old building on the
grounds at "Linden-
wald" to the left of
the mission house.
Photo taken 8-3-36.

Appendix V - Bibliography:

1. William E. Smith, "Martin Van Buren," in the Dictionary of American Biography, ed. by James Malone, Vol. XIX (New York: 1936), pp. 152-57.

2. Edward A. Collier, A History of Old Kinderhook (New York and London: 1914).

3. "Notes on Martin Van Buren Property by Mrs. Van Alstyne," given to Associate Historian Roy E. Appelman on May 29, 1936, by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald."

4. Harold D. Eberlein, The Mansions and Historic Homes of the Hudson Valley (Philadelphia and London: 1924).

5. Denis T. Lynch, An Epoch and a Man: Martin Van Buren and His Times (New York: 1925).

6. "Description of 'Lindenwald,' the Van Buren Homestead, by the Present Owner, Mrs. C.S. de Frosse," given to Associate Historian Roy E. Appelman on May 29, 1936, by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald."

7. Nancy McClelland, Historic Wall-papers, from Their Inception to the Introduction of Machinery (Philadelphia and London: 1924).

8. "Activities to Affect Preservation of Martin Van Buren Homestead," a summary of informational data given to Associate Historian Roy E. Appelman on May 29, 1936, by Mr. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of "Lindenwald."

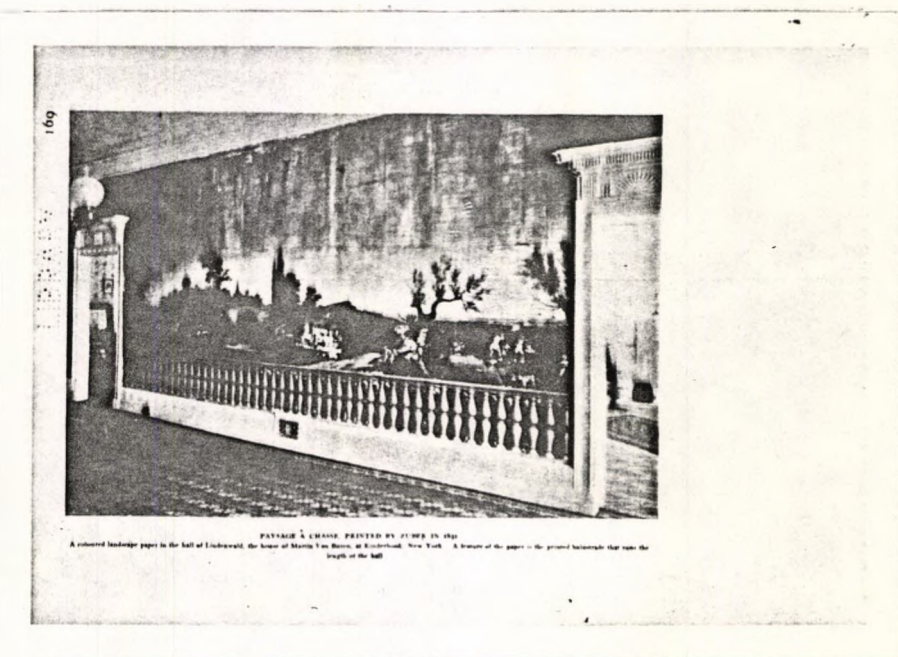
9. Richard Schermerhorn, Jr., "Report of Association Meeting at Van Buren Homestead, Kinderhook, N.Y., September 6, 1936," furnished to the writer by Mr. Schermerhorn.

Respectfully submitted,

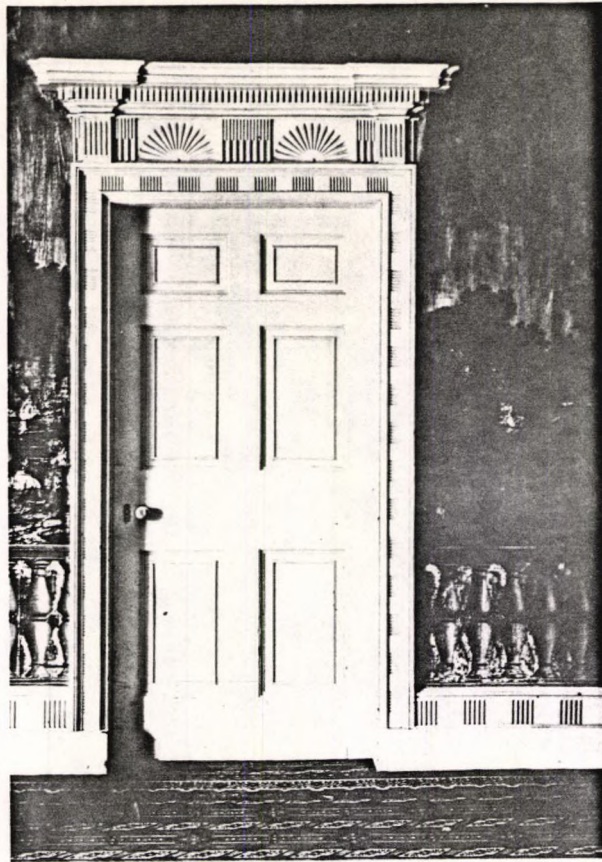
Malvin J. Weig
Assistant Historian
District 3, Region I
National Park Service



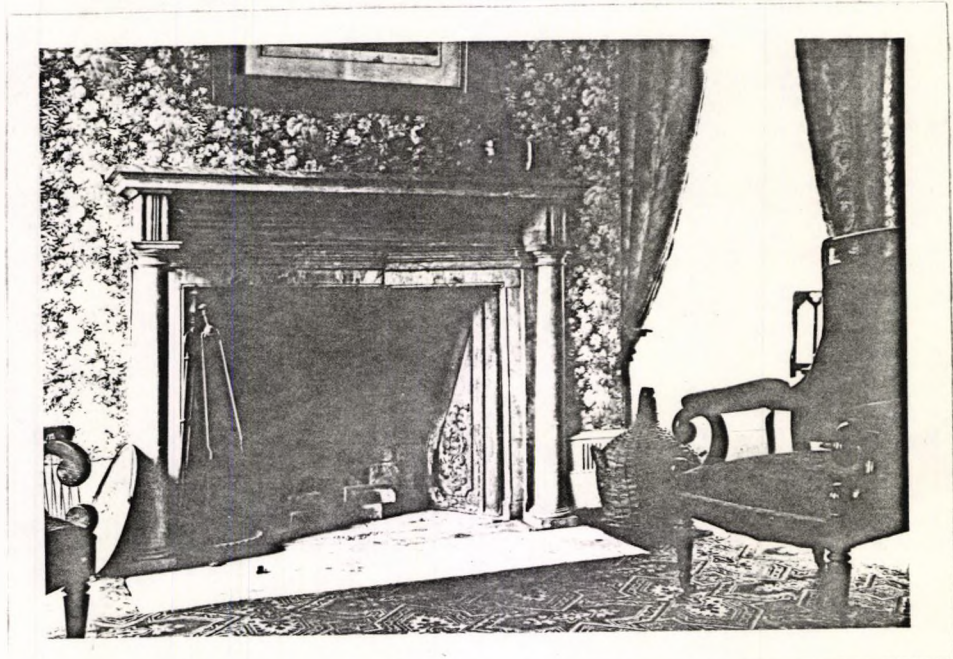
Left side of the first floor hall in the mansion house at "Lindenswald," showing the imported French wallpaper. Copied from Nancy McClelland, Historic Wall-papers, p. 170, 10-24-36.



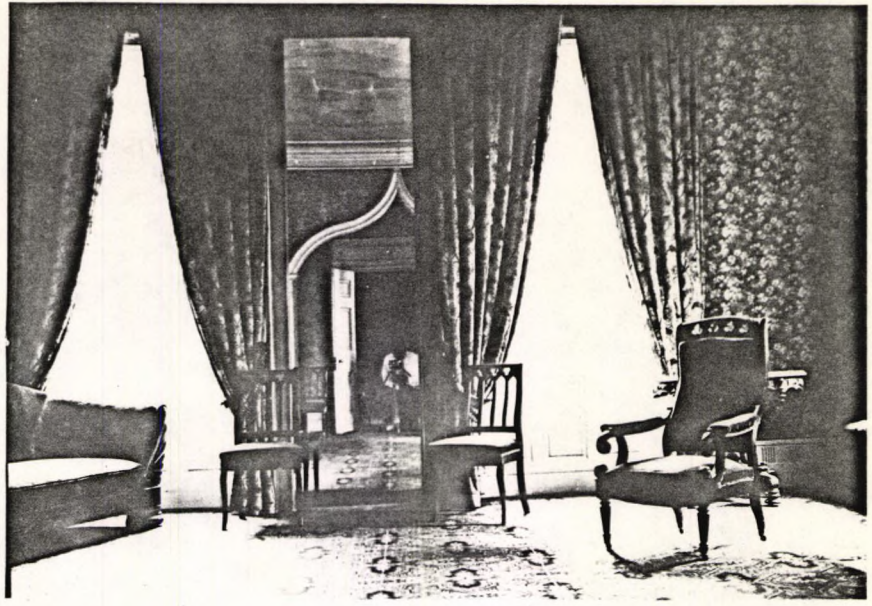
Right side of the first floor hall in the mansion house at "Lindenswald," showing the imported French wallpaper. Copied from Nancy McClelland, Historic Wall-papers, p. 169, 10-24-36.



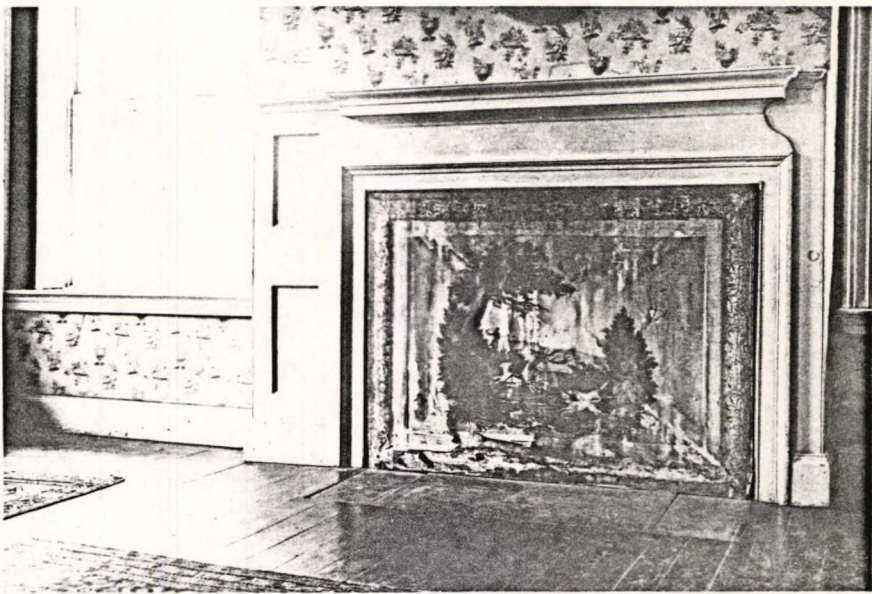
Detail of doorway on
left side of first floor
hall in the mansion house
at "Lindemald." Photo
taken 8-3-36.



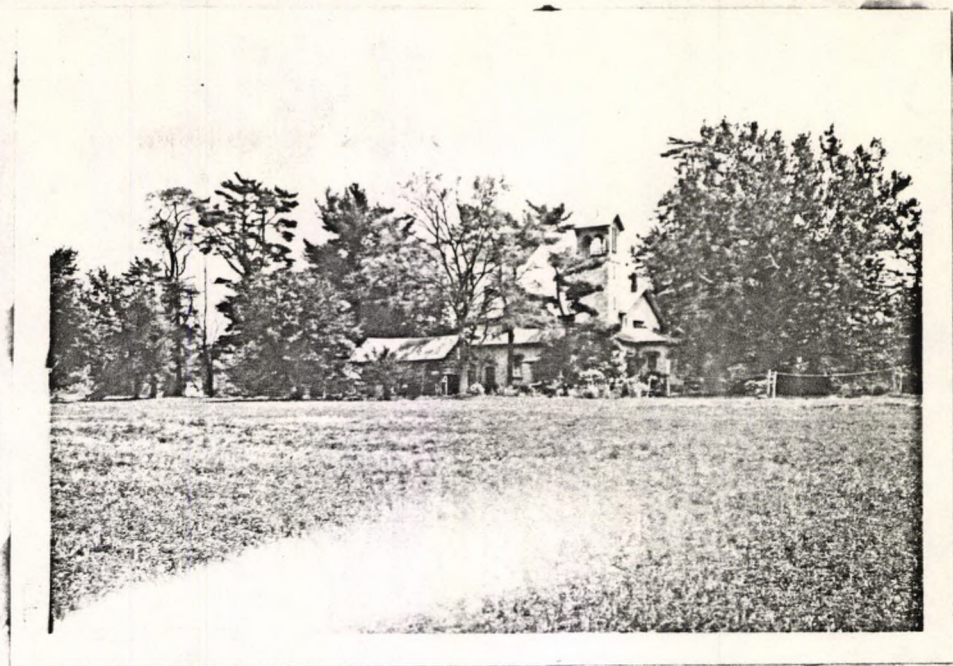
Mantel in left side front room on first floor of the
mansion house at "Lindemald." Photo taken 8-3-36.



Looking toward the old Albany post road in left side front room on first floor of the mansion house at "Lindenwald." In the large mirror, mentioned in the text of this report, can be seen a reflection of the presumably Italianesque archway leading to an adjoining room. Photo taken 8-5-36.



Wooden mantel in left side front room on second floor of the mansion house at "Lindenwald." Photo taken 8-5-36.



General rear view of the mansion house at "Lindenwald" from the left side and a short distance from the Van Ness burial ground. Photo taken 8-3-36.



The Van Ness monument at "Lindenwald," showing the inscription to Elbertie Van Ness. Photo taken 8-3-36.



The Van Ness monument at "Lindemald," showing the inscription to Peter Van Ness. Photo taken 2-5-36.

Appendix III - Comment of Associate Architect C. Stephen Pierpont on
the Architecture of "Lindenwald":

72 Pondfield Road West
Bronxville, New York
October 8, 1936

Mr. Melvin J. Weig
Assistant Historian
72 Pondfield Road West
Bronxville, New York

Subject: Inspection of Van Buren
Homestead

Dear Mr. Weig:

This is in line with your request sometime ago for my architectural comment as a result of our visit to Kinderhook, New York, where we met Mr. Wilson Tipple on Monday, August 3. The purpose of the visit was, of course, to consider the Homestead from an architectural angle and to approximately appraise the value of the building.

The Homestead, originally a fine Georgian Colonial example, has been considerably altered on the exterior during later periods. These unfortunate alterations, with Venetian Gothic tendencies of a baroque type, were undoubtedly carried on by a contractor with photographic examples to guide him, rather than from actual drawings for the required alterations. Therefore the work performed does not show any of the normal adjustments or placement of motives in conformity with the Architecture of the original work, which might be reasonably expected if the work had received definite study.

Interiors have not been materially altered and in the judgment of the writer are representative of the best period of Colonial work of that time, with cornices containing finely dentiled and carved members and pilasters in good proportion and craftsmanship. In two instances fireplaces are faced with mantels that may prove to be Italian importations. Two others are of stock type, typical of the later periods. However, as you will remember, the present occupant and owner assured us that the original mantels are stored on the premises. Wall papers in three or four rooms appear to be original French papers of the earlier period. The large entrance hall contains a scenic paper of interesting character of this early period. Some furniture, presumably of early period, is also located in various parts of the house.

Structurally, except for the later additions consisting of entrance porch, dormers and the tower addition, the house is in a

satisfactory state of preservation. In fact no serious settlements were noted in stone masonry walls, which are faced with brick on the exterior. The cellar walls were also examined for evidence of settling but there were no indications that this had occurred to any definite extent.

The house would cost approximately \$60,000 to construct at the present time. Necessary work for restoration and preservation would cost about \$20,000. This cannot be accurately ascertained until a complete set of plans and a survey have been made.

It is recommended that very definite collaboration exist between the Historian, Archaeologist and Architect. Experts in the latter two fields should be retained to assist the Historian in the work of preservation and restoration of the building.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.)

C. Stephen Pierpoint
Associate Architect

Appendix IV - Inventory of Martin Van Buren Furniture at "Lindenwald,"
as Prepared by Mrs. C.E. De Frosse, Present Owner of the Property:

"President Van Buren's Furniture

- 1 - Van Buren's personal secretary
- 2 - Van Buren's personal study chair
- 3 - Gray horsehair set
 - 1 - 2 arm chairs
 - 2 - 3 straight chairs
 - 3 - 2 settees
 - 4 - 1 sofa ✓ 50⁰⁰
- 4 - 2 large mirrors (3' by 10' 6")
- 5 - Large marble-top table ✓ 1 Rosewood
- 6 - Hat box
- 7 - Green Brussels carpet (22' by 20')
- 8 - Original wallpaper (star design - green border)
- 9 - Hallett and Gunston piano and stool
- 10 - Black hair upholstered davenport
- 11 - Small cannon
- 12 - Wrought iron kerosene chandelier
- 13 - Large hall Brussels carpet
- 14 - Original French scenic wallpaper in hall
- 15 - Original silver door knocker 1797
- 16 - Van Buren's personal shaving stand
- 17 - Van Buren's personal wardrobe
- 18 - Mahogany bureau ✓
- 19 - 3 large mahogany sleighback beds
- 20 - Mahogany parlor suite (imported from France by Van Buren)
 - 1 - 6 straight chairs
 - 2 - 2 arm chairs
 - 3 - 1 love seat
 - 4 - 1 sofa
 - 5 - 1 card table
- 21 - 4 pair of original drapes
- 22 - Red Brussels carpet (22' by 20')
- 23 - Eulogy to Andrew Jackson which hung in Van Buren's room
- 24 - 4 large stool engravings
- 25 - Van Buren's coffee pot ✓ 5
- 26 - One of Van Buren's plates ✓ 14
- 27 - Large mahogany sideboard
- 28 - Kitchen dresser
- 29 - Large card table upon which the estate was gambled away
- 30 - 2 dressers
- 31 - 2 wardrobes
- 32 - Gray painted bedroom set
 - 1 - Sleighback bed
 - 2 - Wardrobe

- 3 - Table
4 - Dresser
5 - Washstand
- 33 - Mahogany wardrobe
34 - Marble-top table
35 - Brussels carpet (22' by 20')
36 - 2 mahogany marble-top washstands
37 - Van Buren's bath tub
38 - Van Buren's copper hot water boiler (name painted on side)
39 - Original Boynton furnace
40 - Original stove and dutch oven
41 - Old tower bell
42 - Miscellaneous chairs, tables, fireboards and other items
- Van Buren's*