

MAY 18, 2015

We've been busy at the Warner site this spring mostly from an historic preservation perspective. As the renters moved out in early May, I was then able to get into the house to get a proper assessment of its current condition (after cleaning up after the renters with the help of my uncle). The interior is in mostly good condition with improvements to the plaster on the walls and ceiling. I was most worried about the status of the irreplaceable trim, furnishings, doors, etc. All seemed to be intact with little changed in that regard over the past several years and three sets of renters. During the inspection, a couple of discoveries were also made. It appears that the original wood floor is intact in one of the first floor bedrooms that was hidden when covered with carpet for many years. Also, four sets of windows are dated to the mid 19th century and could also be original to the house. The windows exhibit narrow wood frames with panes that have small bubbles and slight waves.

Restoration work on the exterior commenced with a contractor specializing in historic homes. Much of the bottom members of the exterior siding around the perimeter are quite deteriorated and are slated for replacement. Sections of the foundation were shored up including an area at the corner of the cellar that had partially collapsed. During the repair of the cellar corner, several pieces newspaper were found, one with a date of 1961. Another section of mortar has the name Laverne Warner (my great uncle) with a date of 1936. As would be expected, it appears that repairs were made periodically over time. The door on the cellar was also rehung and is now in working condition. In the coming weeks other pieces of trim will be repaired/replaced. We also have plans to reinstall the columns on the front porch that were removed during the 1920s-1930s. Soon we will begin the process of scraping and repainting the house.

We received a preliminary analysis of wood samples taken from oak barn members and a single oak sample from the roof deck of the house. All the samples suggest that the trees were cut during the fall of 1841 to spring of 1842. This date is highly significant for two reasons. First, the original pioneer, Timothy Warner, purchased the 80 acre parcel in October 1841. The dates make sense relative to the purchase date in that he likely immediately began clearing the property. Census records indicate that half of this 80 acre parcel was cleared by 1850. Second, a family story suggested that the NRHP listed Greek Revival home was built in 1855. The family story is derived from an anecdote told by George Warner (2nd generation, born in 1848) that he was seven years old and carried nails for the carpenters. It is entirely possible that the main house was built in the 1840s and the south wing added as an extension in 1855. If this is the case, the home is quite a bit older than originally thought. Keep in mind that this date for the house is preliminary and is from a single sample and more need to be taken and analyzed to be conclusive. Many thanks to Robert Bloye who conducted the dendro analysis. During the restoration process we hope to take

additional samples from around the house to hopefully give us a better idea of the construction chronology.