

LONGFELLOW - VOLLMER HOUSE

6637 West Henrietta Road, West Henrietta, New York

Visitors should park preferably on the highway, but may park in the barnyard if careful not to block other cars in the limited space.

This haunting sentinel of the past was built by Jonathan Longfellow in the 1830's. It stands with an ancient lilac and a lonesome pine tree atop a rise in the fields west of West Henrietta Road.

The last occupants moved out of the stone house in ¹⁹¹⁹~~1921~~. The Todd and Vollmer families preferred living closer to the highway in the new and larger frame house on West Henrietta Road. For ~~nearly~~ fifty years the house has stood alone and empty.

Those willing to stroll up the dirt lane are rewarded with a rare glimpse into an unchanged and fairly typical nineteenth century cobblestone farmhouse. In spite of missing plaster and window panes, the interior retains virtually all its original, hand-crafted details. Twentieth century intrusions such as plumbing, central heating and electricity are not seen here. One rusty hand pump, used to manually pump water ^{UP}~~directly~~ from the BASEMENT CISTERN ~~outside well~~, is the only convenience.

A 1969 inspection by the Henrietta Town Building Inspector has declared this structure basically sound and also mentions some of its interesting features.

"The south wall of the house incorporates a fireplace chimney supplying fireplace openings in the cellar, living room and bedroom."

"The trim that is intact is in good condition and appears to be hand made showing the skill that these old time craftsmen had for their work."

"The rear of the house had a shed attached at one time, but nothing remains but a timber attached to the wall at the second floor level. These bolt fasteners extend completely through the wall."

"In the front of the house at the front entrance remains one set of timber framing fastened to the front wall - the remains of a porch - the mortise and tenoned joints show the locking of the assembly by the use of a hardened pin."

As the front entrance has no steps, the rear door at grade level should be used.

The basement, paved with cobbles, shows traces of an original ^{RAIN WATER CISTERN} ~~which was later~~ filled in with gravel. ^{THE CISTERN COLLECTED RAIN WATER FROM THE ROOF} ~~THE CISTERN STORED RAIN WATER FROM THE ROOF~~ The hand-hewn beams were carved from OAK TREES. OTHER BEAMS, OF BEECH AND IRON WOOD, STILL RETAIN THEIR ~~a solid tree. Many still retain their bark.~~ BARK. TWO FIREPLACES REMAIN IN THE BASEMENT.

Copies of the two-page inspection report ^{ARE} available from the Henrietta Town Building Inspector. Anyone interested in acquiring this cobblestone landmark should contact Mr. Albert Vollmer of West Henrietta.