

KREUZER-PELTON HOUSE, 1262 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island. One-room original building completed 1722; addition completed 1770; two-story brick addition completed 1836.

Landmark Site: Borough of Richmond Tax Map Block 149, Lot 1.

On September 13, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Kreuzer-Pelton House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 30). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The Commission has been informed that the owner does not object to the proposed designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Kreuzer-Pelton House is an interesting example of Colonial architecture. The original one-room cottage with garret, erected in 1722, was constructed of random fieldstone and shows Dutch influence. Built in three stages each section, as it was added, was respectful of, yet distinguished from the original one-room cottage. In each instance the new addition enhanced what had gone before it. The various textures of the materials used in construction blend together and yet create an attractive contrast increasing the overall appeal of this House.

Architecturally, the three sections of the House are a manifestation of historic continuity. About 1770 the steep-roofed larger one and one-half story central section, constructed of rough cut stone (now sheathed with clapboarding), was joined to the one-room cottage, and in 1836 a two-story brick extension was added to this central section. The kitchen is located in the oldest section of the House. Beside the fireplace a trap door opens into a flight of stone steps which lead into the so-called dungeon area and into an adjacent room used as a wine cellar. No two rooms are on the same level. The varying dimensions of the rooms and the width of the central hall reflect the affluence of those who added to the structure.

Historical Significance

The original one-room cottage was constructed by Cornelius Van Santvoord, a native of Leyden, Holland and a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in what is now Port Richmond. The central portion of the complex was built by Cornelius Kreuzer about 1770. During the Revolutionary War the House was occupied by the "widow" Kreuzer. General Cortlandt Skinner, who was commander of the "American Loyalists", maintained the residence as his headquarters during this time. It is also believed that Prince William Henry (who later became King William IV, and was succeeded by Queen Victoria) was occasionally the guest of General Skinner. According to tradition, Major André was billeted in the House during the Revolution. Daniel Pelton, Sr. purchased the house in 1835, and he and his descendants owned and occupied it for many years. Under Daniel Pelton Sr's. supervision the brick addition was erected in 1836. Daniel Pelton, his son, was a noted poet at the turn of the Century. One of his less-known poems, entitled "Lovers' Lane", describes Pelton Avenue, then called Kreuzer's Lane, as a "farm lane lined with cherry trees and as secluded as a hopeful young woman could ask."

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Kreuzer-Pelton House has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Kreuzer-Pelton House is an interesting architectural representation of historic continuity, that the three units of this charming country residence have a picturesque unity and architectural character and that the personages connected with its past gave national importance to the history of Staten Island.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Kreuzer-Pelton House, 1262 Richmond Terrace, Borough of Richmond and designates Tax Map Block 149, Lot 1, Borough of Richmond, as its Landmark Site.