

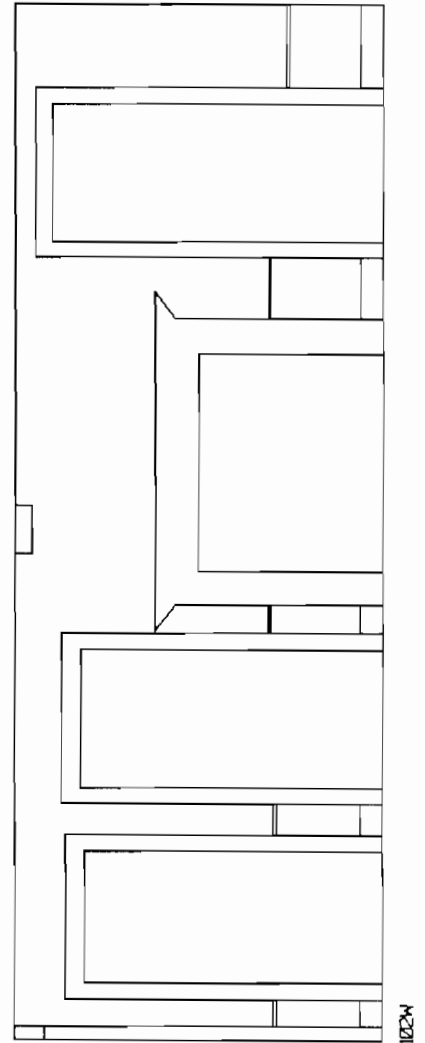
ROOM 102

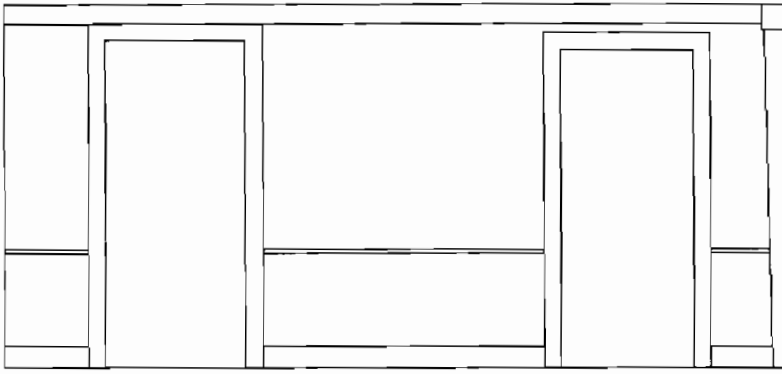
The Original Kitchen/Parlor

Fireplace evidence indicates that this room was the kitchen of the original house. The walls were sheathed with molded horizontal boards, the ceiling joists were exposed, the windows were smaller - and probably of the casement type - and there were only three doors (to the hall, the cellar, and the easterly yard).

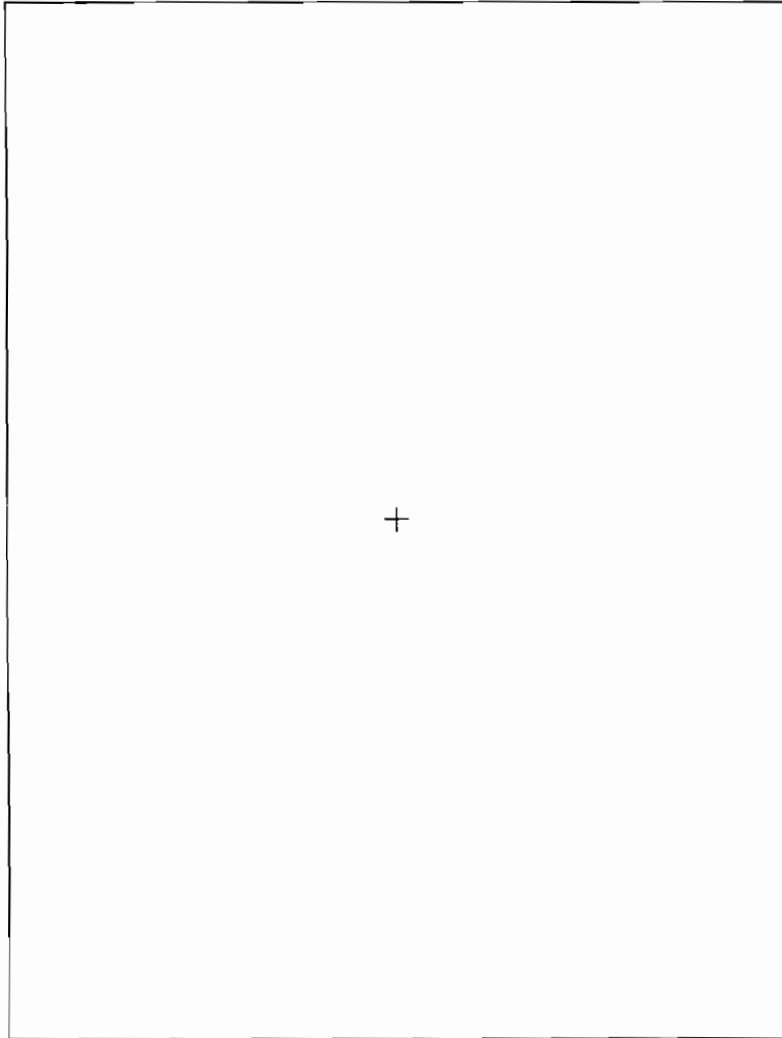
The room was plastered and converted to a parlor in the Federal period (c.1795-1815), the lean-to becoming, briefly, the only kitchen. When the ell was constructed shortly after, the northeast door was cut through as a connector. The last Federal-period alterations were the relocation of the east wall door slightly to the north, and the closing up of the cellar door.

The room has been further altered by twentieth century restoration work. The cellar door was incorrectly restored, the ceiling and some of the wall plaster replaced, and nearly all the woodwork stripped of paint.



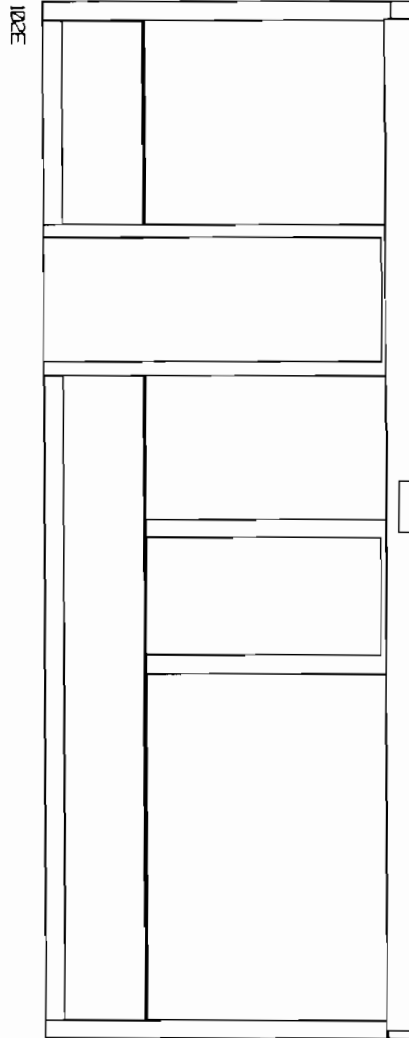


102N



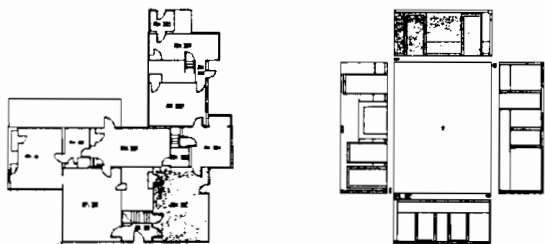
RML 102

5201



102E





EXCAVATION 102-N

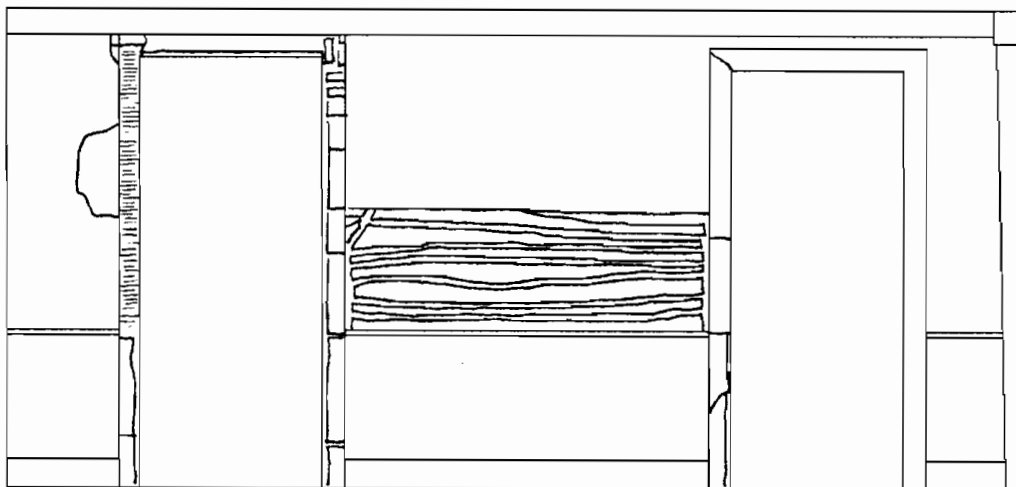
The description below is based on an amalgam of woodwork, nail, paint, and wallpaper evidence presented in more detail over the following pages.

This wall was originally (c. 1725-35) sheathed with horizontal, moulded boarding, which still survives under the plaster. A narrow strip of the material was exposed by removing the casing of the left-hand door (F).

Both door openings in this wall were cut through at later dates. The left-hand opening, which probably replaced an original window, dates to either c. 1750-80, when the lean-to was added, or c. 1800, when the room was given its present plaster and Federal-style woodwork. In any case, the door which was here c. 1800 was slightly narrower than the present opening, its left jamb located at (A) in photo 2. A wider door was installed c. 1815, requiring that the left casing be moved a few inches further left. Between these two events, the wall was painted with a blue distemper, and later given a blue paper, both of which were fortuitously entombed under the moved casing (B).

At the time of the door alteration or slightly after, the room was papered a second time with the green pattern (C) found under the right-hand door casing.

There is evidence that a tall object of a semi-permanent character - possibly a cupboard - was set into the northwest corner (D) when the green paper was applied. A large scrap of the blue paper remained on the wall to the left of the casing (E) and was never covered by the green wallpaper. The wainscot in this corner is dissimilar to that in the rest of the room and likely dates to the mid or late 19th century, based on nail evidence. The c. 1800 wainscot was likely removed so that a pre-existing object could be fit into the corner.





102 - 1

102 - 2

102 - 3



EXCAVATION 102-N (Continued from previous two-page spread)

The right-hand door opening was cut through sometime after the green paper was applied (c. 1815-20?). It likely coincided with the remodeling of the east end of the lean-to into a parlor, the building of the east addition, and possibly the building of the ell.

Horizontal Wall Sheathing (c. 1725-35)

The room was originally sheathed with moulded horizontal boarding, a typical finish in early 18th century interiors. We found this sheathing on each of the outer (non-fireplace) walls, but the most accessible section was under the excavated kitchen door casing on the north wall (photos 4 to 6).

The one-inch sheathing boards vary greatly in width, but all are beaded and lapped on their upper edge and beveled on their lower. The boards are covered with a highly deteriorated paint layer, perhaps two coats in thickness, at least one of which appears yellow. The paint is so fragile, deteriorated, and blackened, perhaps from the cooking fireplace, that this color designation should be viewed as preliminary. Whether the paint has an oil or calcimine medium is also unclear. Crude water tests appeared to result in some solubility of the binder, but this may have been due to powdering as much as dissolution.



102 - 4



102 - 5



102 - 6

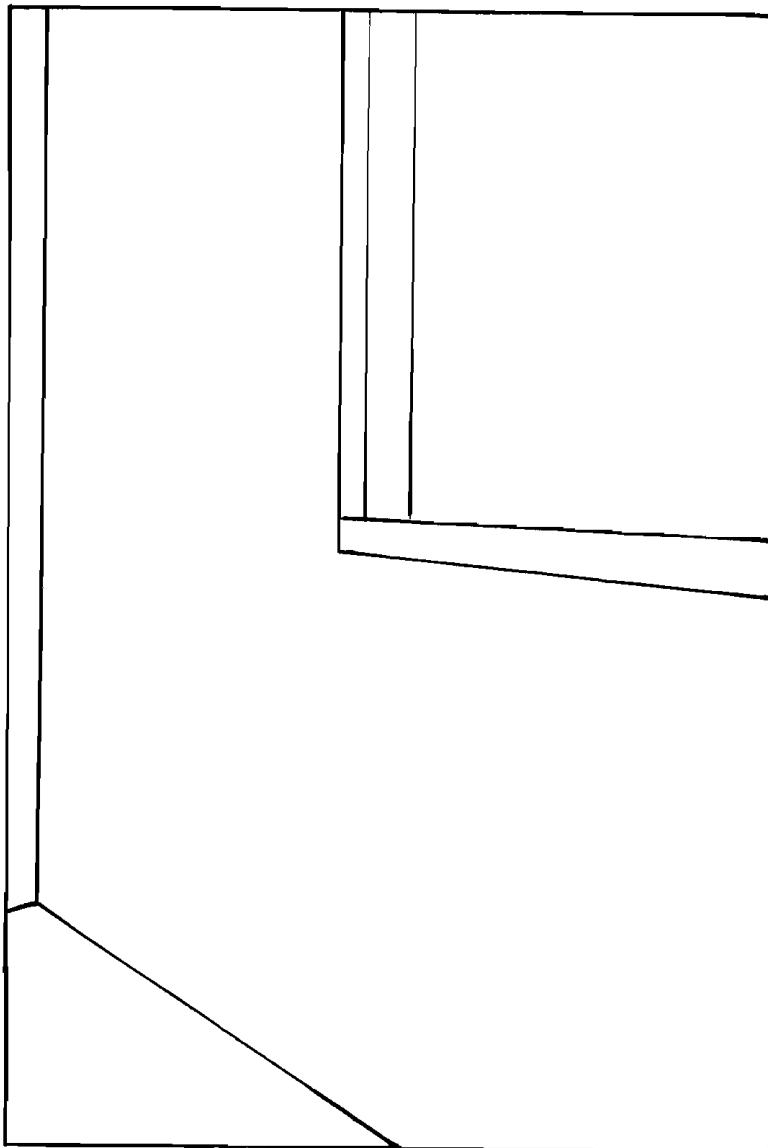
An Early Window Opening (c. 1725-35)

The present door casing is the second or perhaps third casing this opening has had. The first was probably for an original window, which was converted to a door opening when the kitchen lean-to was added (c. 1750-80). As we removed the present surround, toothpicks were pushed into each of the nail-holes associated with earlier casings. Their spacing on the right-hand stud suggests an earlier window (photos 8 and 9). The left jamb is bereft of early nail holes.

The nail evidence is corroborated by a cavity in the outer face of the westerly stud (photo 10) - mirrored by a smaller cavity in the easterly stud (arrow in photo 11) - characteristic of water damage just below a window sill.

A third piece of corroborating evidence are the two sheathing boards below the rotten areas on either side of the door frame (a & b in photos 10 and 11). These appear to have once spanned the opening, while the sheathing boards above and to either side of the door do not align.

The drawing below (7) expresses the height and location of the original opening.



102 - 8



102 - 9



102 - 10



102 - 11

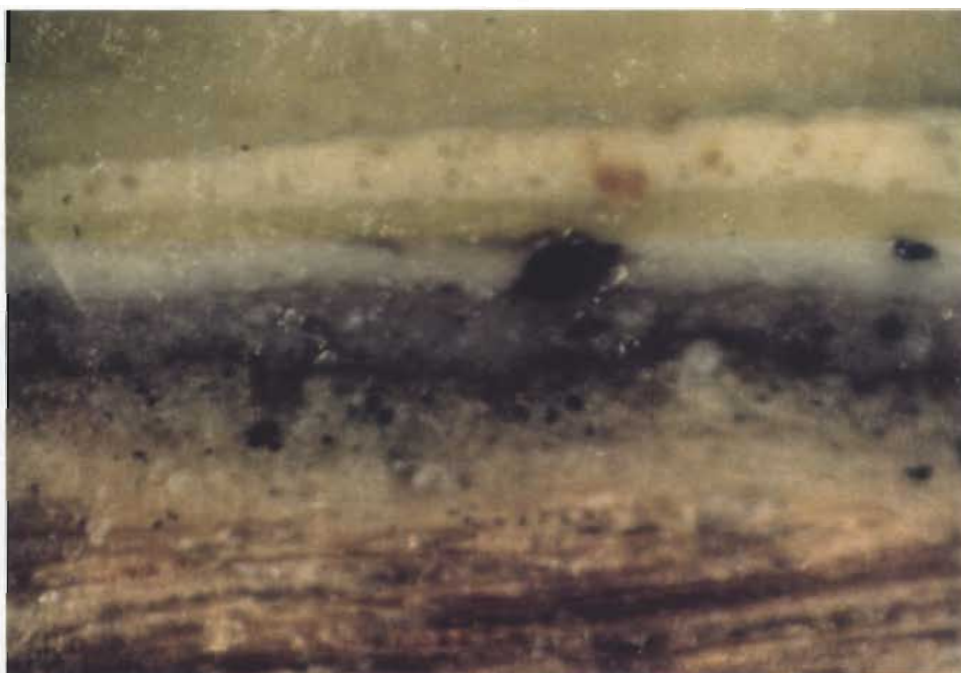
Blue Wall Paint (c. 1800) and Blue Wallpaper (c. 1810)

Behind the kitchen door casing, we discovered a long strip of blue wallpaper, laid directly over a bright blue distemper wall-paint (photo 12). The blue wall-paint survives on the original c. 1800 plaster at many points in the room, but the samples preserved under this and other wallpaper fragments (see photo 16) were particularly fresh. Large areas of this paint could be exposed to the left of the door casing by simply removing a later plaster skim-coat.

The blue paint is readily soluble in water, likely indicating a distemper binder. It was applied in a single layer directly over the finish plaster when the first Federal-period remodeling occurred, and is probably contemporary with the overmantel painting (excavation 102-W), and the original, umber-colored paint on the earliest Federal woodwork (the attached paint swatch, Benjamin Moore 1671, records the wall-paint; the matching woodwork paint, a mauve, does not closely correspond with any swatch in the Benjamin Moore collection).

The blue wallpaper seems to belong to the second Federal-period finishing scheme. The strip trapped behind the later door casing extends from the chair rail to the ceiling (56"), and incorporates border fragments (1-11/16" wide) at each extremity. There is a 10" wide bulge in the center of the fragment which was covered by a later plaster skim-coat (A), and is severely bleached.

The paper consists of 27 1/2" wide horizontal sheets (their lengths cannot be measured) block-printed with four colors - green, white, and black on a blue field (see color swatches below). Even at its widest point it does not provide a full repeat.



WOODWORK
PAINT LAYERS

7 Ochre (matches B17195)

6

5

4 Mauve (likely unker-based)

3

2

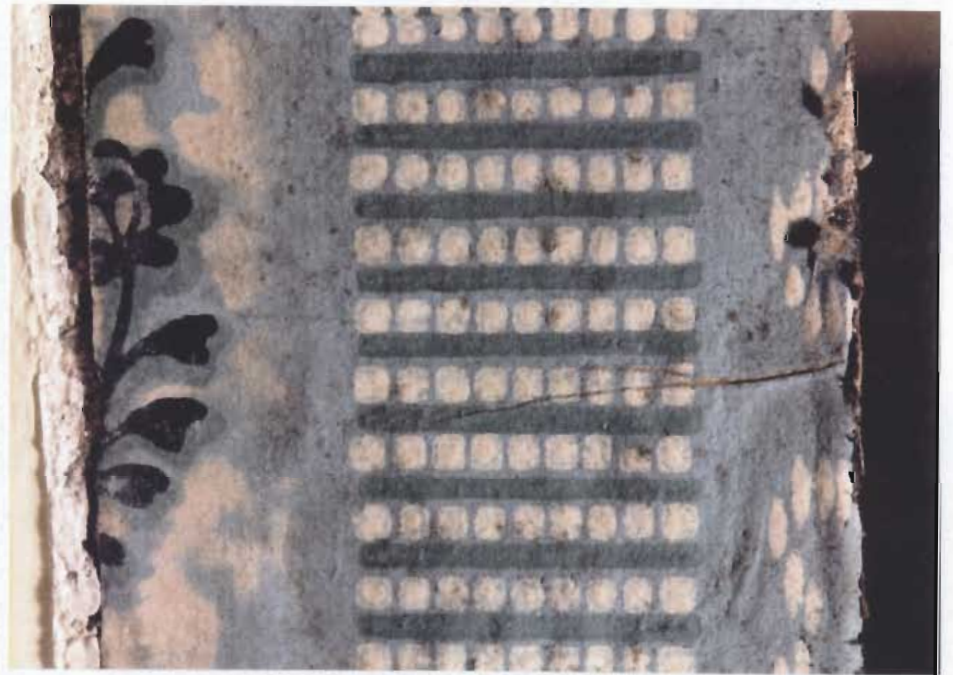
1

WOOD

Microphotograph of paint cross-section taken from "A" in photo 102-17 (area of varnished casing covered by door casing). The actual colors are darker than they appear.



102 - 12



102 - 14



Wall paint Color (BR11671)

The Second (Green) Wallpaper (c. 1815)

The room was wallpapered for a second time prior to the cutting through of a door opening to room 104. A fragment of the second wallpaper, a leaf design with a green background, is preserved behind this later door casing. The green paper also lies directly over the blue wall-paint; the blue paper was entirely removed from this area before this one was applied.

We know that the green paper came after the blue paper because: 1.) this door casing is attached with a later type of cut nail than the expanded kitchen door casing, and 2.) the surface of the blue paint under the green paper is more damaged than the same surface under the blue paper (as it would be if the blue paper had been applied, and then removed).

The door casing also covered a strip of wainscot, preserving a deep yellow woodwork paint which must have accompanied the green paper (**A, the attached color chip represents a close match**).



102 - 15



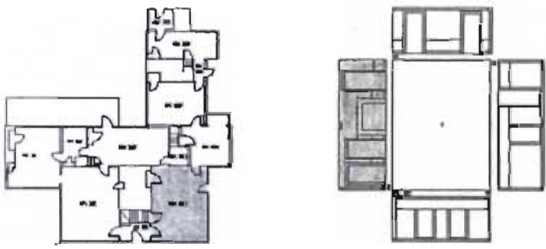
102 - 16



A(BM195)



102 - 17



EXCAVATION 102-W

A Lost Overmantel Painting

In removing a plaster skim-coat at the right-hand end of the mantel, we discovered one corner of a now-destroyed overmantel painting (photos 19 and 20). The painting was executed in distempers on finish plaster, and was likely contemporary with the Federal mantel and blue wall-paint. All that remains is a fragment of the grey border (C), a dark green/grey line separating the border and field (B), and a small area of the field itself (A). The painting was later covered by repeated applications of wallpaper, of which a few small fragments survive.

The bulk of the design was lost in the 1950s when an excavation was made above the mantel to access the fireplace. Extremely hard replacement plaster (the material to the left of the fragment) was used to fill the opening.

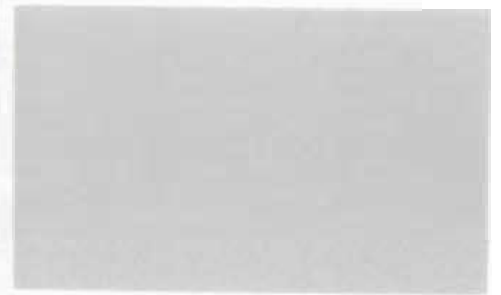
The drawing at right (18) illustrates one corner of the painting's border, and the dotted line in the drawing below traces its full dimension.



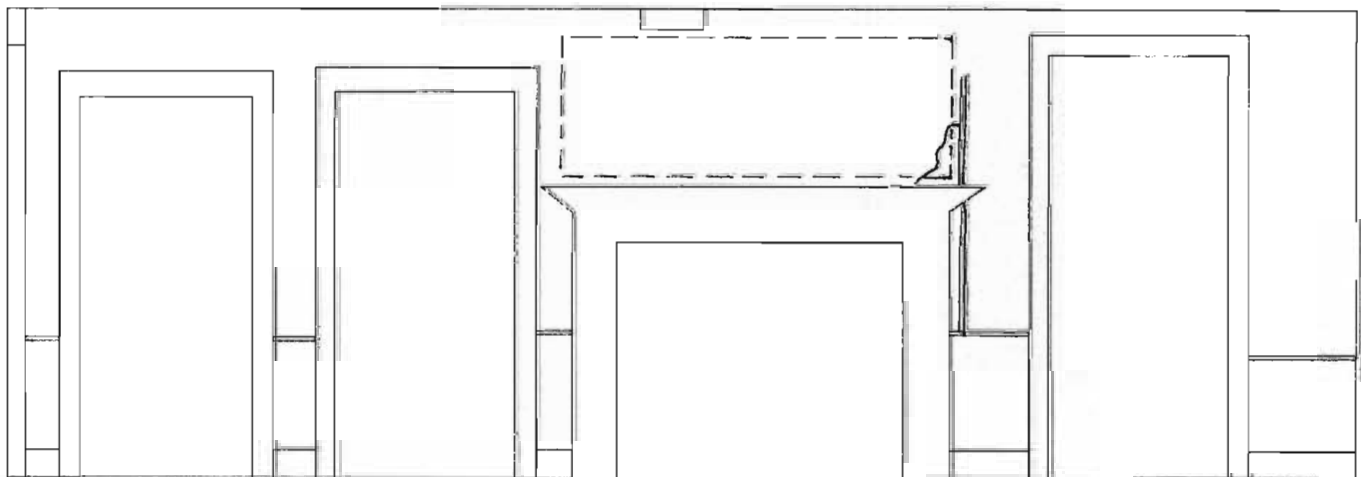
A (BM 221)

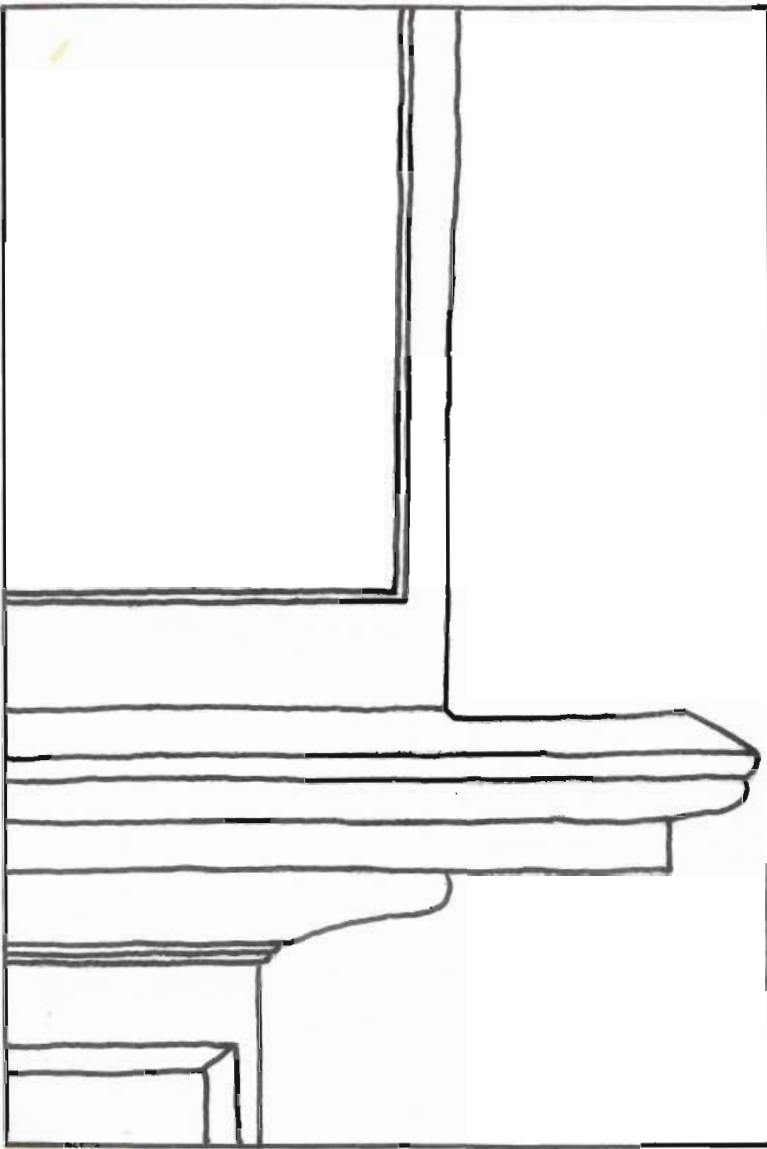


B (BM 978)



C (BM 1551)





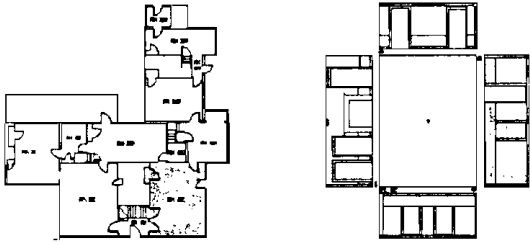
102 - 18



102 - 19



102 - 20



EXCAVATION 102-E

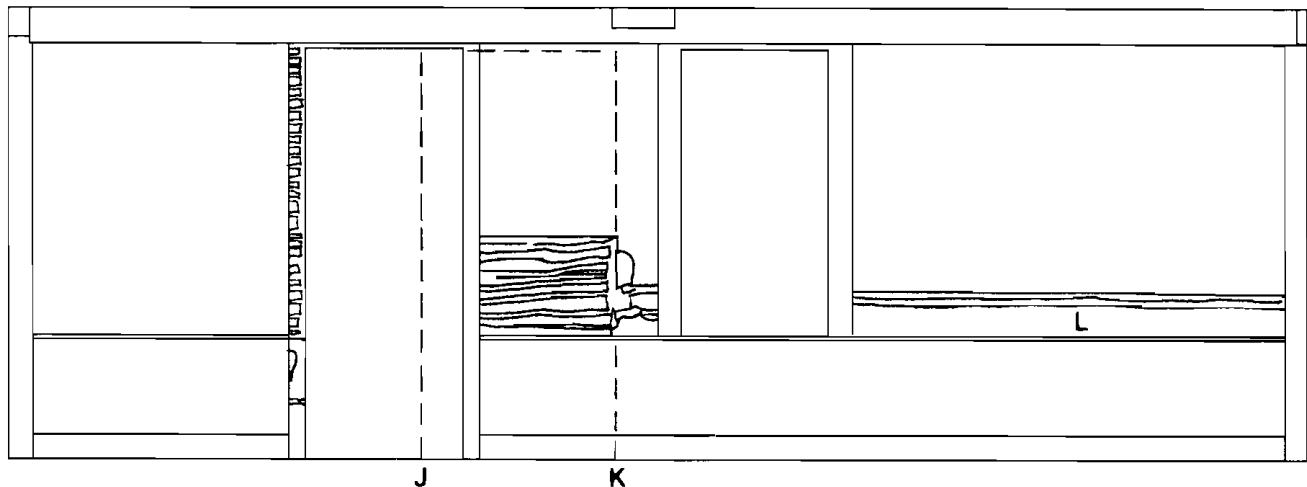
An Early Door Opening (c. 1725-35)

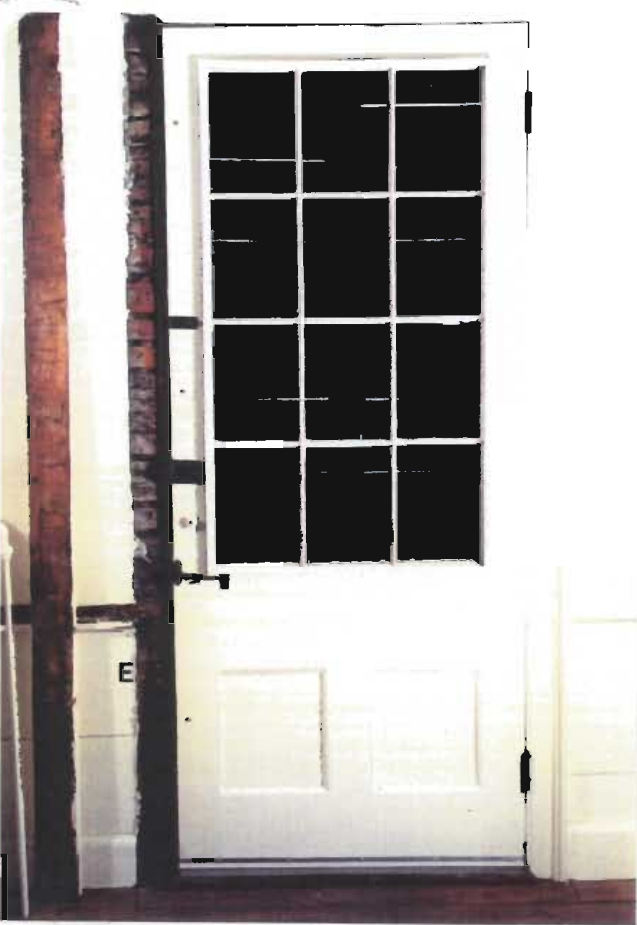
There is evidence that an earlier door opening stood between the present door and window on the east wall. A vertical line extends through the plaster and woodwork (**K**), from floor to ceiling, a few inches to the left of the window opening. The plaster and woodwork to the right of the line is earlier than the material to the left of it. The right-hand fabric (**G**) is identical to material elsewhere in the room which dates to c.1800, and represents the first generation of plaster finish. This plaster seems to have butted against a vertical door casing which stood to the left of **K**.

The area between **K** and the present door is bereft of horizontal wall sheathing, and filled with split-board lath held by cut nails (**U** in photo 24). An excavation made into this same area from the exterior (**EXT-E**) found nineteenth century sheathing boards and nails instead of eighteenth century siding.

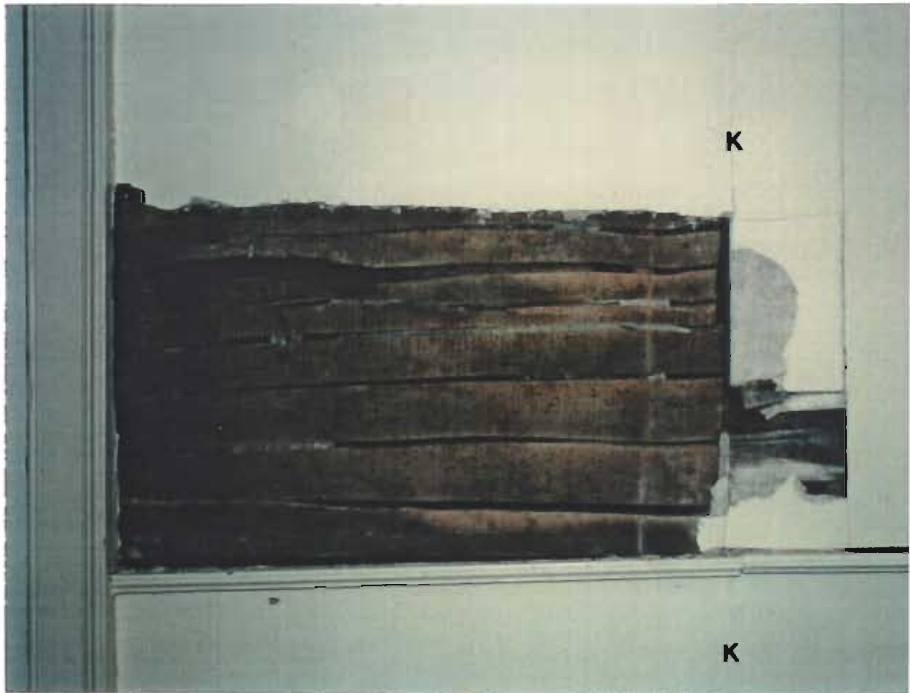
This evidence seems to describe an early door opening, which was blocked up and replaced by the present, adjacent door sometime in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The alteration occurred after the room was plastered and the exterior weatherboarded, but still prior to about 1825 (the design of the exterior surround is Federal). The plan may have been to better center the door in the new gable end. We have conjectured **line J** as the door's left-hand dimension.

The left-hand section of the present door casing (photo 21) covers a strip of painted wainscot (**E** in photo 22). The white paint, which was applied before the alteration was made, is slightly later in the room's paint chronology than the yellow paint under the door casing on the north wall (**A** in photo 17). This corroborates that the door was moved into its present position quite late in the Federal period, after the many other alterations to this room.





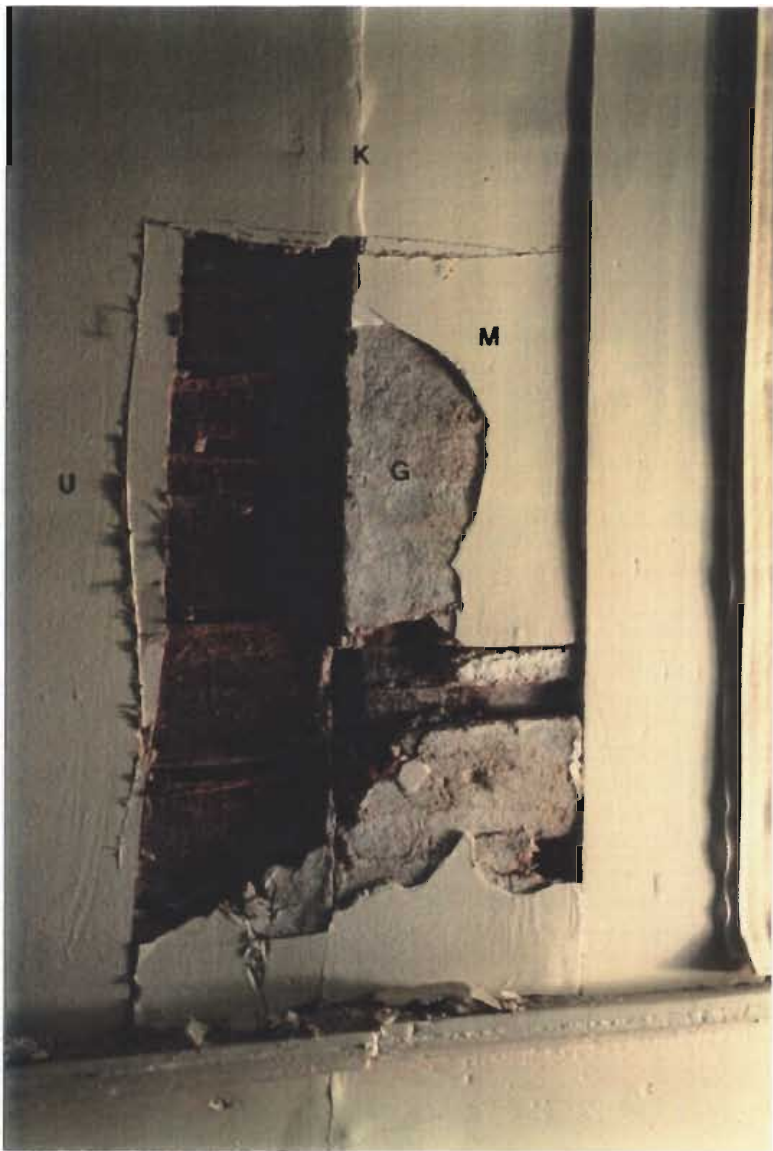
02 - 21



102 - 22



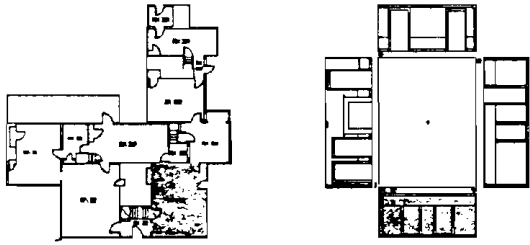
102 - 23



102 - 24

Much of the earliest lath in this and other rooms is actually broken-up window and/or door casing stock - beaded on one edge - from the exterior of the original house. This is evidence that the re-siding of the exterior and plastering of the rooms were roughly contemporary projects. Some of this casing/lath is in the narrow strip to the left of the east window (**under G in photo 24**), and a particularly long piece of it (71") is just above the wainscot to the right of the window (**L in the drawing below**). This long piece is the proper dimension for an exterior door surround.

E (BM945)

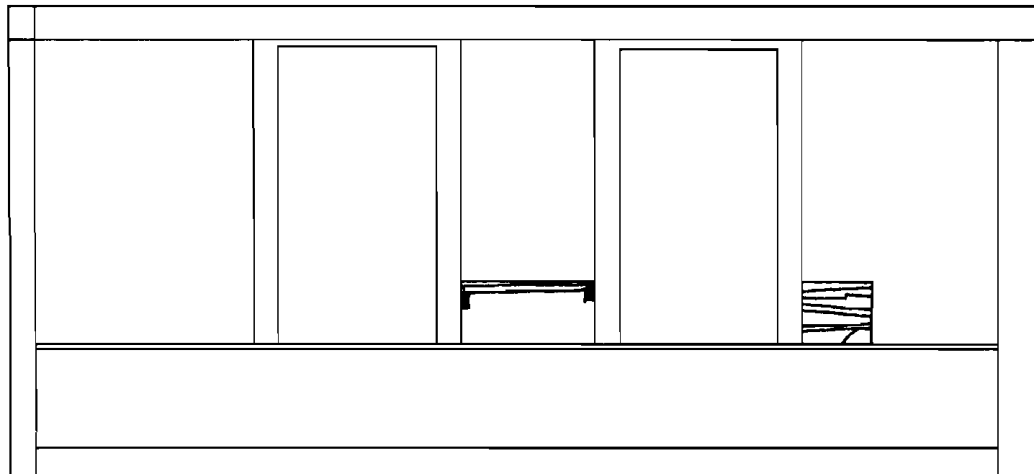


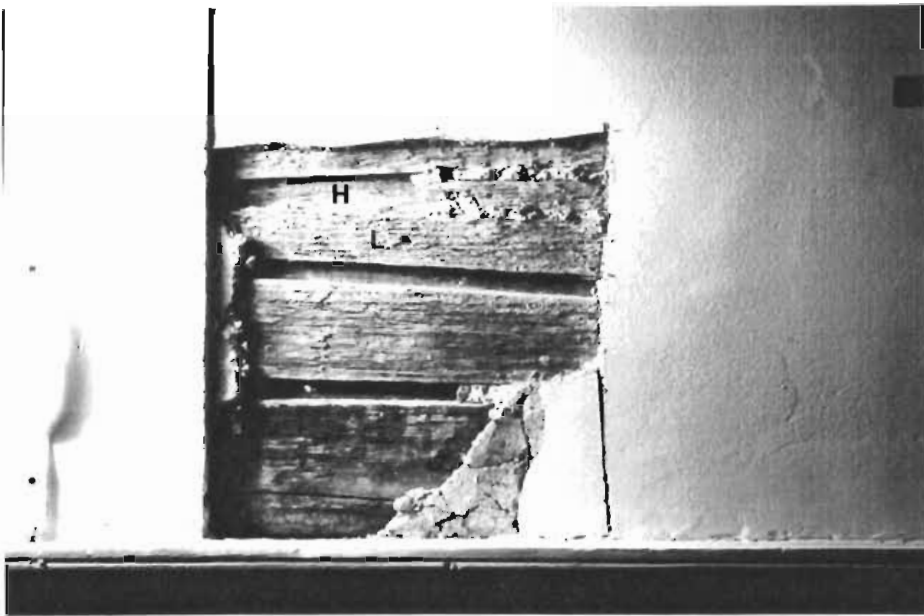
EXCAVATION 102-S

More Horizontal Sheathing and Evidence of Early Windows

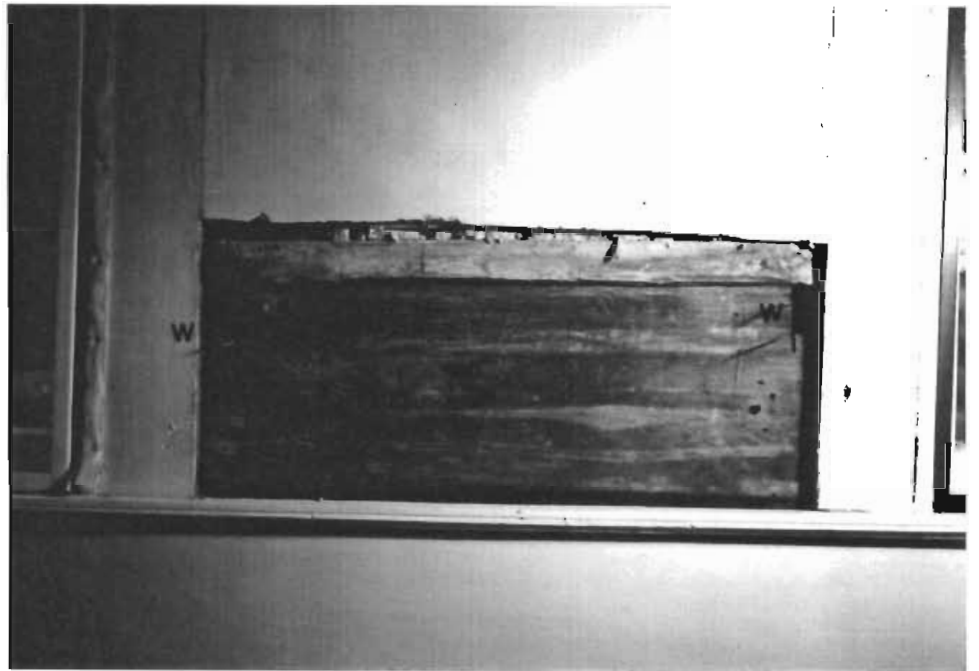
These excavations on the east were mainly to confirm that the horizontal sheathing found around the kitchen door was general to the room. As expected, we found the same sheathing (**H**) in both locations, under obviously Federal-period lath (**L**).

The south wall excavation also provided evidence of original but shorter window openings on the facade, in the same locations as the later (present) sash. The sheathing is cut for what were likely the bottom corners of the original openings, about six inches up the present surrounds (**W**). There are also early nail holes, marked by toothpicks in the photograph, which likely related to interior window surrounds.

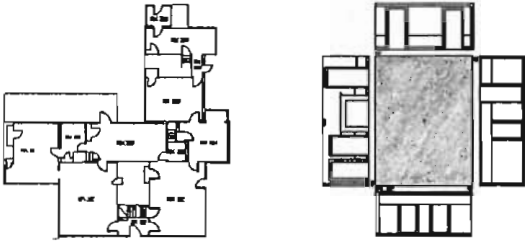




102 - 25



102 - 26



The Ceiling

The room's Federal-period plaster ceiling was entirely removed in 1981 (photo 28), and the present sheetrock installed over the split-board lath. The plaster and lath constituted the second ceiling, contemporary with the wall-plaster, the wainscot, and other woodwork. The earliest ceiling was simply exposed joists running from the summer beam, and the planed undersides of the chamber floorboards.

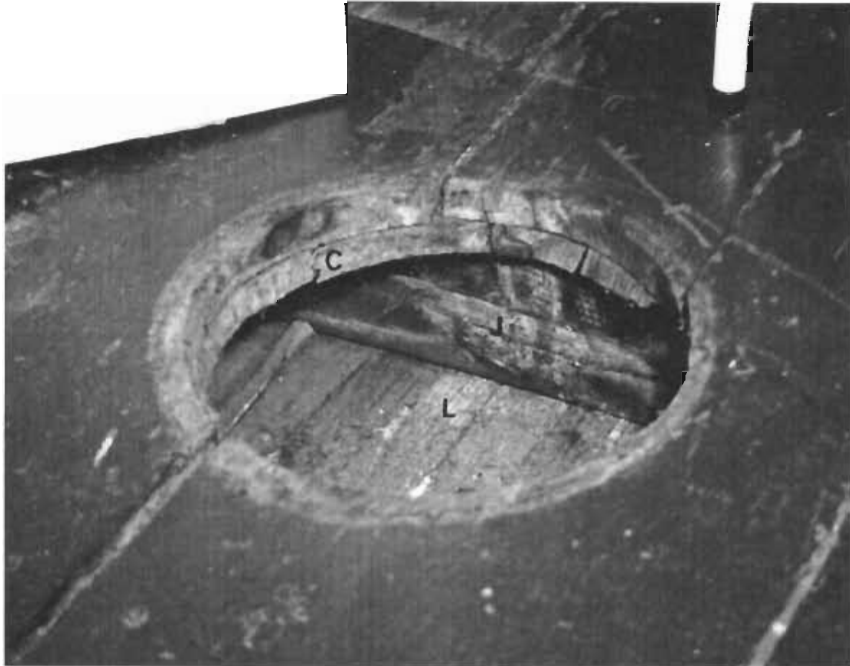
A few of these joists can be examined through metal grate-holes in the floor of the chamber above (photos 29 and 30). Both the joists (J) and the undersides of the chamber floorboards (C) are covered with a thick, white, water-soluble paint, likely a distemper. A similar or identical paint covered the exposed joists in the adjacent kitchen. The summer beam was undoubtedly painted in the same way, but the finish was long ago removed. The back side of the later lath is also visible in the photograph (L).

The drawing (31) is a sketch of how the section of room photographed in 1981 (photo 28) might have appeared in the early 18th century, based upon the available evidence.

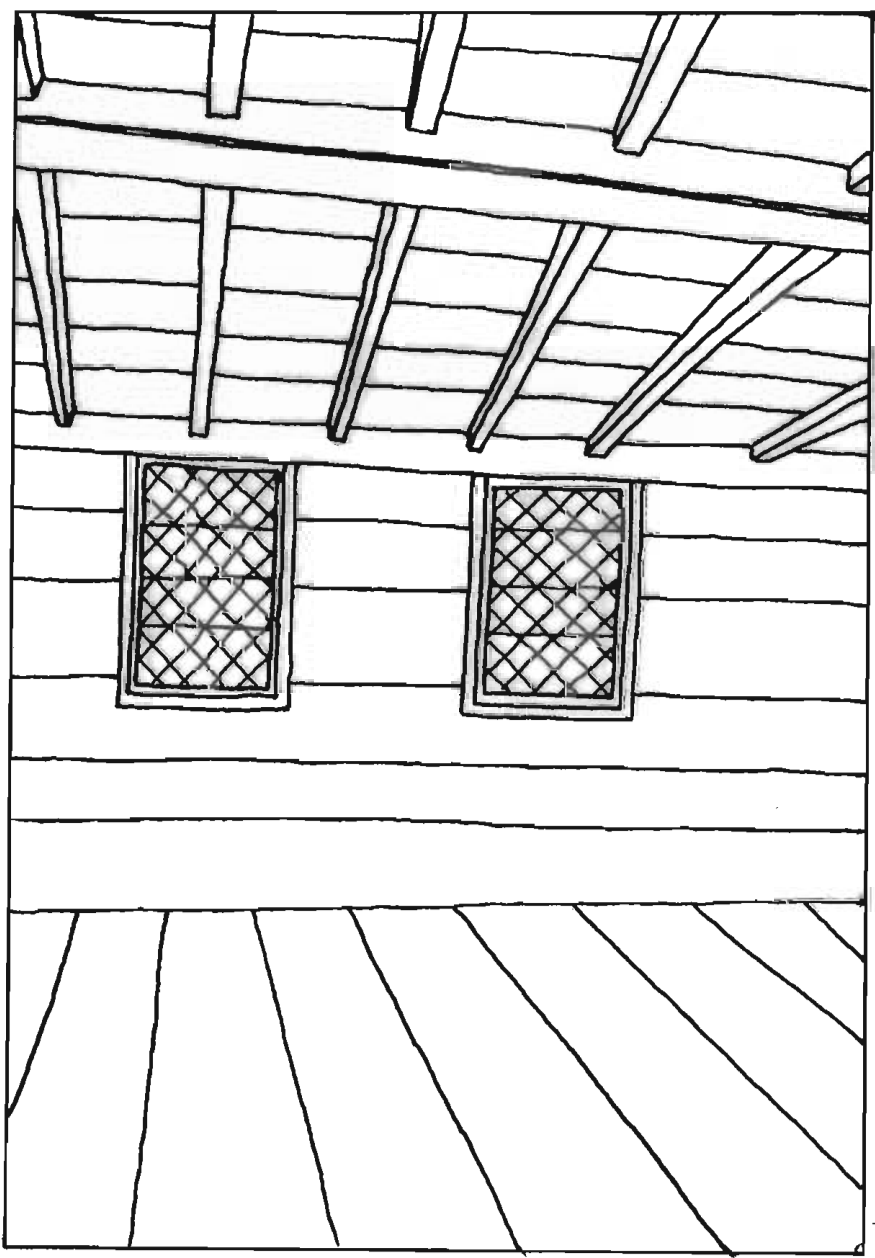




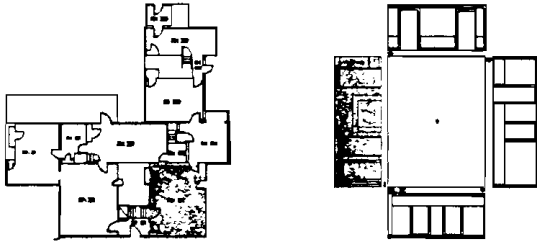
102 - 29



102 - 30



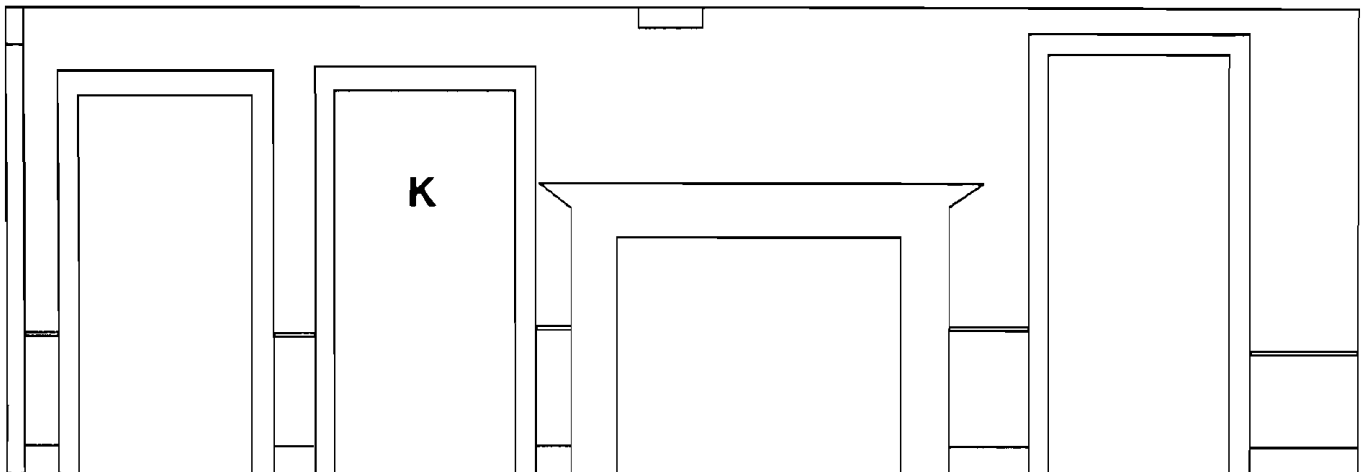
102 - 31



The Cellar Door

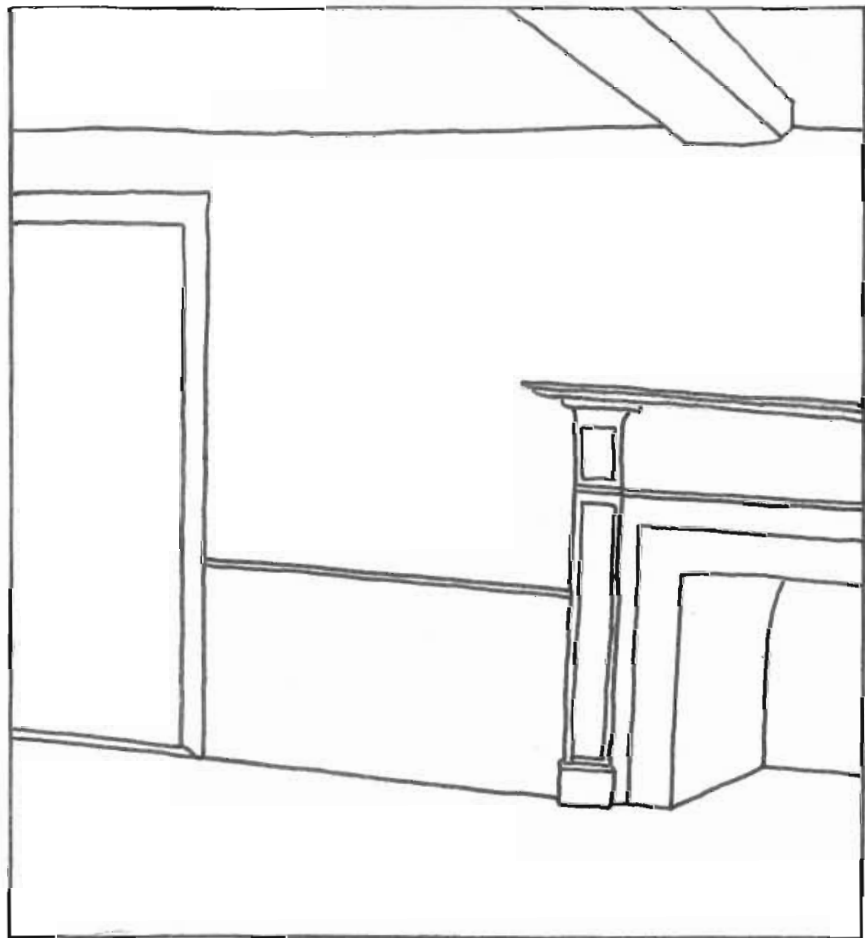
The present cellar door opening (**K**) was discovered within a wall cavity during the restoration work of 1981 (photo 33, shows the door after it had been opened). Prior to 1981, the cellar was entered through a door from the front hall (**H** in the same photo). The restorers closed up the hall opening and inserted an early nineteenth century door (probably from elsewhere in the house) into opening **K**.

The physical evidence in this area is greatly disturbed, but it seems probable that **K** was the original (c.1725-35) cellar door, connecting the cellar with the original kitchen. Just as probably, **K** was closed up, and the cellar stair re-located to the front hall (**H**) c. 1800, when the old kitchen became a parlor and the present hall stairs were constructed. The restorers likely erred, therefore, in putting a Federal-style door and casing in an opening that had actually been closed-up in the Federal period (drawing 34).





102 - 33



102 - 34