

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Peleg White House
other names/site number _____
name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 2297 Dixon Road ☐ not for publication
city or town Ledyard ☐ vicinity
state New York code NY county Cayuga code 011 zip code 13026

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC: transitional Federal/Greek

Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/limestone; BRICK

walls: WOOD/clapboard siding

roof: METAL/steel

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Peleg White House is located at 2297 Dixon Road in the Town of Ledyard, Cayuga County, New York (Figure 1). The house is a two-story, five-bay by three-bay transitional Federal/Greek Revival-style frame house clad in wood clapboards and constructed ca. 1836. The main volume of the house follows a symmetrical side-gabled design of a traditional New England farmhouse and possesses a centrally located entrance, a brick and limestone foundation, and evenly spaced windows on the facade. A pedimented gabled roof supported by square piers marks the entrance. The house features a one-story kitchen addition on its north elevation. A recessed porch on the kitchen volume contains a secondary entrance.

The roofline features a molded frieze and cornice returns. Decorative triangular panels containing a fan motif are at each gable end. The roof is clad in standing-seam metal and concrete block chimneys rise from behind the ridge of the main and kitchen volumes. A water pump, ca. 1890, is in the yard near the kitchen volume, and the foundation of an outbuilding is located at the southwest corner of the lot. Although testing has not been conducted, this site may have archaeological potential.

The fenestration throughout the house consists primarily of six-over-six, double-hung sash windows in flat surrounds with wood sills, with some windows on the side and rear elevations having different light divisions. Basement windows are generally situated below the first-floor windows in the stone foundation. All windows above the basement are double hung, while the basement has all fixed windows.

The interior varies slightly from the traditional New England farmhouse in that its symmetrical plan features a centrally located staircase flanked by two main rooms, rather than the traditional central fireplace, since by this period heat was supplied by metal stoves. Behind the staircase along the west wall are two rooms, one twice the length of the other. The kitchen volume consists of a single open space. The second story follows the symmetrical plan more completely, with four rooms mirrored along the east-west axis of the house. An additional finished attic space is located above the kitchen volume. The interior retains many period features, including paneled doors, wood floors, window and crown molding, molded chair rail and hearth surround, plaster walls and ceilings, and door hardware.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The Peleg White House is located on the west side of Dixon Road, set back approximately twenty-five feet from the road. The house is situated in a largely rural area, on a ridge running north to south between two of the Finger Lakes - Owasco and Cayuga - with homes and agricultural outbuildings spread across large swaths of farmland and forested areas. Nearby hamlets such as Poplar Ridge, Ledyard, and Sherwood feature homes, churches, and small municipal buildings like post offices and libraries clustered around main intersections. The

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character of the built environment is distinctly agrarian, with most buildings dating from the early- to mid-nineteenth century, showcasing vernacular forms of popular architectural styles from that period, including Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Italianate designs. Apart from one residence located directly across the street, the property is largely separated from neighbors by large, open parcels of farmland.

Exterior

The foundation walls visible above grade on the south and west elevations feature brick, while the facade is faced with dressed limestone blocks. The north foundation is of concrete blocks, believed to have been added in the mid-twentieth century, in a basement renovation. The symmetrical east-facing facade is divided into five bays. The entrance, situated at the center, is accessed by a set of concrete steps leading to a shallow portico having an extended pediment roof that is supported on either side by square tapered wooden piers accented with an orthogonal reed. The pediment is highlighted with a full raking and horizontal molded cornice. The historic storm door has twelve glass panes set within the top panel, and a wooden panel below. It is flanked by half sidelights and has a wooden transom that is divided into three panels lined with wooden beading. The entrance portico's roof is clad in standing seam metal. The fenestration of the facade consists of nine six-over-six double-hung wooden windows in simple, flat wood casings: one above the entrance portico and two on the first and second floors on either side of the central bay. The single-story kitchen addition towards the north has a door with two long vertical glass panels in the upper portion. North of this door is a single double-hung window with shutters on either side. The roofline features a wide beaded cornice. A concrete chimney is placed behind the ridge, towards the northern end of the roof.

The south elevation is divided into three bays and has an exposed brick masonry foundation revealed across a topography that slopes slightly down to the west. At the basement level, a single-panel wooden door is located at grade in the western bay. To the east of it are two smaller, square fixed windows; the central bay has six panes and the eastern has two panes. Above the basement there are four identical six-over-six windows set in a simple wooden casing: two on the first floor and two on the second floor in the central and east-end bays, respectively. The westernmost bay consists of a two-over-two window on the first floor, while the one on the second floor is a nine-over-six window. A ghost line on the second story of this bay indicates a later addition. This added portion on the western end has a simple sloped roof. The roofline is highlighted with a beaded cornice and cornice returns. Just below the returns, on either side, is a molded frieze. A decorative blind triangular panel is situated in the gable end. Towards the back, in the extended kitchen portion, is a glass panel door that is centrally placed within that volume.

The west elevation of the main block is divided into two bays and has a foundation of brick masonry and concrete blocks. Towards the north end of the volume is a small square vinyl window in the basement. The fenestration of the elevation consists of four windows: two on the first floor, and two on the second, asymmetrically placed except for the northernmost bay. The southern window on the first floor features a half window, while the remaining three windows are nine-over-six. The kitchen volume, extended on the northern side of the main block, is also divided into three bays. At the basement level, there is a small square window towards the south end of this volume. A set of sloped metal cellar doors project from a small concrete patio. Above the cellar, the kitchen volume features three six-over-six, double-hung, split-finish wood and fiberglass windows with false muntins.

The north elevation of the main block consists of a door with glass panels in the upper portion, placed on the eastern end of the volume. On the second floor, just above the door, is a single six-over-six double-hung window. There is a decorative triangular panel in the gable end. The roofline is highlighted by a beaded cornice with small returns. Just below the cornice return is a molded frieze. The north elevation of the kitchen block

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consists of a concrete block foundation, with one vinyl window set inside a window well, placed slightly below grade. On the first floor is a centrally located, tripartite vinyl casement window and to its west is a one-over-one, double-hung wood window. At the attic level, there are two small, four-pane casement windows, placed at an equal distance from the gable center. Towards the western end is an added portion that has a sloped roof, which is integrated with the original gable roof with a slight but noticeably lower pitch. This section has a single, centrally located one-over-one double-hung vinyl window. The tall concrete chimney can be seen on the western end of the kitchen block.

Interior

First Floor

The first-floor plan of the main volume is symmetrical, and the interior retains a high level of integrity of form and materials. After a set of four steps, and through the entrance portico, the door opens into a small entrance “hall” or landing, that leads immediately up the staircase to the west. The staircase forms the central east-west axis of the house and features a closed design with a curved plaster ceiling and round wood handrails with square balusters. There are no newels, as the handrails curve into the wall inside the landing. To the north and south of the landing are doors that lead into two rooms of equal size and shape. On the doors that open into the rooms on either side, the original trim remains intact. The trim features a fillet and reeding molding design, with a square molding at the top corners of each door.

The large rooms on either side of the vestibule have molded chair rails along the walls. They both have gypsum and horsehair plaster walls, and feature wood floors. The room south of the landing has a shallow built-in shelf along the north wall set within a trim surround. On the south wall is a centrally located original wood mantel, built as an ornamental backdrop for an early wood-fired heat stove. The mantelpiece is typically late Federal in its fluted pilasters and paneled frieze, but the quatrefoil rosettes in the panels above the pilasters and in the central panel are the joiner’s creative whim. Just above this mantel, on the ceiling, is a small cutout, indicating the location of the exhaust for the stove. On the western wall of this room, towards the south end, is a door that connects to the rear volume of the house. The trim in this room has the same three-tiered staggered design as in the room north of the vestibule.

The room on the northern end has two built-in shelves along the southern, or staircase, wall of the room. To the west of them are ghost lines of a previous door, now covered. There is a door located on the southern end of the western wall leading to the rear rooms of the house. On the north wall is a door leading outside to the kitchen porch. To its west is a large opening that leads into the kitchen area. All the openings have trim that feature a three-tiered staggered design.

The kitchen volume has been stripped of the non-historic interior finishes and features exposed timber framing. The historic wainscoting on the east wall and the trim around entrances and windows has been retained in place. Reframing of the roof members is evident in sistering in the west portion of the roof. There is another door on the southern end of the eastern wall, which leads outside. On the west is an enclosed rear porch that leads to an exit.

A long, narrow volume along the west wall is divided into two rooms. The rooms have primarily plaster walls and ceilings, but there are a few sections of older vintage gypsum board patches in the ceiling. The longer of the two connects to both of the larger main rooms and is twice the length of the second room to the north. A new frame has been installed on the southern end of this elongated room but has not been covered in gypsum wall board. The second room to the north is a former bathroom, accessed through this room and open to the kitchen volume as well.

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Second Floor

The second story features a similar symmetrical layout. The stairway leads to a small landing, at either side of which are steps up to two rooms. Both rooms feature plaster walls and ceilings. The trim on the second floor mostly features a splay face molding design. The large room south of the landing features a ghost line along the ceiling, both walls, and the floor, indicating a demolished partition wall. A chair rail has been removed from the perimeter of the room as well, revealing the riven lathe behind it. There is also a patch on the southern end of the ceiling, apparently from the stovepipe leading from the early wood stove below, which would have passed through this room up to a masonry chimney in the attic. On the north wall are two shallow built-in closets with original keyhole plate latch door hardware and panel doors.

The large room north of the landing has its chair rail intact. The walls and ceiling are of gypsum and horsehair plaster. There is a circular metal vent in the floor near the north wall. There are also holes in the floor and ceiling, like the opposite room on the same floor, corresponding to a former stovepipe leading from the main floor up through this room to a second masonry chimney in the attic. Both these chimneys formerly protruded through the roof. They were abandoned and shortened, but their brick chimneys remain in the attic. A small door along the north wall leads to an attic space located above the kitchen. The attic space has a low ceiling and is semi-finished, with low plaster walls rising to exposed roof joists and decking. Along the north wall of this space are two windows previously described flanking the remnant of a former chimney vent. On the south wall, towards the east end, is a door that opens into a closet. The closet features built-in shelving and has a door on the west wall leading to the attic staircase. The trim in the staircase area leading to the attic has the same fillet and reeding molding design, with a square molding at the top corners of the doors, as found on the first floor.

West of the landing is a volume with a lower, doubly slanted ceiling split into two mirrored rooms. Each room features flat baseboard trim, with a wide beam clad in finished planks along the exterior wall. Each room features a simple plank door and open closets faced with finished planks. The room to the north was at one time a bathroom.

Attic and Basement

The attic consists of a large open space with a plank floor. The roofing system features open attic trusses with exposed rafters and decking. Some interior framing members along the attic staircase feature marriage marks.

The basement is accessed by a staircase behind and beneath the central staircase, located inside a doorway on the east wall of the rear volume's longer room. Inside the doorway is a short landing. To the left there is trim from a previous doorway, now covered. The basement is unfinished and consists of two spaces that reflect the footprint of the main and kitchen volumes above. It features a poured concrete floor and exposed heavy timber framing. The walls are covered in plaster in varying degrees of decay. In some areas the masonry beneath is revealed. The foundation walls appear to be fieldstone to shoulder height, and then vary between brick and limestone. The kitchen volume's basement has a concrete block foundation. On the south wall of the basement, towards the western end, is a wood plank door leading outside. In the northeast corner of the main volume of the basement is a large cistern enclosed by shoulder-height concrete block walls on two sides.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1836

Significant Dates

ca. 1836

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance (justification)

The period is defined by the original construction of the residence (ca. 1836), as it is the house type that lends the property its significance.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Peleg White House is significant under Criterion C for Architecture as a highly intact example of a distinctive 1830s local adaptation of the traditional New England hall/parlor plan house in which, due to the arrival of stove heating, a central stair has been substituted for the central chimney. The stylistic features of the ornamental joinery are transitional Federal/Greek Revival and very much of their time. The arched surround at the base of the stair, the vaulted ceiling of the stair, and the attenuated proportions of the front porch and front door surround relate to the Federal taste. Some interior door moldings are a simplification of Plate 48 of Asher Benjamin's *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830).¹ The orthogonal nature of the front door surround and the more muscular proportions of the interior moldings and mantelpiece (particularly in terms of its pilasters) do point forward to the Greek Revival. The quatrefoils on the mantelpiece are apparently a flourish of local joiner's whimsy. Original doors, built-in shelves, original chair rails, baseboards, and door and window moldings, and unusual stairs with their intact rails and balusters all contribute to the building's high level of integrity of workmanship, design and materials.

Constructed circa 1836 and modified in 1863, with two twentieth century alterations, the building is distinguished as an excellent example of early nineteenth-century agrarian domestic architecture. The rural landscape of the Finger Lakes is an extant reminder of the first wave of newly independent American settlers and their quest to establish a national identity in lasting and successful communities. The Peleg White House is located approximately three-quarters of a mile from the National Historic Landmark (NHL) Jethro Wood House (NR Ref# 66000505) and approximately three and one-third miles by road from the Sherwood Equal Rights National Historic District (NR Ref# 08000096); it is linked to these properties in local history as well as architectural significance (Figure 2). The Peleg White House is an example of an increasingly rare vintage in the area and is a testament to the timelessness of the form and the longevity of the construction. The house has undergone little change to its basic form and layout and retains a high degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, location, design, feeling and association. It is a tangible reflection of the cultural and architectural influence that settlers brought to Cayuga County. This architectural heritage remains a defining characteristic of the region's historic landscape, linking Cayuga County's rural development to broader patterns of migration and cultural exchange in the early nineteenth century.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Overview

The land upon which the Peleg White House was built was part of the New Military Tract, a government bounty of nearly two million acres surveyed in 1789 and set aside for the benefit of Revolutionary War veterans. The earliest settlers came from Pennsylvania but were soon followed by emigres from Massachusetts and Connecticut. Previous to its formation, the area encompassed by the town of Ledyard was the site of the first

¹ Asher Benjamin, *The Practical House Carpenter* (Boston: The Author, R. P. & C. Williams, and Annan & Smith, 1830). Plate 48.

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settlements by white immigrants in what would become Cayuga County.² Following the end of the Revolution, the land west of Albany experienced rapid growth. In the greater regional context, Western and Central New York increased at an incredible rate, about 469 percent, between 1790 and 1820.³ The population of this broad area grew faster than any other settlement in the United States before or since that time. The town of Ledyard was formed from Scipio, one of the original townships of the New Military tract, in 1823.⁴

By 1820, many wealthy and highly educated families from New England, particularly Massachusetts, made their homes in the towns and villages of Cayuga County.⁵ Among these emigres was Peleg White, born on August 12, 1760, in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Peleg lived in Westport, Massachusetts, until he and his wife, Eunice, moved to Cayuga County in the early nineteenth century.⁶ White was enumerated in the census of 1810 living in Scipio next door to Jethro Wood, inventor of the modern plow.⁷ He was one of numerous early Quaker settlers to the area who brought along the religious and educational ideals that made the Southern Cayuga area “a storm center for reformers”, playing a major role in the abolition movement.⁸ As Judy Wellman’s *Uncovering the freedom trail in Auburn and Cayuga County, New York* describes:

In central Cayuga County, abolitionist sentiment centered in the North Street Friends Meetinghouse (Brick Meetinghouse), and Underground Railroad work was anchored in the home of Slocum and Hannah Howland in Sherwood, New York. This group had ties to [the] Underground Railroad network of Friends and free African Americans in Philadelphia and Delaware, including William Still, Dr. Bartholomew Fusell and his niece, Graceanna Lewis, and Thomas Garrett in Wilmington, Delaware).⁹

In fact, Peleg White was a signatory of a petition, dated 1835, calling on Congress to abolish slavery and emancipate the slaves in the District of Columbia.¹⁰ The petition was signed at the NR-listed North Street Friends Meetinghouse, approximately two miles north of the Peleg White House. The 1829 Burr *Map of the County of Cayuga* shows the meetinghouse, but Dixon Road does not appear.

White was also the purveyor of “Peleg White’s Sticking Salve,” a popular product in the age of cure-all ointments and tinctures. The salve was derived from something commonly known as “Cook’s Salve” and continued to be sold under Peleg’s name after his death. The product was well-known and was used extensively

² Elliot G. Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1879), 390.

³ John Q. Adams, *History of Auburn Theological Seminary, 1818-1918* (Auburn, NY: Auburn Seminary Press, 1918), 19.

⁴ Storke, *History of Cayuga County*, 6.

⁵ Anderson, Scott W. *Auburn, NY: Entrepreneur’s Frontier* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015), 53.

⁶ Emily Howland, “Early History Of Friends In Cayuga County, N. Y.”, Collections Of Cayuga County Historical Society, Volume Two (Auburn, NY: Knapp & Peck, 1882).

⁷ Tanya Warren, “The Cayuga County Homes of Elias & Susan White Doty”, Manuscript: Historical New York Research Associates, undated, 1.

⁸ Judy Wellman, *Uncovering the freedom trail in Auburn and Cayuga County, New York* (Auburn, NY: Historical New York Research Associates, 2005), 342.

⁹ Wellman, *Uncovering the freedom trail*, 26.

¹⁰ National Archives and Records Administration. HR23A-H1.2.

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in the kitchens of Black Americans.¹¹ In one newspaper, a reader wrote in to inquire if Peleg White was a “character in fiction or in real life.”¹²

In the year 1836, White assembled his property through four purchases of adjoining parcels in 1836, totaling \$645.¹³ Upon Peleg’s death six years later, his widow, Eunice sold the property to Matthew Barker for \$2,000.¹⁴ The increase in value for the combined property likely reflects the addition of new construction - the house itself - built by Peleg White in 1836.¹⁵ In the basement, beneath the southeast room of the main volume, the year “1836” is painted on a floor beam.

After a few years Matthew Barker sold the property to Calvin Tupper.¹⁶ Tupper had come from Salisbury, Connecticut, in 1806 with his father Benjamin, a Revolutionary War veteran.¹⁷ He married Polly Ely (nee Landon) in 1845, and died in 1851.¹⁸ Polly was the widow of Elias Ely, with whom she had two children, John F. and David.¹⁹ Elias was part of the Quaker community in Bucks County, Pennsylvania before coming to Cayuga County in 1823.²⁰ He died sometime after the 1840 census. The house is shown on the 1853 Geils *Map of Cayuga County* with the label “Mrs. Tupper” (Figure 3). Her son with Elias, John F. Ely (1831-1906) lived in the home with his wife Sarah after Calvin Tupper passed away.

The Tupper-Ely family’s occupation of the property was a period of expansion of the farm. Calvin passed away on October 1, 1851, leaving a will that transferred a thirteen-acre section of land (Ledyard Lot 57) to Polly.²¹ Just nine days later, on October 10, 1851, Thomas and Keziah Boucher sold Polly an additional three and a half acres adjacent to her existing land for \$262.50.²² In the 1855 New York State Census, Polly, now forty-eight, was living with John F. Ely, listed as a twenty-four-year-old farmer and landowner, and his wife, Sarah.²³ On April 1, 1856, Polly expanded her holdings by purchasing twenty-five more acres from Isaac and Susan Pine for \$1,500, bringing her total land on Lot 57 to around forty-two acres.²⁴ By 1860, Polly’s property was likely under John F. Ely’s management or ownership, as he was assessed for forty-one acres on Lot 57.²⁵ Polly passed away on September 6, 1870. In her will, executed by her son, John F. Ely, she bequeathed her forty-two acres to

¹¹ Kyla Clarke, “A Domestic Cookbook: Containing A Careful Selection of Useful Recipes for the Kitchen: An Analysis of Malinda Russell’s Cookbook as an Indication of Black Knowledge and Agency,” *The Mirror - Undergraduate History Journal*, 43 (Guelph, ON: University of Guelph, 2023), 18–27.

¹² “Peleg White”, *Buffalo Evening News* (Buffalo, NY), December 12, 1898, 3.

¹³ Cayuga County, NY, Deeds including, Book ZZ: 96; ZZ:98; 66:235; and 66:236.

¹⁴ Cayuga County, NY, Deed Book 66: 237.

¹⁵ “Ely House”, Scrapbook compiled by Jane Searing, (Poplar Ridge, NY: Collections of the Hazard Public Library, 1980).

¹⁶ Cayuga County, NY, Deed, Book 80:448.

¹⁷ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/61004068/benjamin_tupper.

¹⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/72424765/polly-tupper>.

¹⁹ Reuben P. Ely, *An historical narrative of the Ely, Revell and Stacey families who were among the founders of Trent* (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 254.

²⁰ Buckingham Monthly Meeting, correspondence approving Ely’s move to Cayuga County and requesting acceptance into the Scipio congregation, dated November 3, 1823. Available at <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/2577008:2189>.

²¹ Cayuga County, Deed, Book 82: 333.

²² Cayuga County, Deed, Book 82: 451.

²³ 1855 New York State Census. Ledyard, Cayuga County; #88-96.

²⁴ Cayuga County, Deed, Book 92: 493.

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John.²⁶ In 1871, John Ely was taxed for fifty-six acres on Lot 57, which included additional or redefined parcels.²⁷

Over the years the farm also grew in terms of agricultural use and capacity. In 1850, Calvin Tupper had one horse, one cow, and two swine on his thirteen acres.²⁸ During John Ely's ownership, the farm grew and diversified, and by 1880, his now 90-acre farm had four horses, ten cows, two swine, thirty-six sheep, and forty chickens and was worth six thousand dollars.²⁹ Based on agricultural census data, the farm sold a variety of products, including mutton, butter, "Irish potatoes," and wheat.

According to his 1906 obituary, *Mr. Ely had resided all his life in [Ledyard] and for more than fifty years on the farm where he died.*³⁰ Ely was a reverend in the Methodist-Episcopal Church. With John F.'s entry into this denomination, the connection between the property and the Quakers of Cayuga County apparently ended. The property remained in the Ely family until 1931, when the property was sold to Harry Jones.³¹

The property's association with the Quaker sect resumed in 1969 with the purchase of the property from the Jones estate by Paul and Jane Simkin, who were Quakers, very active in Quaker social concerns throughout their five decades living in the property. It was also in 1969 that the parcel was subdivided and the house's functional connection with the adjacent barn ended.³² The address of the house was 2307 Dixon Road until changed during the implementation of 911 services in Cayuga County in 2000.

Greek Revival Architecture in the Finger Lakes

"Nowhere more than in up-state New York is local research to discover local architects and builders, to trace detailed influences, more necessary. Nowhere is Greek Revival work more vital and more varied."

-- Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (1944).³³

New York City, Philadelphia, and other urban areas were the first places to build in the Greek Revival style, as the architects employed by the new government turned to the Classical world to find inspiration. In order to create a truly "new" American architecture, they adapted Ancient Roman and Greek examples to the new world.³⁴ These buildings were large-scale and monumental early versions of the style, almost experimental in their tentative use of the column orders (Ionic, Doric, etc.) and trim treatments. By the 1820s, the Hudson

²⁵ Tax assessment. Cayuga County, 1860.

²⁶ Cayuga County Probate. Will Book T: 617.

²⁷ Tax assessment. Cayuga County, 1871.

²⁸ United States. U.S. Census of Agriculture, Ledyard, Cayuga County, 1850, 1.

²⁹ United States. U.S. Census of Agriculture, Ledyard, Cayuga County, 1880, 9.

³⁰ "Death of an old resident", *Auburn Semi-Weekly Journal* (Auburn, NY), June 1, 1906, 5.

³¹ Cayuga County, Deed, Book 240: 473.

³² Cayuga County, Deed, Book 372:182.

³³ Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1944), 270.

³⁴ Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1952), 575.

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Valley became the home of increasingly rich landowners from New York, who built their sprawling Greek Revival estates in the communities on the banks of the Hudson River.³⁵

During this period, travelers from New York City and New England moved through the Hudson Valley, west into the Mohawk Valley, and then down along the shore of Lake Erie on their way to “New Connecticut.”³⁶

Thus the westward route from Albany to Buffalo became the pathway along which the contemporary architectural styles moved in New York State. With these travelers came the religious and educational ideals that were born in the homogenous culture of New England, destined to be transformed by the (relatively) more diverse landscape and populations arriving in upstate New York. As a result of this, a refined and polished type of Greek Revival architecture eventually emerged in the Finger Lakes. Compared to the stylistic attributes of the wealthy Hudson Valley mansions, the examples found in Central New York and the Finger Lakes were scaled back, and the smaller homes and farmsteads took on more dignified and original versions. The widespread dissemination of the Greek Revival architectural style in Cayuga County, particularly in the early nineteenth century, was significantly aided by pattern books—printed instructions with illustrations for constructing homes and other structures. As travel and commerce expanded with the Erie Canal, these books reached a broader audience, allowing local carpenters, who had few architects to rely on, to use them as guides for building new homes.

The influx of settlers from New England during this period brought their values and traditions from states like Massachusetts and Connecticut, influencing not only civic and religious institutions—such as town meetings, schools, and Congregational churches—but also the region's architectural landscape. The settlers came from places where the Federal style was prevalent, arriving when the nation began favoring Greek Revival architecture. The synthesis symbolized the democratic ideals of the new American republic and connected their new homes to their New England heritage. This regional iteration of the two styles' simplicity, symmetry, and classical proportions resonated with their appreciation for order and beauty. While the farmhouses in Cayuga County reflected the same principles found in New England architecture, they adapted to meet the unique environmental and social needs of the region by utilizing local materials like stone and timber and incorporating practical additions such as large barns and agricultural outbuildings.

Criterion C: Architecture

Original Construction

The focus of the nominated property is the frame dwelling erected by Peleg White in 1836. The dwelling was conceived along traditional and established lines, a self-contained mass erected above a symmetrical plan with a five-bay façade, a center entrance and a side gable roof. On the interior, the Peleg White House is set apart from the characteristic Federal and Greek Revival houses of the time by the extremely shallow vestibule and the unusual, enclosed stairwell, with arched ceiling. The plasterwork covering the stairwell is backed by riven lathe, indicating it is part of a relatively early building campaign, and possibly original. While it is uncertain whether this feature dates to 1836 or was modified later, it is undoubtedly exceptional in the context of domestic architecture in the region. Riven lathe is found throughout the walls and ceiling of the main five-bay volume

³⁵ Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 260.

³⁶ Morrison, *Early American Architecture*, 258.

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finished in horsehair plaster. This provides an intriguing counterpoint to the other documented Federal or Greek Revival dwellings, even those constructed by Peleg White. White is believed to have built two other houses in the vicinity, including 1685 Poplar Ridge Road (aka Melwood, in 1816), which bears a striking resemblance to the house at 2297 Dixon Road, although the latter retains a more typical Federal-style central stairwell and Greek Revival facade.³⁷

Near Little Salmon Creek, approximately one mile southwest of Genoa, local industries such as sawmills and grist mills were central to the area's development during the early nineteenth century. These mills, powered by water and steam, provided essential services to the growing community, with operations like Melvin Alexander's mill processing flour and feed for local farmers. A few miles further south, at the forks of the creek, John Boyer and his partners ran a grist mill and sawmill, both originally built by Colonel Daniel Thorp in the early 1800s.³⁸ These industrial hubs not only supported the agricultural economy but also contributed to the availability of locally sourced materials, such as timber, which would have been crucial to the construction of the Peleg White House in 1836. The availability of nearby mills likely provided Peleg White with access to milled lumber and other necessary materials, enabling the efficient construction of his home.

The house displays the familiar pattern of a hall and parlor flanking a central vestibule. These more public rooms display intact original baseboards, chair rails, and crown molding. The legacy of popular pattern books can be seen in the fact that the vestibule door moldings are a simplification of Plate 48 of Asher Benjamin's *The Practical House Carpenter* (1830).³⁹ The rosettes in the corners of the mantelpieces, on the other hand, attest to the folk carpenter's creativity. Stoves located at either side of the main volume are indicated by holes in the ceiling which correspond to brick chimney remnants in the attic. Stoves were increasingly popular and important in rural farmhouses between 1820 and 1850.⁴⁰ This gave certain flexibility to the builders of farmhouses in the period, as they were freed from the necessity of constructing brick hearths and chimneys either at the center or at the ends of their dwellings. Nevertheless, decorative mantels sometimes retained a cosmetic touch of flair, as in the Peleg White house. This treatment allowed White to display his relative wealth in a restrained manner. As a Quaker, he likely would have had an interest in removing the social barriers associated with the wealthy, which is evident in the modesty of decoration in the house.

The exterior doorway and porch off the kitchen on the facade appear to match the original construction. There were originally two square columns supporting the roof over that porch, as shown in a 1950 photo (Figure 4). Two columns found in the ruins of a shed on the property appear to be those missing square columns, as they match the tapering and detail of the columns supporting the front portico. These columns have been restored and returned to their original roles.

³⁷ Otto Barthel, ed., *The New Century Atlas Of Cayuga County, New York* (Philadelphia, PA: Century Map Co., 1904), 121.

³⁸ Storke, 506.

³⁹ Benjamin, *The Practical House Carpenter*, Plate 48.

⁴⁰ Thomas C. Hubka, *Big House, little house, back house, barn* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1984), 126.

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Mid-nineteenth century alterations

As the Ely farm grew and flourished, the desire for additional space led to building additions, such as the one-story volume on the north side of the Peleg White House featuring a kitchen and “sunroom.” Whereas early kitchens would typically be located in the basement, the addition of a first story kitchen marks the transition in domestic architecture toward greater convenience, efficiency, and the growing emphasis on the kitchen as a central space for household activities. It is presumed that the kitchen was originally built in 1863 by John F. Ely over a crawl space, based on evidence found in the walls; a pair of boards with the date “1863” and the name “J. F. Ely” painted on them. Floor joists are heavy, roughhewn timbers with wide notches, indicating they may have been repurposed from another structure.

In the early nineteenth century, the nature of agrarian life often meant limited personal seclusion. However, the evolution of middle-class values in the mid-nineteenth century brought a growing emphasis on personal and domestic privacy, particularly in the design of homes. Architectural trends like the separation of public and private spaces within houses (e.g., formal parlors versus bedrooms) reflected this shift. The evident partitioning of the southeast second-story bedroom speaks to this.

There is some evidence that the original roof was rebuilt during the period as well. Lumber used in the rafters of the roof appears to be of a later date than that used throughout the rest of the house, displaying cut marks consistent with a sash saw, widely used before 1850.⁴¹

Twentieth century additions

The second story of the west elevation is presumed to be a later addition, due to several observed factors. For example, the window and door trim in the second story of the west volume is different from that of the first story, the flooring on the second story runs north-south, while that of the first story, as well as both stories of the main house volume, runs east-west, indicating that it was built upon pre-existing rafters, and, finally, there is an exposed (but covered by finished lumber) beam running north-south above the floor along the entire length of the second story’s west interior wall in the manner of baseboard trim. The height of this beam would match that of the beams of the main house. However, the floor of the second story’s west volume is one step lower than that of the main volume - at the top of the staircase, one step up from the landing to enter the north or south bedroom. That unusual beam may have supported a shed roof on the west side of the house in its original construction. Further investigation may confirm this, although the timing of the addition of the second story, if that is what happened, may remain uncertain. Based on the type of materials and workmanship in this portion of the house, such as the extant (and presumed original) wallpaper, it is estimated that this addition was made sometime at the turn of the twentieth century as the Ely farm and family had grown. It is assumed that this is more likely to have occurred prior to 1930, when wallpaper slowly started to decrease in popularity.

The “sun room” at the northwest corner of the Peleg White House, just off the kitchen, features newer framing interspersed with historic heavy timbers, indicating a limited renovation at some period. This also is reflected in the mid-twentieth century gypsum board found on the ceiling of the sunroom. The foundation under the kitchen

⁴¹ Thomas Durant Visser, *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings* (Hanover, NH: University press of New England, 1997), 27.

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is a modern cement block foundation, and the access to the basement under the kitchen from the main basement appears to have been created by breaking a doorway through the original foundation of the main house. The roof over the kitchen was extended with a shallower section of roof over that northwest room. That work was likely part of a larger project that included installation of a poured concrete floor in most of the main basement, and installation of a cistern. Probably while the modern foundation under the kitchen was constructed. The windows in the kitchen and "sunroom" were then modified, and the current kitchen chimney was added, in the late 1970s.⁴²

The Peleg White House originally had two chimneys, one at each end, each built up from the attic floor and rising from the roof at the ridge line. Inside the house, stovepipes passed up through the attic floor from the house below and turned 90 degrees to enter the chimneys on their center-facing sides. Extant stovepipe passages in the first-story ceilings/second-story floors indicate that the house was originally heated by stoves at each end on the main floor, with stovepipes passing through the upstairs bedrooms and thereby bringing some heat to those rooms. This system was superseded by a central furnace in the basement. A central chimney built of concrete block was added, extending from the basement floor up through a space along the north side of the main stairway (and attic stairway) and up through the roof. Pieces of an old coal-fired hot air furnace were found in the yard. That furnace and central chimney appear to have predated the pouring of the concrete slab and installation of the cistern and kitchen foundation.

The access to the basement was originally via a stairwell under the main staircase, from the west volume and from another doorway, now covered, from the dining room. That stairway was likely removed to facilitate installation of central heating and associated ductwork. In the first story, the space under the main staircase became a closet. In the basement, two modern two-by-six joists located directly beneath the staircase stand out against the historic, beetle-damaged heavy timbers, indicating the historic location of the basement stairs. A new basement staircase was carved out of the bathroom at the north end of the west volume. That bathroom developed a sagging floor (recently corrected), due to the extra loading created by removing floor joists and cutting out flooring to build the stairway.

The house reflects its 1836 origins in the Federal and Greek Revival styles, as seen in its five-bay façade, cornice and frieze, and trim profiles. Early construction techniques and materials are found throughout the structure, including mortise and tenon joinery, horsehair plaster on riven lathe, and square cut nails. Although the Peleg White House has undergone alterations and been expanded with a small addition to the upper rear portion, it retains many important elements from its historic period of significance, including original trim work and an interpretable floor plan. The house would be recognizable to Peleg White as his dwelling. The Peleg White House's direct association with White, an important figure in the area and a widely-known patent medicine maker, further enhances its significance. Together with the associated gambrel barn, with its roughhewn timber framing, the property stands as a key architectural feature of the surrounding landscape.

⁴² Account of Sam and Brenda Simkin, who grew up in the house.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.69

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude:	Longitude:
2. Latitude:	Longitude:
3. Latitude:	Longitude:
4. Latitude:	Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the present real estate parcel on which the house sits, which includes the yard surrounding the house and the foundation ruins of one outbuilding. Since the house is what makes the property eligible, no further parcels are necessary within the boundary.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew Roblee and Maryam Rabi [edited by Johnathan Farris, Ph.D., NYSHPO]

organization Roblee Historic Preservation, LLC

date May 2025

street & number 74 Genesee Street

telephone 315-224-6344

city or town Auburn

state NY

zip code 13021

e-mail andrew@robleehp.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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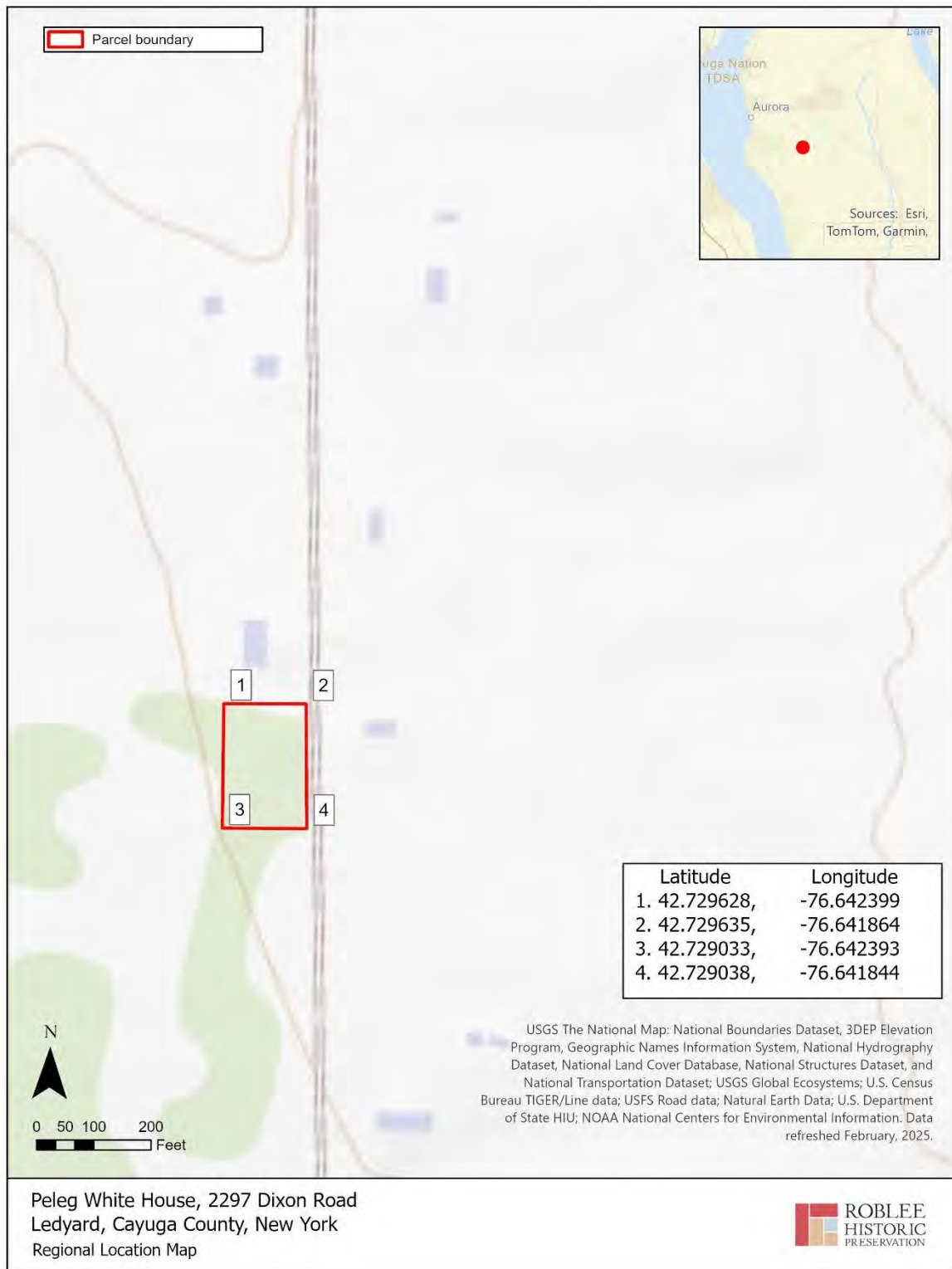


Figure 1. Location of the Peleg White House at 2297 Dixon Road, Ledyard, Cayuga County, NY.

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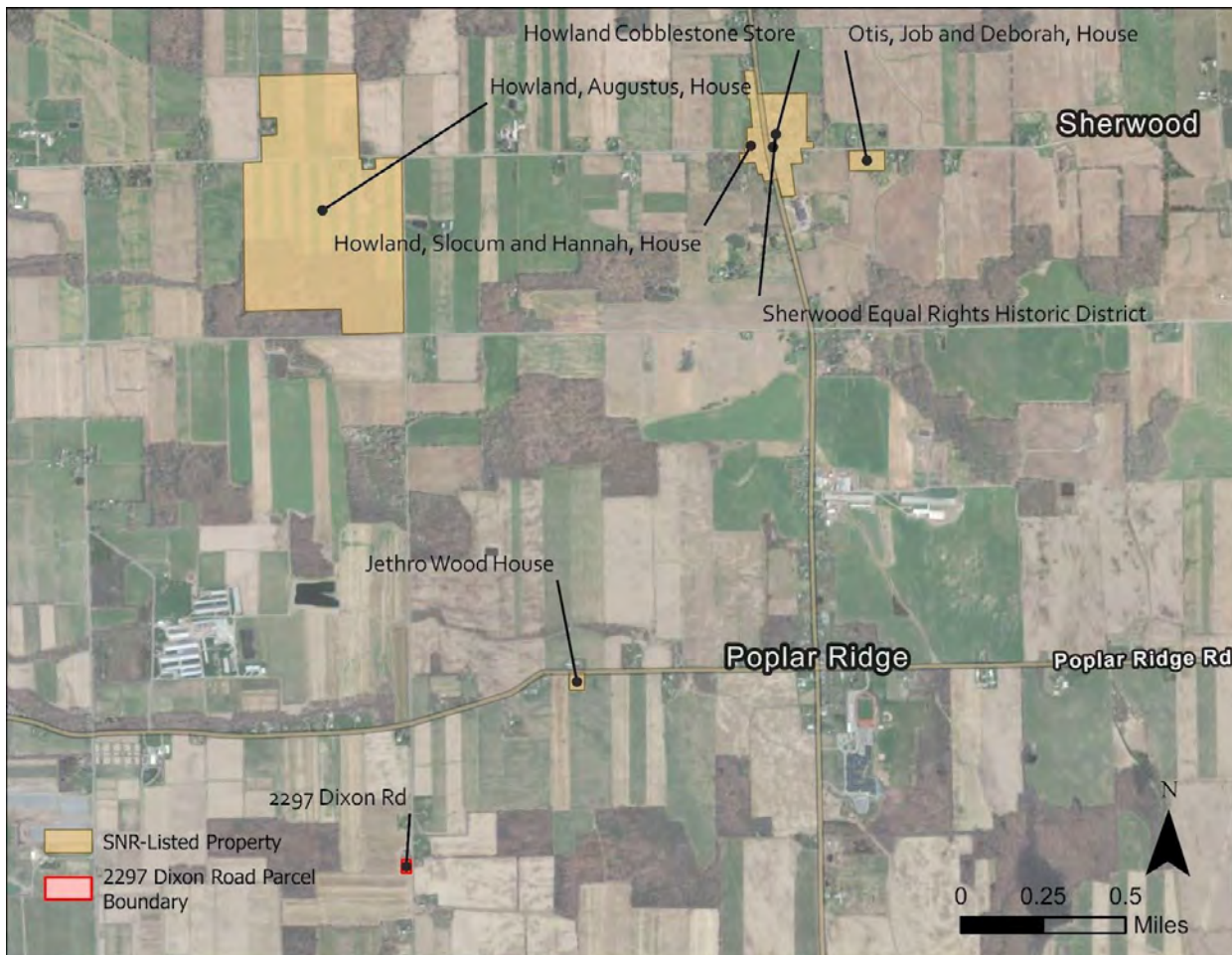


Figure 2. The Peleg White House's location relative to nearby S/NR-listed properties.

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Figure 3. Detail from the 1853 Geils *Map of Cayuga County* depicting the house under Polly Tupper's ownership (Courtesy of the Cayuga Museum of History and Art).

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Figure 4. View to the northwest toward the Peleg White House circa 1950 (Photograph courtesy of the Hazard Library Collections).

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Peleg White House

City or Vicinity: Ledyard

County: Cayuga

State: New York

Photographer: Andrew Roblee

Date Photographed: January 14, 2025, and March 25, 2025

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 17. View to the southwest toward the Peleg White house.
- 2 of 17. View to the northwest toward the Peleg White house.
- 3 of 17. View to the northeast toward the rear of the Peleg White house.
- 4 of 17. View to the east-southeast toward the rear of the Peleg White house.

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- 5 of 17. View to the south toward the Peleg White house (kitchen volume).
- 6 of 17. View to the west toward entrance and porch.
- 7 of 17. View inside entry hall up the staircase.
- 8 of 17. View to the northwest inside southeast room, first story.
- 9 of 17. View to the northeast inside northwest room, first story.
- 10 of 17. View to the east inside kitchen volume, first story.
- 11 of 17. View to the west down central staircase from second-story landing.
- 12 of 17. View to the southeast inside northeast bedroom, second story.
- 13 of 17. View to the southeast inside southeast bedroom, second story.
- 14 of 17. View to the southwest along attic stairs, showing marriage marks.
- 15 of 17. View to the south inside attic.
- 16 of 17. Detail of mantelpiece in southwest room, first story.
- 17 of 17. Detail of basement framing.

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Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name N/A
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.























