In 1915-1916, while the restoration team tried to re-create the 19th century atmosphere on the interior, they were unable to re-create the farm itself. Most of the surrounding land had left family ownership, so they were only able to acquire about 1/2 an acre. They chose to landscape this as a small garden although they did hint at the farming past through two elements: they constructed a reproduction smokehouse to represent the outbuildings that would have been in the farmyard and they planted a cherry tree to represent the former orchards.

One of the more unusual elements they included in the garden is the reconstructed Military Hut. (see the signage by the hut)

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DYCKMAN FARMHOUSE MUSEUM was built c. 1784 and restored and donated to the city in 1916. It has been open to the public since that time. Today, nestled in a small park, the farmhouse is an extraordinary reminder of early Manhattan. The farmhouse is owned by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation and is a member of the Historic House Trust.

The farmhouse is managed by the Dyckman Farmhouse Museum Alliance which fundraises to enable the site to offer public programming, maintain the lovely garden and care for the collections. Your donations are greatly appreciated. Please contact us to learn more about supporting the work at the Farmhouse. For more information visit our website or email us at info@dyckmanfarmhouse.org

Enjoy your visit!
The first Dyckman, Jan, arrived in New Amsterdam in the 1660’s and settled in Northern Manhattan. By the Revolutionary War, the Dyckman homestead was located at the Harlem River just north of present day 207th Street and Jan’s grandson William had inherited Dyckman land. During the British occupation of Manhattan (1776-1783), William and his family fled their home and sought refuge upstate. After the War, William returned to find the family home and farm destroyed. It is believed that he immediately began building a new house, but chose to build in a new location, along Kingsbridge Road (now Broadway). This small Dutch Colonial style home was most likely constructed with the help of family, friends and slaves.

William’s son Jacobus inherited the farm in the 1790’s and it was during his tenure that the farm prospered. On the first and lower floors of the farmhouse the spaces are furnished to tell the story of the family in 1815-1820. During this period about 10 people were living in the household, including: Jacobus, three of his sons (Jacob, Isaac and Michael), his young grandson James Frederick Smith, his niece Maria, one unidentified white women, a free black woman, a free black boy and one male slave.

With their husbands, curator Bashford Dean and architect Alexander McMillan Welch, they undertook a major restoration and furnishing project to bring the house back to an earlier appearance. This included removing later woodwork, restoring missing features and tearing down a later addition. The farmhouse today represents all the layers of its history: the original modest 18th century structure, 19th century room modernizations such as staircases and the early 20th century alterations for museum use. The interior paint colors date to this early museum period.

When Jacobus died in 1832, his bachelor sons, Isaac and Michael, continued to live in the farmhouse with their nephew James Frederick Smith. By the 1850’s, they had moved to another house on their property and rented out the farmhouse. James Frederick Smith later inherited much of the family property and changed his name to Isaac Michael Dyckman in honor of his uncles. The farmhouse left family ownership in the 1870’s.

By the early 20th century, the farm house was in disrepair and the rural character of the neighborhood was quickly changing. In response, Mary Alice Dyckman Dean and Fannie Fredericka Dyckman Welch, daughters of Isaac Michael Dyckman, bought the property in 1915 to ensure its preservation.

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There were also 30 people living within three other houses scattered across the roughly 250 acre farm. The residents included laborers and other Dyckman family members. The main outbuildings for the farm were built close to the farmhouse including a cider mill, corn cribs, barn and stable.

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The earliest sketch of the farmhouse, c. 1835. The addition on the right was torn down in 1915-16.

The winter kitchen of the Dyckman Farmhouse, c. 1835. The addition on the right was the living quarters built by the family for their slaves.

The farmhouse soon after it opened as a museum in 1916. The bedroom on the second floor as it appeared when the museum first opened in 1916.

The summer kitchen of the Dyckman Farmhouse, c. 1835. The addition on the right was the living quarters built by the family for their slaves.

The farmhouse after it opened as a museum in 1916.
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Museum & Garden Hours:
Friday-Sunday 11am-5pm
Monday-Thursday by group appointment only.

Museum Admission:
Minimum admission of $1 for adults, free for children under 10
Groups of 10 or more by appointment, see website for information on our school tours

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