Early Settlers’ Meeting House

Corner of Fogg’s Ridge Road & Granite Road

Minnie Leighton’s book on the Meeting House explains its origins: “…Jacob Leighton, born in 1787… gave a corner of land on which [the Meeting House] was built. This gift of land…was to hold on binding as long as the building to be erected on it should be maintained as a place of worship. No deed of that gift can be found.” While there may be no record of this gift, the Society keeps alive the tradition by maintaining the building and having a worship service at least once a year.

The Historical Society of Ossipee has paperwork of an appraisal done in 1856. The churchgoers wished to modernize this place of worship and did so within the same year. A new foundation was placed under the building, the entrance was moved from Fogg’s Ridge Road to Granite Road and a platform was added. The roof was raised, though the entire frame and floor remained the same. Since the entrance changed, the pews & pulpit also had to be changed, which explains the lack of a pulpit window, which was the common arrangement before the wide use of electric lights. The remodel also included plastered walls and ceiling which hid the old hewn beams. And finally, the old wide, unpainted shingles were replaced with clapboards. One can also see the *trompe l’oeil* paintings to look like wood grain on the woodwork. Therefore 1856 is a more accurate date, not circa 1812 as often appears in other documents.

At the front of the Meeting House, where we think a stove was intended to be installed, is an Estey reed organ. It can be dated to some time between 1890 and 1892. There are no cataloging marks on it, so its provenance is not known. We do not know if it came to the Society with the building or if it was donated to the Society & located in the Meeting House as an appropriate place for it. If anyone has more information about it, please let someone in the Society know, so a written record can be made.