



Female Academy

Norridgewock Historical Society Newsletter

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The Vaughan Homestead - Hopkins Home

On page 63 of the book “Norridgewock 200 years 1788-1988” by the Norridgewock Historical Society there is a picture of the home of “Brad Wells—now R. Hopkins”. To be included in the book was nice, however this picture is not of my home. I kept looking at the foundation and knew that it did not look correct. We do not have a window on the left or West wall of the granite foundation. The answer, however, was looking right out at me. The windows! The windows are 2 over 2 and the Wells-Hopkins house has 9 over 6 windows. I learned while looking for replacement windows that 9 panes over 6 are the style of the mid to late 18th century. We found a home at Sturbridge Village called the Bixby House with the same layout as our home. Many of the settlers who came to Norridgewock after the Revolutionary War came from Worcester County, MA. The settlers of Norridgewock most likely brought familiar building plans with them when they came.

So, we have a home that was moved to where it is now and was moved there in the winter of 1872-1873 or 1873-1874. Where did it come from? Who were the builders and how old is the house? Researching the deeds to our home took us back through time from Somerset County to Kennebec County to Lincoln County.

What follows are the results of our search. The references to “The History of Norridgewock” by William Allen written in 1847 deals with some of the physical properties of our home and suggest that it came from the top of Winding Hill from the original homestead of Cephas Vaughan. On page 58 of Allen’s book he mentions the large boards used by the early settlers. Many of the boards in the house are 24-36 inches wide suggesting that the house was one of the earlier homes built in town.

Oral history from the Wells/Ketchum family who owned the house from the late 1800s to the 1960s tell of the house being moved “down the hill and across the ice” leading some to believe it was moved across the river. When homes were moved at that time, they were moved in the winter on the iced roads by teams of oxen and/or horses. So, the house could have been moved down Winding Hill in the winter into town “across the ice” since Cephas Vaughan already owned the house as part of the family homestead on Winding Hill.



Deed Chain - Hopkins - Wells/Ketchum - Vaughn - Whitcomb/Gould House

Barnes to Hopkins - Book 963 page 24: Sep. 12, 1980

Hertz to Barnes - Book 868 page 8: Aug. 11, 1976

Lizotte to Hertz - Book 815 page 576: April 19, 1972

Ruth Piper and Jessie Ward to Lizotte - Book 652 page 14: June 11, 1962

Ruth Piper (Wise), Jessie M. Ward and Bradford Wells Ketchum, Sr. to Ruth Piper and Jessie Ward - Book 619 page 194 : Aug. 10, 1960

Julia Ann Wells to Irving B. Wells and Mabel Wells Ketchum on death of Irving to Mabel Wells Ketchum - Book 437 page 61: March 25, 1936

Florence Whiting to Julia Wells - Book 235 page 373: Aug 29, 1896

Alfred Whiting to Florence Whiting - Book 205 page 24: Sept. 29, 1889 refers to the "Vaughan Homestead"

Mary Lindsey to Alfred Whiting - Book 187 page 105: May 30, 1885 refers to the "Vaughan Homestead"

W. W. Gould to Alfred Whiting - Book 187 page 104: May 28, 1885 refers to the "Vaughan Homestead"

Cephas R. Vaughan to Town of Norridgewock to W. W. Gould tax lien - Book 166 page 357: 1878

Mortgage reference "land with building thereon" Cephas R. Vaughan mortgaged property to Stephen Lindsey - Book 144 page 227: May 18, 1874

Land purchase Vaughan from W.W. Gould - book 136 page 461: July 3, 1872

Oral History - Julia Ann Wells to the Rev. Bradford Wells Ketchum, Jr. to Robert and Kathryn Hopkins "the house was moved down the hill across the ice". The house was probably moved the winter 1872-1873 or 1873-1874 from lots 71 or 72 owned by Vaughan on Winding Hill to its present location on Upper Main Street, the lot purchased from W.W. Gould. See also - Cephas R. Vaughan to M. Willis, land reference January 14, 1875, Book 306 page 143 "a certain parcel of land situated in said Norridgewock containing fifty acres and being that part of my former Homestead Farm that lies west of the cross road leading from the River to the Childs Road so-called'.

Cephas R. Vaughan to Stephen Lindsey mortgaged property, "my Homestead Farm"- Book 118 page 620: January 4, 1869

Ebenezer Vaughan to Cephas R. Vaughan - Book 68 page 298: December 12, 1848 "...the dwelling house in which he now lives with the land whereon it stands and the garden lot of the house containing one acre situated in said Norridgewock also one undivided half of the residence of the farm whereon I live excepting and reserving the dwelling house thereon in which I live and the land whereon it stands and one acre by the house as is fenced in for a garden. Also reserving fifty acres off of the back end of the lot by the new road which I design for my other son Ebenezer Vaughan Jr the farm being the same that was conveyed to me by Joseph Savage estimated to contain in the whole one hundred and fifty acres of which fifty acres of land and the house I live in are reserved and the dwelling house and one acre of land and the undivided half of the residue estimated at ninety eight acres more or less is hereby sold and conveyed to said

Cephas with one half of the other buildings thereon with all privileges and appurtenances belonging thereto to the said Cephas R. Vaughan"

Joseph Savage to Ebenezer Vaughan - Book 44 page 192: January 25, 1838 "...being the same farm where I live is the same I purchased of Calvin Selden, Esq. " (Lot 71)

Calvin Selden to Joseph Savage - Book 30 page 356: March 18, 1833 "Lot 71 containing 150 acres with all the buildings thereon" Also referred to as the Selden Lot

Charles, Sewall and Emmons Whitcomb to Calvin Selden - Book 15 page 99: November 1, 1823 "Part of Lots 71 and 72 containing 200 acres the same as was conveyed to me by Charles Whitcomb and the same being the farm on which Charles Whitcomb lives."

Sewall Whitcomb to Emmons Whitcomb - book 11 page 365: October 19, 1821 "being part of Lots 71 and 72 deeded to me by my father, Charles Whitcomb"

Charles Whitcomb to Sewall Whitcomb - Book 10 page 282: January 20, 1821 "part of Lot 71 containing 125 acres"

Moriah Gould to Charles Whitcomb - Book 2 Page 124: April 25, 1800 "... part of said Lot 72 being at a stake and stone on a line between my farm and Charles Whitcomb farm on the southwest side of the road which runs by my house containing 50 acres being part of Lot 72"

Jonathon Robbins to Charles Whitcomb - Book 1 page 457: June 4, 1791 "fifteenth year of our independence... in consideration of 45 pounds ...being Lot No. (blank) according to Thomas Farrington's plan... 150 acres on the west side of the Kennebec River adjoining Moriah Gould's land leaving 50 acres on the front or next to the river now in possession of Thomas Whitcomb"

History of Norridgewock by William Allen (1849)

- pg 70: Thomas Whitcomb and Moriah Gould settled on Lots 71 and 72.
- pg 57: There was formerly a considerable quantity of pine timber in town, which was distinguished for its size
- pg 58: The most of the pine and oak timber was taken off many years ago by the pioneers in the lumbering business, in the early settlement of the town

Town Tax Records

1866 - "The Vaughan Farm and Selden Lot - \$28.71

1868 - "where he (Vaughan) occupies - \$24.89

Town Inventory

1870 - Cephas R. Vaughan 100 acres value - \$750, 1house - \$75

Submitted by Bob Hopkins

Happy Holidays

We wish to give a big "Thank You" to our Historical Society Officers and also to the many volunteers that helped make 2016 a successful year.

We are looking for a candidate to serve as President for the upcoming year. Please let us know if you are interested or know someone who might be.

WHO ARE THESE HEROES?

The Civil War hats say the old men were veterans of that war. The photo was taken 1896 to 1908, because the American flags had only 45 stars. The word “Norridgewock” on the big flag indicates the men were part of a local veterans’ organization. “9th Regt Maine” below the memorial wreath indicates they were remnants of the Union Army’s 9th Regiment. The 9th mustered in Sept. 1861 in Augusta drawing 800 to 1000 men from surrounding towns and counties. Until mustered out in July 1865 the regiment saw tremendous and terrible action, losing 421 men, close to 50 percent (182 killed, 239 dying of disease).

After the Civil War, an “Encampment” or veterans’ reunion was held every year in some large Maine town until the 1930s. In 1903 Norridgewock had 42 surviving Civil War veterans. This encampment photo of 15 men was taken somewhere in Maine. If we knew where we might know when, and what veterans were still alive at the time.

Can anyone tell us anything more about this photo? Does anyone recognize an ancestor here? These old men were Heroes: We must at least remember their names.






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Best wishes for a prosperous 2017

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Monthly Meetings resume April 26, 2017