

## Center Hill

The road from the Deerfield line to the old Epsom Meetinghouse was named East Street by the proprietors. In later years it was also called Elm Street after residents planted Elms along the road near the McClary Cemetery. The area was where the first twenty families settled the original 20 home lots, and built their meetinghouse, school and parsonage. The area also included a town pound and town common. The area had several stores and taverns that accommodated travelers that were heading inland from the coast. It became of lesser importance when the First New Hampshire came through town, which was on less hilly ground north of the old town center. The most notable family was the McClary's, who owned much of the land and did well by their mill operation. Later, Joseph Lawrence established himself as a large land owner and store operator, preceded by Thomas D. Merrill. Among other prominent families were Blake's, Locke's and Wallace's.

The Town of Epsom was incorporated in 1727 with land being granted to the taxpayers of Rye, New Castle and Greenland – each person receiving a section of land in proportion

to taxes paid in their native town. There were several criteria which had to be met, those being 1) That 20 dwelling houses be built and settle families on them within 4 years; 2) that a house be built for public worship; 3) that one hundred acres each be set aside for a parsonage and a school, as long as peace existed with the Indians during the four years. In the event this was not the case, an additional 4-year extension would be granted. Along with receiving these land grants, these taxpayers of Rye, New Castle and Greenland became immediately responsible for paying the costs of the charter and getting the land surveyed, and were known as proprietors.

At the beginning of 1729, the proprietors voted a committee to survey and divide up the town according to the Charter, and in May 1732 it was voted that a location be selected for building a Meeting House and for settling the 20 families who were to start the town. It was decided that these twenty people each would receive a fifty-acre lot in the section that was set aside for the starting of the settlement, plus thirty acres that would be laid out in another part of the town. A committee was formed to find these twenty men who would be able to pay the five shillings and establish themselves on what is called the original 20 home lots.

Even after all the men had drawn their lots in the different ranges, plus the home-lots and their additional 30 acre lots elsewhere in the town, there was some land left over. Some of this land was on either end of the home lots. When the home lots were drawn, the northern row were numbered from East to West 1 through 10; the southern row just the opposite from 11 through 20. One must remember that in addition to the 20 home lots there had to be two additional lots – one for a school, another for a parsonage. Most likely these were originally planned to be put at the eastern end of the home lots on the common land, but instead they were inserted near a more central point of the home lots; in effect, home lot number 7 became a place for the minister and un-numbered, bumping the lot numbers one lot to the east. To make things just a little more complicated, they then took the western most lot (home lot #10, and attached it to the eastern end near the now Deerfield line. This then made the northern row of home lots 10, then 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, parsonage lot, 7, 8 and 9. The same happened for the southern row of home lots, with number 11 on the west end being moved to the east end near the Deerfield line. Their new order from West to East would be 12, 13, 14, school lot, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 11.

The road dividing the 20 home lots had been built along with the first Meeting House as shown in the following note from a 1733 proprietors meeting: “Voted, January 17, 1733, that the name of the Street from the Meeting-House upward West Street & Down ward to Nottingham from sd Meeting-House East Street.” Later the street was lined with elm trees, planted by residents before the Civil War, and thus for a while East Street was seen in picture post cards as Elm Street. Epsom records detailed: *Record of trees set out on the school house common and by the cemetery wall. Those trees on the common and by the cemetery wall were all set out in 1857 except the chestnut tree at the east end of the cemetery wall that was set out by John C. Hall the elm that was set there in 1857 died. There were originally 28 of them. They were all dug up and set out by Simon A. H. Weeks, Eben B. Hoyt, Edwin and Joel L. Sanborn and Charles Jeffrey Brown, some of*

*them from the Range Road near Pettengill House, some from the roadside near Joe Eastman's (Byron Ambrose) and the rest from the roadside near Deacon John Eastman's (Manson Griffins) they dug them and brought them on their shoulders and set them out and took care of them.*



### **Echo Valley Farm**

Echo Valley Farm is located on Echo Valley Road between Center Hill and the Deerfield town line, on what was formerly called Wallace's Hill. The land in 1767 belonged to the town of Epsom and was sold by the committee of Andrew McClary, Eliphalet Sanborn, gentlemen, and Samuel Blake, yeoman, to Stephen Swett, the first Doctor in the town of Epsom. He moved here from Pembroke with his wife Sarah Adams. He is mentioned in the town history by Rev. Jonathan Curtis, so it is presumed he was in residence, though deeds do not indicate any structures on the land. He sold the land in 1768 to Andrew McClary, and in 1770 moved to Gorham, Maine. Andrew McClary sold the land in 1773 to Moses Osgood, who remained there until his death in 1823, surviving all but one of his son's and three of his four wives. Moses Osgood continued to expand his land holdings, and upon his death, a committee of Thomas D. Merrill, Simon A. Heath and Joseph Lawrence were appointed to set off the widow Lucy's dower rights including "the east end of the easterly barn to the first posts westerly of the barn floor - also a privilege in the sheep house behind the barn and a privilege in the Cider house sufficient to make her own cider - also the southeast front room in the house, and the middle kitchen with the chamber over them - a privilege in the cellar, also the right of passing and re-passing through the front entry to the front door, and also through the back kitchen to the back doors for all necessary purposes - also the easterly half of the shed stand westerly of the house, the shoe makers shop, bark house, tan-yard and chaise house."

Moses Osgood married March 18, 1773, Mary Brown, and their children included: Lydia, born 1774, married at Epsom in 1792, Elijah Locke, son of Moses and Mary (Organ) Locke; Deborah, born 1777, married at Epsom in 1800, Samuel Seavey; Isaac, born 1779, died unmarried about 1798; Elizabeth, born 1782, married at Epsom in 1803, Hugh Morrison; Mary, born 1786, of whom nothing more is known; and David, born 1788, died 1789. Mary Osgood died in 1790, and Moses married second at Epsom in 1791, Rachel Sanborn, daughter of Eliphalet and Margaret (Wallace) Sanborn. Moses and Rachel had a son David, born 1792, married at Deerfield where he resided, Lydia White; and Margaret Sanborn, born 1794, married at Epsom in 1818, Timothy Pearson. There is

no death date known for Rachel, but it may have been about 1796 when Moses married for a third time, at Deerfield in 1786, Lydia Ham. Moses married a fourth time about 1811, Lucy Randall, widow of Abraham Osgood.

The heirs of Moses Osgood sold the family farm to Andrew M. Heath in 1833. He was the son of Capt. Simon Ames Heath and was raised at the old tavern. In 1832 at Epsom he married Jane Cram Cass, daughter of Levi and Mehitabel (Osgood) Cass, having one daughter, Rebecca J., born in 1834 and married first in 1853 Henry C. Tarlton, and second about 1858, William Pickering Babb, son of John and Salome (Rand) Babb. The couple resided at the farm for over 20 years, moving to Slab City, selling the homestead in 1855 to Jonathan Watson. After a decade, it was sold to Andrew M. and Rebecca's daughter and her spouse William Pickering Babb. They moved to North Road near the Pittsfield line and sold the home in 1873 to Jacob Eastman Griffin.

Jacob E. Griffin was a son of John and Mary Maria (McDaniel) Griffin, born at Northwood in 1829. He married in Boston, in 1853, Mary Ann Henry. The family included: John W., born Roxbury, MA in 1854, married 1882, Flora C. Atwood; Elsie Elive, born at Boston in 1856, married at Epping, NH, Frank H. Plummer in 1880; Charles Francis, born 1858, died 1863; Lily Evelyn, born 1860, died 1863; Mary Ann, born 1862 at Chelsea, MA; Charles Francis, born Roxbury, MA in 1865, married Ada Deborah Clark; Jacob Ellsworth, born 1867 at Boston; and Emma Frances, born 1870, died at Boston, unmarried in 1945.

In 1903, Jacob E. Griffin deeded the 125 acre farm to his son Charles Francis Griffin. Jacob died in Epsom in 1906, his wife having died in 1878. His family included Elsa, Ellsworth C. (1896-1896), Roger, Alice Deborah, and Ellsworth. Roger married Margaret L. Briggs and was deeded the home from his father in 1947. Roger died at St. Paul, Minnesota in 1957, and the farm left the family in 1959.

### **The McGaffey, Osgood and Locke Home**

John McGaffey was living in Brentwood when he administered his father's estate. He was born about 1728, son of Neal and Jane (Lucas) McGaffey. According to 'Neal McGaffey of White Hall Illinois' by Laura McGaffey Clarenbach, Neal was *killed by an Indian with his own broad-axe*. Neal's family included John, who married in 1756, Jane McClary, daughter of Andrew and Agnes McClary; Eleanor, born at Nottingham in 1735, married at Kingston, John Edward Bean; Jane, born about 1741, married Josiah Bean; Andrew, born 1743, married at Deerfield in 1775, Hannah Wallace, daughter of George and Margaret (McClary) Wallace of Epsom, served in the Revolution from Epsom and moved to Sandwich about 1780; and Sarah, born about 1745, married at Epsom in 1770, Ebenezer Wallace, brother to Hannah, and resided at Epsom.

John and Jane McGaffey had for a family: Neal, born about 1756, married Sarah Babb, daughter of Philip and Grace (Lang) Babb in 1781, signed the Association Test in Epsom and moved about 1788 to Ohio; Margaret, born 1758, married Henry McCrillis; Samuel, married at Epsom in 1784, Lydia Sanborn, daughter of Eliphalet and Margaret (Wallace)

Sanborn and moved to Sandwich, NH; John, baptized at Epsom in 1761, married in 1791, Belle Tripp and moved to Vermont; Jane, baptized Epsom in 1763, married Stephen Etheridge, removed to Sandwich; Andrew, baptized Epsom in 1765, married at at Sandwich, Hannah Corliss; William Workman, baptized at Epsom in 1767, married Mary Babb, daughter of Philip and Grace (Lang) Babb, moved to Vermont; Agnes, baptized at Epsom in 1769, became a Mormon, and of whom nothing more is known; Molly, baptized at Epsom in 1771, married in 1788 Andrew Bean; James, baptized at Epsom in 1773, married

Deborah Estabrooks; and David, born 1779 at Sandwich, NH, married about 1799 Sally Gates. John and Jane McGaffey sold their farm in 1777 to Samuel Osgood, gentleman, of Salisbury, Mass., who came to Epsom to live. He was a Colonel of the local militia and a town Selectman, and served in the Revolution from Cambridge, MA. According to a local paper, his house accidently took fire in April of 1792. He was born at Salisbury, MA in 1736, and married there in 1763, Eleanor Morrill. His children, born Salisbury and Epsom, included: Eleanor, born 1764, married a Jonathan Randall; Abraham, born 1766, married at Epsom in 1786, Lucy Randall; Lydia, born 1769, died 1776; Polly, born 1763, married at Epsom in 1792, John Ham of Canterbury; Samuel (1), born 1774 died 1776; Samuel (2) born 1776, died at Epsom, unmarried in 1808; Capt. Isaac, born at Epsom in 1779, married at Deerfield in 1801, Betsy Ham; Lydia, born 1781, married at Epsom in 1799, Hanover Dickey, son of David and Rachel (Hanover) Dickey; Hannah, born 1784, married at Epsom in 1803, Robert Dickey, brother of Hanover; and Sarah, born 1786, married Isaac Norton.

Samuel's first wife died in 1793, and he married second at Epsom in 1794, Elizabeth McCrillis, widow of Andrew McClary; and married third after the death of his second wife in 1808, Abigail Chapman, widow of John Lucy. Samuel had no male heirs at the time of his death, his last surviving son, Isaac, took his own life just months before the death of his father. Samuel in his will left his farm to his third wife, Abigail, and two grandsons: Samuel, son of Abraham, who was born in 1802 and resided at Canterbury; and Abraham, born 1813, son of Isaac, who became a minister and at the time of his death was living at Stovington, CT. Abigail, Samuel, and Thomas D. Merrill, as guardian of Abraham, all sold their rights to the homestead in 1823 to Samuel Johnson of Deerfield. Deacon Samuel Johnson was born in Northwood in 1774, a son of Moses Johnson. He married at Deerfield in 1802, Catherine Ham, daughter of Joseph and Mary (Peverly) Ham of Portsmouth. Though they have a younger male and female in the early 1810 and 1820 census, there are no known children. Samuel died in 1845, his wife lived to age 91, and they are buried in the McClary Cemetery. Her sister Betsy was the wife of Isaac Osgood, son of Samuel on whose homestead they lived.

By 1858, the farm was owned by Francis Locke. Francis, the son of Francis and Mary Abigail (Katherwood) Locke, born at Epsom in 1791. He married Mary Philbrick, daughter of Daniel and Ruth (Merrill) Philbrick. Their children were: Daniel Philbrick, born 1815, married first at Epsom in 1840, Abigail Fowler, daughter of Withrop and Abigail (Davis) Fowler, and second after 1868, Leah E. Prescott; Emeline, born and died in 1821; Lovie Chase, born 1822, died unmarried in 1861; Arthur Caverno, born 1824, married Salina O. Bickford, daughter of Nathan and Eliza W. (Dickey) Bickford; and

Sarah Emeline, born 1826, married at Epsom in 1849, Joseph H. Veasey. Francis and his second wife Rhoda sold 'the homestead farm upon I know reside' to Augustus Lord of Portsmouth in 1864, and moved to the area of Slab City. The house does not appear on the county map of 1892.

### **Home Lot # 10**



Home Lot # 10 was originally drawn by Solomon Dowst of Rye, and is one of the re-located lots, having been originally at the West end before becoming the last lot on the East end. To make matters more confusing, it is still sometimes called Lot #1. It is unclear of the disposition of the 50 acre home lot, though it would appear it was sold to John Blake. John Blake acquired several Epsom home lots for which there are no recorded transactions. These lots were sold or passed on to various sons, some of which then can be traced.

William Blake, a grandson of John (John, John), owned home lot #10 and sold a part of it to George Wallace (who owned the home lot across the street) in 1762, and the rest (as lot #1) to Andrew McClary in 1767. The McClary family held the property until 1789, when the widow of Andrew McClary began to sell parcels of land to help pay off certain debts. The recipient of the lot was Moses Osgood, who had previously bought the adjoining lot, now known as Echo Valley. When Moses Osgood died in 1823, the estate wasn't fully settled, until finally in 1833, all the heirs signed off the property to Andrew M. Heath. The property included the home lot along with Osgood's homestead farm. In 1837, Andrew M. Heath sold a small parcel bordering the Mill Road and the main road to Samuel Wells, with the rest of the property later being part of the holdings of Joseph Lawrence. The 1858 and 1892 maps indicate that the Lawrence's had an additional house on the lot. The West end of the lot is the current Cato Seavey road.

Samuel Wells was the son of Daniel Wells and Lucy Emerson, who lived on the Tarleton Road. It was about this same time that Samuel Wells married Harriet Wicome and the property was mortgaged. In later deeds, this small parcel of land was known as the homestead, and owned by Samuel & Harriet's only child, James Lewis Wells. James L. Wells married Abbie L. Meserve in 1860, and their family included: Melissa J. born 1862 and died 1865; William S., born 1863, married at Manchester in 1890, Lillie M. Baker, daughter of Rufus and Lavina (Heath) Baker; Rachel A., born 1866, married first George

Edwin Rogers in 1892, and second at Epsom in 1903, Guy T. Pike; Hattie J., born 1869, died unmarried in 1889; and Harvey J., born 1876, married at Epsom in 1902, Loella May Marden, he died in 1916 and she married second, Edwin L. Bunker.

James L. Wells died in 1911, his wife the year before, and the property later passed to their son Harvey J. Wells in 1911. He sold the family home to Flora C. Griffin in 1912, who sold it to John W. Cox in 1934.

The thirty-acre lot that was given Solomon Dowst as an owner of a home lot, was given to his daughter Rachel who married Benjamin Marden.

### **Cato Fisk**

Not much is known about Cato Fisk, who likely lived for a short time on what is now the Cato Seavy Road, which divides home lots numbers one and ten. It was the road used to get to McClary's Mill. He and a son appear in the Epsom death records compiled by John Dolbeer, as well as the funeral sermon given for Michael McClary by the Reverend Jonathan Curtis, as they died within weeks of each other. He was living in Deerfield in 1818, but died in Epsom in March of 1824. A son, Eben, appears as having died in Epsom in January of 1825. He does not show in any deeds or paying any taxes in Epsom. What is known of Cato comes from his Revolutionary War pension applications, excerpted here:

*I Cato Fisk, now of Deerfield in the County of Rockingham and State of New Hampshire testify and declare that I enlisted as a soldier in the company commanded by Capt. William Rowell of the second Regiment in the New Hampshire line of the American Army in the Revolutionary War in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven and served without any intermission from the time of my first enlistment to the seventh day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty three at which time I was honorably discharged from \_\_\_ and am now in reduced circumstances in live and am in need of assistance from my Country for support.*

*Deerfield, April 6, 1818*

*Cato X Fisk (his mark)*

*Schedule containing the whole estate and income of Cato Fisk (his necessary clothing and bedding excepted) on the 18 day of June 1820, and annexed to his oath:*

*A small hut, small barn standing on another man's land - 40.00*

*1 cow - 13*

*1 pig - 3*

*8 old chairs - 1.50*

*2 old tables - 1*

*Iron ware - 1.50*

*Cooking knives and forks - .75*

*Scythe and \_\_\_ - .75*

*One old Ox (or axe?) - .67*

*On this 18th day of July 1820, personally appeared in open court at Concord, before John Harvey and Hall Burgin; Esqrs., Justices of the Court of Common Pleas, Cato Fisk aged 60 years, resident in Deerfield - My occupation is that of a laborer but am not of sufficient ability to pursue it as formerly by reason of age and infirmities I have. In my family residing with me, my wife aged 53 years, two sons, James and Ebenezer, James aged about 28 years and non corpus mentis; Ebenezer aged about 24 years who has been sick for several weeks confined to his bed; and a grand daughter Louisa aged three years.*

*Sworn and declared at Concord on the 18th day of July 1820.*

*On this twenty eighth day of December AD Eighteen Hundred and twenty seven, personally appeared before me, William Simmons, one of the Justices Court for the County of Suffolk and Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Elsa Fiske, a resident of the City of Boston in the County of Suffolk and Commonwealth aforesaid, aged about seventy three years, widow, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision on the act of congress, that she is the widow of Cato Fiske, formerly of Exeter in the State of New Hampshire, deceased, who was a private in the Army of the Revolution, that she hereunto annexes two original certificates by which it will appear that said Cato Fiske received a pension for his revolutionary services and that she presents the particulars of his service will appear in the proper office at Washington.*

*She further declares that she was married to the said Cato Fiske by the Reverend Nathaniel Trask at Brentwood in New Hampshire in the month of March, as she believed in the year seventeen hundred and eighty three, but she knows that it was before the close of the revolutionary war because the said Cato Fiske was t the time of the marriage apart from the army on furlough and afterwards returned to it and served in it for sometime before the close of said revolutionary war, that she cannot remember the day of the death of her said husband, but he died she thinks about thirteen years ago and that she has remained a widow ever since, as will more fully appear by references to the proof hereto amassed.*

*Elas X Fiske (her mark)*

*I Sarah West of Brentwood in the County of Rockingham and State of New Hampshire, aged seventy years and upwards, do testify, declare and say, that in the fall of the year 1780 I used to live with the late Rev. Nathaniel Trask of said Brentwood, and lived with him until I was out of my time, and made his house my home for several years, after I was out of my time and until I was married. Soon after I went to Mr. Trask's a colored woman came to line in the neighborhood of Mr. Trask's, not a quarter of a mile from his house - she used to be called Aunt Sellars (?) - a colored girl by the name of Else Huso used to live with her and was after at Mr. Trask's. I knew her well. She was courted by a colored man, Cato Fisk, and I remember her being published to Cato Cato was not much in Brentwood after he was married until after he removed to Exeter. He was a drummer in the Army and a fiddler at home. He continued in the Army several months after he was married as I suppose, and until about the time he moved his wife to Exeter.*



## Home Lot # 11



This lot is one of the lots taken off the west end and moved to the east end of the home lots. It was located near the Deerfield line and on the south side of East Street. The original proprietor was Samuel Wallace of Rye, who in June of 1741 deeded to his son George the home lot in Epsom "where he now lives." This makes George Wallace (Wallis) one of the first settlers in the town. He married, about 1739, Margaret McClary, daughter of the immigrant Andrew McClary. He was influential in town affairs and was made the third Deacon of the church in 1769. He lived in town to quite an old age, and in his will, proved 1795 the home lot was addressed as follows: "Item. I give and bequeath unto my son in law Thomas Babb and my daughter Elizabeth Babb, wife of the said Thomas and unto the heirs of her body the said Elizabeth forever, the whole of my homestead farm in Epsom in the County of Rockingham and State of New Hampshire aforesaid, together with all my buildings, orchard or orchards standing and being on said land, to the heirs and assigns of the Heirs of the body of my said daughter Elizabeth immediately to be possessed and enjoyed by them after the decease of my said son in law and my daughter Elizabeth."

George Wallace and his wife Margaret had for a family: Martha, born 1742, married in 1759, Benson Ham; Ebenezer, born 1744, married first at Epsom in 1770, Sarah McGaffey, daughter of Neal and Jane (Lucas) McGaffey, and second after her death, Elizabeth Quimby; Margaret, born 1744, married first at Epsom in 1761, Eliphalet Sanborn, and second in 1800, John McGaffey; Hannah, born about 1746, married at Deerfield, Andrew McGaffey, brother to John and Sarah McGaffey; George, born about 1748, married at Greenland, NH, Rachel Babb; Jane, born about 1750,, married at Epsom in 1769, James Gray, she died in 1772; Elizabeth, born 1754, married at Deerfield in 1776, Captain Thomas Babb; and John, previously unknown, born about 1756 and is the John Wallace mentioned in the Reverend Jonathan Curtis history of Epsom as died in service at Bunker Hill.

Thomas Babb was said to have been in Epsom in 1789, but it was probably earlier as a Thomas Babb signed the Association Test in Epsom in 1776. He died in 1808 leaving the property to his five daughters by his second wife, each of who sold their fifth to David Griffin between 1810 and 1814. Thomas Babb and his frist wife Elizabeth had children: Sarah, born 1777, married Samuel Langmaid; Margaret, born 1777, married in 1803, James Prescott of Hampton Falls; Elizabeth, born 1779, married Jonathan Hartwell; Jane Wallis, born 1781, married at Epsom in 1804, Samuel Wallace of Newcastle; and Rachel, born 1783, married at Kensington in 1809, Jesse Stevens. Elizabeth Wallace died in

1787, and Thomas Babb married second in 1788, Sarah Blake, and had additional children: Priscilla Rundlett, born 1789, married at Epsom in 1815, John Carr of of Weare; Hannah, born 1792, died 1827; James, born 1794, married at Northwood in 1825, Susan Smith Mead; Thomas, born 1799, died unmarried at Meredith, NH in 1851; and Amelia, born 1801, married at Sanbornton, NH in 1820, Ephraim Green.

David Griffin built the current house on the property in 1824. He was born in 1772, a son of Nathan and Phoebe (Cass) Griffin. He married at Epsom in 1793, Abigail Cate, the daughter of Deacon John and Abigail (Sherburne) Cate, the daughter of Deacon John and Abigail (Sherburne) Cate, raising a family of four: Nathan, born 1797, married at Chichester in 1821, Mary Cate, daughter of Ebenezer and Phebe (Gilman) Cate of Chichester; Abigail, born 1798, died unmarried at Epsom in 1869; Ebenezer, born 1803, married at Northwood in 1826, Sarah E. Brown; and John, born 1807, married Fanny P. Wiggin, daughter of Nathaniel and Sally (Haynes) Wiggin of Epsom. David Griffin's wife died in 1824, and he married second about 1826, Mary Gilman. David died in 1840, his second wife in 1861. The property appeared to have passed to his son Nathan and wife Mary.

Nathan Griffin and his wife raised the following family: David M., born 1821, married Francena M. Emerson; Phebe, born 1823, married at Epsom in 1843, Lowell Eastman of Deerfield; Nathan, born 1825, died unmarried in 1901; Samuel O., born 1826, died unmarried at Epsom in 1874; Mary, born about 1831, married at Epsom in 1851, Alonzo Wallace, son of Philip Babb and Rachel (Babb) Wallace; Abbie, born 1834, died unmarried in 1923; Charles H., born 1837, died unmarried at North Leveritt, MA in 1859 where he was teaching school; and John Sherburne, born 1840, Civil War veteran, died unmarried at Chelsea, MA, in 1929.

Nathan Griffin died in 1869, his wife Mary in 1885. The homestead passed to son Nathan (by deed October 27, 1859) and daughter Abbie, neither ever married. Nathan sold his share in 1889 to James M. Griffin, son of John and Fanny (Wiggin) Griffin. The same day, he sold the property to John S. Griffin, both of Lynn, MA. Abbie sold her share to John S. Griffin the same year, he being her brother.

In 1901, John S. Griffin sold the property to Flora C. Griffin, who with daughter Elsa, owned the homestead in 1939 when Elsa died. The homestead was sold by Flora in 1941 to Ruth M. Griffin, widow, of Wellesley, MA, *a parcel of land in Epsom, with the buildings thereon, being a farm consisting of 100 acres*. Ruth was the widow of Trescott Griffin, born 1887, son of John W. and Flora C. Griffin. The homestead left the family, being sold by Ruth in 1941 to Henry and Beatrice Stevens.

### **Home Lot # 1**

The original proprietor of Home Lot #1 was, according to town records, James Seavey of Rye. He did not retain the lot as when the surveyor's laid out the lot, their records indicate it was laid out to Walter Weeks. Indeed, he was also shown on the list for the drawing of the 30 acre out lots, his being lot No. 6 in the second range. There are no deeds showing Walter Weeks disposing of the home lot. Walter Weeks also owned the 30

acre out lot, which was sold for unpaid taxes of land of non-resident proprietors. There is no record of the home lot being sold, though it is known to have become part of the Andrew McClary homestead, they being settled on home lot No. 2. The lots passed from Andrew to his son Andrew, and later to his son, James H. McClary. It was near this location, as told by John Dolbeer in his history of Epsom, found in Hurd's "History of Merrimack and Belknap Counties, that when the battle at Lexington was announced "by a swift rider, blowing a horn, who passed through Nottingham and reached Epsom, it found Captain Andrew McClary plowing in the 'old muster-field.' Like Cincinnatus of old, he left the plow in the furrow, and hastened to obey the summons. With little preparation, he seized his saddle-bags, leaped into the saddle, swearing as he left that he would kill one of the devils before he came home!"

James H. McClary of Epsom sold to Joseph Lawrence of Epsom, "a parcel of land lying in Epsom being two of the home lots, numbered two and three (original #'s 1 & 2) lying between the road leading to Northwood and land owned by Henry Chapley (Shapley) and the same land that the said McClary formerly lived on and occupied by said Lawrence, the same to contain one hundred acres by grant. Signed J.H. and Elizabeth McClary" From this it would appear Joseph Lawrence was already living on the premises. The property remained in the family until 1933.

The thirty acre out lot drawn by Walter Weeks was #6 in the second range. By deed, Benjamin Goodwin as the collector of taxes for 1779, sells at auction land of non-residents for which taxes were not paid. Jude Allen buys, according to the deed, land that was the original right of Walter Weeks, and identifies it as lot 30 in the second range of 26 acres. There was no such numbered lot in the second range, though it is known that Jude Allen lived in the area covering lots four and five.

### **Home Lot # 20**

Though this lot was drawn by James Marden, it was forfeited and given by the proprietors to Joseph Simpson in April of 1735 for, as stated by John Mark Moses, they had 'settled a family in the town.' John Mark Moses says that he sold land to Charles McCoy, and perhaps that is the family referred to, though it is possible it is the McClary family. The list of those proprietor's to draw the accompanying 30 acre out lot shows that the home lot was owned by Daniel Moulton. Simpson drew out lot number 63, and probably had an additional 30 acre out lot with the home lot. Often families had to settle land before they acquired deeds.

In 1753 Joseph Simpson sold the land to Andrew McClary who later sold it to his son John who lived on home lot #19. It is not known if any structures were ever on this property.

## Home Lot #2

Richard Goss of Rye was the original proprietor of Lot #2. "A Sketch Covering Four Generations of the McClary Family" by Horace P. McClary, says the family moved to Epsom in 1738. Andrew McClary is seen in deeds as being "of Epsom" by deed as early as 1741, and was selectman in Epsom 1742, and back in Nottingham in 1744 when the proprietor's records indicate he was there with the Epsom town books. It appears that the actual purchase of the lot was not until February of 1756 when by deed, the lot was purchased from Joseph Brown and his wife Abigail (Goss) Brown and Samuel Shaw and his wife Margaret (Goss) Shaw, both spouses daughters of the late Richard Goss (died by 1735), original proprietor. What arrangement there was is unknown, but Andrew McClary built his house and tavern prior to the purchase of the lot on the highpoint along with a small garrison house, used for safety from the Indians if they could not get to the larger garrison in Nottingham.

Andrew McClary came from the north of Ireland in 1726, reaching Boston August 8 of that year. October 8, 1728. Andrew "McClary" of Hanover, Plymouth County, Mass., bought land in Nottingham, NH. He was "of Nottingham" by a deed October 16, 1735, also "of Nottingham" February 27 and March 7, 1747, but "of Epsom" again June 10, 1747, and onward. He died there between September 13, 1764 and October 15, 1765, leaving a widow, Agnes, and children: John, born in 1719; Andrew, said to have been about ten years younger; Jane, who had married, January 8, 1756, John McGaffey, and a daughter that had married Richard Tripp. By tradition this daughter's name was Ann. The church records have it Nanny. A deed signed by her mark October 15, 1765, has it "Agnas." An older deceased daughter, Margaret, had married George Wallace early enough to have a child baptized in 1740 who settled on home lot 11.

Andrew and Agnes had the following children: John, born in Ireland about 1719, married in 1746, Elizabeth Harvery, daughter of James of Deerfield; Margaret, born in Ireland about 1720, married about 1742, George Wallace, son of Samuel and Hannah (Seavey) of Rye; Andrew, born about 1729, married about 1761, Elizabeth McCrillis, daughter of John and Margaret (Harvey) McCrillis; Jane, born about 1735 at Nottingham, NH married in 1756, John McGaffey, son of Neal and Jane (Lucas) McGaffey; and Agnes (also seen as Ann), birth unknown, married Richard Tripp.

A series of articles in 1868, no author given, but possibly John Cate French, appeared in the Valley Times paper. It was titled *The McClary Family* and included an extensive look at the life of Major Andrew McClary.

*The old town of Epsom has furnished many worthy men during the past hundred and fifty years, who have held prominent positions of trust and honor, in the State and Nation; but none stand out in so bold relief, or are more worthy of remembrance, than the McClary's. In fact, no family in the Suncook Valley fills so large a space in its history, or the hearts of the people; and as the "Times" attempts to gather some of the incidents from memories of the past it seems appropriate that early mention be made of our most*

*distinguished characters. For nearly a century, the McClary's were the leading influential men in all our civil, political and military affairs, and were identified with all the important events and measures, that received the attention and governed the acts of the successive generations during that long period of time. There is something mournful in the thought, however, that a family and name, once so familiar in our midst, is but a record of the past and that no lineal male descendant is living to inherit the honors so dearly won by a noble ancestry, or to transmit the name to a grateful posterity. And it is passing strange, that so little has been written or preserved, concerning their noble deeds and many years service in public life, and that no testimonials are in existence, except public records, to aid in preserving their memories. We know of no instance in our State where history has so sadly neglected to do justice to a family which had rendered so efficient service in defending the rights, and promoting the interests of our commonwealth and nation, as in this instance. The only official effort made to perpetuate the name as of national interest, has been to honor one of the fortifications of Portsmouth harbor, with the name, Fort McClary, and a privateer which had but a short existence. The name of only one, Major Andrew McClary, appears in our printed histories, while several others of the family are equally deserving of mention. The early proprietors and settlers of Epsom were of good English stock, though there was a small company of Scotch Irish from Londonderry who bought lands here about 1738. Among the number were the McClary's, McCoy's, McGaffey's, Dickey's, Wallace's, Knox's &c. These Scotch Irish were a peculiar race, not liked by the English. They were of pure Scotch descent, with the broad dialect and brogue and many of the customs peculiar to their ancestry. They resided for a long time in the north of Ireland, where they suffered a series of oppressions and persecutions which would have disheartened and subdued ordinary men. The famous siege of Derry is fresh in the minds of every student of history, where, for eight long months, these Scotch-Irish defended their city against the assaults of a powerful Irish army. History furnished no parallel to the bravery, suffering, valor and endurance displayed by that memorable siege. They fought for their homes and the Protestant religion, with want, famine and destruction, staring them full in the face. Horses, dogs, cats, rats and mice were choice morsels of food, before they received succor from England, and drove back the besiegers. But in after years, with rents, taxes and the annoyances of Catholicism, many were induced to emigrate to the cheap, fertile soils of America and a few families founded a settlement in Londonderry in 1719, under the ministry of Rev. James McGregor. The history of this settlement is the most important and entertaining in the unwritten history of New Hampshire. Among the descendants of this people, now numbering over sixty thousand, have been found the ablest men of the nation in all walks of life. The Bell's, Stark's, Thornton's, McKeen's, McNeil's, Reed's, McClary's &c., were of this stock, besides many others who have done much to give character, wealth and reputation to the State, and make New Hampshire what she is. The colony first introduced the culture of the potato and flax, also the spinning and weaving of linen. There were high-spirited out-spoken, industrious, hardy, jovial, and immovably attached to the principles of the Protestant Religion. Among the number who felt the wrongs and oppressions, and sought an asylum for himself and children in the wilderness at Londonderry, was Andrew McClary. He soon died, but two of his sons, Andrew and John, grew to manhood and settled in Epsom, where they carved for themselves a farm and fortune. By the records, we find that Andrew McClary held town office in 1739, and*

*for eighty-three successive years some members of the family were promoted to positions of trust and power by their townsmen. This forcibly illustrates the popularity and appreciation of this family by their kinsmen and townsmen. Epsom at that time was a frontier town with a few scattering pioneers, striving to find a "local habitation and a name," in the unbroken forests. Theodore Atkinson, a wealthy land owner, was the leading spirit, among the proprietors, in inducing a few families to push a settlement so far into the woods. None of the adjoining towns were settled till many years afterward. This was nearly thirty years before Chichester, Pittsfield or Barnstead were settled; twenty years before Concord received its present name; twenty years before Northwood and Deerfield were incorporated, and thirty six years before the Revolution. The first settlement in the Suncook Valley was here, and not a tree was cut between this land and the Canadas, and not a clearing or friendly smoke or any signs of civilization to break the monotony of the unbounded forest or cheer the loneliness of the early settlers. The sentiment that prompted the line, "Oh! For a lodge in some vast wilderness" could have been here gratified. Meager indeed, are the records and traditions concerning these hardy foresters during their many years of border life, before the Revolution. Nottingham fort was the nearest neighbors and the asylum for safety. The Indians frequented the Valley, and bears, wild cats, deer and catamounts roamed the forest undisturbed. The proprietors built a blockhouse or garrison for refuge in case of danger. It was built near Andrew McClary's and the old foundation was disturbed last summer by building the new house for Augustus Lord, Esq. Mrs. McCoy and family were hastening to and had nearly reached this garrison when captured by the Indians in 1754, which will be the subject of another sketch. Though the Indians were generally friendly, the inhabitants were greatly annoyed, and the growth of the settlement slow and difficult. Andrew and John McClary were the leading influential men in all town or military affairs. Leaving John, who for half a century was a prominent man in public life, for future sketches, we will endeavor to relate some incidents in the life of his more romantic and adventurous brother.*

#### **MAJ. ANDREW McCLARY.**

*In these "piping times of peace," ease and prosperity, we can faintly realize the times, manners, customs, hardships, dangers, privations and the rough life led by these wild woodsmen of a hundred and thirty years ago. Clearing, burning, hunting, scouting and prospecting, required strength, bravery and endurance, also the rough sports, wrestling, boxing &c. especially of the Scotch-Irish, tested the strength of the muscles and agility of the participants. Only the men who excelled in these tests of strength and skill, were the popular leaders of the day. In all such labors and pastimes, Andrew McClary was the acknowledged champion. He was a host in himself. He stood over six feet, straight as an arrow, finely proportioned symmetrical of form, every muscle well developed, rough and ready, jovial, generous, with a stentorian voice, blue eyes, florid complexion and such a man as would be picked out of a thousand as evidently "born to command." He possessed all the qualifications of a successful and popular border leader of that time. It is said that in a bar room scuffle at Portsmouth, one night, six men attempted to put him out of the room, when he turned upon them with his Herculean strength and through them all out of the window. During the French and Indian war, commencing in 1756, Epsom*

was one of the frontier towns; the people lived in fear of the scalping knife and tomahawk, and suffered the incursions of the prowling savages. Garrisons were established at Epsom, Buck Street Pembroke, and a fort at Canterbury. Government frequently sent small detachments of troops up through this sections scouting for the enemy and to protect and encourage the settlers. Capt. Andrew McClary was the leading man in this region in all military matters and rendered the colony efficient service during there perilous times. He had the personal acquaintance of the highest officials of the colony, and as such noted fighters, and rangers as Stark, Goffe, Rogers &c. His name frequently appears on the State records. In 1755 he applied to Gov. Wentworth and obtained a company of troop to go in and search of the Indians that committed the massacre and captured the McCall family at Salisbury. At another time he obtained a small company to aid in doing garrison duty at Epsom, while the Indians were seen lurking about. As an officer, he was ever ready for any exposure or danger, while his men had the most implicit confidence in his ability and integrity. His command was authoritative and no man refused obedience. In case of an emergency he could swear enough for a battalion, enough to frighten the Penacook's out of the Suncook Valley and cause the old Scotch Covenanters to hold up their hands in holy horror. He built a one story frame house and kept tavern on the height of the land on the road leading from Epsom village to Pleasant Pond. The place is now owned by Joseph Lawrence, better known as Lawrence's "muster field." His home was the common resort of the settlers, proprietors and scouts, and all who had occasion to travel in this direction. Town meetings were held here until the "new meeting house" was built, jurors were drawn here for His Majesty's Court, training of His Majesty's soldiers, and many rude frolics and exciting incidents which have long since passed into oblivion, never to be recalled. His wealth increased as well as his popularity. He owned all the land on the north side of the road to the Deerfield line. He had won the advantages of a fair English education. He served as Town Clerk and his records on the town books indicated a thorough knowledge of business, a good use of language and a style and beauty of penmanship seldom found at the present day. His last writing on the town books, the year before he was killed, evinced care, accuracy and precision. He took a lively interest in the affairs of the colonies and early espoused the cause of the people against the arbitrary encroachments of the mother country before the commencement of the Revolutionary War. His ancestry, education and experience would naturally lead him to take sides with the people in defending their liberties, when assailed by British oppression. Frequent meetings were held at his house, and measures taken to co-operate with adjoining towns for natural rights and protection. For fifteen years the white winged angel of peace had hovered over the State; the most prosperous period in her whole history. The desire to possess real estate so strong in the Anglo Saxon mind, the huge growth of trees, the fertile soil in the Suncook Valley, attracted the attention of the emigrant and secured, the rapid settlement of Gilmanton, Pittsfield, Chichester, Loudon, Northwood and Deerfield, with Epsom as a common centre. The "seven years war," which closed in 1760, had completely aroused the military spirit of the province and organizations, with experienced officers, had been maintained up to the time of the Revolution. A new regiment was then formed, the 12th, comprising the towns of Nottingham, Deerfield, Epsom, Northwood, Chichester and Pittsfield. "Coming events cast their shadows before." The people were expecting a serious conflict. The location of McClary's tavern made it a common resort for the rustic

foresters to meet and talk of the difficulties; while the popularity and ability of the jovial landlord, rendered him the political and military oracle of the Suncook Valley. The battle of Lexington on the 19th of April 1775, sounded the tocsin to arms. Signals flamed from the hilltops, and fleet messengers transmitted news from town to town. A swift rider, blowing a horn, passed through Nottingham and reached Epsom on the morning of the 20th. The alarm found Capt. McClary plowing in the "old muster field." Like Cincinnatus of old, he left the plow in the furrow and hastened to obey the summons. With little preparation he seized his saddlebags, leaped into the saddle, swearing as he left, than he would kill one of the Devils before he came home. "Jocky Fogg," who was his servant in the army, used to speak of his horse as "a large powerful iron grey, four year old stallion, so exceedingly vicious that no one could mount or govern him, except the captain. He could spring upon his back, and, by the power of his arm, govern him with the greatest of ease." The sturdy yeomanry of the Suncook Valley snatched their trusty firelocks and powder horns, and started for the scene of hostilities, with spirits as brave as ever animated a soldier, and with hearts as noble and honest as ever throbbed in the cause of liberty and freedom. They were governed by one common impulse, and came from blazed paths and crooked roads that wound through the forest and thickets. They were all known to each other as brothers and townsmen. Each soldier represented a household, and they and their cause were commended to the protection of Heaven at the morning and evening devotions, and in the service of the Sabbath; donations of food and clothing were freely sent to them, by the families at home. The men from this section reached Nottingham Square about 1 o'clock where they found Capt. Cilley and Dr. Dearborn with a company of about 60 men making with themselves, about 80 men. Who would not like to see those men, some with broad-tailed black coats, worsted stockings, three cornered hats; others in coarse homespun; all with long stockings, knee and shoe buckles, and thick cowhide shoes. Their guns and equipments were as various as their costumes. Some had the old "Queen Ann" that had done service in the French War; some, long fowling pieces; some, a fusee, only one had a bayonet. Powder-horn and shot pouches took the place of cartridge box. If we were to choose a subject for a historical painting, we would prefer the scene on Nottingham Square, April 20th, where were paraded the noblest band of patriots that ever left New Hampshire to vindicate her honor and protect her liberties. We would like to hear the roll call and see a photograph of these heroes. Without the spirit of boasting, we doubt if ever one company in the country furnished so large a portion of distinguished men, or that cost "John Bull" so many lives, or so much money. Many of their names are historic, and come down to us in official records, filling a large space in our military history. Just reflect who composed this Spartan band, and not only astonished the nation with their famous deeds and heroism at the battle of Bunker Hill, but consider their positions and power in after years. First, there was Captain McClary, the oldest and noblest Roman of them all, whose sad fall is familiar to any schoolboy. Then Capt. Joseph Cilley of Nottingham, aged 32, soon to be promoted Maj., Col., and Gen., serving through the war with distinction, and in 1786, appointed Maj. Gen. of the N.H. Militia. Then Dr. Henry Dearborn, but 24, to be Capt., then Maj. and Col., then member of Congress, U.S. Marshall, Sec. of War under Jefferson, Foreign Minister, and Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army in the war of 1812. Then, Thos. Bartlett, afterwards Capt., Member of the Com. of Safety, then Col. in the army, and in 1792, Brig. Gen. of the N.H. Militia. Then, Henry Butler, but 21,



*afterwards Capt., under Col. Bartlett, and Maj. Gen. of the N.H. Militia. Then Amos Morrill, first selectman of Epsom, Lieut., then Capt. And Maj. serving in the army four years with honor to himself and town. Then the young and chivalrous Michael McClary who served with credit four years in the Revolution, then represented the military spirit of the State, for nearly half a century, and as Adj. Gen., called out the northern troops in 1812. Then Andrew McGaffey, another worthy officer from Epsom; also James Gray and Nathan Sanborn, both gaining the position of Captain in the army; also Joseph Hilton of Deerfield. Capt. Andrew McClary was by common consent the leading spirit of this noble band of patriots, though there was no previous organization. There is much to be written concerning the achievements and adventures of this distinguished company, and many of the able men composing it, but the most remarkable and thrilling incident in this connection, was their famous march to Cambridge. There is not a parallel in the annals of all the wars in our country, and such wonderful powers of endurance by a whole company of men, excites our surprise, as their patriotism does our pride and admiration. No other locality can boast of sending braver hearts, or tougher men to aid, by their valor and perseverance, in establishing the noblest Republic that ever cheered and blest a prosperous people. This noble Spartan band opened a series of brilliant exploits, be performance one of the most remarkable physical feats ever recorded in our nation's history. Dr. Dearborn gives an account of it, and Bancroft a passing notice, and tradition relates it, from generation to generation, but it should be familiar to every son and daughter of New Hampshire, as one of the brightest testimonials of our devotion to the cause of freedom and independence. Accustomed as they were to life in the open air, and trials of strength by long journeys, hunting, trapping and scouting, they knew little of fear and fatigue. Leaving Nottingham Square at one o'clock in the afternoon, they pushed on at a rapid pace as if the destiny of the Province, or hopes of the nation depended upon their alacrity and speed. At Kingston they took a double-quick, or "dog trot," and followed it without a halt to Haverhill, crossing the Merrimack River in a ferry boat, at sunset, having made twenty-seven miles in six hours. But this is not all: - they halted at Andover for supper, and then started for a night march, and, on the morning of the 21st, at sunrise they were paraded on Cambridge Common, 'spilling for a fight. Those from Epsom had traveled seventy miles in less than twenty-four hours, and the whole company from Nottingham, fifty-seven miles in less than twenty hours. Did bone and muscle ever do better? That was the spirit of 76 that was the kind of stuff the men were made of, who lived in the Suncook Valley eighty-three years ago.*

### **BUNKER HILL**

*The part which the soldiers of the Suncook Valley and adjoining towns took in this memorable fight, has never yet been written and we propose now to give it in full connection with the sketch of Andrew McClary. For personal courage and firmness the battle of Bunker Hill stands among the first, in the brilliant events of the war. When we inquire who were the men that gained the highest prize of glory in this great contest, which ushered in our nation's birth, we can, with honest pride, claim for the men of the Suncook Valley a rich share of the praise and honor rightfully bestowed upon the soldiers of this memorable battle. The company from this section was not only composed largely of men who afterwards became distinguished in the Revolution and, at the outset, made*

*the best march ever recorded in our military history, but it was one of the largest and best companies on the field and held the post of honor in the engagement. The American army, composed of rustic heroes who had left their implements of husbandry in the fields and seized their fire-arms and powder-horns and flocked to the scene of the action, holding the British cooped up in the narrow limits of Boston, was without proper organization, equipment, ammunition or supplies. In fact, they had nothing but pluck a righteous cause and a love of liberty to sustain their hopes. They were commanded by Gen. Ward and old and incompetent military officer. The New Hampshire troops, who, as the news of the slaughter at Lexington and Concord spread like wild fire over the land, had rushed to the place of rendezvous, had organized into two regiments, and lay entrenched at Medford. John Stark, by a unanimous voice, was chosen to command the first under the rank of Colonel with Andrew McClary as Major. The company, composed of soldiers from Pittsfield, Chichester, Epsom, Deerfield and Nottingham, was commanded by Henry Dearborn of Nottingham, Captain, Amos Morrill of Epsom, Lieutenant, and Michael McClary of Epsom, Ensign. The British having become impatient of restraint, determined to take the offensive. The first design in their plan was to move on the 18th of June and take possession of Bunker Hill, which commanded the city of Boston, and would enable them to annoy the American lines. Fortunately this design became known to Gen. Ward and he was urged to anticipate the movement and frustrate the plan. He accordingly ordered a detachment of about a thousand men to march stealthily during the night of the 16th and entrench themselves on the commanding eminence. At sunset, the men were paraded on Cambridge common and stood reverently with uncovered heads, while President Langdon of Harvard College offered a fervent prayer and commended them and their cause, to the protection of Heaven. They then took up their silent march, passing the narrow neck of land that connects Charlestown with the main land, and reached the summit of the hill without being discovered by the enemy. The bells in Boston tolled the hour of midnight before a sod was turned. In three short hours, the shadowy folds of night would lift and expose this bold advance and this brave band to the view and fire of the enemy who lay in the harbor. The British ships Lively, Falcon and Somerset lay in the stream between Charlestown and Boston, and from the decks of these, the drowsy cry of the sentinels "all's well" could be distinctly heard by those who patrolled the shore. The Americans plied the pick and spade with vigor and threw up a square redoubt, near the middle of which, the monument now stands. At daylight, the enemy discovered this daring band of patriots entrenching themselves almost over their heads, and immediately opened a brisk cannonading upon their works, but, regardless of the flying missiles, the Americans toiled on until their entrenchment was completed, with the loss of one man. This bold advance caused in instant commotion among the startled British, who immediately made preparation to land their forces and attack our entrenchments to dislodge our men from their position. All was soon commotion also along the American lines. Col. Stark and Maj. McClary came down to Charlestown in the morning to reconnoiter the field and made many valuable suggestions in the preparation of the conflict which it was evident was about to open. The movements of the British indicated a formidable attack, and orders were issued for reinforcements to be forwarded to the redoubt, but such was the want of discipline and the conflict of authority, that few reached the scene of action. The battle of Bunker Hill was a series of blunders and individual heroism. It was fought without a commander. Each regiment*

acting and fighting on their own hook. Two of the regiments that had been ordered to the redoubt, halted at the neck, which was swept with a continual discharge of chain and solid shot from the ships of war. It was at this juncture the New Hampshire troops under Gen. Stark came up hurrying forward to the aid of their comrades in the redoubt. Each of his soldiers had received a gill of powder, fifteen balls and a spare flint. There were scarcely two muskets alike in the regiment and the men were compelled to reduce the size of the balls to suit the caliber of their respective guns. They had received orders to be in readiness to march about ten o'clock and reached Charlestown neck about one. It was one of the hottest days of the season and the men suffered severely from heat and thirst, yet every man was ready for a tilt with the British regulars. Finding the way blocked up with the halted regiments, Major McClary went forward and with his stentorian voice and commanding appearance called out to the commanders of those regiments to move on, or open up the right and left and let the New Hampshire boys pass. This was immediately done. The regiment opened and they marched forward. The fire across the neck from the British Frigates was so galling, that Capt. Dearborn, whose company was in front, as he marched by the side of Stark, suggested to him that they take a quicker step, but that grim old veteran sternly replied, "Dearborn, one fresh man is worth ten fatigued ones" and strode on as coolly as though on parade and not a man of his command flinched or deserted his post. They reached the Hill about two o'clock. Stark halted below the redoubt and harangued his men in a few short characteristic sentences, which were answered by three hearty cheers from his men. When he arrived he found the redoubt exposed to a flank movement from the enemy and, selecting his position with the practical eye of an old soldier, he led his regiment to the left of the hill, and posted them near a rail fence east of the redoubt which ran down to the Mystic. This was then a hay field, the grass having been cut the day before; the men seized the hay cocks and crowded the hay between the rails of the fence, giving it the appearance to the enemy, of a breast-work, though it afforded no real protection. Capt. Dearborn's company was posted on the right of the line, which gave them a fine view of the action and his written account of the battle throws much light upon the part borne by Major McClary and his men. The British had then landed in large force and were forming for the attack, near the waters edge. While this was going on, Col. Stark stepped out and deliberately measuring off forty paces stuck down a stick. "There," said he, as he returned to the line, "don't a man fire till the Red Coats come to that stick, if he does I'll knock him down." The British regulars, in the gay scarlet uniforms, presented a formidable and beautiful appearance, as they marched and countermarch in preparation for the attack. They at length moved forward, with the order and precision of a dress parade. The column that was to make the attack upon the rail fence was commanded by Gen. Howe in person and was composed of the Welsh fusiliers, a veteran regiment, and the flower of the British army. On they came as if flushed with the prestige of a hundred victories. When within a hundred yards of the rail fence they deployed into line and opened a regular fire by platoons as they advanced. Along the whole line of the fence lay the New Hampshire boys peeping through the hay, their guns resting on the rails; every man a dead shot, knowing his trusty firelock was good for a red coat, but intent on reserving their fire till they reached the stake. But John Simpson, better known as "Ensign Simpson" of Deerfield being too much excited to wait, let drive, and this was a signal for a murderous fire along the whole line, so severe that the bold Britishers were driven back in confusion and disorder. Simpson being

reprimanded by Stark for firing against his orders, drawled out: "How in \_\_\_ could I help it when I see them Red Coats within gun shot". The fate of the British in front of the redoubt was equally disastrous and their whole line was thrown into confusion and compelled to retire before the well directed fire of the despised Continentals. They were however rallied by their officers and being reinforced, again moved up the hill on the redoubt and upon the rail fence below in the same perfect order as before. "Don't waste the powder" "Pick off the officers" "Look out for the handsome coats" "Take good aim" and similar remarks were passed from mouth to mouth in Capt. Dearborn's company. "Don't fire again till they pass the stick and I say the work" said Stark. "Fire low and aim at their waistbands" rang the clear voice of Maj. McClary as he moved along the lines encouraging the men by word and example. On came the British, making the same imposing display as before, stepping over their fallen comrades and firing as they advanced. An ominous silence held possession of the American lines, not a shot was fired from the rail fence until the enemy reached the stick when "Fire!" yelled Stark and "Fire!" thundered McClary and never did a volley of musketry do more fatal execution. Almost the entire Welsh Fusileers went down. No troops could stand the fire which blazed from that rail fence, pouring into their bosoms a storm of lead which swept them down like the mown grass. The officers were nearly all picked off. General Howe's aids were all shot but one. Howe himself made the most vigorous efforts to urge on his men. His long white silk stockings were smeared with blood that fell like rain upon the tall grass. British honor and British valor were at stake and cost what it might he was determined to urge them on to victory. There was but one mounted officer upon the field during the engagement and as he rode forward to aid in steadying the wavering columns and urge it to advance, Capt. Dearborn's men caught sight of him, and the Captain writes that he heard them say, "There! There is an officer on horseback; let us have him now, old on, wait till he gets to the knoll; now!" They fired and Maj. Pitcairn of Lexington fame, fell dead at the hands of Capt. Dearborn's men. Meanwhile the whole regiment with the rapidity with which men practiced in the use of the gun alone can exhibit, loaded and fired, keeping up a continual stream of fire until the Red Coats, despite the efforts of their officers, broke and ran, leaving the ground strewn with the dead and dying. The Americans, jubilant at the success and carried away with the tempest of excitement, leaped the rail fence and chased the fleeing regulars till restrained by their officers and brought back to their post. Their joy and exultation knew no bounds. They had won a victory and driven the proud defiant army of old King George. They threw up their hands and made the welkin ring with shouts of triumph though their tongues were parched with thirst and heat. They thought the day was won. Twice shattered before their scathing well directed fire, they had not thought the enemy would rally again. But Clinton who had viewed the struggle from Copps Hill in Boston, now hurried over to the scene of the action. It would never do to have it go out to the world that two thousand well trained British troops had been routed beyond rallying, before a little band of half armed Continentals. Being reinforced the routed troops were again formed into line and marched to the assault. But the Americans had already exhausted their ammunition and without bayonets, they could offer but feeble resistance to a furious bayonet charge from the enemy. Those in the redoubt were compelled to beat a hasty retreat, but the New Hampshire troops retired in excellent order and covered the retreat of the army. They were the last to leave the field and Maj. McClary was in the rear maintaining order and

discipline. During the engagement, Capt. Dearborn lost but one man killed and five wounded. While the slaughter on the side of the British had been terrible. Of the regiment of the Welsh fusiliers, but eighty men escaped unharmed. As the Americans retreated across the neck, Maj. McClary was remarkably animated with the result of the contest. That day's conflict and the glorious display of valor which had distinguished his countrymen, made him sanguine of the result. Having passed the last place of danger, he went back to see if the British were disposed to follow them across the neck, thus exposing himself to danger anew. His men cautioned him against his rashness. "The ball is not yet cast that will kill me" said he, when a random shot from one of the frigates struck a button wood tree and glancing, passed through his abdomen. Throwing his hands above his head, he leaped several feet from the ground and fell forward upon his face, dead. Thus fell Major Andrew McClary, the highest American officer killed at the battle; the handsomest man in the army and the favorite of the New Hampshire troops. His dust still slumbers where it was lain by his sorrowing comrades in Medford, un-honored by any adequate memorial to tell where lies one of the heroes that ushered in the Revolution with such auspicious omens. Before taking up other members of this distinguished family, we add one "note" to make the sketch of Maj. Andrew McClary complete and embody herein some of the eulogies of the times. He was the favorite officer of the New Hampshire soldiers and his death spread a gloom, not only over the hearts of his men and through the scattered homes of the Suncook Valley but throughout his native state. His sun went down at noon on the day that ushered in our nation's birth, an early martyr to the cause of freedom with the affections of his countrymen to grace his burial. Capt. Henry Dearborn, after fighting his way, by regular graduations, from the position of Captain to that of Commander in Chief of the United States Army, pays the following glorious tribute to Maj. McClary, forty three years after the battle of Bunker Hill. "He was among the first officers of the army, possessing a sound judgment of undaunted bravery, enterprising, zealous and ardent both as a patriot and a soldier. His loss was severely felt by his compatriots in arms while his country was deprived of the services of one of her most distinguished and promising champions of liberty. After leaving the field of battle, I met him and drank some spirit and water with him, he was animated and sanguine of the result of the conflict for independence. He soon observed that the British troops on Bunker Hill appeared in motion and said he would go and reconnoiter them, after he had satisfied himself that they did not intend to leave their strong posts on the heights, he was returning towards me and within twelve or fifteen rods of where I stood with my company, a random shot from one of the frigates lying near the center of Craiggie's bridge now is, passed directly through his body and put to flight one of the most heroic soul that ever animated man. He leaped two or three feet from the ground, pitched forward and fell dead on his face. I had him carried to Medford where he was interred with all the honors and respect we could exhibit to the remains of a great man. He was my bosom friend; we had grown up together on terms of the greatest intimacy and I loved him as a brother." Another article written in Epsom and published in the New Hampshire Gazette July 1775, indicates the feeling of his townsmen at the time of his death. "The Major evinced great intrepidity and presence of mind in the action and his noble soul glowed with ardor and the love of his country, and like the Roman Camillus who left his plow, commanded the army, conquered his opponent, so the Major, upon the first intelligence of hostilities, left his farm and went a volunteer to assist his

*suffering brethren where he was soon called to a command which he executed to his eternal honor, and had thereby acquired the reputation of a brave officer and a distinguished patriot. May his name be held in respect by all the lovers of liberty to the end of time, while the names of the sons of tyranny are despised and disgraced and nothing left of them but the badges of their perfidy and infamy. May the widow be respected for his sake and may his children inherit his spirit and bravery but not meet with his fate.”*

Andrew’s oldest son John built a home on the home lot across from his father about 1741. This firmly establishes the McClary’s as one of the earlier settlers of Epsom. Life during the time was described in brief by Horace P. McClary in his book. “There was little time for idleness in the McClary household; the large farm must be tilled, the potash factory looked after, the stores to attend, and presumably some portion of land to clear each season – plenty of healthy work to develop brawny muscle. There was, outside of the home, work waiting for everyone – roads to build, churches and schoolhouses to locate, erect and maintain, dams to construct, mills to build and the thousand and one other things which play a necessary part in the change from the forest primeval to the cultivated and productive farm.”

It is easy to see why the McClary family was so influential. They had mills, the tavern and the garrison. In these times, the largest dwelling was the social gathering place for a small town. With no church or meetinghouse, it is clear that this early lot was where many of the decisions relating to the growth of the town were made. From a Manchester Union newspaper article of 1893, “At this time the whole country was unbroken wilderness, a log cabin was built in which they lived until the two sons, Andrew and John built large houses but a short distance apart on the brow of the hill. The house erected by Andrew was long ago destroyed by fire. The place where it stood may be seen from the roadside marked by an embankment and a few rocks. There is a depression in the ground, just below the site of the old house, which is said by tradition to be the spot where the log cabin stood.”



The original lot and dwellings passed from the emigrant Andrew McClary to his son Andrew. This son, the Major Andrew McClary, who died at Bunker Hill, and the property passed to his son James Harvey McClary, who kept up the business and the tavern until he sold the property, including both home lots 1 and 2, to Joseph Lawrence in 1807.

James Harvey McClary and his wife Elizabeth had children: Sarah Swett, born 1790, died 1802; Andrew, born 1792, died 1793; Elizabeth, born 1794, died 1863; Harriot, born 1795, died 1878; Nancy, born 1798, died young; and Ann G., born 1800, died 1826. Sister Ann G., Harriot and Elizabeth are buried with their mother in the Old North Cemetery in Concord, NH.

Not long after Joseph Lawrence acquired the homestead, it burned, and Joseph Lawrence built a new home, but according to a newspaper article of September 14, 1848, this house burned as well. The article read "Fire In Epsom. - The large three-story house in Epsom, which, for many years, has stood so boldly in the traveler's eye as he passed on either of the leading roads in Epsom, owned by Mr. Joseph Lawrence, was consumed by fire, last Wednesday morning, soon after sunrise." His tavern and business was very prosperous and allowed for several generations of this family to retain this property well into the 1960's.

Joseph Lawrence, son of Edward and Rachel (Prescott) Lawrence of Epping, married as his first wife in 1799, Mary Prescott. They had children: Hannah, born 1802, married at Epsom in 1824, Charles Flower; Edward (1), born 1805, died 1808; Elizabeth Maria, born 1808, died unmarried in 1853; Edward (2) born 1810, died unmarried in 1834; Abigail P., born 1812, married in 1843, Eleazer Savory; and Nancy Dearborn, born 1814, married in 1855, Moses Fife of Chichester. His wife Mary died in 1816, and Joseph married second at Epsom in 1816, Martha Ham, daughter of Benson and Martha (Wallace) Ham, and their children were: Joseph, born 1818, married at Concord, in 1840, Lucy M. Philbrick, daughter of Perkins and Lucy (Ham) Philbrick of Epsom; Martha J., married at Epsom in 1840, William H. Dickey, son of William H. and Betsey R. (Locke) Dickey; and Josephine M., born about 1827, married at Epsom in 1849, John S. Dennett. The marriage had its problems according to an ad placed by Joseph in 1826 - *WHEREAS MARTHA my wife has left my bed & board and separated herself from me ever since June the twenty-seventh day 1822, declaring her fixed determination never more to return or live with me; and since that time has continued to live separate from me in such manner as best suited her views; often repeating her determination not to return to me or perform any of the duties of a wife; but as we are commanded to render good for evil, for that reason I offered to give her a lease of a complete well finished dwelling house, delightfully situated on a small farm, about one quarter of a mile from my homestead farm during her natural life; also to deliver her two children into her care, and in addition to that I offered to maintain her and the children, and provide everything necessary for their comfort in sickness and in health. But she has such an ungoverned tempter and disposition, that she utterly refuses to comply with said offer; but chooses rather to stroll about from place to place and live in gross and lewd manner, inconsistent with and repugnant to her marriage vows; it is said in the Scripture at the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established; and at the mouths of three respectable eye witnesses, I have a full, sufficient reason to believe that she the said Martha has been guilty of the crime of adultery. Therefore I do hereby forbid all person harboring or trusting her on my account, for I am determined not to pay any debts of her contracting from the above mentioned time she left my house up to this date, and from this date to the end of time.*

Joseph married third at Portsmouth in 1827, Hannah Reed Bickford. Joseph died in 1857, Hannah in 1864. Joseph's son Joseph inherited the homestead. He and his wife Lucy had for a family: Emily A., born 1841, married at Deerfield in 1859, John Manson Griffin of Epsom, son of John and Fanny P. (Wiggin) Griffin; Mary F., born 1843, married at Lynn, MA, Josiah L. Elder; Helen M., born 1846, married Andrew O. Carter as his second wife; Augusta, born 1848, married John W. Sargent; Eldora, born 1850, died unmarried in 1865; Sophia S., born 1852, married Charles F. Bulfinch; Abbott, born 1855, married in 1882, Justina M. Davis; and Joseph, born 1858, married at Epsom in 1882, Luella J. Cilley, daughter of Daniel Thomas and Lydia Ann (Babb) Cilley. Joseph died in 1893, his wife Lucy in 1913. The heirs deeded the homestead to Joseph Lawrence, the third of the name to occupy the large farm.

Joseph and his wife Luella only had one child, a daughter Eva Augusta, born in 1883, and married at Epsom in 1907, John William Cox, son of Edmund W. and Janette (Crawford) Cox. She was a music teacher, and died in 1933. John W. Cox then married second, at Epsom in 1936, Bernice Ida Piper, and inherited his late wife's property. There were no children from either marriage. John died in 1959, Bernice in 1989. She sold the 140 acre farm in 1953 to Robert and Lillian Serrine.

### **Home Lot # 19**



Jedediah Weeks was the original proprietor of this home lot. One half of the lot was sold in 1741 to the emigrant Andrew McClary. Weeks sold the other half to Nathaniel Huggins of Greenland, who sold it to Samuel Wallace of Greenland in 1737, who sold it to Andrew McClary in a deed of 1747 - the property being called the 'easterly' half. His son John built a home on this lot in 1741 which remains today, the oldest structure in Epsom. Andrew sold to his son John both lots 19 and 20 in 1747.

John McClary married Elizabeth Harvey and had one male heir, Michael McClary, who inherited the house and property. Through both father and son, this homestead was well known, being frequented by most of the influential men in New Hampshire. It was here the NH Society of Cincinnatus was formed. A well detailed history of the house was published in the Manchester Union Leader in 1893. Michael McClary died in 1824, and the homestead went to Jonathan Steele who married in 1819 Elizabeth Harvey McClary, daughter of Michael McClary and Sarah Dearborn. The next family member was Michael



McClary Steele (son of Jonathan and Elizabeth Steele) who was the owner at the time of the Union Leader article. He died in 1906, and then the homestead went to his daughter Helen Burden (Steele) Barstow. The family continued ownership until 2006.

The article about the John McClary home appeared in the Manchester Union Newspaper Saturday May 13, 1893.

## ***McCLARY PLACE***

*Famous in the Stirring Times of Long Ago  
When American Independence Was Sought  
Story of the People Who Made Its Proud History  
Last Meeting of Society of Cincinnati  
Was Held There  
Home of Michael McCleary Steele  
Willows Set by a Bride*

*Through the forest of Nottingham, and up the wooded hills of Epsom, following the slender bridle paths, just wide enough for a horse to pass, there came in 1746 a bridal party. Tradition is silent concerning its appointments; if there was a splendor it was not because the participants might not in all propriety have worn the adornments of pride and station. John McClary and his bride were worthy of all that belongs to the rank of nobility.*

*At all events, the mansion to which they came was, in those fine days almost palatial in size and style. It stood upon the brow of a hill surrounded by lands as rich, and encircled by forests as noble as any ancestral home ever boasted.*

*The great house was destined to be the birthplace of men who were to help make the history of the nation, and to be the resort of some of the most distinguished patriots, lawmakers and statesmen. And after they had all passed away, to remain so lightly touched by the hand of time as to now appear strong and substantial enough to comfortably shelter another generation. A century and a half has passed and gone since the day John McClary's bride alighted from her horse at the foot of the hill where the lane turns from the road, and planted the willow switch he had used for a riding whip on her wedding journey from Nottingham, in the earth by the side of the path. The tree that sprung from the twig has grown and kept the family company from generation to generation and now stands in melancholy companionship with the old house.*

*But it was some twenty years previous to this event that old Andrew McClary, the very first man of the name to come to this country, arrived in New Hampshire and settled in Nottingham. he was of Scottish origin, but his ancestors settled in Londonderry, Ireland from whence they emigrated to this country about the year 1726. At that time his son John was but six years old. The original settlement was made in Nottingham. In 1739 the family removed to Epsom and settled on McClary Hill. At this time the whole country was unbroken wilderness, a log cabin was built in which they lived until the two sons, Andrew*

*and John built large houses but a short distance apart on the brow of the hill. The house erected by Andrew was long ago destroyed by fire. The place where it stood may be seen from the roadside marked by an embankment and a few rocks. There is a depression in the ground, just below the site of the old house, which is said by tradition to be the spot where the log cabin stood.*

*In 1746 John McClary married Elizabeth Harvey, who came to this country in the same ship when they were three years old. They had twelve children. Though unassisted by great advantages of education, he was honored with a very large share of public confidence, and that, too, in trying times. Besides sustaining, with much acceptance, several important offices in the town, he was called by his townspeople in that period of danger and anxiety, when the provincial congress was formed, to hold a seat in the council and senate of the state. He was a most exemplary citizen and was deeply interested in the church, and all matters of religious welfare to the community. In connection with his brother, Andrew, he cleared large tracts of land; they together owning more than 1,000 acres. They built sawmills, cut roads and otherwise energetically punched forward the work of civilization. The Hon. John McClary died in 1801, aged 83, and was buried in Epsom. A plain slab erected in his memory may be seen in the graveyard on the hill in Epsom.*

*Hon. John McClary had a son named John, who was killed in the battle of Saratoga in 1777. He also had a son Michael born in 1753. Michael entered the army at the age of 23, and was appointed ensign to Capt. Dearborn's company in John Stark's regiment, and fought at the battle of Bunker Hill. He was in the army 4 years and saw service in some of the severest engagements. After leaving the army he aided in forming the government of the state and held office of Adjutant General for 21 years. It was largely through his influence that the New Hampshire branch of the Society of Cincinnati was formed, of which he was treasurer for 25 years. These Revolutionary officers met on the 4th of July, and three times at his house, with affable and engaging manners, his wit and varied knowledge rendered him a most entertaining host and constant friend. In 1779 Michael McClary married Sally Dearborn of North Hampton.*

*Maj. Andrew McClary, son of Andrew the first settler and brother of Hon. John McClary, although equally respected and esteemed by his fellow townspeople, was a man of different cast of mind. His intensely patriotic nature and military disposition let him to sympathize with and take an active part with the patriots; he was fond of military tactics and shared largely in the war-like spirit of the time.*

*John McClary was accustomed to entertaining travelers, so that his house became known as McClary's Tavern. Here the prominent military characters of the town about were accustomed to assemble and discuss the all absorbing subject which was agitating the country. They were anticipating the war and were ready for it. The echoes of the first gun fired at Lexington had hardly died away when signal fires were lit on a thousand hilltops and messengers on fleet horses rode through every town, calling to arms. News of the battle soon reached Exeter and from whence one of those fleet messengers started for Nottingham, across Deerfield Parade and on to Epsom. Here again the part of*

*Cincinnatus was enacted; young McClary was plowing in the field, the messenger had scarcely finished his words of warning, when he left the plow in the furrow, and joined by other daring patriots hurried to Deerfield. There they were joined by others, making a company of some eighty who left the same day and reached Medford the next morning. Many of these men became distinguished in the revolution at once. This company of brave men from the hills of New Hampshire held the post of honor at the battle of Bunker Hill.*

*Andrew McClary, whose military ingenuity had always made him a conspicuous character, at once began to exert his influence in organizing troops. At Medford two regiments were organized, composed of New Hampshire boys, of one of these, John Stark, was chosen as colonel, and Andrew McClary major. In the Nottingham company Michael McClary was ensign. Of the little over 1500 troops stationed around Boston on the 17th of June, 1500 were actually engaged in the fight of Bunker Hill, and of these the larger number were from New Hampshire, connected with the regiments under Colonel Stark and Reed. Stark's regiment formed a line behind a rail fence and fought heroically, doing fearful execution to the enemy, and were the last to retreat. A commander of one of the companies was Henry Dearborn of Nottingham, who survived the perils of war and afterwards wrote a graphic account of the battle of Bunker Hill. In a lengthy review of the battle he frequently speaks in terms of praise, not only of the military sagacity, but of the constant bravery of Major McClary. His courage and enthusiasm were a constant inspiration to the men. He, as well as General Stark, was always foremost where duty directed him. The misfortune of that memorable battle can in no way be attributed to either of these men; but on the contrary much of the heroism and valor of that hardly fought, but lost battle was due to the skill and cool courage of John Stark and Andrew McClary.*

*And it is almost sufficient praise to say that as regiments of other states, one after another were forced to fall back these brave New Hampshire men in the midst of the terrible carnage, that none but Spartans could withstand, covered their retreat. After the battle Maj. McClary observed that the British troops on Bunker Hill appeared in motion and started to reconnoiter them. After having satisfied himself that they did not intend to leave their strong posts on the heights, he was returning when a random shot from one of the frigates, lying near Craig's Bridge passed directly through his body. He leaped two or three feet from the ground, pitched forward and fell dead on his face. He was carried to Medford and buried with all the respect and honor that could be shown a great and good man.*

*During the battle the patriots were intent on cutting down every officer they could distinguish in the British line. When Maj. McClary discovered one he would instantly exclaim, "There, See that officer. Let's shoot at him!" Two or three would fire at the same moment and all being excellent marksmen were sure of their object. Col. Dearborn in his account of the battle says of Maj. McClary, "He was among the first officers of the army, possessing sound judgment, undaunted bravery, enterprising and ardent both as a patriot and as a soldier. His loss was severely felt by his compatriots in arms, while his country is deprived of the service of one of her most promising and distinguished*

*champions of liberty.” In taking leave of brave Maj. McClary, it must be said to the shame of the present generation that while the exact spot where the body of that hero was buried is unknown, no monument has been erected to his memory.*

*The homestead built by Hon. John McClary, and occupied by several generations of that illustrious family, remains very nearly the same as it was originally built; no room has been altered or partition removed; old age has not weakened its joints, and its walks stand as firm as in the days of yore. The visitor can leave the cars at either Short Falls or Epsom station and reach the farm by a delightful drive of about three miles on the road leading to Epsom Center. The high ascends a series of short hills until it reaches the mansion on the height of land overlooking panorama of diversified and beautiful scenery. The wide foreground of the landscape is enriched by cultivated fields and comfortable farmhouses. In the middle distance lies the quiet and fertile valley of the Suncook, while away beyond the encircling range of foothills rises the blue summit of Kearsarge. The old house stands upon the very top of the hill, and is nearly hidden from view by the lombardy poplars and willows that grow by the side of the lane leading up to it. Just at the turn of the road, on the left, is the ancient willow that grew out from the little twig used for a riding whip by the bride of John McClary.*

*The venerable mansion has a history more genuinely interesting than often attached to buildings of even legendary fame. In it great men have been born and lived; in its dining hall famous men have sat at the board; in its chambers distinguished statesmen, jurors and heroes have slept; before the wide fireplace in the reception room have gathered the wit and beauty of a time when men were strong and women fair and wine was red. No wonder that the echoes of long lost and forgotten music are said to return at night when darkness and silence reign. Alone in the great guest chamber one might fancy he had for companions the shades of Daniel Webster, Josiah Mason, General Sullivan and other distinguished men, who have in other days slept within its walls.*

*When the Hon. John McClary built this house in 1740, he built as though he anticipated the momentous events that were to follow; spacious rooms and well appointed apartments that might accommodate meeting patriots or Freemasons and at the same time have all the comforts and even luxuries of a gentleman's home.*

*It was in this house that the Committee of Safety met, at the most important period of the nation's history. In the reception room, deliberations that held the welfare of the state in their grasp, have been often held. Some idea of the importance of the actions of that body of wise and strong men may be formed, when it is remembered that their meeting in the McClary house extended over a long series of years, from 1750-1776. Michael McClary, through whose influence the New Hampshire branch of the Society of Cincinnati was formed, and who was it's treasurer for 25 years, was born in this house in 1753. He married Sally Dearborn, daughter of Dr. Dearborn of North Hampton in 1779 and they reared 5 children. General Michael McClary died in the old mansion in 1824 and was buried in the little churchyard at Epsom by the side of the Hon. John McClary. One of Gen. Michael's daughters, Elizabeth, married Jonathan Steele, a lawyer, and resided at the homestead.*

*On a fine summer morning the traveler seeking the healthful air of Epsom's beautiful pastoral landscape, will, if he pursues his journey over the height toward Deerfield, notice the shady lane branching off from the highway, and on the right; if he should, tempted by the prospect of a fine view from the higher land, turn into the byway and walk up to the old fashioned house, he will meet a gentleman somewhat past middle life engaged in some pleasant occupation about the grounds. The cordial greeting which will be received will give assurance that a man of more than ordinary attainments has been met.*

In an address to the Epsom Historical Association, Gilbert H. Knowles gave a biography of the Honorable John McClary:

### **JOHN McCLARY AND HIS DESCENDANTS**

*Compiled by Gilbert H. Knowles*

*We will commence once again with Andrew McClary, Sr., who came to America from Ireland in 1726. His oldest son, John, was born in Ireland Jan. 1, 1720. Andrew McClary Jr., (the Major) was about ten years younger and was, of course, born in this country. The McClary boys also had three sisters whom I briefly mentioned last year. This particular paper has to do mostly with the Major's older brother, John, and his descendants. I would like you to listen carefully to the following sentence, which is taken from some genealogical material that was compiled in 1886. "John McClary removed to Epsom from Nottingham at the same time his father did and for more than fifty years succeeding was the most prominent and useful citizen who ever resided, either before or since, in that town. That is a tremendous statement; But John McClary was an outstanding citizen of early Epsom. In 1741 John McClary's father helped him to build a one-story house on the south side of Center Hill Road. This house was greatly enlarged as the years went by, and still stands today. Always, since I was a small boy, I have known it as The McClary place. It is now owned by Miss Catherine L. Berry, who is a direct descendant of the builder. I believe it is the oldest house in Epsom and will continue to believe so until someone can show me proof that some other place is older. In 1747 Andrew McClary St., deeded to his son John, lots 19 and 20, containing 100 acres of land on which the historic house is located. It is my understanding that Miss Berry still owns the same 100 acres that John McClary received from his father in 1747. the deed could have been a wedding present of a sort, because on January 22, 1746, John McClary and Elizabeth Harvey were married in Nottingham. They had come over from Ireland on the same ship with their parents. It is mentioned in some records that the girl's parents were opposed to the marriage, because the Harvey family in Ireland had enjoyed a higher social position than the McClary family. One record goes so far as to say that that feeling is why the McClary's left Nottingham and came to Epsom. This sounds to me like imagination or mere gossip because the McClary's came to Epsom in 1738, and John and Elizabeth were not married until eight years later. If there was a little feeling on the part of Elizabeth's parents, we trust they soon got over it. The fact remains that the McClary's were always proud of their Harvey connections, and the Harvey name is carried down through the younger generations. There is a pleasing story*

*about John and Elizabeth after their marriage in Nottingham. It is said that in the early spring, after their January marriage, they came to Epsom on horseback, and that the charming young Elizabeth carried a willow stick as a whip. When they arrived at the driveway leading to their new home they dismounted, and Elizabeth stuck the willow stick into the ground. The willows growing in that area today are said to have sprung from that stick! Esquire John McClary – there is no mistake about it – was a leading citizen and office holder in the town of Epsom for many, many years. Beginning in 1745, he was Surveyor of Highways, Clerk, Constable, Juror, Selectman, Moderator, Justice of the Peace and so on. He represented Epsom, Allenstown and Chichester at the annual meetings held in Exeter and he was a conspicuous member of the first Convention held for the purpose of organizing a colonial government. When Mrs. Loella Bunker compiled her “Historical Sketch of Epsom, NH” in 1927, she wrote, “In reading of the influential men who helped make Epsom’s history, we find that Col. John McClary stand foremost.”*

*“John McClary at an early period connected himself with the Congregational Church at Epsom and for many years was an elder in the same. His religious opinions were of the ultra Calvinistic School. He was very ‘long-winded’ in prayer, as was the fashion in the time in which he lived”. In 1761 John McClary was one of the Committee appointed to extend a call to Epsom’s first minister, the Rev. John Tucke. Most all the men in the McClary clan took part in military affairs. Esquire John was a captain in the militia and did some scout duty during the French and Indian War. He was appointed a Colonel of one of the New Hampshire regiments, but it does not appear that he was ever in any actual engagement with the enemy. As Mrs. Bunker pointed out, Major Andrew McClary had the strong military spirit of the Suncook Valley and his brother, Esquire John, had the Civil Authority. John and Elizabeth (Harvey) McClary had six children, but several must have died quite young. In fact, only two were still living when John McClary made his will in 1792. His sons, John Jr., and Michael were active participants in the Revolutionary war. I found brief mention of a younger son, Andrew, who died at age 16. Michael was born in 1752, and John Jr., in 1754, and they were of course, at ripe military age when the War broke out. I have told you in my earlier paper how Michael was made an ensign in Henry Dearborn’s company, in John Stark’s regiment. He was in the battle area when his uncle, Major Andrew McClary was killed. Michael’s brother, John Jr., became a Lieutenant on General Whipple’s Staff at the Battle of Saratoga. He died of wounds at Albany, Nov. 26, 1777. It appears that Michael and an older sister, Mary, were the only children of Esquire John McClary who married. This Mary, born Oct. 29, 1748, married Daniel Page of Deerfield, NH. Epsom’s first minister, Rev. John Tucke, performed the ceremony on Dec. 6, 1770. Mary and Daniel Page had four sons, three of whom married, so there are likely some descendants from that line. A great-grandson of Esquire John McClary, one George Page, kept the hotel at Deerfield Center around 1865-1870. Esquire John McClary was 55 years old at the time of the fighting at Bunker Hill. He was a delegate at the Provincial Congress sitting at Exeter in the spring of 1775. After the war, Esquire John and his son Michael, both took active part in State Government. The New Hampshire State Senate first met in 1784 and John McClary was one of the first members of that body serving three or four years. Indeed, in 1785 he was President of the N.H. Senate (the only Epsom man who had ever held that office).*

John C. French, historian, wrote historical articles for a local paper in the late 1860's, including this biography of General Michael McClary.

***General Michael McClary by John C. French***

*Michael, second son of Esquire John McClary, was born in Epsom in 1753. He received the advantages of a fair education, was a smart, active lad and, in common with other members of the family, had military tastes. At the age of twenty-three, he joined the army at the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, and was appointed Ensign in Captain Henry Dearborn's company in Stark's regiment. This company rendered heroic service at the battle of Bunker Hill. In 1777 he was promoted and made Captain in Colonel Scammel's regiment. He served four years in the army, taking part in some of the most decisive engagements of the war, and suffered with his men some of the severest privations and fatigues. His soldierly qualities, engaging manners and family connections gave him the acquaintance and friendship of the leading officers of the Revolution, and by a severe experience in the army he gained a thorough knowledge of men and national army, he at once took a prominent position in social and political life, which he held for half a century. He took an active part in the organization of the State Government and, being well versed in military affairs and of good executive ability, he was appointed Adjutant-General for the State of New Hampshire. He organized that department and held the office twenty-one consecutive years, In 1796 he was elected Senator and was a member of that body seven years, and such was his popularity that the votes in Epsom were Unanimous in his favor and nearly so in the adjoining towns. He was United States Marshal for a long time, which, during the last war with England, with the large amount of privateering prosecuted at Portsmouth, was a very responsible office. He was tendered the nomination of candidate for Governor, but declined to accept. Though well known throughout the State, with positions of honor and trust at his command, his popularity, power and influence in his native town was remarkable. He seemed to control the affairs of Epsom with almost universal consent. For over fifty years he served his townsmen in some capacity, either as Moderator, Town Clerk, Representative or Auditor. Said an old Federalist, "If I had a family of children who would obey me as well as the people of Epsom do General McClary, I should be a happy man." Though once a Federalist, he cast his lot with the Democratic Party and carried the town with him almost unanimously. During the last war with England, party feeling ran high and party lines were closely drawn. Governor Plummer, through Adjutant-General McClary, called out detachments of the militia without calling together the Council or Legislature, which provoked a great deal of controversy. General McClary procured supplies for the troops, made preparation for the defense of Portsmouth, purchased cannon and munitions of war. But in 1814, when the Federalists rallied and elected John T. Gilman as Governor, General McClary resigned his office with virtuous indignation, which he had filled with credit and ability, and in which capacity he had reviewed every regiment in the State. The town of Epsom strongly supported the war. A full company, under Captain Jonathan Godfrey, volunteered for the defense of Portsmouth. Michael McClary also did much business as justice of the peace and probate judge. He took an active part in organizing the New Hampshire Branch of the Society of the Cincinnati. He was the first treasurer and held the office twenty-five years. This honorable body of Revolutionary officers met*

*annually on the Fourth of July. Three of their annual meetings were held at the house of General McClary. This society is worthy of more extended mention, and their annual meetings called together more noted men than ever assembled on any other occasion. He was also a Free Mason. While in the army young McClary had met in secret conclave such men as Washington, Lafayette, Sullivan and other brothers of the mystic order and became an earnest worker in the craft. In connection with other ex-officers he was instrumental in organizing a lodge at Deerfield, and in honor of General Sullivan it was called Sullivan Lodge. He was the first Senior of this lodge, and afterwards Worshipful Master. In appearance General McClary was tall, commanding, well proportioned and prepossessing. He made a fine appearance as a military officer, either on foot or in the saddle, which, with his position, means, and hospitality rendered him exceedingly popular. He was remarkably affable and engaging in his manners, interesting in conversation, graceful in his movements, convivial in his habits, generous and public spirited, fond of power, and when opposed displayed some traits not recorded among the Christian graces. His acquaintance and correspondence was remarkably extensive, embracing many of the most distinguished men of the country.*

*He married, in 1779, Sally Dearborn, an intelligent, interesting and accomplished lady, daughter of Dr. Dearborn of Northampton. They entertained company with style and grace, and around their festive board have been many happy meetings of the prominent men of the times. They had five children. The oldest son, John, born in 1785, was of great personal beauty. He was early promoted to offices of trust, Representative, Senator and a clerkship at Washington. He was killed by a falling building when but thirty-six years of age. The second son, Andrew, born in 1787, was wild and roving. He entered the army in the War of 1812 and served as Captain. He married Mehitable Duncan of Concord, in 1813, and had one daughter. Shortly after he sailed for Calcutta and was lost at sea. General McClary also had three daughters. The oldest, Nancy Dearborn, born in 1789, married Samuel Lord of Portsmouth, whose ability and wealth is well known. One of his sons, Augustus, purchased a large part of the old McClary estate. The second daughter, Elisabeth Harvey, married Jonathan Steele, a lawyer from Peterboro. The third daughter, Mary, born in 1794, married Robert Parker and lived in Fitzwilliam. General McClary and wife both lived to old age. He died in 1825, aged 72, and was buried with his ancestors in Epsom, where rests the dust of many heroic dead, whose lives and deeds are fast fading from the memory of passing generations.*

The John McClary property was in the hands of Jonathan Steele and his wife Elizabeth (McClary) where they raised a family including: Charles Augustus, born 1820 and married at Chichester in 1871, Hannah Plummer Cilley, daughter of Samuel P. and Hannah W. (Critchett) and widow of Elbridge Lyman Swain; Reverend John McClary, born 1822, married at Epsom in 1852, Annie E. Burnham; Michael McClary Steele, born 1824, married at Somerville, MA, Catherine G. Burden, daughter of the Reverend John and Catherine Gray (Sanborn) Burden; Thomas Little, born 1826, married about 1859, Zalie Maille and resided in Canada; Henry, born and died 1829; and Elizabeth Ann, born 1831, and married at Stratham, NH in 1855, Isaiah Lincoln Bangs.



Jonathan Steele died in 1858, and by deed that year, his son Charles A., deeded his half of the homestead, which he shared with his mother, to his brother Michael McClary Steele. Michael lived and worked in New York, moving later in life back to Epsom after having business problems. His children were: John McClary, born 1858, died 1866 while playing around a two-wheeled ox cart - the heavy tongue of the cart came down and crushed him; Helen Burden, born 1860, married at Epsom in 1885, Doctor Benjamin P. Barstow; Catherine Gray, born 1872 at Brooklyn, NY, died unmarried at Epsom in 1879; and Elizabeth Harvey, born 1870, died at Kingston, MA, unmarried, in 1891. Michael McClary Steele died in 1906, his wife in 1916. The property passed to their daughter, Helen Burden (Steele) Barstow, then to their daughter Katherine Steele (Barstow) Berry, who married Charles F. Berry. Their daughter Catherine L. Berry was next to inherit, and the last of the family to own the McClary home at her death in 2006.

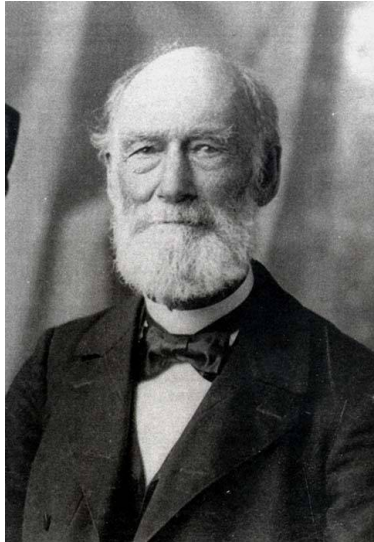
### **Home Lot # 3**

Home Lot #3 was drawn by Thomas Berry, but by the time the list for drawing their 30 acre out lots was made, it belonged to John Blake. John Blake ended up owning several of the home lots, but there is a lack of deeds for many of his transactions. Rockingham County deeds shows John Blake selling to his son Thomas 'in consideration of ye love and goodwill that I have and do bear to my well beloved son Thomas Blake of said Ipsom' 'that lot of land on which my now dwelling house stands and is that first division lot of which Thomas Berry was the original proprietor of said lot, was No. 4.' By the time of this deed, home lot No. 10 had been relocated to above lot No. 1, making this the fourth lot, but it is the identification of Thomas Berry being the original proprietor, that properly identifies the home lot. Thomas Blake was a tavern owner, as he applied for a license to be an Inn Keeper from the selectmen of Epsom, September of 1749. Thomas Blake later moves to Chichester and sells to Andrew McClary the 50 acre lot May 17, 1771. Well after the death of Andrew McClary at Bunker Hill, his widow, Elizabeth, begins to sell much of their property to make ends meet. This included two home lots of fifty acres each, bordering 'easterly on the lot which I the said Elizabeth now lives' which was lot No. 2. Amos Morrill acquired many pieces of property in Epsom, which he sold off starting about 1793 when he and his family moved to St. Alban's Vermont. By this time he owned three home lots, and sold them, land and buildings, to William Locke, January 28, 1795, property bounding the lot occupied by James Harvey McClary, son of the widow Elizabeth. William Locke, over time, sold off this property. In April 1811, the three 50 acre home lots were sold to John Chesley, 'excepting what I have heretofore sold to Henry C. Shapley, John Locke, Benjamin Moody and William Tucker.'

Henry C. Shapley of Rye, sold his Epsom property November 14, 1816, to John Wallace of Deerfield, 50 acres, bounded easterly on land of Joseph Lawrence, who owned the former McClary home lot #2, being 'the same land I purchased of William Locke and formerly owned by Amos Morrill, also all the buildings standing on said land.' Upon his death around 1840, the property passed to his son John Wallace Jr., he having to buy out his siblings.

John Wallace was born in 1783, son of George and Rachel (Babb) Wallace who married Mary True of Deerfield in 1806. His family included Rachel B., born 1806 and married at Epsom in 1829, William Sanders; John, born 1807, married at Epsom in 1839 first, Nancy Sanders and after her death in 1852, married second, Sarah Huse Towle, daughter of Benjamin M. and Hannah (Sanborn) Towle; Emma Y., born 1809 and died unmarried in 1826; Mary T., born 1810, married Newell Brown and resided on North Road; Lois P., born 1812, married Reuben Lake of Chichester; Jacob T., born 1814, married at Boston in 1837, Mehitabel S. Howes, he died in 1841 at New Orleans; George Benjamin, born 1817, became a founding member of the Mormons, married Mary Critchett McMurphy in 1840, and later 4 other wives having a total of 45 children; William T., born 1819, married Mary Ann Langdon Dana, who died in 1845 and he married second, Lydia M. Waterman; Ebenezer True, born 1821, died unmarried in 1846; Dorothy Y., born 1823, married Peter J. Hook of Chichester where they resided; and Sarah E., born 1825, became a Mormon and died at Nauvoo, IL., unmarried in 1845.

Of note in this family is George Benjamin Wallace:



*George Benjamin Wallace was born February 16, 1817, in Epsom, Merrimack County, New Hampshire, the son of John Wallace and Mary True. They had a family of 12 children, 7 girls and 5 boys. His mother died when he was about eleven years of age. George worked hard and helped on the farm, and also learned the trade of carpentry. Later on, when John Wallace became ill, he requested George to remain at home offering him one-half of his possessions if he would help him manage the farm. His decision was in the negative, as he was planning marriage with a distant relative and a very different career. When he was twenty-three years old he married Mary C. McMurphy who was born April 27, 1818, at Boston, Massachusetts. This marriage was performed either the 13th or 14th of February, 1840, in Boston, where they resided for some time, George becoming a building contractor. They were affiliated with the First Baptist Church.*

Mormonism was brought to the attention of George by Elder Freeman Nickerson and "after conversing with him for about fifteen minutes, I was convinced I was building

upon a sandy foundation. I invited him to go home with me and we spent the time from about 10 a.m. until evening, conversing in the parlor. I was convinced he was a servant of the living God. I purchased the only Book of Mormon he had." George was baptized in December 1842 by Elder Nickerson.

The following is taken from the journal of George Benjamin Wallace:

*March 5th, 1845. Church meeting. I laid before the Saints the necessity of gathering to Nauvoo immediately to help build the House of the Lord and to prepare for their endowments, stating to them that I had been called to go to Nauvoo by Elder Ezra Taft Benson, leaving my wife and children until I can return; stating to them that I had one dollar to assist me in getting there; stating to the Saints that if they thought it was the will of God that they should help me to obtain money to go with, for them to come forward and do so; and they immediately raised money to take me to Nauvoo, and I blessed them in the name of the Lord. I ordained Brother Rogers to preside over them and he was received by unanimous vote, after which I received a vote of thanks for my past services and a letter of recommendation by unanimous vote.*

*March 7th, Friday. Left New Bedford with family for Boston to start from there on the 11th in company with others.*

*March 18th, Monday. Saw my wife and the children aboard the cars for New Hampshire and bid them farewell. Oh! May the Angel of the Lord protect them.*

*April 8th, Tuesday morning. Arrived in Nauvoo, Illinois. In good health after four weeks in company with about forty Saints. The yearly Conference was in session.*

*May 24th, Saturday morning at Nauvoo. 6 o'clock. The apostles, bishops, elders and Saints of God of the last days gathered around the Temple to witness the last cornerstone placed on the southeast corner of the Temple by Brigham Young, president of the entire church. A band played two tunes, after which the stone was laid in place. Then they prayed to God to protect and deliver us from the hand of our enemies, that we might be permitted to finish the Temple and receive our endowments. The whole multitude shouted, 'Hosannah, Amen' until the Heavens, as it were, said Amen. Then the people dispersed to hallow the day. (End of journal.)*

Later, George returned to Boston as a missionary for the Church. It is not known whether his wife, Mary, joined the Church. He endeavored to persuade her to return to Nauvoo with him but she and her people were now very bitter against the principles of the Church, particularly polygamy. They did not want her to have anything whatever to do with it. This condition culminated in a separation between them, after a marriage of four years. She took their three children, Emma A., James Barnay and Sarah Ellen and returned to her parents. George returned to Nauvoo saying, "I feel I have done my full duty toward my wife Mary, and toward my God." He could not deny the faith; he had joined the Church completely, but it was tremendously difficult for him to give up his family.

There was previously, under date of January 29, 1844, a political meeting held in Nauvoo, at which time Joseph Smith was nominated for the President of the United States and on the 17th of the following May, at a state convention held there, the

nomination was sustained. Mr. Wallace campaigned for Joseph Smith and delivered a political speech in Faneuil Hall in Boston. He was ordained a high priest October 18, 1844, and was given a patriarchal blessing by John Smith April 10, 1845, in the Nauvoo Temple. He acted as undertaker during some of the terrifying times in Nauvoo. While George Wallace was presiding elder of the Boston Branch of the Church, Howes Crowell and his wife, Melissa Mandana King Crowell, requested a recommend transferring their membership from Boston Branch to Nauvoo. Later, when George went to Nauvoo, he again met Melissa who was heartbroken with grief at the death of her husband and their two children. Their friendship ripened into love and they were married June 4, 1845, in Nauvoo. When the Saints were leaving this ill-fated city, the Wallace's fitted themselves out for the long journey west and left for Winter Quarters where they spent the winter of 1846-47. Their first child, Mary Melissa, was born January 8, 1847, and a few months later they started their trek to Utah.

George Benjamin Wallace was appointed captain over fifty in Abraham O. Smoot's company of one hundred, which was organized June 17, 1847, on the west bank of the Horn River. They arrived in Salt Lake Valley September 26, 1847, and camped in the Old Fort. Their baby girl, Mary Melissa, died September 27, 1847, the day after their arrival. She was buried on a hillside in the northeastern part of the Valley. George Crowell Wallace was born June 12, 1848, died August 14, 1848, and is also buried there. The little girl, Mary Melissa, was the first person buried in that area.

George and Melissa built a log cabin inside the Old Fort. In this cabin four persons were set apart and ordained apostles, in a meeting held by the First Presidency of the Church. They were Charles C. Rich, Lorenzo Snow, Erastus Snow and Franklin D. Richards. On February 22, 1849, in this home, when the Valley was divided into two wards, bishops of Salt Lake Valley wards were ordained under the direction of President Young, with President Heber C. Kimball, the Twelve Apostles and others. The next day another meeting was held in this log cabin home and Reynolds Cahoon and George Wallace were set apart as counselors to John W. Young in the High Priests Quorum; and Daniel Spencer was set apart as president of Salt Lake Stake.

The corner of First North and Second West Street was chosen by George Wallace as his property. It was then thought that this would be the future business street. The Union Hotel was built on the opposite corner and John Squires built a barber shop on the Wallace corner. The hotel was eventually used for a first class school known as the Union Academy, and still later the building was used as a temporary headquarters for the University of Deseret, Deseret Hospital and finally as a warehouse for the Salt Lake Knitting Works. George built a one-room adobe house near the corner. The bricks were made from a mixture of red clay and fine gravel; the roof was covered with boards and the cracks filled with rags. After it was completed, he moved the little log room, their first home in the Old Fort, to their new home site.

On September 20, 1849, another child was born to George and Melissa whom they named Louisa King. She was one month old when George was called as one of the first missionaries to be sent from Utah, leaving for Great Britain, October 18, 1849. He gave a

neighbor a yoke of oxen and several acres of land to look after Melissa and her little girl and to furnish fuel and other meagre necessities. She was given a dress by Vilate, wife of Heber C. Kimball, who advised her to reverse the material to the other side and Melissa made a fine dress for herself. Melissa learned to do work she had never done before, such as milking cows, growing a garden, raising livestock, taking in boarders, sharing her little dwelling with another family in exchange for fuel. She had a great faith and an undaunted spirit. Before George left for his mission she was concerned about a timepiece as the only one they owned was a silver watch he had brought from Boston. She asked him what she would do if he took the watch. President Young said, "Brother Wallace, if you will leave that watch with your wife, I will promise you that you will come home with a gold one." This promise was fulfilled for he did come home with a gold watch and chain, a gift from the Saints while on his mission. Before he left Salt Lake City, a little elderly lady at the depot pressed his hand in 'God speed' and left enough money in it to pay his fare and a few cents over. The Lord blessed him so he was able to send a little money home to Melissa and was able to bring back a parasol for her, the only thing she requested from him in the way of a gift.

Mr. Wallace, highly respected and loved by the Saints, remained in Great Britain nearly three years as first counselor to President Franklin D. Richards. He had issued a small circular among the Saints and friends with whom he labored to help pay his expenses home, and as a result had a purse of \$800 in cash, also many other presents given to him by the Saints. He boarded the steamer Canada for the trip home, leaving Liverpool March 20, 1852, arriving in Boston approximately May 31, 1852. He went directly to Epsom, Merrimack County, New Hampshire, in an endeavor to see his estranged wife, Mary C. McMurphy. She was not at home and he was unable to locate her, so he reluctantly left Epsom for his home in the Salt Lake Valley.

In obedience to the law of plural marriage, George Benjamin Wallace under date of October 15, 1852, married the three Davis sisters, Lydia, Hannah and Martha, whom he had converted to the Church when in England. The parents, Edward and Sarah Drabble Davis of London, Middlesex, England, were also baptized. Lydia Davis, born June 15, 1830, died March 8, 1869, Salt Lake City, Utah; Hannah Davis, born May 4, 1832, died February 5, 1896, Granger, Salt Lake County, Utah; Martha Davis, born January 9, 1836, died October 7, 1913, Salt Lake City.

Three or four more rooms were added to the original red brick room and the family increased at a rapid rate. For Melissa it was quite a period of adjustment. Years later, on one occasion, Mr. Wallace received complimentary tickets from a circus manager for himself and family. Imagine the look of dismay on the manager's face when he saw George, his four wives and twenty or more children march past him!

In 1860 Mr. Wallace was chosen to act as second counselor to President Daniel Spencer of the Salt Lake Stake. In 1866 he was first counselor, and in 1874 was called to preside over the Salt Lake Stake, which position he held for about two years. In 1867 he was instrumental, with others, in organizing Brighton Ward on the west side of Jordan River. In October 1869 he filled another mission to the Eastern States. He left home in a wagon,

accompanied by Nathan Eldridge. This mission was short as he returned the following April. He had charge of the territorial farm located where the Fairgrounds now stand, receiving this appointment from President Brigham Young. From 1877 until his death in 1900 he was president of the High Priests Quorum in Salt Lake Stake.

In 1875 George homesteaded 120 acres of land in Granger, where his wife, Hannah, lived. Martha and her sister Lydia resided at the home located at 168 North 2nd West, Salt Lake City. Melissa lived there for awhile, until her son Howes built her a home on Second Avenue in Salt Lake. Mr. Wallace planted the first trees in the community of Granger and his first nursery business stood where West High School now stands. During the years of hardship the large Wallace families experienced, George was loving, patient and kind. He never aspired to any public office, either ecclesiastical or civil. He was not particularly shy, but never put himself forward. If his services were required, he was always ready and willing to respond. The last twenty-five years of his life were spent on his homestead; most of his family were now married, leaving him almost free from worry. During his residence on the farm, raids were made on many known polygamists but he seemed unafraid, traveling back and forth from the city home to the farm, visiting his wives with utmost concern. He was arrested and imprisoned for a term.

George Benjamin Wallace died January 30, 1900, at his home in Granger, Salt Lake County, Utah. Funeral services were held in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square, when high tribute was paid him. Article by Geneva Watson Graham (granddaughter) "Worthy Pioneer" *Our Pioneer Heritage*, vol. 9, pp. 315-319.

John Wallace Jr., eldest son of John and Mary (True) Wallace, bought the homestead from his siblings, but sold shortly thereafter and moved to the part of town known as Slab City where he established a store. He and his first wife, Nancy, had three daughters: Mary A., born 1841, died unmarried in 1910; Eliza J., born 1842, died unmarried in 1916; Abby G., born 1847, married at Chicago, IL in 1877, James McAllister. With his second wife he had one daughter, Sarah N., born 1857, and who married at Epsom in 1903, as his second wife, Hiram A. Holmes.

There is some debate as where the old garrison was actually located on the site of a home built by Augustus Lord. In the Dolbeer History he writes, "The proprietors built a block-house, or garrison, for refuge in case of danger. It was built near Andrew McClary's, and the old foundation was disturbed last summer by building the new house for Augustus Lord, Esq." The date of his 'last summer' is unknown.

Later owners, with the next longest occupant being Varnum and Dolly Fisk in 1864, and in 1867 they sold the home lot to Augustus Lord. It became part of the Lord's large land holdings, and the home no longer stands.

## Home Lot # 18



The original proprietor was Jotham Foss, but it was James Marden of Rye who appears on the list of those owners of a home lot to draw the 30 acre out lot. James deeded it to his son Nathan in May of 1749. The only description of it was that it was a 50 acre lot on the southwest side of East Street. This is a little misleading as the home lot also included a small section on the north side of East Street, and is the section of the lot where later, the Andrew O. Carter farm was located. Nathan Marden was influential in the early town. He was chosen as the first Deacon of the church and served as selectman and town clerk. He was chosen along with George Wallace and Ephraim Locke to secure the original town records that were in the hands of the proprietors, which they later entered into the original town books. Much of that information provides details for the listing of early proprietors and town history.

James sold the lot to Michael McClary, Simon A. Heath and John Chesley in 1811, though he continued to live there, buying back the lot in 1813 and that same day, selling it to Jonathan Chase of Deerfield. His wife died in 1827 and he married a second time to a Hannah Pulsifer. Chase died in 1845, with a son, Samuel Prescott Chase taking ownership, but he only lived two years more and died intestate. The estate was sold at auction and bought by Charles Ames of Epsom. The land and buildings were sold again in 1853 to Jacob Hall of Epsom. After only 3 years on the property, it was sold to Enoch Fogg of Deerfield. Enoch sold out to (Henry) Augustus Lord, who also acquired the home lot across the street, making a homestead farm of 100 acres. The property across the street was sold to Lord by Varnum Fisk.

Jonathan Chase was born at Deerfield in 1778, son of Josiah and Hannah (Sanborn) Chase, who married in 1800, Mary Prescott. She died in 1827 and he married second, at Deerfield in 1830, Hannah Pulsifer. There were three children from the first marriage: Josiah, born 1800, died unmarried at Epsom in 1842; Samuel Prescott, born 1808, married at Deerfield in 1844, Catherine M. Chase; Hannah Weare, born 1824, married in 1848, George F. Fife. Jonathan and his second wife Hannah both died in 1845.

Augustus Lord was born in 1822 as George Augustus Lord, but is seen in documents as Augustus. He was the son of Samuel Lord and his wife Nancy Dearborn (McClary)

daughter of General Michael and Sarah (Dearborn) McClary. Their family included: Charles Haven, born and died 1811; Charles, born and died 1812; Elizabeth Susan, born and died 1814; Susan Mehitable, born 1815, died 1819; Mary Elizabeth, born about 1817, married Horace Morrison; John McClary, born about 1819, died unmarried 1880, lived for a time with his sister Mary E.; Henry, born about 1821, died 1822; and George Augustus, born 1822, died unmarried in 1879.

Augustus Lord owned and improved the property including building a new house and running a successful business as noted in an article in 1869: *One of the very best herds of cattle to be found in New Hampshire may be seen at the barn of Augustus Lord Esq. of Epsom, He has thirty oxen, none of which girt less than seven feet. He has probably sold more good cattle and obtained better prices the past four years than any other farmer in the state. Farmers may obtain many new ideas by visiting Mr. Lord's farm, noticing the various improvements and looking at his stock.*

After about two dozen years, he died, and his estate, being in the hands of his sister Mary E. Morrison, sold both lots on either side of the road, to the trio of James B. Tennant and Warren Tripp of Epsom, along with James G. Fellows of Pembroke. It was likely bought on speculation, as the property was quickly turned over and sold to Myron H. Ray of Boscawen. Ray never settled on the land and sold it to Andrew O. Carter of Lynn, MA in 1886. Carter had married in 1877, as his second wife, Helen M. Lawrence, daughter of Joseph Lawrence who owned the adjoining property.

Andrew O. Carter died in 1897, his wife Helen in 1930, and had no heirs. The homestead was sold by Fred L. Bulfinch and his wife Sophia, sister to Helen, to Diana Boisvert in 1930. Other owners included: 1932, John F Mellady; 1935, A. L. Hodges; 1948, Neil A. Wallace Jr., and Arthur Wallace; and 1950, Paul and Gertrude Thiem.

#### **Home Lot # 4**

The history of home lot No. 4 was not fully understood by early Epsom historians. Though the original proprietor was Daniel Lunt, the home lot was sold by John Blake to his son Dearborn Blake in 1754, home lot which is no. 5 (originally drawn No. 4). Dearborn sold this home lot to his brother Thomas, who in turn sold it November 30, 1764 to Jethro Blake of Epping, the fifth home lot in number containing fifty acres, and was laid out to the original right of Jude Allen. John Mark Moses, who researched the early settlers of Epsom, was aware of the deed naming Jude Allen as the original proprietor, but was unable to make the connection. In the list of the proprietors list for the drawing of the 30 acre out lots given to the 20 owners of the home lots, home lot No. 4 was under the name of Samuel Allen. Samuel and Jude were brothers, both were for a time of Stratham, with Samuel moving to Wakefield, and Jude to Epsom, presumably on the home lot owned by his brother. As with the other home lots owned by John Blake, no deeds exist showing when he bought them, only when he sold them to various sons.

Jethro Blake sold the home lot to Andrew McClary, "land in Epsom being one of the home lots, bounded southerly on the main highway, westerly on land of Joshua Berry,



easterly on land of Thomas Black (Blake) containing 50 acres". Andrew's widow Elizabeth sold the lot to Amos Morrill in January of 1790. As with home lot No. 3, Amos Morrill sold the property to William Locke, January 28, 1795, who settled his family there.

William Locke moved to Alexandria, and sold the majority of the three home lots to John Chesley (1795-51) in 1811, excepting pieces he previously sold to Henry C. Shapley (home lot 3), John Locke, Benjamin Moody and William Tucker.

One of these pieces was to his son John Locke in 1806, in part quit claimed 35 acres adjoining land of Henry C. Shapley, during the natural lives of his parents. John Locke sells, with his wife Mehitable relinquishing dower, the same 35 acres to Joseph Lawrence in 1811, land adjoining Henry C. Shapley, taken from the northeasterly end of the lot.

William Locke sold a quarter acre to William and Olive Tucker of Rye in 1798 (179-360), lying on the northerly side of the main road leading to the meeting house, on which stands a small house 'I purchased of Simon Ames Heath and hauled there'. Tucker sold the same to William's son John at the end of 1807.

William Locke also sold in 1801 (158-238) one acre to Benjamin Moody, 'said land is part of the lot on which I now live.' An additional piece was sold to Moody in 1805, adjoining Moody's land.

William Locke was born at Rye, NH in 1758, his parents Deacon Elijah and Huldah (Perkins) Locke, and married in Rye, 1779, Abigail Sanders, daughter of John and Trephena (Philbrick) Sanders of Epsom. His children, born Rye, but raised in Epsom included: John, born 1780, married Abigail Locke, daughter of Francis and Mary Abigail (Katherwood) Locke who died in 1809, and he married second, Mehitable Bickford, daughter of Samuel and Abigail (Cook) Bickford; Abigail, born 1781, married Jeremiah Page, son of Jeremiah and Lydia (Philbrick) Page of Epsom; Huldah, born 1783, married at Epsom in 1799, John Page, brother to Jeremiah, and resided Epsom; William, born 1785, married in 1808, Mercy Shaw; Elizabeth, born 1788, married June 1813, John Langley of Deerfield; and Reuben, born 1791, married in 1815, Jane McMurphy. William and most of his family moved to Alexandria. Son John resided Epsom.

John, the eldest son and his first wife Abigail raised children: William, born 1799, married Louisa Ferrin, moved to Alexandria, NH; Martha D. (1), born 1801, died unmarried at Boston in 1822; Francis, born 1803, died at Boston, unmarried in 1831; Abigail, born and died in 1805; an unnamed child born 1807, died 1809. By his second wife, Mehitable, the children were: Nabby, born 1810, died 1817; John, born 1812, married at Chichester in 1834, Sarah Sanborn; Samuel B., born 1814, married in 1837, Lucia R. Sanborn; George, born 1816, married at Concord in 1845, Sabra Kimball; Benjamin B., born 1818, married at Lawrence, MA in 1850, Julia M. Currier; Abigail, born 1821, married in 1842, Reuben L. Sanders, son of John and Anna (Locke) Sanders; and Martha D. (2), born 1823, married in 1844, Pierce Bickford.

George Locke resided in Manchester, and donated a family sickle to the New Hampshire Historical Society which published a card advertising the item. It included a likeness of William Locke, and a photo of his grandson George. The card gives a history of the sickle, which for a time must have resided in Epsom: *Presented to the New Hampshire Historical Society, at Concord, in 1890 by George Locke of Manchester, N.H., the grandson of William, who was the great grandson of Capt. John Locke. This is the sickle which was broken in combat with Indians when Capt. John Locke fought his last battle against eight Indians who ambushed themselves in his field, on Josselyn's Neck, in Rye – also known as Locke's Neck, -- where the Indians came upon and killed him, August 26, 1696, he being 70 years old. Another account says a boy was with him who secreted himself under bundles of grain and escaped. Capt. Locke, after being shot cut off the nose of an Indian with his sickle. This sickle was kept in the family of William Locke, the fourth son of Capt. Locke. Afterward it fell to the possession of William, the great-grandson of Capt. Locke. This great-grandson moved from Rye to Epsom 1780, thence to Alexandria, N.H. 1808.*

John Locke lived in Epsom where he died in 1849. He perhaps lived in the house he bought of William Tucker. The only other reference to a house on this lot is on the 1858 map of Epsom and is under the name of Joseph Lawrence Jr.

The out lot was lot # 2 in the second range and drawn by Samuel Allen. Allen lived in Stratham and Wakefield, and almost lost the property as unpaid non-resident land, according to the town books, it was 'redeemed' (1780). Allen sold the property to Nathaniel Allen, who left Epsom for Maine, selling this, along with other property to Thomas Marden. After about four years, Marden left for Deerfield and the lot was sold back into the Allen family, this time, Joseph Allen. Joseph broke up the property, selling parts to Joseph Towle, Daniel Goss, and William Badger of Kittery, Maine. William was a successful ship builder from Newmarket, and supposedly built 100 ships. He appears as a non-resident paying tax on Lot 68, and the Allen Farm, land and buildings. He died in 1830, and this part of the estate was probably passed to his two surviving children - son William, who died in December of the same year, and daughter Hepzibah who married Joseph Sherburne of Portsmouth. John Ball represented the minor children of deceased son William; and Joseph his own children, selling the property to George Sanders. The Sanders family held the land for two generations, the elder Sanders being there over 50 years. His son inherited the farm, and sold it two years after the death of his wife in 1899. It went through a couple owners until the Sanborn family bought it in 1906. The buildings were abandoned and began to decay, as the Sanborn's were living in Minnesota, and local hands kept up their farm utilizing the pasture around the old farm. The house was restored again while owned by Alice Kimball Smith in the late sixties.

### **Home Lot # 17**

Lot number 17 is difficult to trace, though drawn by Joseph Locke, it is assumed that his family had some part in settling the early town. The list of proprietors for the 30 acre out lots show that the lot belonged to John Philbrick. Deeds show he acquired the land from his brother Caleb in 1742. A third brother, Elias, had married an Anna Locke, daughter of

Capt. Joseph Locke, which may show the family connection. Of interest is the fact that when the lot was sold by John Philbrick to David Clifford, the deed mentions land and buildings. John removed from Epsom and died in Deerfield, and David Clifford sold the home lot to Timothy Dalton of North Hampton, without any mention of buildings. Though the owner of the lot was Timothy Dalton, the land was sold by one John Dalton in 1757 to John McClary.

John McClary sold a few sections of home lot 17. One section of five and one half acres was sold to Amos Morrill. Morrill owned the lot across the road, which bends between the two lots, with this purchase apparently giving Morrill that adjoining piece to complete his property on the north side of East Street. The lot stayed in the family for quite a length of time. The Mountain Road was taken out of the eastern side of this lot and the monument to the capture of Isabella McCoy stands in the northeast corner. The McClary estate passed from John to his son Michael, and then to Jonathan Steele who had married Michael McClary's daughter Elizabeth. Lot's 16 and 17 passed to their son Charles Augustus Steele and his wife Hannah Plummer (Cilley) Swain, widow of Elbridge Lyman Swain.

Charles McClary Steele sold the lot in 1956 to Roland R. LaFleur, who sold a portion of the property to John and Hilda Fulton, which became Blake's Brook campground.

### **Home Lot # 5**



Amos Morrill bought from the estate of Andrew McClary two home lots, #3 and #4 (January 5, 1790). He previously bought home lot #5 (by deed called #6) in three parts; the first on April 26, 1773, one half of the lot on the western end, from John and Deborah Berry; next on August 4, 1773, a quarter acre and a house from Samuel Jackson; and finally on November 16, 1774, the westerly half from Ephraim Berry. From this it would appear Amos Morrill made Lot 5 his residence. He sells all three home lots to William Locke, January 28, 1795 'three fifty acre lots in Epsom the same three of the home lots lying on the northerly side of the main road leading from Epsom the Chichester lying between land owned by James Harvey McClary and land owned by the heirs of the Reverend John Tuck including all the buildings standing thereon.'

The lot was drawn originally by Noah Seavey, but by the time the list of those drawing the out lots was made it was owned by Joshua Berry. Little is known about Joshua Berry, but it appears he lived in Epsom and Greenland. One half of the lot was in the hands of his son Ephraim Berry as he sold it to Amos Morrill, the eastern end, in November of

1774. Joshua Berry of Greenland, sold the western half to a John and Deborah Berry of Epsom, in April of 1773, this John either an identified son, or perhaps grandson, son of Ephraim. John and Deborah sold this half to Amos Morrill two days later, April 26, 1773. There is no doubt Joshua Berry owned the lot and perhaps lived there for some time, but was also occupied by his son Ephraim who raised his family in Epsom, as well as John and Deborah Berry.

Joshua Berry married first Abiah Philbrook of Hampton and second Susanna Philbrook. Little is known of the family, and there appears three children from the first marriage: Ephraim born about 1723, married an unknown Abigail; Rachel, born at Greenland about 1725, married a James Bailey; and Joshua, born about 1727 of whom nothing more is known. Son Ephraim had children: possibly John who bought land from Joshua, who could be a son of Joshua; Benjamin, born about 1755, married Sobriety Duda (also Durrell), who deserted from Revolutionary War service; Joshua, born about 1757, married an Eleanor Burleigh in 1779, and may have settled at Loudon, NH; Thomas, born about 1759, is seen only in a deed from Ephraim Berry of Epsom and called 'son;' and Sarah, born about 1763, probably at Epsom, married a Moses Chandler. She is identified in a statement where she names brothers John, Thomas, Joshua and Benjamin Berry.

In addition, a small piece of this lot was sold early on by Joshua Berry to John Blazo in 1762, just a quarter of an acre, 'to be upon the west corner upon the road being part of one of the home lots joining to William Wallace's.' A few days later Blazo sold a dwelling house and the ½ acre to Samuel Jackson. Jackson likely lived on the small lot until 1773 when he sold it to Amos Morrill.

Amos Morrill sold all three of his home lots to William Locke of Rye in 1795, and William Locke sold some sections of the lots to several people, and the majority of the lots, including No. 5, to John Chesley on April 18, 1811. Morrill advertised the properties, with the three home lots described as follows:

### **F A R M S**

#### **To be Sold in Epsom.**

8-28-1793 The first containing about 175 acres of good land, under good improvement, consisting of mowing, pasturing, tillage, orcharding and woodland, pleasantly situated near the meeting house, and will serve for two small farms, having heretofore been improved as such, and has on it two houses, three barns and out houses, and is well situated for a trader, tradesman or innholder.

Amos Morrill, William Locke and John Chesley were all blacksmiths by trade. John Chesley was already of Epsom and had married Elizabeth Blake, daughter of Samuel and Sarah (Bickford) Blake. Chesley's house burned in 1831 and the barn in 1842, as seen in newspaper articles of the time:

#### **7-4-1831 JOHN CHESLEY RESIDENCE**

The dwelling house of Mr. John Chesley at Epsom was burnt on Wednesday night last. There is no doubt the fire was set by an incendiary. Fire had twice before, within a short

time, been applied to Mr. Chesley's barn, and had gone out, leaving the brands which were intended to enkindle the flames. The house was so much on fire before it was discovered, that only a small portion of furniture in the front part was saved.

## 1842

*A barn belonging to Mr. Chesley was burned March 29, 1842 along with about a dozen head of cattle. A person by the name of Hoit was committed to prison under the charge of setting it on fire. The youth, identified as 13 year old Samuel Hoyt, was found guilty in September of that year and sentenced to one day solitary confinement and three years hard labor in the State Prison.*

The homestead on Lot No. 5 became well known as the Chesley Place, and after the death of John Chesley, son Jonathan Steele Chesley, who died in 1879, owned the house. His son Walter was the next owner and used the house primarily summers as he removed to Massachusetts. Walter's daughter Mary Chesley Oldfield was the last of the family to own the home.

John Chesley, born at Lee, NH in 1775 to Lemuel and Sarah (Randall) Chesley, married at Epsom in 1797, Elizabeth Blake, daughter of Samuel and Sarah (Bickford) Blake of Epsom. The children were: John, born 1805, married Joanna Tibbetts at Barrington in 1834; Samuel Morrill, born 1809, married at Epsom in 1827, Sarah Martha Lang, daughter of Bickford and Abigail (Locke) Lang of Epsom; Elizabeth G., born 1813, died unmarried in 1864; Jonathan Steele, born 1816, married in 1840, Abigail Hoyt of Northwood; James Blake, born 1817, married Mary Jane Lake, daughter of John and Sarah (Moses) Lake of Chichester where they resided; and Josiah Crosby, born 1820, married Almira Wood of Epsom.

The family of Jonathan Steele Chesley and wife Abigail, included: Gulielma, born 1843, married at Pittsfield in 1863, Trueworthy Fowler Kelley; John E., born 1845, married at Pembroke in 1878, Sarah E. Cofran; William Albion, born 1847, married in 1872, Clara A. Brown of Concord; Walter, born 1850, married at Newton, MA in 1882, Francena H. Hoyt; Mary J., born 1858, married at Manchester, 1880, Walter Cofran; Dr. Andros P., born 1855, married at Wakefield, NH, Kate Manning Paul; Arabella C., born 1859, married at Epsom in 1884, George P. Cass, son of Levi and Eliza B. (Philbrick) Cass; and Annah, born 1864, married at Concord in 1895, Joseph H. Benton.

The house was dismantled and moved.

## **Home Lot # 16**

Paul Chapman of Greenland was the original proprietor of this lot. He was one of the early clerks of the proprietors and was constable in 1733. He had a brother Penuel Chapman who was also clerk for the proprietors. As to whether either Chapman actually lived on home lot 16 is difficult to determine, but it was sold by Penuel Chapman to John McClary in 1756. John McClary owned this, and the adjoining lot west, for many years,

with both lots being passed to his son Michael McClary. In 1813, Michael sold the lot to his son John who died in a tragic accident in 1821, and the lot stayed in the McClary estate, passing to Jonathan Steele who had married Elizabeth Harvey McClary, daughter of Michael McClary.

Jonathan Steele had several sons who stayed in Epsom, with the estate apparently being split between Charles Augustus Steele and his brother Michael McClary Steele. Michael inherited the homestead, while the home lots 16 and 17 were in the hands of Charles. Charles Augustus McClary married Hannah Plummer (Cilley) Swain, widow of Elbridge Lyman Swain, who had two children from her first marriage; Joseph Lyman Swain and Sarah Mehitable (Swain) Bunker. From her marriage to Charles A. Steele, were two additional children, Charles McClary (born Michael McClary Steele, but still referred to as 'Mike') and Andrew McClary Steele. Son Andrew removed to Massachusetts and the majority of the property was owned by Charles M. Steele, who with wife Helen E.P. Yeaton, had one surviving child, James M. Steele. Jim Steele inherited the estate and began to sell some of the assets.

It does not appear that there were any early settlement or buildings on the lot.

### **Home Lot # 6**



Site of the Simon Sanborn home, later owned by Daniel T. Cilley.

William Locke junior of Rye was the original proprietor of home lot number 6 which he sold to William Wallace of Rye June 30, 1742. The sale was early enough that William Wallace is in the list of proprietors to draw for the additional 30 acre out lots. This William Wallace died about five years later leaving three young sons, William, Samuel and Spencer. The estate was not settled until they were older, with son Samuel of Newcastle selling his one third part to his brother William in 1760. William sold his two thirds to Thomas Ward of Kensington in 1767 and his brother Spencer of Exeter, sold the remaining third to him the following year. Ward did not hold on to the home lot, rather instead selling it to the Reverend John Tuck on April 15, 1768 with the following description: a parcel of land in Epsom being one of the home lots lying on the north side of the main road bounding easterly on land possessed by Joshua Berry, westerly on land in possession of the Rev. John Tuck, being the whole of the lot as it was laid out containing 50 acres. The Tuck's lived on the adjoining minister's lot.

When the Rev. Tuck was dismissed from serving the town of Epsom he joined the Revolutionary War effort as a chaplain and shortly fell ill and died. His wife Mary continued to reside in Epsom, but quickly was in debt and had to dispose of the property in small pieces to cover them. Several pieces of property were lost by execution. A Daniel Pierce was one person receiving property. Another is a piece of land sold by Mary Tuck in October of 1797 to Abraham Libbey of Epsom – ‘a parcel of land in Epsom being part of one of the home lots in said town and to take its beginning at the southeasterly corner of that home lot adjoining on the easterly side to that lot the said Mr. Tuck lived on then to run north westerly on the highway about 33 rods then north easterly a parallel line with the road that goes between said lot of land of William Lock to the north end of said lot being the same land that Execution was levied upon by Daniel Pierce to satisfy a demand which the said Pierce had against the Estate of the said deceased to contain the same quantity of acres being had to said Execution.’ This same parcel was sold to Daniel Shaw by Libbey the following year, and Shaw settled on the lot remaining there about 10 years. He sold the lot ‘where I now live’ to Abner Blaisdell of Portsmouth in October of 1808. Daniel Shaw had married Mary Marden, daughter of James and Sarah (Worth) Marden. Blaisdell’s ownership of the lot was short lived, being sold to Simon Sanborn of Epsom in July of 1811.

Another parcel of this lot was also lost by Mary Tuck to James Marden by execution on October 3, 1792, the lot had the following description: beginning on the main road in said Epsom leading by the meeting house at the south westerly corner of land set off by execution to John Sherburne Esq., then westerly on said road 2 rods to a stake and stones then north 33 degrees, east 11 rods then westerly parallel with said road 2 rods and 10 feet then north 33 degrees 45 minutes east to the north end of the lot where the deceased last lived, then easterly on the end of said lot to land set off to John Sherburne Esq., thence south westerly on said Sherburne’s line to the bounds first mentioned. It would appear that John Sherburne Esq. had also previously received part of this lot through similar circumstances. Marden sold his parcel to John Samuel Sherburne of Portsmouth in 1793. In turn, John Samuel Sherburne sold 29 acres, including a barn, to Jonathan Locke of Epsom. Locke died in 1803, and his widow sold the property to Simon Sanborn January 12, 1811, chair maker of Epsom. This property abutted the parcel he bought from Abner Blaisdell July 26, 1811.

Simon Sanborn probably built a house on the site, he was the son of Eliphalet and Margaret (McClary) Sanborn. He married Harriet Dearborn in 1811 and had a son John H., born 1816, died 1818. Simon died in 1818 and his widow Harriet lived there until 1836 when she sold the property to John M. Wells of Loudon.

Several short-term owners included after Mr. Wells; Abraham D. Swain of Chichester (1836); Wilson Quimby of Epsom (1839); Jonathan L. Cilley of Epsom (1842); William Sanders of Pembroke (1842); Nathan Griffin of Deerfield (1845); Daniel Thomas Cilley (1863).

Daniel Thomas (Tom) Cilley raised his family with his wife Lydia Ann, daughter of John and Salome (Rand) Babb. They had two daughters: Luella J., born 1860, married Joseph

Lawrence; and Annie Lydia, born 1865, married at Epsom in 1887, Benjamin M. Towle, son of Benjamin M. and Harriet E. (Edgerly) Towle. The home was sold to his daughter Annie Lydia Cilley during his later years. She sold the house to Albion Ambrose in 1922 who sold it to his son Frank E. Ambrose in 1926. In May of 1929 he sold the property to Timothy B. Langley.

Timothy Bryant Langley was a son of Josiah D. and Elma Jane (Locke) Langley, born in 1873, and married as his first wife, Bertha Thirza Cottrell, daughter of John Thomas and Clara A. (Sanders) Cotterell. They had one daughter, Marion Agnes, born 1902 and married at Concord in 1923, Hollis Edwin Mank, and resided in Maine. Bertha died in 1903, and Timothy (also known as Bry) married second at Pembroke in 1917, Laura A. Haynes, widow of Alonzo E. Batchelder.

Langley sold his home in 1948 to Thomas R. and Herbert I. Yeaton of Epsom. The house later burned about 1970 while owned by Herb Yeaton.

### **Home Lot # 15**



Simon Knowles drew this home lot. Later the land was in the hands of a Thomas Berry, but no record of how he received it has been found. In any event, the 50-acre home lot was sold from Thomas Berry of Greenland to William Blazo of Epsom, the 'original right of Simon Knowles.' John Mark Moses in his 'Early Settlers of Epsom' mentions that William Blazo acquired land in Epsom as early as 1746, and that Jonathan Curtis in his history of Epsom, mentions William Blazo, a Frenchman, as a pioneer settler in the town. The fact that he was 'of Epsom' when he bought the land of Thomas Berry would seem to substantiate that claim. William deeded the property to his sons Amos and John – land, house and barn...a home lot in Epsom... the lot where I now live. William died in 1761, supposedly the first person to be buried in 'the burying place.' His sons left town for Pittsfield and sold the home lot to Andrew McClary. He in turn sold the property the same year to William Wallace Jr. of Greenland.

This William Wallace of Greenland was the son of William Wallace of Greenland who drew home lot No. 12. The elder William of Greenland had a wife Martha baptized there, and is later seen as Mary in Epsom records, along with her husband, as original members of the Epsom church in 1761. Deeds do not show exactly where they lived at the time, or



how long they stayed, as he died in Greenland about 1772, based on the writing of his will. His son William, who bought lot 15 from Andrew McClary in 1767, sold it to Icabod Weeks in May of 1768, and Weeks sold it back to him August of the same year. At the end of 1768, Wallace sells the home lot to Ebenezer Taber (Tabor) with buildings. This is the first mention of a building on the lot. During this period he and his wife had two children baptized in Epsom, Jane Moses Wallace and Simeon Wallace, on January 1, 1769; and another child in August of 1770, after the property was sold. He would have been familiar with the property as his father's sister, Abigail, who was the wife of William Blazo. Records also indicate besides children William and Abigail, that a Samuel Allen Junior be allowed to be a guardian of a minor child, Furnald Wallace in 1772, son of Nathaniel Wallis, late of Epsom. The eldest sibling of William, Abigail (Blazo) and Nathaniel was the Samuel Wallace who bought home lot #12. Samuel's family largely settled Black Hall Road.

Moses Locke of Kensington, a distant relative to the other Locke family already in Epsom, bought the property in April of 1769 from Ebenezer Tabor, and with his wife, was admitted to the Epsom church. The homestead stayed in this family passing from Moses to his son Jonathan in 1793, with the provision he take care of Moses (and his wife) Mary for the rest of their natural lives. Jonathan appeared to try and sell the property before he died in 1803, as seen in the following ad:

NH Gazette 10-5-1802

**TO BE SOLD**

*On reasonable Terms,*

**A FARM**

*IN Epsom, containing about one hundred and twenty acres with good buildings, well wooded and watered, within fifty rods of the Meeting House, in said Epsom, for further particulars apply to JONATHAN LOCK on the premises. - Epsom, Sept. 27.*

Moses Locke served 7 years in the Revolution and had been given up for dead, and was not recognized by his family upon his return. He was at Bunker Hill and served primarily with Co. McClary's Regiment. His wife was Mary Organ who he married at Kensington in 1755. Their children were: Mehitable, born 1757, married at Deerfield in 1775, John Blake; Anna, born 1760 at Kensington, married at Epsom in 1789, Josiah Sanborn, son of Eliphalet and Margaret (Wallace) Sanborn of Sanborn Hill; Jonathan, born 1762, married at Epsom in 1785, Alice Pearson, daughter of Jonathan and Abigail (Burbank) Pearson; Hannah, born 1764, married in 1785, John Godfrey of Northwood where they resided; Mary, born 1766, married at Epsom in 1786, Caleb Pearson, brother to Abigail; Elijah, born 1768, married at Epsom in 1792, Lydia Osgood, daughter of Moses and Mary (Brown) Osgood; Richard, born 1770, married at Epsom in 1797, Sarah Moses, daughter of Sylvanus and Miriam (Young) Moses, he drowned in the Suncook River in 1810; Moses, born 1773, died of yellow fever in the West Indies; and James Monroe, born 1776, married at Epsom in 1799, Abigail Sherburne, daughter of William and Sarah (Muchmore) Sherburne.

Jonathan Locke, who inherited his father's estate and his wife Alice raised a family of seven: Naomi B., born 1786, married at Epsom in 1807, Greenleaf Clark Brackett, son of Ebenezer and Abigail (Rogers) Brackett; Florinda (1), born 1788, died 1790; Florinda (2), born 1791, married at Epsom in 1810, David Locke, son of Simeon and Abigail (Blake) Locke; John, born 1793, died unmarried at Boscawen in 1872; David, born 1796, married at Epsom in 1818, Elizabeth S. Chase; Rebecca, born 1798, married at Epsom in 1818, Colonel Isaac Towle; and Mary, born 1800, married at Epsom in 1822, James Weeks of Concord.

The house instead passed to his son David Locke 3rd, who moved to Hopkinton, selling it to Isaac Towle, who had married his sister Rebecca in 1818. Isaac and family also left Epsom selling the property back to David Locke 3rd who in 1831 sold the 60 acres and William McMurphy was born in Chester, NH in 1793, and married at Epsom in 1816, Sarah Critchett, daughter of Thomas and Margaret (Wallace) Critchett. Their children were: Mary Critchett, born 1818, married George Benjamin Wallace at Northwood in 1840; James, born 1820, married Caroline F. Norris; and William, born 1824, married at Epsom in 1850, Lucinda Maria Locke, daughter of General Benjamin Lovering and Hannah Parker (Moses) Locke and resided in Epsom.

Abraham D. Swain broke up the lot, selling the building and 13 acres to John C. Morrill in 1847. Morrill sold this same piece to George W. Swain, brother to Abraham, late in 1849. The property continued to have different owners including Frederick Sanborn (1850), Joseph W. Rand (1855) and Alexander B. Forbes (1865). Forbes married Susan Elizabeth Parsons Brown in 1859 and they moved to Byfield, Massachusetts, perhaps allowing his father-in-law the use of the house. In September 1889 Alexander Forbes sold the property to his wife's brother Charles J. Brown. Ten years later Charles J. Brown sold the 13 acres and buildings to Charles McClary Steele and his wife Helen E. P. (Yeaton) Steele. Charles McClary Steele had earlier changed his name from Michael McClary Steele, and was still in town referred to as 'Mike'. The "Mike Steele" house stayed in the family until 1961. buildings to Benjamin M. Heath. The lot passed to his brother Andrew M. Heath who sold it to Thomas D. Merrill in 1834. Thomas D. Merrill sold it within a few weeks to William McMurphy (recorded Murphy). William McMurphy sold the land and buildings to Abraham D. Swain in February of 1841.

William McMurphy was born in Chester, NH in 1793, and married at Epsom in 1816, Sarah Critchett, daughter of Thomas and Margaret (Wallace) Critchett. Their children were: Mary Critchett, born 1818, married George Benjamin Wallace at Northwood in 1840; James, born 1820, married Caroline F. Norris; and William, born 1824, married at Epsom in 1850, Lucinda Maria Locke, daughter of General Benjamin Lovering and Hannah Parker (Moses) Locke and resided in Epsom.

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allowing his father-in-law the use of the house. In September 1889 Alexander Forbes sold the property to his wife's brother Charles J. Brown. Ten years later Charles J. Brown sold the 13 acres and buildings to Charles McClary Steele and his wife Helen E. P. (Yeaton) Steele. Charles McClary Steele had earlier changed his name from Michael McClary Steele, and was still in town referred to as 'Mike'. The "Mike Steele" house stayed in the family until 1961.

### **School House Lot**

Of all the old fifty acre lots, this one is probably the most interesting. The first minister's lot and the original school lot both had with them additional land elsewhere outside the 20 home lots. The use of this land was as resource material for the upkeep of the school and meetinghouse. It could be used for planting, or a source of lumber for building or keeping warm. The first activity on either original lot was the burying ground and meetinghouse on the first minister's lot, and it was even later that the young town began to make use of the school/parsonage lot, which was just across East Street from the meetinghouse. With the first minister, Reverend Tuck buying and building on the parsonage lot, it put off the young town having to build a parsonage early on.

### **School house**



Since Rev. Tuck outright bought from the town what was set aside as the original parsonage lot, the land across the street, originally set up as a school lot, was the only 50 acre lot on East Street that was town, or common land. The town began to sell small portions of the property. One of the earlier transactions was in 1778 when the town sold to James Gray, 2 acres taken from the northeast corner of 'the school lot so-called.' James Gray was a well known Revolutionary War veteran and a most respected individual. He lived, as best as we can tell, in the area of Sanborn Hill, and it is known that he was one of the earliest schoolteachers in Epsom. The issue of maintaining a school is even more unclear than the efforts of the town to build a meetinghouse. As early as 1765 it was voted that a school be built on the lot 'commonly called the School Lot', and a school was built, but the maintaining of the school remained in question. The selectmen were dealing with how to raise money for the support of the school in 1780, and the following year passed the following vote: "Voted That the school House which

stands near the meeting house in said Epsom be this day sold at ‘publick vendue’ to the Highest Bidder, & the purchased sum be appropriated to the use of the town.” This shows the existence of a school building in 1781, and if indeed it was sold, it is not known when a replacement was built. There was a petition in 1793 as a grievance against the town for not supporting a school, including ‘power to have a suitable school house in the district completed...’ There certainly was a school on the lot when the town had by 1807, seven school districts, with the Center Hill School House being number one. School records for the district, which still survive, start in 1841, and throughout the records an effort is made to build a new school. The effort never happens until 1888, the date of the current structure on the lot. It was voted to sell the old school house to the highest bidder, with John C. Hall committee to build a new school house and to have it ready for October 1882. It became a private residence in 1956.

### **Parsonage**



Meanwhile, the town remained without a minister after the dismissal of Rev. Tuck in 1774. Rev. Benjamin Thurston was invited to take the position, and in preparation the town “Voted that there be a Parsonage house and barn built upon the Parsonage lands, where it shall be thought most proper, of the following Dimensions, viz.: the House to be 40 by 30 feet, and 2 story high; the barn to be 35 by 30 feet, and our elected Pastor to be consulted as to the finishing the Parsonage House as to convenience.” The Rev. Thurston declined the invitation, but the town went ahead and built a parsonage. Finally in 1784, the Rev. Ebenezer Haseltine accepted the call to preach in Epsom and was settled in the new parsonage.

After thirty years of preaching, Rev. Haseltine died, and the town picked up the expense of his funeral and allowed his widow the use of the parsonage and the rest of his earnings for the year. The town, with the beginnings of other religious societies, could not come to a common agreement in hiring a new minister, and a new ‘Congregational Religious Society of the Town of Epsom’ was formed, and in 1814, voted to ask the Rev. Jonathan Curtis to be the new minister. He accepted in January of 1815 and was given the use of the parsonage land and buildings. Since the town could not band together in the hiring of

Rev. Curtis, and with other religious organizations beginning to flourish, and yet further with an eye on frugality (remember Rev. Tuck bought the original parsonage lot), they sold the parsonage lot to the Rev. Curtis in December of 1816. He remained minister until January of 1825, and kept many good records and seemed quite successful. He wrote the first published history of Epsom in 1823, which was reprinted about 1889. During the later part of his ministry, the use of the meetinghouse became a troublesome issue for the town. Other religious societies demanded use of the building, forcing different denominations there during different parts of the day. The Congregational Society chose to meet at Captain Heath's hall for the 1820 season and looked into a new meetinghouse for the Society. In 1821 a committee was named to help settle the issues with the town, but complications with the various pew holders made a resolution impossible. It was not until 1845 that the Congregationalist's built a church in that part of town known as 'slab city.' The McClary's and the Epsom Church had an interesting relationship going back to the Major Andrew McClary and the Reverend Tuck. In an interesting letter to a local paper, Enoch Eastman relates memories of some local events. Enoch was born in Deerfield April 15, 1810 and died in Iowa in 1885. He was the son of John Eastman and Mary Worthen James. The Eastman's lived near the Epsom/Deerfield line and attended church in Epsom. Enoch's brother, Lowell Eastman, was a resident of Epsom. It was in the fall of 1869, while living in California, he received a copy of the local paper, "The Suncook Valley Times" which caused him to pause and reflect on his youth, and prompted him to write the paper a letter. The paper focused on historical events and people, and this excerpted letter of Enoch Eastman gives a first hand account of events in Epsom.

*And now, when I begin to tire at evening and feel the weight of the finger of time upon the physical man, along come this gem of the Suncook Valley (Suncook Valley Times), and hunts me out in the far-off west, and takes me back to the land and days of my youth, tells of the people and events of by-gone years, and imagination enlivens youthful blood and I am a boy again, sitting in that same old Academy, hearing our old friends, Joy and Curtis, expound the ablativ and vocative, and solve the square and the cubit.*

*It tells too of the Harvey's, Knowlton's, of the Heaths, Hazelton's. Curtis' and McClary's, and of the old New Hampshire Turnpike, which by the way was voted a free road in Northwood. But the writer had forgot all about gates. Well, there was a gate right in the road. It stood at Yeaton's Tavern, at the closing of the "North road" in Epsom. Afterwards it was moved south, about a mile on to \_\_\_\_ hill, where it was tended by the "colored people" Catoe and Daily.*

*Both of the men, Catoe and Daily, were Revolutionary pensioners for services in the war to establish a government in which they "had no rights, which a white man was bound to respect." Lady Catoe afterwards moved to Exeter and became a pensioner under Col. Benton's Widow bill, the same bill by which the Widow Michael McClary of Epsom also became a pensioner.*

*And thereby hangs a tale that is nearby them. Mr. Curtis, before referred to, was the successor in Epsom of Rev. Mr. Hazelton (Hazeltine), settled for life at the expense of the town. Ministers, like women, were supposed not to enjoy the right of elective franchise. Nevertheless Mr. Curtis voted, and not only voted, but he cast a Federal ballot and I believe the only one of the kind cast in town. At any rate it was federal. Afterwards in*

*discussing the vote over some good liquor, the way such things were always done in those good old times, Gen. McClary said Curtis was a d\_\_\_\_\_d federal, that he had rather have old Hazelton's bones dug up from behind the meeting house and put up in the pulpit to preach, than to have Curtis there. Well, the evening wore away and the night and the liquor too; and the talk, for it was only talk, was forgotten.*

*But someone was kind enough to tell Mr. Curtis what Gen. McClary thought of his patriotism.*

*Afterwards when Thanksgiving was approaching, Gen. McClary sent a turkey to Mr. Curtis. But still remembering the election, Mr. Curtis declined to receive it, and returned it by the bearer with a note saying: "Sir. I have on numerous occasions received favors from you, for which I have been thankful. But such has been your expression about me of late, that should I receive this, I have reason to fear it might contain something destructive to live. I therefore decline to accept it."*

*The result was that at the next "Town Meeting" it was voted that Mr. Curtis might preach in the meeting house "half the time," and his support was curtailed to the society. Other denominations occupied the meeting house every other Sunday, and occasionally Elder Ebenezer Knowlton, of Catamount, who had a voice like an archangel, would come down and preach so loud in the meeting house, that it disturbed the sinners over across the road in the school house, where Mr. Curtis was preaching, I was there and saw and heard.*

*Soon after this the patriarch Cato went dead, and was quietly buried in the graveyard back of the meetinghouse, where he and the Rev. Mr. Hazelton still repose, without a chiseled slab to tell of the spot.*

*The next week Gen. McClary died, the funeral service was held in the old meeting house. People came from afar. Large delegations from Concord and Pittsfield were there. Mr. Curtis preached the funeral sermon from the singular text "Without any order." I was but a boy, scarcely in my teens, but I remember it well. The thread of the discourse was that all without any order go to the grave; the rich, the poor, the young, the old, the high, the low.*

*"The grave is the common lot of all. All go down on one common level in the grave. Last week the poor African, to-day Gen. McClary." And as he came near the close, the speaker said it was customary to extol the dead, but he could not do so. "You all knew the deceased. If I should speak of his patriotism you all know that. Should I tell you he was at the battle of Bunker Hill, so also was the poor African who died last week He closed by reading that beautiful hymn of Dr. Watts, two lines of which ran thus: The true, the wise, the reverend head Must lie as low as ours.*

*Probably no funeral sermon in New Hampshire ever created such an excitement. The Concord people said they guessed the speaker remembered the Turkey, and I expect he did.*

*The result was, figuratively speaking, that Gen. McClary rolled over in his coffin. A division soon sprang up in the church and society, and Mr. Curtis soon after left Epsom and went to Hanover in Mass., and from there to Pittsfield.*

*The moral to all this is, that when a man presents a minister with a turkey, his better way is to eat it.*

*Fraternally yours, E.W. Eastman*

Rev. Curtis began to preach in Pittsfield following his tenure in Epsom, and remained owner of the parsonage and property until he sold it to Joseph Spaulding of Windham in 1836. It is unknown if it was occupied after Rev. Curtis stopped preaching, or whether he remained and traveled to Pittsfield to preach. It can be assumed that after 1836 he lived in Pittsfield as his wife, who died in 1840, is buried there.

The Reverend Curtis sold the parsonage building to Joseph Spaulding in 1836, who after three years sold out to John Chesley Jr., Chesley sold the land and buildings to Hanover Dickey Jr. in 1839, and is where his parents lived.

Hanover Dickey was the son of David and Rachel (Hanover) Dickey of the Mountain District. Born in 1773, he married at Epsom in 1799, Lydia Osgood, daughter of Col. Samuel and Eleanor (Morrill) Osgood. The couple's family included: Eleanor, born 1803, married at Epsom in 1825, Capt. Samuel Wells; David, born 1806, married at Claremont, NH, Lois Everett Nelson; Dr. Hanover, born 1807, died unmarried at 1873 at Lowell, MA; Abraham Osgood, born 1812, married at Haverhill, NH in 1842, Sarah Hazen Page, daughter of Governor John and Hannah (Merrill) Page; Sally O., born 1814, died unmarried at Lowell, MA in 1858; and Lydia, born 1816, married the Reverend William Henry Hayward at Epsom in 1840.

Hanover Dickey's heirs, Hanover, Abraham O. and the widow Lydia, sold the old parsonage in 1858 to John C. Hall who sold it the next day to Samuel Wiggin, at this time equaling 8 acres, land and buildings. The property was reduced in size even further when Wiggin sold 2 acres, land and buildings in 1867 to Charles C. Batchelder. Due to some domestic problem, the Supreme Judicial Court awarded it to his wife Ursula Batchelder of Northwood, and she sold it to Charles Sumner Hall (son of John C. Hall) in 1875. He held it only a few months before selling it to Betsey L. Piper, wife of George H. Piper, and deeded the house to a son by her first marriage, Oscar L. Hall. At his death by will it went to Bert O. Piper, son of Betsey by her second marriage, and it remained in the Piper-Oscar Hall-Cox family until 1945.

Betsey L. Piper was Betsey Caroline Langley, daughter of True and Mehitable (Dow) Langley who married first about 1856, Lemuel Hall, and second after his death in 1866, George H. Piper. George and Betsey had a son: Bert O., born in 1872, married at Epping, NH in 1892, Edith G. Hopkinson. George H. Piper died in 1923, his wife in 1912. His son Bert O. and his wife had two daughters: Bernice Ida, born 1894, married at Epsom in 1936 as his second wife, John W. Cox; and Helen Ruth, born 1895, died 1896. By her first marriage to Lemuel Hall, Betsey (Langley) Hall-Piper had son Oscar Lemuel. He married at Haverhill, MA in 1892, Hattie A. Lillis, widow of John A. Frost. They both died in 1923.

Later owners included Eleanor Hillson Hall, Edwin and Doris Jacquith, Howard D. Hughes, and James O. and Cyrene Wells. Gilbert Knowles in a paper prepared for the Epsom Historical Association in 1975, wrote the following:

*Although I have found nothing written up about it, Mr. Luther Hall, who died in 1939, and lived in the beautiful house just west of here until it burned, told Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Nutter that an ell part of the “parsonage” was sold and moved by oxen down the lane and then made into another house on the lot where Charles and Ruth Batchelder now live. Mr. Hall told that in turning the corner on the main road with the oxen and their load there was some damage to the grounds of the property of George Batchelder (now Watson Ambrose) and that Mr. Batchelder made quite a fuss about it. As Mr. Batchelder died in 1889, the date of the ell moving must have been a number of years earlier.*

### **Morrill-Sanborn House**

During the time that Rev. Haseltine lived in the parsonage, the town of Epsom sold off another corner of the lot in 1795 to William McClary of Epsom. It was described as follows “a certain parcel of land lying in Epsom aforesaid the same being part of the parsonage lot where the Reverend Ebenezer Haseltine now lives, to contain one half acre to take its beginning at the pound, then to run Easterly as the said ministers lot and as far back as well contain the said half acre the same being sold at public vendue agreeably to the vote of the Town.” William built a house on the lot and about 1798 moved to Stanstead, Canada, selling part of the land to Michael McClary in 1799 with ‘house, barn and all buildings’ and a portion to David Lawrence Morrill (later Governor of New Hampshire, married Jane Wallace). David Lawrence Morrill was a Doctor and moved his practice to Goffstown, selling the property to his brother Samuel Morrill (also a Doctor) in 1801. It later became the home of Benvolio Sanborn.

Benvolio Sanborn was born in 1797, a son of Deacon Ira and Mary (Page) Sanborn. He married at Epsom in 1823, Ann Lane, and their family included: Samuel Wallace, born 1826, married in 1860, Elizabeth S. Stoddard; unnamed child, born and died 1827; Charlotte M., born 1828, married John A. Gardner; Susan Parson, twin to Charlotte, died 1834; Elizabeth M., born 1830, married William W. Virgin who died in the Civil War, and married second, Walter Gage in 1886; Joel Libby, born 1832, married at Boston in 1868, Ida C. Shattuck; Edwin A., born 1835, married at Lynn, MA in 1868, Rachel Lord; Austin E., born 1837, died unmarried at Concord in 1873; Mary, born and died in 1839; Clara M. B., born 1840, married at Concord in 1862, Walter Gage, she died in 1870; Moses, born 1842, married in 1864, Lelia A. Ordway, daughter of Eneas Ordway; and Druscilla B., born 1844, married at Haverhill, MA, Newell C. Whittier.

### **John C. Hall House**





Samuel Peabody purchased half of this lot that had been sold to Michael McClary by William McClary. Peabody in 1838 sold it with 'house, barn and woodhouse, to John Folsom and Samuel Chapman of Tamworth, who in 1842 sold it to John C. Hall. This is most likely the site of the John C. Hall home, which burned Old Home Day 1916 after being struck by lightning. This starts to give us a picture of what this lot appeared to look like, the frontage on East Street having houses on both the east and west ends of the lot, with the parsonage building between and set back from the road. Also in the area on the west end, the town pound, a small common and somewhere, a schoolhouse.

John C. Hall was born in 1806, his parents unknown, married about 1831, Martha E. Rand, daughter of Richard and Anna (Lake) Rand. The children were: Sarah Ann, born 1832, married at Manchetser in 1859, James Kendall Taylor; Martha Ellen, born 1834, married at Epsom in 1856, Joseph Morrill Emery of Pembroke; James Wheelock, born 1837, married at Pembroke, Sarah Elvira Emery, brother to Joseph; Amanda Sophia, born 1840, died unmarried in 1917; John Hamilton, born 1842, married Nellie Farnham; Deborah Jane, seen also as D. Jennie) born 1845, married a Raymore, and at Epsom in 1868, Frank Gilbert Stebbins; Georgie Anna, born 1848, married at Epsom in 1874, William J. Desiletts; Luther Taylor, born 1851, died unmarried in 1939; and Charles Sumner, born 1854, married at Epsom in 1876, Ellen M. Dolbeer, daughter of Calvin and Abby Lucas (Goss) Dolbeer.

### **James H. McClary House**



The small two-acre section of land sold off from the eastern part of the parsonage lot and facing East Street also went through many owners. Originally sold to James Gray by the town to raise money for schools in 1778, he sold it in 1789 to John McClary Jr., one of the son's of Maj. Andrew McClary. Though bought with no mention of buildings, he sold the lot 'with the buildings thereon' to William Duncan of Concord in 1792. Maj. William Duncan did not hang on to it very long as he sold it about two years later to Solomon Sutton, who may have lived there a while. Duncan ran a store and Sutton a tavern, both licensed to sell liquor in the town. Solomon was 'of Epsom' when he sold to Ebenezer Virgin of Concord – the complete two acres, land and buildings. It came back into the hands of the McClary family in December of 1799, as James Harvey McClary, brother to the John McClary who sold it in 1792, bought the property. At the time James Harvey McClary was living on his father's and grandfather's homestead, which he sold to Joseph Lawrence, and moved down to this lot. Most historians agree that he built the house currently standing there, and the architecture probably bears this out. He was running the old tavern and store from the homestead, and apparently ran some sort of store from his

new home. In 1810, suffering from an illness, he sold the property 'being where he now lives' to his cousin Michael McClary. James Harvey McClary died eight days later. By deed of February 1814, his widow again owned the property, and years later rented the store to James Babb, who bought the property in October of 1825. Just a few weeks later, he sold it to Thomas D. Merrill, who was soon to become one of the most successful businessmen in Epsom. It was in January of this same year that Jonathan Curtis ended his tenure as minister in Epsom.

Thomas D. Merrill lived on what is now the western end of the McClary Cemetery, his property adjoining the old burying ground. He bought and sold a lot of property, was a holder of many town offices, active in town affairs, handled many legal affairs, and was a strong supporter of the Congregational Society. Deeds show that he bought the property for its use as a parsonage as the original parsonage was in private hands. The original old parsonage lot and buildings were sold by Joseph Spaulding to John Chesley on the third of April 1839, who sold it two days later to Hanover Dickey Jr. In the description of the sale of the property, it is stated that it starts 'at the Northwesterly corner of land now occupied as a parsonage and sold by Thomas D. Merrill for that purpose.' That would put the Rev. Winthrop Fifield in the home on this 2 acre lot, he following in 1837, Rev. Abel Manning. It would appear that perhaps most or all of the successors of Rev. Curtis may have stayed here. In 1845, the same year as the Congregational Society built its church, Thomas D. Merrill sold the property to William Wallace of Epsom, 2 acres, land and buildings, which he sold to the Rev. Rufus A. Putnam in 1847. The Rev. Putnam being the successor of Rev. Fifield, and the first pastor at the new church in 'slab city.'

Rev. Putnam sold this small lot to Perley Giles in 1856, and he in turn sold it to Nancy B. Brown the next year. After owning the property for nearly 8 years, it was sold to Hannah P. Swain of Chichester who married first Elbridge L. Swain, who died in Civil War service, and then married Charles Augustus Steele. It passed to her son from her first marriage, Joseph L. Swain, who sold it to Michael McClary Steele (who later changed his name to Charles M. Steele), son of Hannah Swain and her second spouse, Charles Augustus Steele. In the same deed of 1839, when John Chesley sold the former parsonage to Hanover Dickey (known for quite some time after as 'the Dickey Place'), part of the bounds included land of Benjamin Hall to 'the parade grounds.' This was often referred to later as the 'commons' and was part of that small corner of the parsonage lot which included the old town pound.

Hannah Plummer Cilley was born in 1837, daughter of Samuel P. and Hannah W. (Critchett) Cilley, and married first in 1858 at Chichester, Elbridge Lyman Swain, born in 1829, son of Jonathan Blake and Martha Shepard (Johnson) Swain. They had two children: Joseph Lyman, born 1859, married Ella G. Parker, daughter of Hiram and Lavina E. (Place) Parker; and Sarah Mehitable, born 1861, married James Van D. Bunker of Barnstead, parents of Edwin L. Bunker. Elbridge died in Civil War Service, and Hannah married second at Chichester in 1871, Charles Augustus Steele, born in 1820, and their children were: Charles McClary, born 1872, married at Epsom in 1897, Helen E. P. Yeaton, daughter of James A. and Annie R. (Crockett) Yeaton; and Andrew McClary, born 1874, married at Pittsfield in 1896, Althea A. Rowell.

Charles and Helen E. P. Steele had children: Francis, born and died 1898; and James M., born 1901 and married Hazel A. Philbrick, daughter of Maurice C. and Mary Parsons (Cass) Philbrick. The home passed to son James M. Steele, who sold the house in 1964 to Simone Hill, and was purchased in 1969 by Louis LaFleur.

### **First Ministers Lot**



This is one of two unnumbered lots that were set aside for town use and had to be inserted among the home lots, not shown on the original map of the town. In June of 1761, the town voted the following:

“At a legal meeting held in Epsom at the house of Capt. Andrew McClary, on thursday, the twenty-fifth of this 1761 instant June, according to notification dated June the 20, the free holders met according to notification and thus

“1. Voted Capt. John McClary moderator.

“2. Voted Mr. John Tucke to be their gospel minister.

“3. Voted one hundred acres of Land as a settlement as the charter allowed 50 acres laid out and the other 50 in some Convenient place, reserving the privilege for setting of a meeting house and what of this Lot is taken for setting the meeting be made up in the other Lot.

“4. Voted thirty pounds starling as a salary for the first two years, reckoning dolers at the Rate of a 6 pt doler.

“5. Voted That an addition of five pounds be made to sd minister next after the first two years are expired.

“6. Voted That thirty cords of wood be annually cut and hauled to his house.

“7. Voted abraham lebee, Isaac lebee sen., John Blake, george wallis, cap. John mcclary, ephraim Locke, Samuel blake, Left. Eliphlet Sanborn, nathan marden be a committee to present a call to Mr. John Tucke.

“8. Voted six hundred pounds, old tenor, towards building a minister’s house, to be paid in Labour if he accepts the call.

“Town meeting ended.

“NATHAN MARDEN, Clark.”

And shortly thereafter, on August 14, 1761, it was “Voted That the meeting house shall stand on the same Lot where the old meeting house formerly stood, at or near the Burying place.” This indicates a couple of things, first that there was an earlier meeting house on the site, and second that the cemetery was already in use prior to Reverend Tuck arriving in Epsom and the building of the new meeting house.

The town was short funds, and the Reverend bought the lot and built his own house, which was finished just about the time he married. His house held several of the early meetings of the congregation while the town worked on building the meetinghouse. Rev. Tuck's tenure lasted until 1774. Historian John Mark Moses relates in his history of the first church of Epsom:

*By the latter part of 1773, some of the leading citizens had become seriously disaffected; among them, Capt. Andrew McClary, Doctor Williams and Jeremiah Prescott, who made formal complaint. Ephraim Locke, also had "grievances," quite a number, it would seem, as a meeting was appointed to settle "some" of them. A change of pastor had become expedient.*

*Had the church been free to act, this might have been effected without scandal. But the consent of a council was necessary; and, as in a divorce case, there must be charges. January 3, 1774, the town voted to call a council "to settle the difficulties subsisting between the Rev. John Tucke and the inhabitants of Epsom." Six weeks later a church meeting, thinly attended because of a snowstorm, voted the same.*

*The council met March 15, and reported March 18. The report fills four finely written pages of the town records. As twelve men had spent three days investigating complaints against Mr. Tucke, we should be well informed of his faults.*

*No serious charge was sustained. In some small business transactions he had taken liberties, apparently not complained of at the time. In general, he was not disposed to over-reach, as "it evidently appears to us that Mr. Tucke did not take the advantage when he had fair opportunities, and freely offered to pay in divers instances what persons knew of no claim to."*

*As to discharge of pastoral duties, the only serious criticism made by the council was the following: "We think Mr. Tucke chargeable with neglect of duty in not visiting Mr. Ward when desired; and we can't but censure his hard speeches with regard to some of the church and people."*

*Mr. Tucke humbly acknowledged himself guilty of the "faults and follies" of which the council had convicted him, and asked the forgiveness of church and people, promising reparation to any that had been wronged. Thereupon the council advised the continuance of his pastorate for three months, in the hope that the discontent would subside, giving the town permission to dismiss him after that time.*

*The council also gave good advice to the people, deploring the "heat and passion" shown by Mr. Tucke's accusers, and their efforts to "magnify small and trivial matters" into grave crimes, and regretting "that many have forsaken the house, and some the table, of the Lord, and (as some express it in your articles of charge), wandered among devouring wolves."*

*June 18 the town voted to dismiss Mr. Tucke, and "that the meetinghouse' shall be shut up till the town sees cause to open said house again." One almost wonders if they did not nail up the door.*

*Thus Mr. Tucke's ministry closed under a cloud. His life went out a few years later, under circumstances of unusual sadness. He died at Salem, New York, February 9, 1777, probably of smallpox, while on his way to join the Revolutionary army as chaplain, leaving a widow, and at least six children.*

*The census of 1790 found Widow Mary Tucke in Epsom, as head of a family of five: two males over sixteen and three females. The homestead was sold February 15, 1797, to Simon Ames Heath, the deed being signed by the following heirs: Samuel Rand of Rye and wife Polly (Tucke), Samuel J. Tucke of Boston and wife Judith (Gardiner), Simeon Drake of Pittsfield and wife Love (Tucke), and Joseph, Richard and Abigail Tucke of Boston. October 3, 1797, the widow, then of Pittsfield, deeded her interest in the same. We may imagine that Mr. Tucke's dismissal and sudden death left the people divided in sympathies. Whether from this cause, or from the burdens of the Revolutionary War, it was nearly ten years before another pastor was settled.*

The tension between Major Andrew McClary and the Reverend was well known, and a grandson of Rev. John Tuck takes issue with how his grandfather was dismissed and how history treats Capt. Andrew McClary, though slightly illegible, what could be read is as follows:

*Owing to the inaccurate accounts of my grandfather given in Farmer and Moore's Historical Collections, I was induced to give a true and minute account of his life. It is there observed that he was dismissed from the ministry but without telling us why. As his removal from the ministry owing chiefly to the diabolical machinations of one person, whose true character had never been given to the world, it will be necessary to consider it here.*

*The same person also lost his line in the time of the Revolution and before him whom he had sought to destroy. Every reader of the history of the revolution well recollects the high encomiums lavished upon Capt. Andrew McClary whom every considerate person must acknowledge, cast away his life like a fool.*

*Mr. Tucke was at first in favour with McClary and received some assistance from him in his settlement, tho no more then from any other citizen according to his property. The disposition and character of him was at most desperate, overbearing and arbitrary. It is well known that in new settlements it often happens that some ill natured, overbearing fellow or set of fellows go on regardless of all law and in time bring almost everyone to do as they say. This character was Andrew McClary. He swore implacable vengeance to all who would not join him in effecting his designs. His difficulties were frequent among his neighbors. After a long train of difficulties, in which many worthy members of society had suffered severely, some by his giant power (for he was an overgrown man) and others by his skill in gambling. (He being a professor in the black art) The Rev. Mr. Tucke, in performing such duties as every faithful minister should, fell under his displeasure.*

*It was a sermon delivered in June 1774, it is believed, in which he [implies] strongly against vices of every kind and endeavored to dissuade his people from joining in them. This coming to the ears of McClary, he supposed the whole force directed at him, knowing himself guilty of introducing the worst of vices. An uproar now commenced. His rugged voice, on which floated the most abominable oaths, like bubbles from the raging cataract, was soon heard in every part of the town, and vengeance was proclaimed*

*against all, and in some instances, death to such as would not join with him in breaking up the ministry.*

*He next nailed up doors of the meetinghouse and threatened anyone with death that should attempt to open it. Some persons tried to reason with him but this only increased his rage and at one time he was heard to say 'I have shut the house and I defy God Almighty to open it,' at which his brother observed to him 'depend upon it brother as you have shut the doors of the house of God against our Godly minister, so I fear has God shut the doors of Heaven against you.'*

*On receiving the news of the battle of Lexington in 1775, McClary raised a company and marched to Charlestown, where after the battle of Bunker Hill, he was exposing himself, boasting of his courage in a place of imminent danger, when a cannonball thrown from a ship put an end to his life on the 17th June. Mr. [Moore] of Deerfield NH was near him when he was shot and repeatedly urged him to retire. Said he 'God damn them, the ball's not cast yet to kill me,' and from these words escaped his lips, a cannon ball shot from the Glasgow cut out his bowels and he had only time to say 'I am a dead man.'*

*This is the true account which has been kept in the dark, lest it should have some effect of the concerns of his relatives, but no one except the most suspicious would reflect anything there from, and says every fine historian, 'the truth must be told.'*

*Mr. Tucke now receiving an appointment in the army as chaplain and prepared for his departure. He set out from Epsom and after several days travel arrived at Danvers, here he was seized with a violent headache to which he had been always more or less accustomed through life, tho not to such an uncommon degree as at this time. A physician was called in, and some medicine administered which proved directly opposite to his complaint, or in their words greatly enraged it, for it proved to be the small pox, and he died Feb. 9th 1777, with all that composure or mind which arises from a rectitude of conduct and a consciousness of having committed no crime.*

*Mr. Tucke opposed, in his conversation, every measure of the British Parliament in its various attempts to force a tax on the American colonies, which he clearly foresaw would lead to an open [ ] political affairs however he never found [ ].*

*In a history of the town of Epsom by Rev. Mr. Curtis, slight notice is taken of the first minister, with an excuse for so doing that information could not be obtained, but he knew the family from whom I am descended and that my mother was his daughter from whom alone of course, he was to expect correct information about family particulars, more especially as chief of his papers, manuscripts and books fell into her hands. Particularly a manuscript entitled 'the Ecclesiastical Records of Epsom' which was exactly kept during his ministry there. How could Mr. Curtis dispense with the only true early accounts of the town, without even inquiring of a single descendant whether any such thing existed? Mr. Tucke was a son of the Rev. John Tucke who settled at Gosport (Smith's Isles) where he continued until his death 12 August 1773.*

*He had two brothers who immigrated to this country at the same time. One settled at Hampton and the other somewhere in the south. It is said in Maryland, descendants of the former are found in Brentwood, N.H. and in Massachusetts.*

*The subject of this history married a daughter of Rev. Samuel Parson of Rye by whom he had seven children. John, the elder of these, in the beginning of the war of Independence, sailed on a cruise in the ship American and was never heard from again. The whole crew was made up of promising young men. Richard died at [ ] in the West Indies. Joseph went out to Europe as super cargo and died in Liverpool. Samuel Jones, the only son now living is a merchant in Boston (it is true and mentioned in Farmer and Moore's Col. That he was a merchant of Baltimore, but not then because he removed back to Boston in 1822 whence he went in 1817). The three daughters are living. One married Thomas Rand of Rye, one Simeon Drake of Northwood, the other Samuel G. Bishop Esq. of Connecticut, no Columbia, N.H.*

*Mr. Tucke, though his fore mentioned death, must be lamented by all true friends of science and virtue, left ample monuments of his great [ ] and experience there in. He was eminent in the mathematics, as his manuscripts (now belonging to me) fully show and he wrote the banned languages with accuracy and ease. The deplorable condition into which the family of Mr. Tucke was thrown on his being obliged to desist from preaching, cannot be described. His wife, a widow, of a delicate constitution, with several young children, was now left in a great measure to the will of his enemies, as will be explained.*

*The most frivolous law suit, and to Mr. Tuck the most fatal, were brought against him by or at the instigation of McClary. On being driven from the meetinghouse, Mr. Tuck preached in the hall of his own house, where his good friend would assemble for instruction on days of meetings. But the number was gradually lessened by the [madness] of McClary. He at length hit upon the most effective and perhaps the only means, utterly to destroy his victim. They were suits of law! Swayed by the will of the prosecutor!!*

*No cushion had been furnished to the meetinghouse, and after a time Mr. Tuck, at his own charge procured one and placed it in the pulpit. This was of course wrested from him when the church was nailed up. When it was found that the house was not again to be opened to Mr. Tucke, he caused it to be entered, and the cushion taken out. This he had a right to do because it belonged to him. This was no sooner known to McClary but he brought a suit against Mr. Tuck in which he was arraigned at thief.*

*I will not disgust my readers with the particulars of the trial, for they tend only to stamp with the blackest infamy, the prosecutor, of which indeed they must have discovered too much in the very outset of this narrative. It will suffice here only to observe that although nothing was made out against the defendant, yet it caused him the greatest distress.*

*At another time he was tried for theft and with no better foundation than before, but with more success on the part of the prosecutor. Mr. Tucke had boards at a mill, his neighbors also had boards there. Mr. Tuck having occasion for some, went a man with directions*

*which to take, but when he came to the mill, took boards from the wrong pile; in consequence of not understanding his instructions, or from the difficulty of distinguishing among piles of boards, where of course there was much sameness.*

*Thus are the circumstances stated that led to the destruction of the family, for the widow was swindled out of the rent of her farm for some years, which greatly increased their distresses.*

*James Gray who died in the winter of 1821, for a stipulated price per acre, improved her farm. After years he was requested to make payment, and after being put off for some time, she saw no other way of obtaining her right but by a recourse to the law. Accordingly a suit was commenced. At the day of trial, a woman much attend in person' at a great distance from home; (she had no male connection nearer than Rye) but this would have been trifling but for the acts of a villain. (all at the instigation of Gray) For eventually, she had with great fatigue, on horseback, arrived at the appointed place, or in its neighborhood, some one or more, under the greatest pretensions of friendship, waited upon her and informed her that the trial of her case would not come on until a future day. Thus disappointed she returned home. The trial immediately came on, and the result was, she lost her right. The loss, together with the cost of court, subjected her to still greater sufferings.*

*It was considered very remarkable at that time and is so at the present day by all old people who knew the circumstance; which was this; General Andrew McClary was killed near Bunker Hill just one year, on that very and to him fatal day, from the time he nailed up the meetinghouse at Epsom, before related.*

Reverend John Tuck was the son of the Rev. John and Mary (Dole) Tuck of the Isles of Shoals. He married at Epsom in 1762, Mary Parsons, daughter of the Reverend Samuel and Mary (Jones) Parsons. Their children were: Mary, born 1763, married in 1790, Thomas Rand, son of Samuel and Sarah (Dowst) Rand of Rye; John, born 1765, in the beginning of the War of Independence sailed on a cruise in the ship AMERICA and was not heard from after; Samuel Jones, born 1767, married in 1791, Judith Gardiner, resided Nantucket, MA; Love Muchmore, born 1768, married at Epsom in 1794, Simeon Drake, resided Concord, NH; Joseph, born 1770, died at Liverpool, England; Richard, born 1772, died at an unknown date in the West Indies; and Abigail, born 1774 of whom nothing more is known.

The house and lot, was sold in October of 1797, to Simon Ames Heath of Canterbury, who had married the daughter of Capt. Andrew McClary, Elizabeth McClary. Here Simon Heath ran a successful tavern and the property remained in the Heath family until 1864. The home was a popular site, hosting church services, courts, and even circus animal exhibitions.

Captain Simon Ames Heath was born at Canterbury in 1765, and married at Epsom in 1796, Elizabeth McClary, daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth (McCrillis) McClary. His first wife, Betsey Kimball, died in 1793, with whom he had a son, Joseph Kimball Heath.



Simon and Elizabeth's family included: Betsey, born 1798, married Samuel Weeks of Epsom; John McClary, born 1800, married at Epsom in 1823, Abigail M. Cate, daughter of John and Mary (Towle) Cate; Douglas Merrill, born 1802, married at Epsom in 1826, Rebecca F. Currier; William, born 1804, died unmarried at Andover, MA in 1825; Benjamin Moody, born 1807, married at Epsom in 1830, Rachel Dolbeer Sanborn, daughter of Deacon William Sanders and Elizabeth (Cass) Sanborn; and Andrew McClary, born 1810, married at Epsom in 1832, Jane Cram Cass, daughter of Levi and Mehitabel (Osgood) Cass;

In 1864, Simon's sons Benjamin Moody Heath and John M. Heath sold the property to George W. Batchelder, as they moved to Lynn, Ma.

George W. Batchelder was born in Meredith, NH in 1816 to Dearborn and Mary (Nealley) Batchelder. who moved his family to Epsom. George W. married at Allenstown in 1836, Abigail B. Wells, daughter of Samuel and Hannah (Brown) Wells. Their family consisted of: Lucetta M., born about 1837, died unmarried in 1905; Orison, born 1838, married at Concord in 1859, Ann Maria Clark, daughter of John and Rebecca (Withee) Clark; Charles C., born 1840, married first at Epsom in 1862, Ursula Knowlton, and second in 1882 at Barnstead, Jennie Young; Elbridge G., born 1844, married about 1865, Vienna R. Yeaton, daughter of John and Sarah (Bickford) Yeaton; and Alonzo Elbridge, born about 1844, married first, Carrie E. Page, daughter of James D. and Elizabeth P. (Locke) Page, who died in 1894, and he married second at Deerfield in 1895, Laura Abbie Haynes, who married second, Timothy B. Langley.

By will, the property passed to a son of George Batchelder, Alonzo E. Batchelder, on his death in 1889. Alonzo and his first wife had two daughters: Hattie L., born 1870, married at Epsom in 1888, Albert David Sherburne, son of Capt. James Moses and Lucy Coolidge (Bickford) Sherburne; and Myrtie Ella, born 1872, married at Chichester in 1896, Clarence Henry Sanborn. By his second wife he had one daughter, Doris Abbie, born 1902 and married in 1927 at Concord, Ellsworth Blake Philbrick, son of Maurice Crawford and Mary Parsons (Cass) Philbrick.

When Alonzo died, 2/3 of the property went to his wife Laura, and 1/3 to his daughter Laura, and both were purchased by Charles Sumner Hall in 1907. He sold it the next year to Bernard S. Anderson of Greenville who just a few months later sold it to Albion Ambrose of Deerfield. The family owned the 'old tavern' until it burned.

Albion Newell Ambrose was the son of Byron and Flora M. (Watson) Ambrose, born at Deerfield in 1865. He married at Haverhill, MA in 1892, Susie F. Coburn. The couple's children were: Byron H., born and died in 1894; Jesse Gertrude, born 1895 at Haverhill, MA, married at Epsom in 1916, Edward Roscoe Kelley; Frank Eben Ambrose, born at Haverhill, MA in 1896, married Edna Witherspoon; Forrest Everett, born 1898 at Haverhill, MA married Alfreda Gustafson; Watson True, born Haverhill, MA in 1900, married at Pittsfield in 1920, Helen C. Ordway, daughter of Albert Alanson and Angie E. (Crooker) of Epsom; Alice Flora, born 1905 in Deerfield, married at Epsom in 1929, John Lemuel Barton of Newport, NH; and Hattie Elizabeth, born 1908 at Epsom, married

at Epsom in 1930, Elmore Alfred Bickford, son of Charles Sumner and Katie Alice (Rand) Bickford.

### **Heath and Hall Homestead**



In 1834 Benjamin M. Heath sold to Thomas D. Merrill 15 acres east of the burying ground which in 1849, along with the rest of his Epsom property, was sold to John Griffin Jr., and Aaron B. Grant. There were two buildings east of the cemetery, and in 1851, John Griffin Jr. and David M. Knowles sold to John Wells. 'a house about 23 feet square one story high being that part of the old store formerly owned by Thomas D. Merrill and by him fitted up for said Wells to live in and in which he now resides.' The adjoining land came into dispute and was deeded to Joseph Lawrence from the Sheriff and John Griffin Jr., which on the 1858 map is identified as the store of J. Griffins & Son's store, with the cemetery on the west and the house of J. Wells on the east. John Wells mortgages to Joseph Lawrence in 1860 'the building now occupied by us as a dwelling standing on land of said Joseph Lawrence being the same which was deeded to said John Wells in 1851.'

Lawrence appears to have retained the store for some time, and it is known that John C. Hall operated a store as well, but it remains uncertain whether they are one in the same. John C. Hall bought the house in 1859 and it was occupied by his son James (Jim) Hall. Work was done on the house during 1860 by neighbor Charles J. P. Brown, including siding the barn. James married and moved shortly thereafter to Pembroke.

John C. Hall sold the house to Andrew J. Hall in 1864, and Andrew J. Hall sold to Horace Robinson, two tracts of land with the house, and excluding the store still owned by Joseph Lawrence. Horace Robinson sold the home in 1869 to Daniel Clough of Epsom. Joseph Lawrence sold to Clough a half acre of land in 1870, with no mention of buildings, which bordered the burying ground, likely the location of the store. Clough continued to buy adjoining land. Daniel Clough and his wife both died in 1880, and the heirs in 1881 deeded the homestead to their sister, Rosilla W. Heath.

Rosilla Winslow Clough moved with her family to New Rye, and her father, Daniel Clough downsized late in life moving to the property on Center Hill next to the McClary Cemetery. She married at Epsom in 1853 Christopher Smith Heath of Thetford, Vermont and resided on her father's homestead on Center Hill. Christopher and Rosilla had children: Rosilla Estelle, born 1855, married at Epsom in 1883, Charles Hall of Barrington; Clarence Linwood; born 1856, died 1857; Alonzo Smith, born 1858, married

at Epsom in 1885, Isabel Fifield; Fred Sherman, born 1866, married at Epsom in 1888, Harriet L. Tripp, daughter of William and Nancie E. (Preston) Tripp; and Ansel Clough, born 1874, married at Epsom in 1897, Edith G. Batchelder, daughter of Elbridge G. and Vienna R. (Yeaton) Batchelder.

Rosilla was active in civic affairs, including the Epsom Centre Historic Club and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She was a poet and left a family genealogy. Her husband, Christopher S. Heath was a Civil War Veteran. he died in 1896, Rosilla in 1921. The homestead was deeded in 1917 to her daughter R. Estelle (Heath) Hall, and husband Charles 'cobbler' Hall.

Charles and Estelle Hall had a son, Roland Smith Hall, born in 1884, and married at Epsom in 1909, Olive May Sullivan, daughter of John F. and Martha O. (Edmunds) Sullivan. Roland and Olive M. had two daughters, Carol Olive born in 1910, and Vienna Rosilla born in 1911. They sold the homestead to Edward Sequin in 1947, and was sold that same year to H.V. Higley. In 1957 it was owned by Roland and Louise LeFleur who sold the farm to Charles and Ruth Batchelder in 1970. The barns burned in 2004.

### **The Meetinghouse**

The proprietor's of the town voted in October of 1732 *That there be a meeting-house of thirty foot Long and twenty-four feet wide, Immediately Built at the charge of the Propriat, & that Mr. Joshua Brackett, Mr. Willm Lock & Theod. Atkinson, Esq., be a committee to a Gree for the same with any Parson or Parsons shall do it soonest and cheapest.* It appears to have been built as the records show that Mr. William Lock received thirty-seven pounds five shillings towards building said meetinghouse as per his receipts, and the proprietor's held a meeting at Epsom 'at the meetinghouse' May 4, 1743. What became of this first meetinghouse is unknown as no other meetings there appear in any records, instead most were held at the McClary's. By 1761, after the hiring of the Reverend Tuck, the town voted to erect a new meetinghouse and "that the meetinghouse shall stand on the same lot where the old meetinghouse formerly stood, at or near the Burying place." Money was in short supply, and it was in 1764 when a 50 by 40 foot meetinghouse was finally erected. The meetinghouse is not seen in any deeds as it was located within the bounds of what is now the old part of the McClary Cemetery, behind the present monument outside the current fence. Later votes relating to the meetinghouse included: in 1779, voted to remove the singing pew in the meetinghouse in Epsom from where it now stands and erect it in the front gallery for the singers and such persons as are or shall be admitted to sit in said pew, their qualifications are to be left to the direction of the Master Singer; 1786, to see if the town will choose an agent to finish the Parsonage building in Epsom as far as the same is to be completed at present, as also to repair the meetinghouse windows and finish the inside of said house; 1796, voted that the outside of the meetinghouse be repaired by clapboarding and shingling the present season; 1798, the Selectmen be directed and authorized to procure a cushion for the pulpit in the meetinghouse in Epsom at the expense of the town; 1816, To see if the town will authorize the erection or building of porches and a steeple of cupola to the meetinghouse in Epsom (article dismissed).

The meetinghouse served the Congregational Church, and about 1824, the Freewill Baptist's also used the building. The Congregationalist's built what they called 'the vestry' on land of Simon A. Heath, and the Baptist's moved about 1832 to Gossville in their own meetinghouse. The Congregationalist's built a new meetinghouse at Slab City in 1845. The town erected a new Town House, and sold the old meetinghouse at auction, receiving \$1.80 for its share of the sale.

The only full description of the old meetinghouse was given as an old home day address by Mary L. Cass in 1901.

### ***Reminiscence of an Old Lady***

*By Mary L. Cass*

**OLD HOME DAY ADDRESS**

August 21, 1901 – Epsom, New Hampshire

*Probably there are but a few present this afternoon that ever attended a church service in the old meeting house that stood on the hill at what has been called the "Center."*

*I wish I could show a picture of the building, but I do not think there is one in existence. I used to go to the meeting there (as it was called, - not attending church) more than seventy years ago and can remember perfectly well just how it looked and the people who attended the service.*

*It was a large square building with three outside doors – one facing the South, the front door; one on the East and another on the West; each of these doors entered directly into the meeting room; no entries or halls.*

*A walk or aisle led directly from the front door to the pulpit stairs. There were several steps up into the pulpit which was enclosed by a partition so high that when the minister was sitting down he could not be seen by anyone upon the floor. Over the pulpit was the sounding board, as it was called; a sort of canopy attached to the ceiling by a slender rod.*

*The top of the pulpit or desk was covered with a dark cloth trimmed with a fringe. Upon this desk lay the large Bible and the hymn book.*

*At the front of the stairs directly in front of the pulpit was the communion table which was a plain pine board hung to the partition by hinges so that it could be let down when not needed for use. Between this table and the pulpit was the Deacon's seat.*

*There was an aisle around the room far enough from the wall to give room for a row of seats or pews; these pews around the outside were raised one step. There were sixteen of these square pews in the center of the floor – eight upon each side of the center aisle.*

*There were two long seats in front of the pulpit known as the old men's seats; the tythingman also sat there.*

*There was a large gallery upon three sides which was reached by two flights of stairs. A row of pews was built against the wall, while in front of the gallery over the front door and opposite the pulpit were the singer's seats.*

*Upon the East side of the gallery was a long seat where the young women and girls sat, called the girls seat and upon the West side was the boys seat.*

*Whenever the boys got to whispering or making a noise, you would hear a sharp tap-tap-tap on the floor and see the cane of the tythingman pointing toward the offender. I do not remember ever seeing the cane pointed towards the girls seat; perhaps that was because I never sat there myself.*

*This building was guiltless of paint either upon the inside or out.*

*The "meeting" began at half past ten and the form of worship was similar to what is followed at the present, except that the long prayer was a long one indeed; the people were all expected to stand during it and, as many of the seats in the pews were hung with hinges, it was customary to turn them up while the people were standing so that the preacher's "Amen" was frequently supplemented with the slamming of the seats as they were dropped down.*

*In any of the pews you might see two or three flag bottomed chairs for the use of the older members of the family. These pews could accommodate perhaps a dozen people and were frequently occupied by two or more families.*

*The morning service lasted until noon, the sermon often being an hour long. Then came an hour's intermission when there was a general handshaking and inquiry after each others welfare etc.. The dinner baskets or bags were opened and their contents enjoyed; and after luncheon was eaten, the snuff boxes were passed and they had a jolly good time. I remember particularly the big bright snuffboxes of Dea. Ira Sanborn and Moses P. Gray, Esq. and how the old ladies seemed to enjoy the treat.*

*The young women and girls usually went out for a stroll in the graveyard just back of the church if the weather was favorable and then over to squire Merrill's shed to get a drink of cold water from the deep well.*

*The*

*older men usually remained in the house but the younger men and boys took their dinners out doors and either on the doorsteps or out on the common in groups, ate their lunch and enjoyed themselves.*

*In the cold weather the men folks would go to Capt. Heath's Tavern (last owner was Watson Ambrose) and warm their feet by his big fire and their goodies with a generous mug of flip. I have frequently been to that same place for coals to replenish the fire in my Mother's foot stove, for during the cold weather they always carried these and went to some of the neighboring houses at noon for new fire.*

*There were no conveniences for a fire in the old meetinghouse and in the Winter the services were held in the vestry where there was a fire.*

*At precisely one o'clock the minister came again and everyone at once took his accustomed place and the services were renewed. Before the pastor began his long prayer, he frequently read a note from some of his parishioners asking for special prayer in their behalf; if a person were sick, prayer was asked for him; were there a death in the family, prayer was asked that this dispensation of Providence might be sanctified to the relative and friends; if a child was born, thanks was returned; all joys and sorrows were remembered. The afternoon service was equal to the morning and the last prayer was followed by the singing of the Doxology.*

*It was generally past three o'clock when we got home from meeting and as we were obliged to leave home by half past nine, we made quite a day of it, - yet there were others who had farther to go.*

*I could tell much about the occupants of the different pews for they come distinctly to my mind as I think of this old meeting house in which my parents and grandparents worshiped; and not only my ancestors but the ancestors of very many – perhaps most of this company, but lest I weary you, I close.*

### **The Old Burying Ground**

From an address compiled by Gilbert H. Knowles and delivered by him at the special Anniversary Service held at the site of the first Meeting House, Epsom Center, Sunday, August 20, 1961: *It is interesting to learn that this "graveyard" or "burying place" as the early records spoke of it, - and what now for many years we have known as the McClary Cemetery, had its beginnings the very same year that the Congregational Society started at Center Hill. Along from 1906 to 1910 a man named John M. Moses made considerable study of records, deeds and vital statistics of early Epsom. Mr. Moses seemed to have become quite convinced and came to the conclusion that the first person buried in the old part of the McClary Cemetery ('the burying place') was William Blazo Sr.. He was a first settler of Epsom. He died August 14, 1761 - (the same date that the settlers gave Mr. Tucke his 2nd call to come to Epsom). Blazo, a Frenchman, was highway surveyor in Epsom in 1756 and a 1757 deed called him a "cooper." Blazo lived, I believe, just east of the Deinhardt's home. Soon after his death his sons sold out to Andrew McClary (probably the 2nd Andrew, the Major who was killed at Bunker Hill). In one of Mr. Moses' articles in 1910 I found the following: "A memorial stone marks the site of the first church. The cemetery in the rear contains many hundred graves. At least two hundred and fifty may be counted that are marked with only common field stones, uninscribed. The oldest inscribed stone, on which only a few letters are now traceable, is among the McClary graves near the south wall and is probably that of the first Andrew McClary." The first Andrew died in Epsom between Sept 13, 1764 and October 15, 1765. One cannot now count 250 graves marked only with fieldstones because along about 1920, when the south wall was taken down and replaced with the iron fence given in the will of Mary A. Evans, the cemetery trustees removed a great many of the uninscribed fieldstones. This was done to make the mowing and general care of the old part of the cemetery easier. Still, if I had been on the board of Cemetery Trustees at the time, I would probably have been against the removal of the stones. Being uninscribed there was no way to tell the names of the persons in the graves; yet the stones had meant something to certain people in the earlier days. Almost all the graves before 1800 were marked with uninscribed field stones, and likely quite a lot of those who died after 1800. Among the early graves in McClary Cemetery there are nine of Revolutionary Soldiers, three of four of the War of 1812, and 20 of the Civil War.*

Sometime prior to 1871, the McClary Cemetery Corporation of Epsom was formed and bought land of Hiram Holmes of 1 1/4 acres bordering the old burying ground. By 1903 it appears to be in the hands of the town. as a Cemetery Trustee's report appears for the first time. In 1922 the old stone wall was taken down and replaced with the current iron fence. An additional 60 cemetery lots were purchased in 1927.

### **Lot # 7 Thomas D. Merrill**

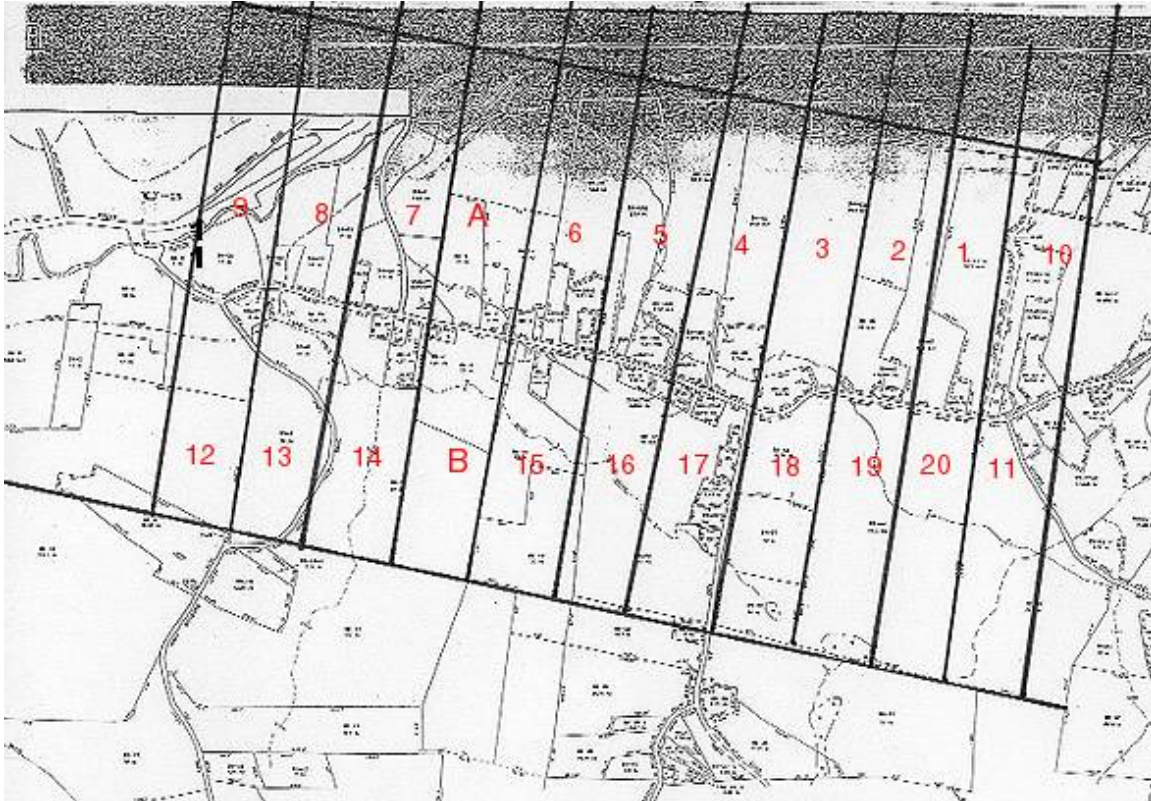
Thomas D. Merrill's first known Epsom deed is from 1808, and was from Thomas Thompson, man of color of Epsom and described as a certain one story house standing in Epsom containing two rooms with a brick chimney standing in or near the Center, said house now stands on land owned by John Philbrick of said Epsom, and the same house that I now live in. He became a merchant and important figure in Epsom, buying and selling properties, including a lot of land from Francis Locke in 1810. He established a store and farm on the site of the current McClary Cemetery. He sold his Epsom home to John Griffin Jr. and Aaron B. Grant in 1849. Through legal action it was next owned in 1860 by Joseph Lawrence. It was sold by Lawrence to John M. and Sarah Griffin in 1861, excepting a part of the old store, occupied by John Wells and a dwelling house. In 1866 it was owned by Hiram Holmes, who ended up selling the land as use for an extended McClary Cemetery. The house, formerly that of Esquire Merrill, was destroyed by fire, March 29, 1866.

### **Lot #14 Charles J. P. Brown**



This lot was drawn by Josiah Foss, but the surveyor's notes in the town records show it being laid out to William Haynes – "Epsom, June 26th 1732 Laid out to William Haines fifty acres of land taking it beginning on the south side of East Street in said town and runs ESE 50 rods by said street then south south west 160 rods then WNW 50 rods then NNE 160 rods to the place where it first began. Entered this 5th day of April 1733, Joseph Simpson. Laid out by Samuel Wallace, Thomas Berry, Richard Goss, James Marden, committee." Samuel Blake bought it from Haynes in 1742, at that time already being 'of Epsom' with his father John owning the adjoining lot to the west, which he sold to Samuel. Samuel Blake sold a small portion to Ephraim Locke for which there is no deed. Ephraim Locke sold one acre to Philip Stevens and Henry Moulton, both of Concord, coopers, in 1795. This one acre became contested, with a committee being formed giving ownership to Henry Moulton. Moulton sold half of it in 1815 to Thomas D. Merrill, with the other half in possession of Benjamin M. and Andrew M. Heath. Both these sections were sold to Benjamin Hall, mortgaged through Thomas D. Merrill in 1830, which apparently was not made good on, as Benjamin Hall moved to the mountain road, and Merrill, now of Concord, sold the property in 1850 to John C. Morrill. Morrill sold to John S. Cate of Epsom in 1855, and Cate resold the property in 1856 to Charles J. Brown, one acre with the buildings thereon.

Charles Jeffrey Parsons Brown was born in 1829, son of William and Lucretia Billings (Gray) Brown. He married at Epsom in 1849, Mary Ann Chapman, daughter of Samuel T. and Deborah (Dow) Chapman of New Rye. They had one son, Charles William, born in 1850. Charles J. P. Brown was a Civil War veteran and died in 1911, his wife in 1908. His son, Charles W. sold the family home to Edwin L. and Loella Bunker in 1924.



*By the Charter for the formation of the town, 20 families had to settle on 50 acre home lots. The proprietor's decided that each of these families would also receive an additional 30 acre lot in another part of the new town. From the time proprietors drew the original 20 acre lots to the time they drew the 30 acre out lot, some of the original 50 acre lots had changed hands. In many instances there are no deeds to show the change in ownership, other than to compare the names between the two lists. Below is shown the people who drew the original home lots with those who drew the 30 acre lots:*

- Lot 1 - James Seavey - Walter Weeks
- Lot 2 - Richard Goss - same
- Lot 3 - Thomas Berry - John Blake
- Lot 4 - Daniel Lunt - Samuel Allen
- Lot 6 - Noah Seavey - Joshua Berry
- Lot 6 - William Locke - William Wallace Jr.



Lot 7 - Samuel Dowst - same  
Lot 8 - Zachariah Berry - John Libbey  
Lot 9 - Ebenezer Berry - Samuel Libbey  
Lot 10 - Solomon Dowst - same  
Lot 11 - Samuel Wallis - George Wallace  
Lot 12 - William Wallace - same  
Lot 13 - John Black (Blake) - Samuel Blake  
Lot 14 - Josiah Foss - William Haynes  
Lot 15 - Simon Knowles - William Blazo  
Lot 16 - Paul Chapman - Penuel Chapman  
Lot 17 - Joseph Locke - John Philbrick  
Lot 18 - Josiah Foss - James Marden  
Lot 19 - Jedidiah Weeks - Andrew McClary  
Lot 20 - James Marden/Joseph Simpson - Daniel Moulton