

My project is on the history of my house in Chippenhook, Vermont. I chose this topic because I wanted to know more about our house. My family and I already knew some information about it but wanted to know more. My house is really two houses put into one, and I will tell you about each one. I will also tell you about people who lived here and events that happened around our house.

The search for my paper started by going to the Clarendon Town Hall and buying the book, Clarendon Vermont 1761-1976. Next I made an appointment with David Potter, one of the Potter family members and author of parts of the above book. I got more information from him. Then I wrote to Nina Ruth Laird Vogtman, the previous owner's daughter, and requested information. However she didn't write back. I then went to the cemetery across the meadow from our house to get dates and rubbings. I later went back and took pictures. Then I collected artifacts for my oral report. Finally I wrote my report...TWICE!!!

The first and oldest house is what we call the back house and was built by Francis Matteson and his wife, Mary, before 1777. The only way we have of telling how old our house is, is by looking at the dates in a cemetery in back of our house. There are several graves there from the

Matteson's children. One is marked for an infant daughter of Francis and Mary Matteson. Other graves are marked with only a stone. Of the children's graves, the best marked says, "Phebe daughter of Francis, Mary Matteson Died August 10, 1777". Therefore the house is at least as old as 1777. The former owner, Mrs. Nina Ruth Vogtman, had told us that she had found a stone in the cemetery dated 1773. But we could not find it.

The Mattesons were Tories. They had other Tory friends in the area. Their name was the Irishes. The story I will tell you is about John Irish's death. He was killed when a party of four scouts from Manchester came to his house. Their names were Captain Ebenezer Allen, Lieutenant Isaac Clark, Private John Train, and Phineas Clough. Clough stopped by for directions and was offered dinner, but he refused. When the Irish family finished eating dinner and John Irish laid down for a rest, Clough saw his chance and ran out the door. Unarmed John Irish followed him outside, and walked about three rods (48 feet) wondering what could have scared Clough so. Then Allen came out from behind a fallen maple tree and shot Irish through the hand, severing the third and middle finger. When the four men came near Irish, he yelled his last words to the men. They were, "I shall harm no man, but look at what they've done to me." He held up his hand for all to see. Then Isaac Clark shot Irish through the heart at such close range that smoke rolled out of his chest. Irish flew back about 5-6 feet and

fell flat on his face. The next day he was buried by his father and Francis Matteson.

The Matterson's house was originally built on the old post road across the meadow from where we now live. This post road is now an old logging road. A short distance away on the side of Suzie's Peak is a cave where Francis Matteson hid his carpenter's tools so the invading British would not find them after their attack on Fort Ticonderoga. Francis Matteson died February 4, 1812 at the age of 69. His wife, Mary, died four days later on February 8, 1812. We think an epidemic swept through the area. On Francis Matteson's grave is this poem:

I lived the common age of man  
Yet all the term appeared a span  
Reader attend believe repent  
No lifes too short if fairly spent.

I will now tell you about the main part of our house (the front house) and the people who lived in it. The first owner was Julius Ewing. He moved from Pittsford to here in the early 1800's to run a silkworm farm and mill for cloth production. He most likely built our house. Joseph Warren Potter bought the house in the 1820's. He lived here with his wife, Lucy R. Fiske Potter, and their two children Sally and Noel. Sally married Nathan Fassett about 1852 and they ran the farm until Nathan died in the 1860's. Sally's brother, Noel, was a Civil War sharpshooter veteran. He bought the farm from his sister when she became a widow. He

married Lydia Potter and had several children. He ran the farm until 1898 when a hay wagon jolted forward and he fell off and broke his neck. His son, William R. Potter, and wife, Callo Potter ran the farm and built a new house next door in the early 1900's. Noel's widow, Lydia, continued to live in our house until her death in the late 1920's. Our house went to her daughter, Blanche Potter Laird. In the 1940's the house was sold to Blanche's son, Noel Potter Laird and his wife, Nina Ruth. My parents bought it in 1983 when Noel Potter died.

Sometime in the later 1800's the back house was moved across the meadow and attached to the front house. It was probably moved by a drawing bee. This was done whenever someone wanted to move a house or barn. As many as 30 yoke of oxen were used to drag a building.

I am glad I did this project because it taught me things I did not know about my house. I am glad I now know more about some of the people who lived here. It seems like they had very hard lives but loving families. I am happy I live now, not then.