

HISTORY OF WEEKS FARM

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This paper is about the Week's farm and the farm's way of life. The farm has had six generations, and all of these generations have helped in the growth of the farm.

The farm extends over most of the airport road in East Clarendon and as far over as Route 103.

There are several buildings on the farm and several generations still live and work in these buildings.

The Weeks Farm, which is located in East Clarendon on the Airport Road and parts of the land leading on to route 103, has a main portion that was bought in 1836 from Christopher Pierce. This land was purchased by William S. Weeks and Mary Ann (Hall) Weeks soon after they were married. The couple lived in a house on the southern boundary of the farm until 1858, when a new farmhouse closer to the barn was built. Six generations have lived in that farmhouse, including the ones there now.

Also in 1858 a small barn, used for heifers, was taken down in the west meadow and moved, with oxen, to where the other barns were located.

In 1902, Amherst Weeks, the third generation on the farm, graduated from high school and took over much of the farm work. That year, a new horse barn was built near the farmhouse. Three years later, in 1905 a wooden silo in which to store grain was attached to the barn.

Amherst Weeks married Rachel Holden Carpenter of Shrewsbury in 1912, and they resided in the farmhouse by the barn.

A change in the livestock took place in 1917. Until then there had been Red Polled cattle and dual purpose breed, which can be used for beef or milk, then Jerseys, and finally grade holsteins which were not registered. In 1917, Amherst Weeks sold a sixty head grade Holstein herd to Aldace Newton of Clarendon. At the same time he purchased twenty registered Holstein cows as a foundation herd. This flourished under the name of Skyway, and many descendants of this original herd have been sold all over the country.

The first substantial land addition was in 1920 when the "creek meadow" was bought from Mrs. Inez Briggs. This thirty acre piece of land is located back of the Clarendon town hall, across the railroad tracks.

In 1933 a lower section was added to the main cow barn, including a double row of stanchions, a barn cleaner, and a 500 gallon electric milk cooler. Until then all milk and dairy products had been either shipped to Boston by train or cooled with ice or running water. Cream was made into butter or taken to the cheese factory, in North Clarendon.

Hay, field corn and oats were grown on the farm to feed the livestock, and there was a small garden plot for family use. Some produce, such as sweet corn and cabbages, were sold in Rutland during the summer.

In 1934, several acres of land east of the farm were purchased from John Farrel. Referred to as "the Farrel farm" or the "mountain pasture" this land was across the railroad tracks near the East Clarendon Railroad Station. Two years later, several more adjacent acres were bought, including a meadow and a gravel pit. This was bought from Theresa Fitzpatrick, whose business venture there had gone bankrupt.

In 1942, the City of Rutland wanted to purchase a thirty acre strip of land down the center of the farm to build an airport runway. It was sold at a low price because of the war effort. Again in 1952, Rutland City wanted eleven acres for a runway addition, which was sold to them. At this time, the newer farmhouse was put in a clear zone easement, meaning that any part of the house extending three feet or more above the present level would be in violation.

A turning point in working conditions occurred in 1957 on the farm. At this time, the last team of work horses was sold and a Farmall 250 tractor replaced them. This farm was the last in the area to mechanize its operation.

The year after the first tractor was bought, the state of Vermont purchased a twelve acre strip on which to build Route 103. Fill from the farm's gravel pit was used in this construction.

In 1959 a few acres near the "mountain pasture" were sold to Lottie Todriff, including the barns and water rights on the property.

In 1964, William Weeks and his family built a new house near the barn. Two years later, the main part of the farm was deeded to him.

Today much has changed on this farm. Most of the original 448 acres remain and four of the six generations still live there. However, the agricultural portion is nearly nonexistent with only half a dozen registered Holsteins left of the Skyway herd. Hay and potatoes are the only crops grown, and these only in small amounts for family use only.