The Isaac B. Parsons Homestead: An historic landmark and quintessential gentlemen's farm, preserved and perfected over two centuries of gracious country living.



When Colonel Isaac B. Parsons returned from the Continental Army at the close of the Revolutionary War, he set to work establishing the charming town of New Gloucester—and building some of the town's architectural jewels, including his second home now located at 146 Cobbs Bridge Road. After years of deprivation in the military, Parsons built his family homestead to celebrate the rural landscape, and the pleasures of Maine village life, through meticulous craftsmanship, luxurious comforts and timeless design. Carefully restored to provide all the comforts modern lifestyles demand, the Isaac B. Parsons Homestead is as unique, vital and gracious a country estate as it was in 1781.

Parsons chose his site well, building among 55 wooded acres of forests, fields and meadows. Experience for yourself the joys of a gentlemen's farm— the property includes miles of trails suitable for hiking, cross country skiing or horseback riding; a pond for ice skating and fishing and vistas of rolling hills strewn with wildflowers. A picturesque red-sided detached barn and a well-established orchard adjoin lush perennial gardens, old stone walls and an elegant in-ground swimming pool. No matter what the season, you and your guests will be tempted outdoors by commanding and enchanting views from all corners of this stunning home.

Recorded in the National Historic Registry of Historic Places in the State of Maine and included in the book Maine Farms of American Architecture, the Isaac B. Parson's Homestead stands apart. The home offers over 4,000 sf of living space, 5 BRs, 2.5 BA, a stunning gourmet kitchen, renovated baths, an inviting screened in porch and much more. A singular example of the Georgian Colonial, its historic details have been carefully preserved through a recent renovation which painstakingly preserved the historical integrity of the home. From the glowing hardwood floors, exposed beams, restored twelve-on-twelve windows with true divided lights with Indian Shutters to the original cabinetry hardware with its well-worn patina, each room offers a peek into the home's glorious past. Original woodwork adorns the walls, perhaps the inspiration for Maine woodworking luminary Thomas Moser, who owned the home during the formative years of his career. Nine wood burning fireplaces—two of which are walk-ins with bee hive ovens—will warm your winter nights, while the long screened sunporch catches fresh summer breezes off the meadow.

The Parsons home transcends its time, offering all of today's modern amenities. Lovingly chosen with a discerning eye for both the historic period and fine interior design, the contemporary updates enhance the home's character and comforts. New wiring and plumbing throughout and a complete rebuilding of the home's el, provides a seamless transition for the next steward of this Homestead. The rebuilt el, offers a state of the art, eat-in kitchen joining the family room. The kitchen boasts concrete countertops, top of the line appliances and a convenient center island. Designed and built by a renowned local cabinetmaker, this showcase kitchen has been featured on local television for its exemplary craftsmanship and style. The heated informal entrance breezeway with cool brick floors blends an antique English pine cabinet with porcelain sink with the modern conveniences of ample closets and attached storage room. Off the breezeway, the screened sunporch offers refreshing summer breezes and soothing vistas. The second story of the el, offers a new master bedroom suite overlooking the meadow in tranquil privacy.

The opportunity to own a home of this quality and historic import is rare, even in Maine. Become a part of a rich tradition and the Maine village lifestyle in the Isaac B. Parsons Homestead.

1915

ISAAC PARSONS House

The first frame house in New Gloucester was built by Isaac Parsons in 1762. It was built on Lot #36. Here his first wife, Anna Merrill, died and here he lived with his second wife, Salome Merrill, where eight children were born to them. In 1781, after the death of Salome he married Deborah, the wealthy widow of Soloman Hewett of Waldoboro. Soon after this marriage he built, across the street from the little frame house, the spacious colonial mansion now occupied by his famed descendant, Mr. Charles Peter Haskell. This home is of typical colonial construction containing ancient furniture of much interest and great beauty. The little frame house (then moved across the street to the mansion) servs, usefully, and unobtrusively, as a wood shed.

ISAAC PARSONS, Sr. HOUSE 1915?

Inherited a "one-third part of Lot #36" in the First Division of Lots. He came to New Gloucester from Gloucester, Mass. in 1761 and built the first frame dwelling in New Gloucester in 1762. It is still in existence. After he married for his 3d wife, the widow of the wealthy Capt. Solomon Hewett of Waldoboro, Maine, the so-called Mansion was built in 1789, and the little frame dwelling was moved across the street and attached to the ell part of the mansion, the same to be used as a woodshed.

The small frame house was moved across the road to probably Lot 36th by Thomas Moser and front of the house he built there. Later sold

Lot 31st 1st Division drawn 1737/8 by Samuel Baker where Isaac Parsons built

Early New Gloucester History closely allied with Col. Parsons

Year? Date? Paper?

Mansion Still Stands and Has Been Always in Possession of Family - Col. Parsons Was One of First Overseers of Bowdoin College.

(Picture insert of "Second House Built in New Gloucester by Col. Isaac Parsons)

NEW GLOUCESTER, May 26, (Special) - - - Not many in town realize that the first frame building which was built in New Gloucester is the hipped roofed shed at the home of Mrs. Sara T. Haskell, widow of Charles Peter Haskell and which was built by Col. Isaac Parsons.

In 1737 a large tract of land in the eastern part of the County was granted to 60 inhabitants of Old Gloucester, Mass., on Cape Ann, provided they would settle it.

In 1738 the lots were drawn and it was voted that the township lately granted to a certain number of the inhabitants of Gloucester be called New Gloucester. One of the men was Ebenezer Parsons.

In 1861 his grandson, Isaac Parsons, Jr., having become of age decided to go to the far Eastern county. He went on a sailing vessel to Yarmouth (Me.) and went on foot from Cousins River to New Gloucester. He decided that it might be "made a good country by industry" and his father purchased lot 36 of his father and ~~married~~ deeded it to Isaac, Jr.

In 1762 he built the little house, the first frame house. On Dec. 1, 1763, he married Miss Anna Merrill in whose home he had stopped when on his way to New Gloucester for the first time. She died on Nov. 28, 1764, and on Nov. 21, 1765 he married Miss Salome Merrill, daughter of Humphrey and Betty Merrill of Falmouth, and brought her to his new home on horse-back. Eight children were born to them.

When the oldest was little more than 10 years of age Mr. Parsons was called to go to war. He was made captain of Col. Price's regiment under Brig. Gen. Wadsworth, and afterward was colonel of Cumberland County. While he was away his wife was taken ill and died in Sept. 1780. The colonel came in December of that year to his eight motherless children the youngest being only two years of age. Someone was needed to care for them and on March 15, 1781 he married Mrs. Deborah Hewett, widow of Captain Solomon of Waldoboro. She had two children, Deborah who later married Phillip Chandler and was the great grandmother of Andrew Chandler, C. P. Chandler, Fred Chandler and Roland Chandler of this town and Lydia who married Andrew Campbell.

Mrs. Hewett and her children inherited quite a fortune from Capt. Hewett and so soon after the marriage Col. Parsons was able to build a fine large house on the opposite side of the road, moving the little house over for a shed. Three children were born to this wife. Mrs. Parsons died Oct. 5, 1786, at the age of 44.

On May 5, 1787 he took another wife, Mrs. Mary Noyes Ellis of Falmouth. She was in the prime of life and was a help to the Colonel's daughters, who were now young ladies needing influences of culture and refinement. She introduced them into the best homes of Falmouth, now Portland. She died in 1810 and again Colonel Parsons married, having Mrs. Lucy Bacon of Yarmouth for his bride. She outlived him by several years.

(OVER)

In 1785 he was representative to the general court in Boston. When he came home he brought the first pair of calf skin boots which were ever owned in New Gloucester and also a chaise, the first in town. His wife and daughters enjoyed this when going to Falmouth on shopping trips.
Col. Parsons set out an orchard and was the first to make cider in town and also showed people how to prepare land for raising corn. He was one of the overseers provided by "an act to establish a college in the town of Brunswick in District of Maine and within the commonwealth (Massachusetts), to be called and known by the name of Bowdoin College."

He drove back and forth with his chaise and a fine black stallion, which was admired by all in the country through which he went. At one time he was taking his son Isaac's wife and four months old baby, Hannah, in this chaise to their home, which he had built on the adjoining farm and which is now owned and occupied by Frank W. Berry, and the child was thrown from the chaise and killed.

The colonel was a man of strong character and intellect, an original thinker and a Christian, and to him is owed much for what he did in the early days of the town.

It is said that he wrote a lengthy will covering 14 pages of foolscap and that among other things he arranged that he should be buried between his wives, two on each side, evidently thinking that the fifth would outlive him, and asked that the gravestones of his wives should be of slate while his should be of marble and several inches higher, and if one should visit the cemetery at Lower Gloucester he would see that the instructions were carried out. He also asked his successors "never to drive upon the intervale with iron bound wheels and always to shut the intervale bars after them." What would he say if he knew that two railroads now cross the intervals with their iron wheels.

He died Oct. 9, 1825, after a long and useful life and it is said that his funeral procession was a half a mile long.

The house which he built and the farm have remained in the family always going from one generation to another and finally to his great grandson, Charles Peter Haskell, who took great pride in the place and kept everything in a fine state of preservation. He died in 1915 and Mrs. Haskell lives in the house summers and goes South winters. The house is one of the fine old structures with large rooms and many fireplaces and it is in the best of condition.

A number of Col. Parson's descendants now live in the town. They are a great great granddaughter, Mrs. H. R. Berry, and a great great grandson, Edwin Rowe, his two daughters, Mrs. Ernest Herrick and Mrs. Chester Brown, and her little son, Edwin Brown. The late Judge Thomas Haskell of Portland was a great grandson.

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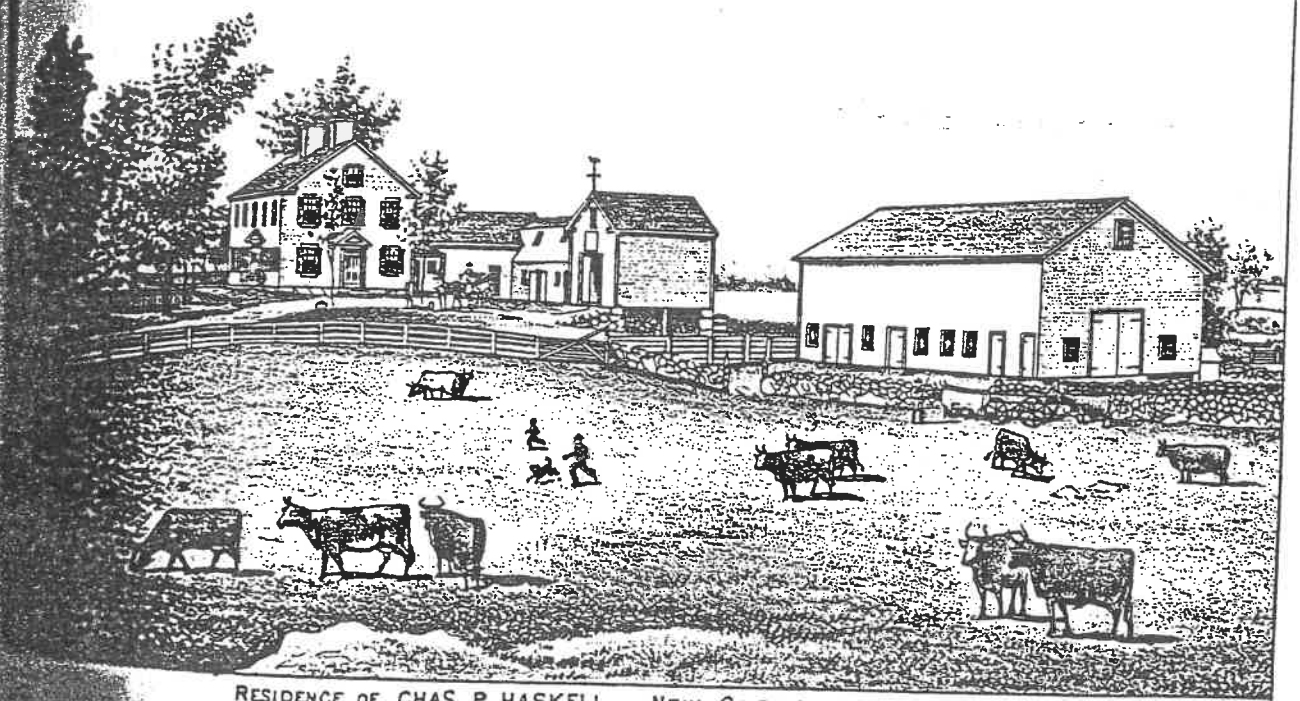
PHOTOS. BY COMART, PORTLAND, ME

C. P. Haskell

Helen M. Haskell



THE FIRST RES. ERECTED BY ISAAC PARSONS IN 1762.



RESIDENCE OF CHAS. P. HASKELL, NEW GLOUCESTER, MAINE.

Isaac Parsons Home

-Alma Berry

The oldest framed building in New Gloucester was built by Col. Isaac Parsons in 1762 on Robb's Bridge Rd. Isaac Parsons native of Gloucester, Mass. came to N. Gloucester in 1761 and built a gambrel, where he and his wife and eight children lived for several years. As the trouble with the Indians ended before he came to N.G. he never lived in the block house. He chose for his first home the sightly location on a hill overlooking the intervale, on Lot #31 1st Divisin of Lots drawn in 1737/8 by Samuel Pearce. Col Parsons also had possession of Lot #36 directly across the road. This was originally drawn by Ebenezer Parsons. While Mosers lived there they found original foundation of the gambrel on highest point of land behind the big house. They discovered chimney base and exact measurments of the gambrel.

The gambrel was not large by today's standards and very simple. Two rooms on the first floor; the one with lathe and plaster was the owners bedroom. Upstairs was two unfinished rooms. Over the years the gambrel was moved forward and became part of the shed, connecting house, ell to garage. The gambrel was a shed before becoming a home 200 yrs later.

Descendants of the Isaac Parsons family owned the house until it was purchased in 1967 by ~~Jens Moser~~ Tom Moser Mosers, who moved the gambrel across the road and repaired and restored it as nearly as possible to the way the original must have been. Two rooms and a stairway were finished downstairs, with a large chimney and fireplaces. Two rooms were finished upstairs. The Mosers sold the big Parsons home to Dr. & Mrs John Rea Jr and moved into the gambrel. They added an ell containing a kitchen and other rooms and later built a connecting gambrel-roofed barn which contains a family room, four bedrooms and a basement garage. Once again the old building is being used for purpose it was built— a home for a family.

After the death of his second wife, Col Parsons married again. She was a woman of money and they were able to build the two and half story house which is now home of

Dr. & Mrs Rice. The home, a center hall Country Georgian, was built with two large chimneys and numerous fireplaces in each, for a total of nine. A large front hall goes through the home with a beautiful stairway leading to the second floor. A smaller hall on the east side of the home also has a stairway leading to a small hall which opens into two of the bedrooms upstairs, and a stairway to the attic goes from this hall. The woodwork and carving in the home are similar to late Home in Stroudwater.

Through the years changes were made and home modernized. Partitions were removed, rooms enlarged, fireplaces bricked up, and some of them, in the bedrooms, were closed. A sunporch was built on the ell. In 1940 the cattle and hay barn, across the road was struck by lightning and burned.

In 1950s Two boys broke into the home after it had been closed for the winter. They set fires on the floors and some of the rooms. Did a lot of damage. Smoke was seen by neighbors and fire dept. saved the buildings. Due to water & smoke damage all the rooms had to be re-decorated and pantry rebuilt.

The farm remained in Isaac Parsons family with Frederick Haskell being the last. He was a direct descendant of Isaac Parsons. His widow Caroline sold in 1967 to the Mosers, who restored as nearly as possible to original condition. Partitions were replaced, fireplaces opened, sunporch removed. Kitchen enlarged and modernized and bathrooms changed. Mosers uncovered a beam in kitchen area dated Feb 23, 1781. House thought to have started 1780 and completed 1782. Wooden Indian shutters on downstairs windows were restored by Mosers.