



History Reclaimed:

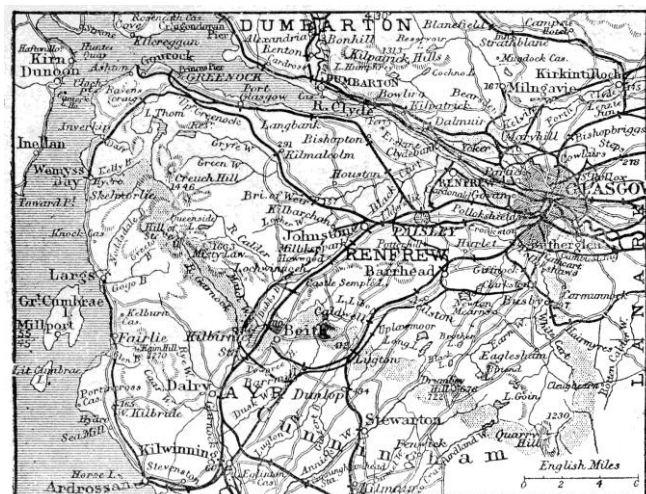
Authentic American Vintage
Lumber from the Symmes Family
1880's Barn in Ryegate, VT



View Across the Connecticut River in Ryegate, VT circa 1900

Immigration

Campbell Symmes emigrated from Renfrew, Scotland with his mother, father and sister in May 1774. Campbell's father, Alexander, came to Ryegate, VT as part of the Scots American Company, and was the first to bring a family into the town. Campbell married Abigail Doyen of Pembroke, NH on Dec 20, 1788 in Newbury, VT and went on to have eleven children while living in Ryegate.



Robert Symmes' House

Campbell and Abigail's fifth child, Robert, was born April 7, 1796 and grew to be an esteemed member of the surrounding community and state. He was a farmer by trade, was chosen as the Captain of the Light Infantry Militia in 1826 and was a Justice of the Peace according to the 1845 Journal of the Senate of Vermont Records.

From his obituary in St. Johnsbury, VT newspaper, January 16, 1880:

"Capt. Robert Symmes was born in Ryegate, April 6, 1796, of Scotch and Irish descent. He died in Ryegate, Jan. 5, 1880, of paralysis. He was for a long time one of the leading, active and influential men of his town. He joined the Covenanter church in 1820, and was a member several years. When the Light Infantry of Ryegate was formed (about 1826), Symmes was chosen the first captain – he had been Orderly Sergeant in the old militia company – he trained and drilled the men, but on account of the oath, he being a Covenanter, and also on account of an unpleasant scrimmage in a sham fight on Gray's Hill with the old militia and volunteer Co., he never took out his commission. He joined in the New Light movement, when the majority of the Covenanter church adopted the rule for voting, and was an Elder in their church many years. About 1855 he left that society and united with the United Presbyterian church in Ryegate, and was elected an elder and installed Oct. 16, 1856. He was for many years their leader in singing in the congregation. He was a farmert (sic), and an excellent mechanic – in 1824 building with his own hands his dwelling house, which will compare favorably with farm house built at the present day. He was married Jan. 24, 1826, to Jane Hall of Ryegate, and has had 11 children, who lived to be men and women. Eight are now living, two sons and six daughters..."



Robert Symmes' Farmhouse, Circa 1895

John H. Symes, Civil War Soldier

Robert and Jane's fifth child John H. Symes was born Dec 05, 1833. John, following in his father's footsteps joined the local militia and at age 28 traveled to Boston with his cousin William H. Symmes and enlisted Oct 29, 1862 in the 45th Regt. Mass Volunteers. John was a Private in Company H and fought in multiple battles in North Carolina until he left the Union Army on July 7, 1863.

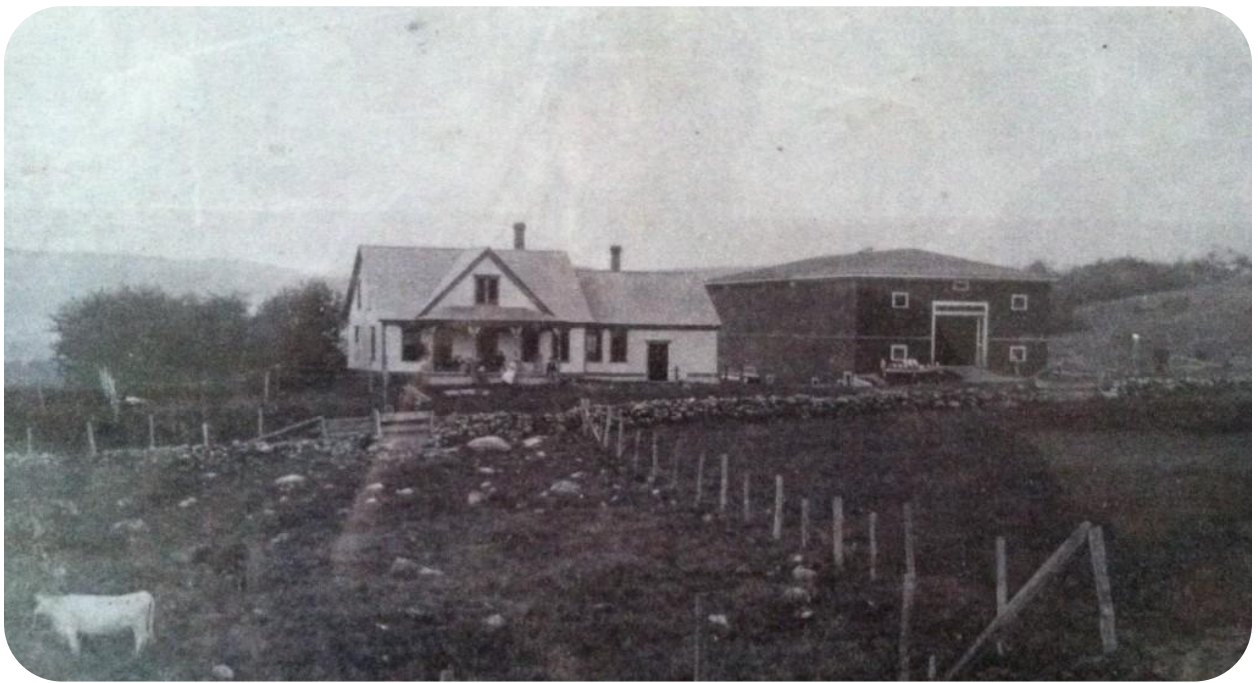
From a Grand Army of the Republic personal war sketch, John said,

"I took part in the following battles: Kinston, North Carolina, Dec. 14, 1862, Whitehall, North Carolina, Dec. 16, 1862, and Goldsboro, North Carolina, Dec. 17, 1862. My most intimate comrades in the service William Symes, Hugh Burke, Hollis Morrill, Leonard Arnold and Sergeant Kingsly. Oscarl Snell, Charles Ingram and Hugh Burke were my three bunk-mates, and only one came home alive. The most critical event that happened during my service occurred during the Battle of Whitehall. While supporting a battery, I heard a piece of a shell screeching through the air and I raised myself up to see where it was. When I lay down again, I covered the hole where it had gone into the ground. In the same battle, the color bearer was killed within four feet of where I lay."

John changed his last name to "Symes" sometime after he was an adult, after he was married, and after military service in 1863.

The Lease

John eventually returned to Ryegate, VT and "on March 25, 1876 Robert and Jane Symmes entered into a lease agreement with their son, John H. Symes covering 'their farm in Ryegate which they now occupy and known as their homestead farm.' The lease included 'all the livestock, farming tools, and personal property.' John was to 'pay all taxes assessed on said farm and stock while in possession of the same.' He was also charged with the responsibility to 'use and improve the said premisses (sic) in good husbandlike manner.' The lease specified that John should 'provide for supply, support and comfortably maintain his parents during their natural lives, furnishing them from time to time with all needful and suitable food and clothing and all the comforts and conveniences of life suitable to their rank.' And 'provide them with suitable team or conveyance to church and to visit their friends as often as they may reasonably require, and shall entertain any friends who may visit them.' Robert and Jane 'reserved for their own use the north front room and bedroom off the same, also middle bedroom and closet. The building known as the shop may be used in common as repair shop and repository for tools.' The lease also provided that John would have a lien against the estate to cover improvements to the property, increase in productivity of the land and expenses incurred in the medical care of his parents. An appraisal of the property valued the 'homestead farm' at \$2000.00, livestock at \$450.00, supplies at \$132.85 and tools at \$337.88 for a total of \$2920.73. Following the death of his parents, John H. Symes acquired the farm in January 1882."



The barn and farmhouse, circa 1895

The Barn

Shortly after to improve the productivity of the land, John began work on the barn adjacent to his father's farmhouse. Built 3 stories tall with mill sawn lumber, a very low pitched roof, supported by a cantilever frame, the structure was one of the most advanced barns in the world at the time. With over 5,000 square feet of roof surface area only 50 miles from the Canadian border the structure required incredible strength for the heavy Vermont snow.

The foundation stones were sourced from Beaton and Rose Stone in South Ryegate and the lumber was sawn on the local Connecticut River. When completed, it measured 100 feet long, 50 feet wide and over 40 feet tall at its highest point. It included stalls for cattle during the winter, an internal silo, a chicken coop and areas for equipment storage.

Later in the 1900's the barn was used for Clydesdale boarding. The animals were used as draft horses in the surrounding land's logging industry. In all the barn remained an active working barn for nearly 100 years.

In the 1970's the barn and farmhouse were sold to a family that still uses the farmhouse as a summer home. In the early 2000's signs of decline began to emerge on the eastern end of the barn and temporary supports were put in place to strengthen the structure. Continued water damage further weakened the eastern wall supports and in 2010 a small portion of the roof collapsed under the weight of the winter snow. Because of the significant investment needed, the owners sadly could not repair the barn and decided to sell the barn. StoriedBoards reclaimed the barn in April of 2012.



BEATON & ROSA STONE SHEDS, SOUTH RYEGATE, VT.

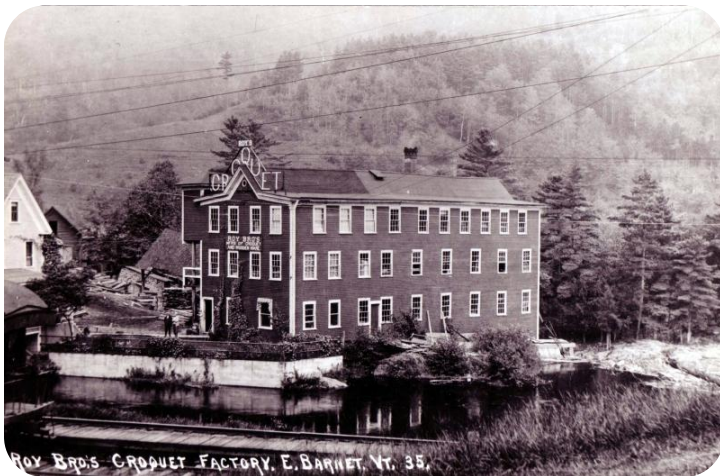
B. L. TERRY'S SERIES

Beaton & Rosa Stone Sheds – the source of the massive granite barn foundation stones

A Connecticut River water powered sawmill in Ryegate, VT – a possible source of the barn lumber



old saw mill, Ryegate, Vt.



ROY BROS. CROQUET FACTORY, E. BARRET, VT. 35.

The Roy Brothers croquet factory, thrived from 1888 to 1938, when the accumulated disasters of a flood and two fires finally put the family out of business. But in its heyday, the mill made more than 40,000 elegant croquet sets each year, and sold them to people around the world.

The barn's stanchions, used to hold cows in the barn during the winter months, were fashioned by the Roy Bros.

1895 and 2012





The Barn's Front



South and West Walls



North Wall From Farmhouse Yard



South Wall as Viewed From Apple Orchard



Damaged East Wall



Damage to East Wall From Inside



Interior Hemlock Walls



Rafters and Roof



Timber Frame



Roy Bros. Croquet Factory Stanchion for Cattle



Unique Cantilever Construction

John Symes and Family, Circa 1890



What We Believe

Preserver of History

StoriedBoards was founded on the simple idea that history should not be lost when materials are reclaimed from their original source.

That is why every product StoriedBoards sells is exhaustively researched, thoroughly documented and passed on to our customers.

We are dedicated to giving our products a voice, telling the stories of their past and allowing you to write the next chapter of their life.

Devoted to Green

StoriedBoards products are 100% recycled, sustainable, eco-friendly and perfect for your green or LEED certified building.

We sell only reclaimed antique lumber and timber, and do not offer any “conventional” wood products that are cut from modern forests.

StoriedBoards reclaims its materials solely via the hands of its own team. This ensures that proper care and respect is employed to both the structure and the surrounding land, while minimizing our waste, increasing the quality of reclaimed materials and returning the land to its original state.

100% Transparent

StoriedBoards lists every product we have, online and with our price clearly stated. No price ranges, no up sells and no requirement to call or write for a quote. We can't find anyone else who offers that transparency in the reclaimed market.

In addition, we promise to always:

- Work one-on-one with you to provide the highest quality customer experience
- Answer all the questions you have, any time you have them
- Provide a pressure-free sales experience



Dedicated to giving our products a voice, telling
the stories of their past and allowing you to write
the next chapter of their life

www.StoriedBoards.com
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