



Pages in Time



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The Adams families of Norridgewock

by Lucille Greer

There were three "immigrants" of the Adams surname who came here and were unrelated: Amos, who came from Pepperell, then part of Groton, Massachusetts, in 1787; Philip Adams' son, of England, born Samuel, who died in York in 1692; and James Adams, from Rochester, New York. (Hanson's History of the Old Towns, pub. 1849)

James Adams was an attorney who first went to Guilford, then Exeter. Governor Kent appointed him clerk of the courts in the Penobscot office. He held that office until Gov. Kent retired, then moved here to form a co-partnership with the noted Judge Tenney. In 1846 he represented Norridgewock and Madison in the State Legislature. He was selected by Whigs of this county as a delegate to the National Whig Convention and was a member of the body in Philadelphia that nominated Gen. Taylor for President. He won.

(The Whig Party, 1833 to 1856, was a political party during the era of Jacksonian democracy, formed in opposition to the policies of President Andrew Jackson. The name recalls the American Whigs of 1776, who fought for independence, and was a widely recognized label for people who saw themselves as opposing autocratic rule.)

James Adams died here in 1848, and, having held the high-

est office in the Society of Odd Fellows, they attended his funeral in a body. As far as we know, he left no children.

Philip Adams and his family lived in the York, Maine area. There, his son, Thomas, had a block house (or garrison house) which were in the larger and most substantial private residences. His was one of the largest. When the Indians would advance toward York, an alarm would be sounded by the discharge of three guns in succession fired at stated intervals. Hearing this, the people would rush for protection toward the block houses which could accommodate six families, eight men, one soldier, a total of 42 persons. A marker is at the location of Philip Adams house. His gggg-granddaughter, Evelyn Adams McElrath has, in the past, visited that and the Adams cemetery there every summer.

Further research will determine if it was Albion Adams, her grandfather, who first came to Norridgewock, or his son. But it was Amos who came here from Groton along with several other families: the Longleys, Spaldings, Goulds, Nuttings, Sawtells, Warrens, Wetherells, etc.

A year before Norridgewock became a town in 1788, Amos was one of the 22 signers of the petition to the court in Boston that settlers not pay the almost \$850 tax bill submitted to them by the

larger town of Winslow. They said they should be looked upon with pity as "Miserable Orphans" for the circumstances under

and flee again to the Berron Wood for Shelter." They asked to work out their rates by making roads themselves and the next

the corner with the Withee Road, and met the Beech Hill Road, at what is now a corner, and all on the east side of the gulch called by that name.

There his son, Amos, built the house that used to be the home of the Alan Foxwells, now of Ronald Currier. He had ten children, all of whom apparently came with him. Also his mother, the former Jane Darby (Derby) who died here, in 1811, at the ripe old age of 105. Another, "Mrs. Adams," also died in 1830 but we aren't sure if it was Amos' first wife, Sarah Kemp, or his second Sarah Hackett whom he married when he was 74. Even if the history books had said "wife of Amos Adams", or "Sarah Adams", it wouldn't have helped a bit as both wives were named "Sarah." (If anyone has information on any of this, please give me a call at 634-4243 or send me an e-mail at lugreer90@hotmail.com.)

With all the children gone, and his wife having died in 1830, that is the year Amos moved from the Adams farm to live with his son, Amos, Jr. on the now Route 148 in Madison, just east of Blackwell Hill Road and Russell Road. That wasn't far from his homestead as there used to be a road at the end of the former Withee Road that connected to Russell Road. The lines were not definitely marked at that time and Allen's *History of Norridgewock*, published locally in 1849 lists Amos as having died in Norridgewock. Amos, Jr. went with his father to apply for his Revolutionary War pension in 1882 which was allowed a year later at \$75 a year. Amos died at age 98 in 1844 and was buried in the Blackwell cemetery.

It was there that the Daughters of the American Revolution went on June 26, 2010, a fine day for an outdoor ceremony, to place a marker on his grave.



Left to right: SAR Color Guard; Mary Jane Hensley, Honorary State Regent from Maryland; Barbara Carpenter, Vice President General, NSDAR; Vrege Murray, Maine State Regent, Kathy Palmer, Regent of Eunice Farnsworth-Ruth Heald Cragin Chapter, Skowhegan in rear; Lucille Greer of Norridgewock and member of EF-RHC chapter; and Crystal Kwon, President of CAR placing flowers at the grave.

Photo by Liz Hotchkiss of Majabigwaduce Chapter in Brooksville, Maine

which they dwelt in "this cold, distant, uncultivated wilderness." There was hardly any cash money in town as the 79 families were mostly struggling farmers who traded by barter. If obliged to pay the taxes, "Petitioners must immediately quit their Habitations

year were allowed to do that, and establish a church and schools.

Like many early settlers, some coming as early as 1773, Amos had managed his Pepperell farm and served over two years in the Revolutionary War. Little or no pay was given these men but land was made available to them. Amos settled on the part of the Beech Hill Road that used to be an extension of the Tarbell Hill Road that went from the Ward Hill Road, through the gulch, past the Withee Schoolhouse that was at

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Seeking histories on American Legion and VFW posts
 by Lyn Rowden
 In our special feature, "Pages in Time," we focus each week on an aspect of local history. I am looking for brief histories of the various American and VFW Posts in our area, which I would like to feature in May.
 A small piece of about 250 words would be wonderful. No worries about "perfect" writing and editing, we will take care of that for you. An old photo, if available may be sent in jpeg format or mailed or brought in to the paper for scanning. You will get your photo back as long as you include your address.
 Please send me your information along with a reliable method of contacting you, by email to townline@fairpoint.net or mail to P. O. Box 89 Jonesbrook Crossing, South China, ME 04358.
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