

Joseph McGee and Siblings, Shelburne Historical Society

How McGee's Corner Came to Be

The construction of the McGee home at the northwest corner of Falls and
Marsett Roads in Shelburne, Vermont.

David Boucher, Collections Manager –
Shelburne Historical Society
7-14-2025

At the annual meeting of the Rutland Railroad Historical Society held in Shelburne on 5 May 2023, Joseph McGee, a former Shelburne resident, told me that he grew up in a house that his father had built using lumber from the pig barn at Shelburne Farms.

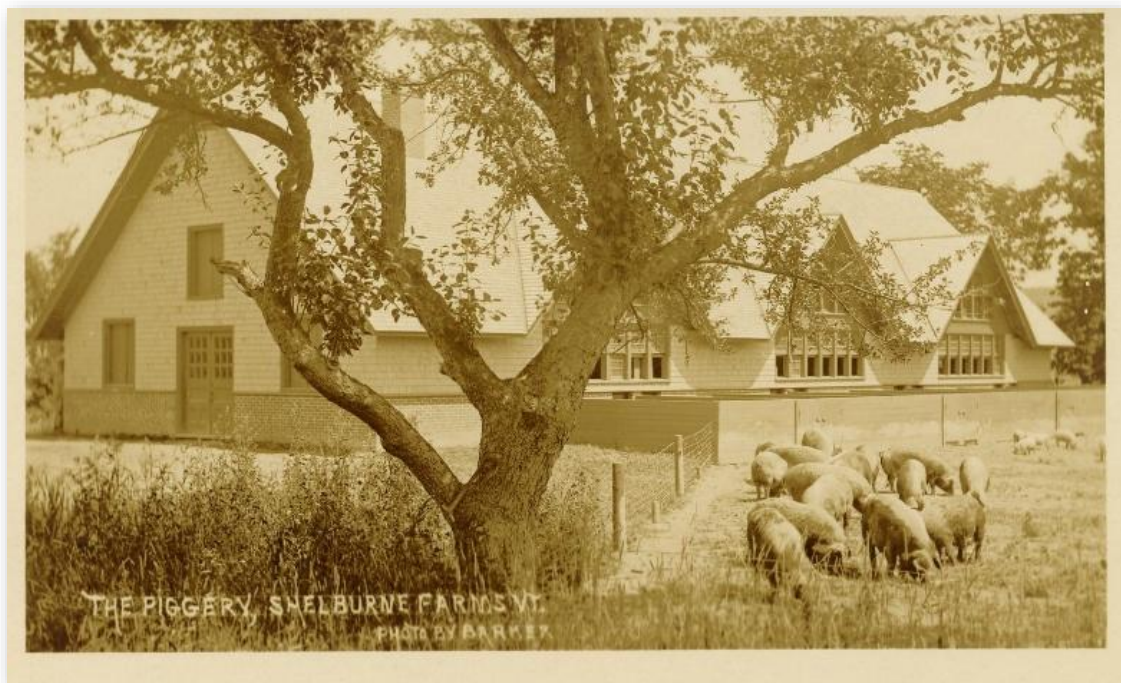
Over a year later, October 2024, at the annual Fall Craft and Antiques Show at the Essex Fairgrounds when looking through his postcard collection, Stephen Smith owner of Foundation Antiques told me that he had more vintage postcards at his shop in New Haven Vermont.



Figure 1 Foundation Antiques



Figure 2 Foundation Antiques Pottery Displays



So the following May 2025, visiting his VERY full shop, we came upon a postcard entitled “ The Piggery, Shelburne Farms, Vermont”! It immediately became a part of the Historic Shelburne collection!

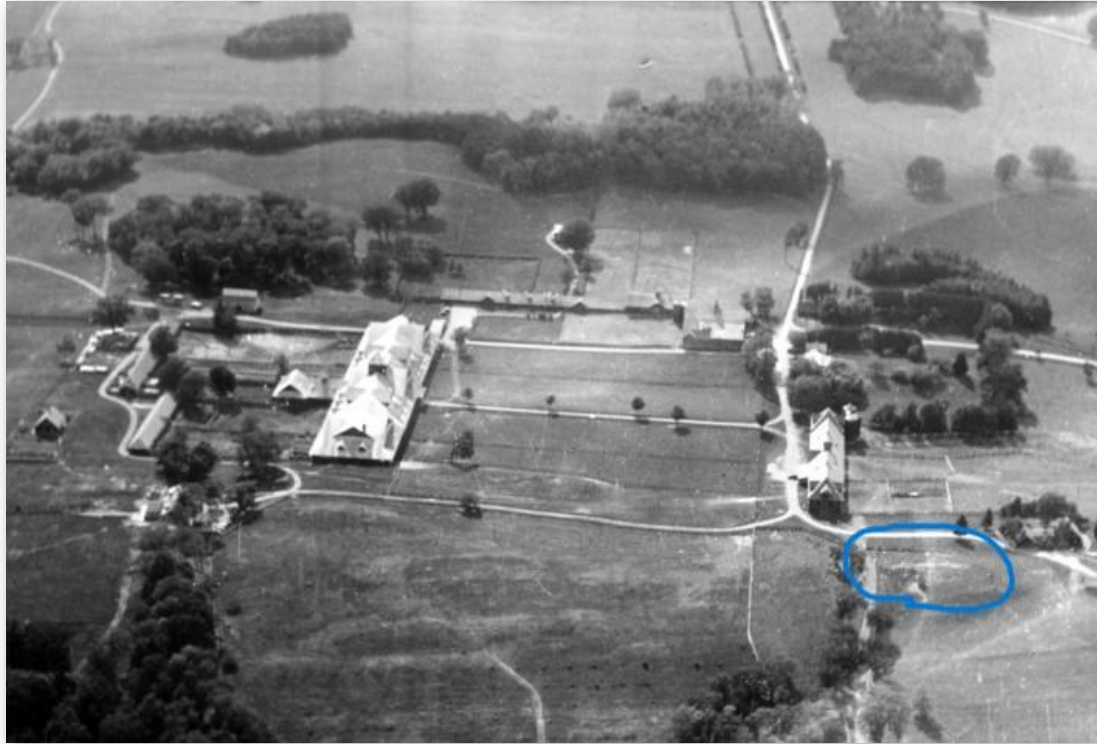


Figure 3 Aerial view looking west is Shelburne Farms Show Barn center left. The blue circle indicates The Piggery's former location.

The Family Photo Album

In his appreciative June 2025 reply to me about seeing the image of The Piggery postcard, Joe McGee told me that his mother had a photo album documenting the building of his family home back in the 1940's and that he would scan the pages and donate them to the Historic Shelburne archives!

The album provides an excellent view of all of the work his father, family and friends put into building his home, and also captured one of the original Shelburne one-room school houses in the village AND the farm pastures surrounding their property!

John and Mareli McGee built their house just east of Edward McGee, who was John's father and a long-time employee at Southern Acres, the part of Shelburne Farms that was given to J.W. Webb, Dr. Webb's son.

Edward McGee's father, William McGee, was also a long-time employee of the Webbs, having worked at Oakledge and Shelburne Farms.



Figure 4 Home of Edward McGee, Marsett Road, just west of construction. "Looking up the hill to Gramp's house. Wash blowing in the wind – Probably frozen!"

The Purchase

On Saturday, September 14th 1946, John McGee signed an agreement with Derick Webb to buy the Piggery Building located next to the "old" dairy barn on Shelburne Farms. John, for \$200, bought all of "the wooden part, and any part of all of the brick work." He had to completely take down the wooden part of the building and remove material and rubbish from Shelburne Farms, at his own expense, on or before April 1st 1947."

The Piggery was purchased on halves with Edmund Lavalette and both of them salvaged the building together. The Lavalette's built their house in South Burlington.



Figure 5 Salvaging the Piggery August 7, 1947.

Salvaging The Piggery

In August 1947, John spent his mornings at U.V.M. summer session to renew his certificate and his afternoons tearing the Piggery down.

As per Joe McGee, “My father, John McGee was the principal, teacher, and team athletics coach at Shelburne High School for many years, so I believe he would have been renewing his teaching certificate by taking summer school classes.”

After drawing up the house plans themselves, construction on the McGee’s two story, nine-room home started 30 July 1948.

Alfred “Buff” Landers was digging his first cellar hole using a steam shovel owned by Bacon Construction Company. Forms for the cellar wall went in on August 7th, then with a portable cement mixer started pouring concrete, pulling the forms on the 19th.

Construction Begins



Figure 6 “We begin – June 30, 1948, the steam shovel owned by Bacon Construction Company.”



Figure 7 The East wall. Open pasture on the opposite side of Falls Road.

The Cellar Surrounded by Pastures



Figure 8 Northeast corner. Note pasture across the road.

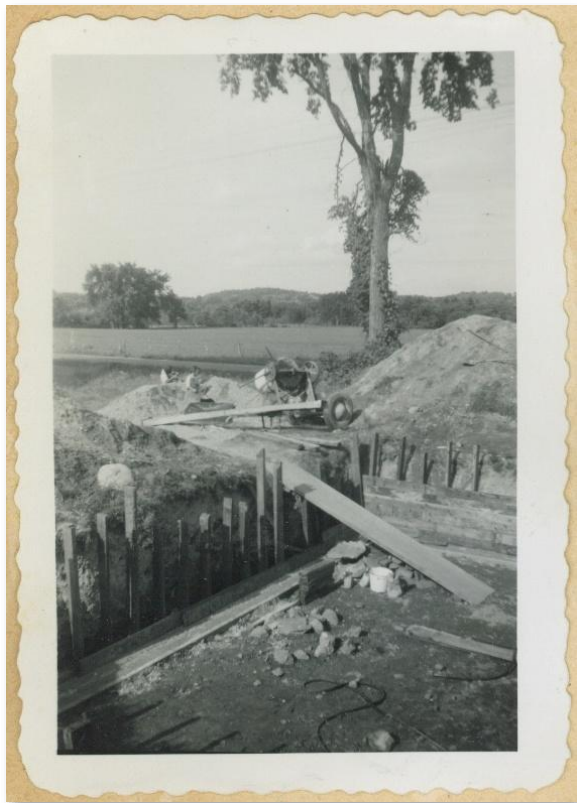


Figure 9 Concrete forms for cellar wall, August 7.



Figure 10 "Four O'Clock Tea - Iced - August 1948."

September 1st, concrete blocks started on top of the short wall, finishing so the sills could be installed on the 14th. By October 23rd, the first floor deck was completed using the lumber from The Piggery. It took until the following August to frame and side the two-story walls and roof. September saw the completion of the fireplace and chimney.



Figure 11 September 1, 1948 facing west.



Figure 12 "September 10th The building in the background is the one-room school house still located on Falls Road which has been converted to a private home with a two-car garage.



Figure 13 "Weekend carpentry, laying the subflooring October 16th."



Figure 14 "The gang on the first floor" October 23, 1948.



Figure 15 Playing by the One-room Shelburne Schoolhouse. To the left of the schoolhouse is Little's Cash Market, a convenience store on Falls Road.



Figure 16 Helping Dad. Falls Road and dairy pastures in the background.

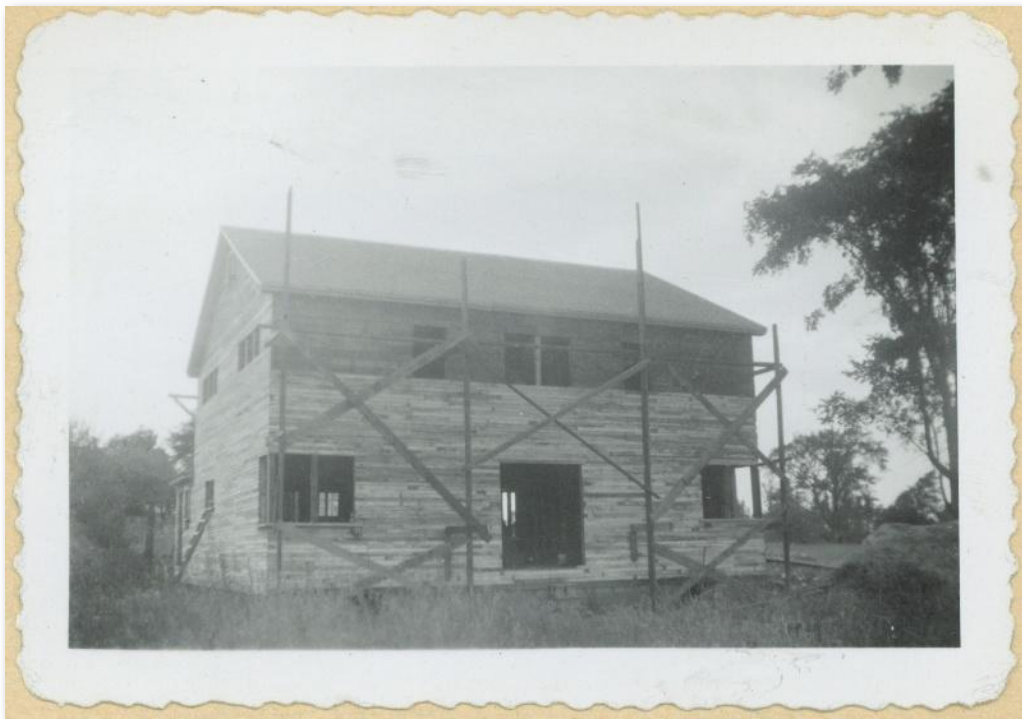


Figure 17 August 2nd, roof on and siding started.

Moving Day!



Figure 18 "Moving Day! Slept for the first time at McGee's Corner on November 11, 1949, Armistice Day."



Figure 19 Front/East side of house.



Figure 20 "South side with laundry. Clapboarding completed November 1950 after being in for a year."



Figure 21 John and Mareli McGee at McGee's Corner September 1969.
Note the “neighbors” now across Falls Road.



Figure 22 The McGee home, "Taken December 1951."

The Shelburne Historical Society sincerely thanks Joe McGee and his siblings for the work they did in sharing their family photo album and allowing us to share it with the community!

This presentation was assembled by editing digital scans (selecting images and enlarging them) that Joe McGee sent David Boucher and adding the commentary written by Mareli McGee in the album (seen in “”) and the additional information contained within email correspondence with the McGee’s.

The scans sent of the original family photo albums 19 pages and 89 photograph images are archived in the Shelburne Historical Society Digital Collection.

This publication is protected by copyright - Shelburne Historical Society, copyright holder. Joseph McGee has granted the use of these images and other images generously donated to the Shelburne Historical Society.

Please contact the Shelburne Historical Society for access to the Digital Collections containing the McGee Family donation of their family photo album, Shelburne1763@gmail.com or Shelburne Historical Society, PO Box 101, Shelburne, Vermont 05482.