

Old Slocum Farm on Cheese Factory Road

Four generations of the Slocum family farmed this land, and lived in this house, from the time in the 1790's when Asa R. Slocum founded the family home here at the eastern tip of the juncture of Shelburne and Burlington (now South Burlington). The farm remained continuously in the family until Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Slocum, now of Shelburne Falls, sold it to the present owner in 1955.

Asa R. Slocum (or Slocombe, as the name was originally spelled), who was born in Hubbardton, Mass., in 1767, settled in Shelburne about 1790, building his first house in the northeast corner of the town, where the home of Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Leduc now stands. That original Slocum house, now known as "The Vermont House," was purchased by the Shelburne Museum some years ago and was moved to the Museum.

Family tradition has it that when the children of Asa R. and Relief Slocum were growing up, about 1825, the brick farmhouse which is being visited today was built "up on the hill" on the Burlington land which Mr. Slocum had begun to purchase in 1799. His first purchase of twenty acres cost him twenty dollars. Among the parcels of land which Mr. Slocum gradually acquired on the Burlington side of Cheese Factory Road was a lot of 103 acres leased from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts--that English society for which a division of land was set aside in each of the colonial land grants made by Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire to towns which now comprise Vermont.

When Asa R. Slocum died in 1830 his estate included over 230 acres of land, a pew in the Shelburne Meeting House, a weaver's loom (value \$10), a yoke of oxen, fifty-eight sheep (value \$87), twenty-five geese (value \$1.25), thirteen hives of bees, one clock (value \$10), and other necessities of the Good Life in 1830. His numerous descendants in later years traded back and forth various parcels of land and bits of personal property until the will of one aunt, Miss Betsey Slocum, in 1872 left to a favorite niece a feather bed, one pair of pillows, two pairs of sheets, two blankets, one bed quilt, and a bedstead with cords.

The present owner has made no structural changes in the house, except to turn an upstairs weaving room into a bathroom, to convert the bedroom over the kitchen into a dining room, and to board up two of the nine doors which were in the living room.

The horse barn was converted into a studio-apartment in 1965-1966. Every effort was made to retain the heavy beams and other outstanding features of the original structure.

A flower garden which lies to the west of the studio-apartment attempts to suggest an Elizabethan "knot garden" and to feature some of the old roses, herbs, and flowers which Shakespeare mentions in his plays.

Presented by
Lewis Slocum
9/25/69

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B Betty Baudel