



Business History

Thomas Clark Store

Capt. Robert B. Dix Store

Isaac T. Murphy House

Later site of Loren W. Rumill Store

Address: 711 Tremont Road (Route 102)

City: West Tremont

State: Maine

Map and Lot Number: Map 5 – Lot 95

Tremont Town Account Number: 385

Map - Map: CS 1887 – SEAL COVE SOUTH – North side of the road

First Owner: Thomas Clark – West Tremont Postmaster 04/15/1872 – brother was Eaton Clark

Subsequent Owners:

Dix – Robert B. Dix (1837-1901)

Murphy - Isaac T. Murphy (1860-1938)

Rumill – Loren W. Rumill (1864-1951)

Lawson – Edwin W. Lawson (1899-1994)

See also:

Capt. Robert B. Dix House

ME - Tremont – Tremont Road – 714

"Ned Lawson's House (Formerly Clark/Dix Store)

This, too, was once part of Lot #21. As I wrote in the Harbor View House description, this whole lot was owned by John M. and Nancy T. Gott. On 26 June 1854 John M. Gott sold to Nathan Adam Reed (son of William and Sarah Appleton Reed) for \$100.00, 3 acres of land, starting at a spruce tree on the highway, running East 12 rods to Sullivan Webster's Northwest line, following this line 40 rods to a ledge, thence West 12 rods, thence South 40 rods to the first bound.

Then, on 16 March 1857, Nathan A. Reed sold to William G. Norwood a 3/4 acre lot for only \$20.00. It began at the county road at a stone in Sullivan Webster's West line, thence North 37 degrees West 12 rods, thence North 26 degrees East 10 1/2 rods, thence South 55 1/2 degrees East 12 1/4 rods to Webster's line, thence South 30 degrees West 14 rods to the first bound; Nathan Reed to have the privilege of a road from his land to the county road across said described land near to William G. Norwood's house. This deed was signed by N. A. Reed and Sarah B. Reed, his wife, before Jacob Sawyer, justice of the peace, and Ali Garland.

Thirteen years later, on 13 Oct 1870, Melissa E. Norwood, with the consent of her husband, Wm. G. Norwood, sold to Thomas A. Clark a 13 square rod lot, beginning at the Southwest corner of Mrs. Webster's house lot (it must mean Eliza Webster) near said Clark's store and running North 59 ½ degrees West 2 rods and 7 links, thence South 36 degrees West 4 rods to a mark in the Southwest corner of a ledge and on the same course to the county road, thence along the North side of the road 3 rods to the said Clark's store lot, thence North 31 ½ degrees East on West side of the store lot to the first bound, containing 13 square rods, more or less. To me, this says clearly that Thomas Clark had a store there at that time. I don't know whether he rented the property or owned it, although it seems to me he must have owned it.

A couple months later, on 2 Dec 1870, Thomas Clark sold to his brother, Eaton Clark, for \$50.00, the above 13 square rod lot, plus another lot, starting at a stake and stone on the North side of the county road opposite the Robert B. Dix dwelling house and running North 31 ½ degrees East 5 rods to a stake, thence South 37 degrees East 8 rods to a stake, thence South 31 ½ degrees West to the road, thence North 37 degrees West to the first bound, containing 1/4 acre. This 1/4 acre lot, then, was the one on which the store was built.

In March of 1875 Thomas Clark mortgaged these two lots to Andrew Lopaus. Did he have financial problems? It would appear so. Sometime thereafter the property came into the possession of Osborne M. Kittredge. I don't know yet how that happened, but it doesn't matter too much now. On 29 March 1884, Osborne M. Kittredge sold these same two lots to Capt. Robert B. Dix for \$500.00. This, then, would be when Robert Dix got the store and started his land-based store business. As I wrote in the section about the Harbor View House, Capt. Dix extended too much credit for too long to too many of his neighbors, and eventually got into deep financial trouble. In fact, he had to mortgage the store property to the Tremont Savings Bank for \$250.00 in February of 1898. He finally had to give up and go back to sea in order to make some money. Unfortunately, it didn't work out for him. On his first trip out he was drowned during a shipwreck on 11 April of 1901.

Following the death of Capt. Robert Dix, his widow and their two children, Ernest Dix and Lillian F. Murphy, sold the store and property to Isaac T. Murphy and his wife, the former Flora Butler. The Murphys converted the store to a home and lived there for several years. For a while their daughter, Kathyln, and her husband, Edmund B. Reed, lived there too in a separate apartment. Eddie and Katie, as they were called, later moved to what is now Bass Harbor where they spent the rest of their lives.

After the Murphys left, the house was bought by Loren W. Rumill and rented out. One of the tenant families was that of Austin and Beulah A. Farrell Ingalls. Austin was a son of Otis and Nell Ingalls. Austin and Beulah had five children in all, one of whom was brought up by Beulah's sister, Madolin Farrell Moore. The other four Ingalls children were Austin, Jr. (Buddy), Pauline, Richard and Harvey. Although Austin wanted to buy the place, he found he couldn't do it without money, so they had to move out...

...Once the Ingalls family moved, Ned and Elsie Lawson wanted to buy the former store. Before he sold it to them, L. W. Rumill removed the ell from the building and moved it a short distance west and sold it to Bernice Brewer Martis. Ned and Elsie then moved into their new house and over the years made it into a very comfortable home. There was a barn near the house which has been used as a shop where Ned built his lobster traps for many years.

Ned Lawson was the second youngest child of George Gardner Lawson and his wife, Wilhemean Sprague. Elsie was one of the four daughters of Fred and Arabella (Belle) Bridges. Ned and Elsie had five children; Barbara, Inez, Edwin, Jr., Jeanette and Russell. Edwin, Jr., (who used to be called Little Ned, Young Ned or "Brother", and his brother, Russell, are both lobstermen like their father .

Over the years Ned Lawson bought the property between the Harbor View House and the shore of Webster's Creek. I don't know how far around the shore he owned, but I suspect he owned quite a lot of it. What will happen to it now, I don't know, but I feel certain the family, or Russell, anyway, will retain what is needed for himself and his son to continue their lobstering business. I just found out (10 Sept 97) that what Lawson property the family didn't keep, after Ned's death, was sold to a Morgan Churchman, III..." - "A History of the Houses of West Tremont, Maine" Volume II, compiled and written by Raymond E. Robbins, Jr., s.n., 1997, p. 89-91.