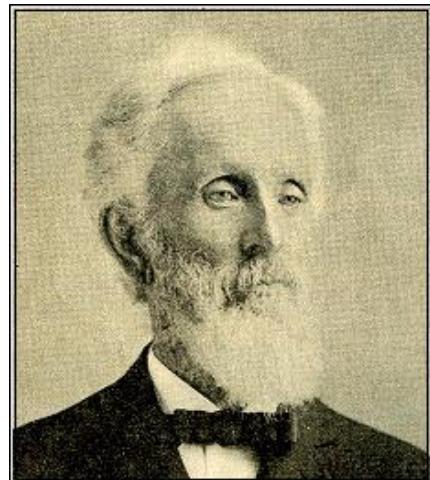


Samuel B. Twitchell (1829-1905)

Samuel Barker Twitchell was born in Bethel on March 16, 1829. He was the only son of five children of Thaddeus (1788-1860) and Sukey Barker Twitchell. One sister married Rev. David Garland only pastor of the 2d Congregational Church; their home stands next to and south of the Twitchell home. His grandfather was Deacon Ezra Twitchell who had brought his family to Sudbury Canada from Dublin, NH, in 1783 to become the second of the Twitchell sons of Joseph Twitchell, president of the Sudbury Canada Plantation, to settle in the part of the plantation now known as Mayville. (Ezra lived where the large white Clanton house now stands.) The Twitchell family home was in Sherborn, Mass.



Samuel B. Twitchell

Samuel Twitchell was educated in a Bethel district school and at Gould's Academy where he was a pupil of Dr. N.T. True. He always lived on the Twitchell homestead which was considered one of the best farms in the Androscoggin valley. He also helped set many of the trees along the road "which add so much to the beauty of Mayville". In his early life he was a trader in the store (now the Briar Ly Inn) and did a large business with lumbermen throughout the lake region. He encountered poor health and gave up the store to attend to management of his farm.

On December 11, 1853 he married Melvina A. Chapman and they had three girls: Marion who married Clarence W. Hobbs of Worcester, Mass., Susie Barker and Florence Eliza. Susie and Florence lived at home the rest of their lives. Their mother died in 1889. After that and until the early 1940's they kept house and took in summer boarders as did many homes in Mayville.

In 1868 Samuel Twitchell was elected a Bethel selectman and was reelected the next two years.

Except for a short time in 1839 crossing the Androscoggin required using Barker's ferry. In 1869 when the town showed determination to have a reliable bridge built over the Androscoggin River, the building committee chosen consisted of Samuel B. Twitchell, Pinckney Burnham and Eber Clough; "they are thorough going, irrepressible men as full of pluck, perseverance and courage as Yankees generally are, and the people have confidence in them; they will build a bridge that will stand."

In 1880 and 1881, Twitchell was Bethel's representative in the Maine legislature.

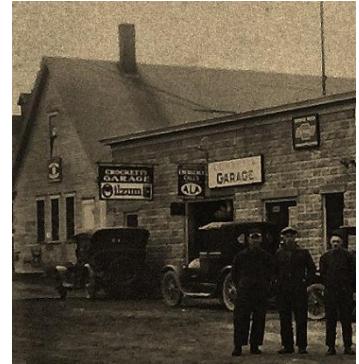
In 1881, the Twitchell home was expanded by first moving the original house back from the road and turning it 90 degrees. Joined to the old house a new, much larger one went up which is the structure known today. The Twitchell's intent was to have a larger home so that they could accommodate summer boarders. At this time his family consisted of himself, his wife Malvina and their two daughters Susie and Florence. (Their oldest daughter, Marion, married and lived in Worcester, MA.) They may also have had farm workers living there as boarders.

Five years later in 1886, the town voted a sum of money for building a chair factory, one of the largest structures in town, and Samuel Twitchell was one of a three man building committee.

In July 1888 the Twitchell barn was lost in a fire of unknown cause. Rebuilding began after the haying season with a new foundation put in; framing and completion of a new barn took place during the warm months of 1889.

Twitchell's last major enterprise started in 1892 when a town organization formed to build a creamery on Church Street (now occupied by the Gould Field House) that would benefit dairy farmers of the Bethel area. He became a very active promoter of the project and soon was voted president of the association. The creamery was to be large enough to handle the cream of 1,000 cows.

The Bethel Creamery was Samuel Twitchell's last major project. He continued farming although in his last two years he had to seek medical treatments. He died September 30, 1905. His two daughters continued at the homestead and took in regular summer boarders until the early 1940s. Susie died in 1941 and Florence in 1948.



Building in the rear, high gable end, is the creamery



A photo of the home shows how the south facing side of the rear ell (original house) of the larger home would have looked while it faced the Bethel-Newry road before being repositioned and moved away from the road.



Photo of the Twitchell barn showing on the right (north) end the gradual sloped bridge made to allow horse to pull loaded hayracks into the barn.

Sources: Bethel and Oxford County newspapers; Bethel Historical Society collections.

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