

SEBAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

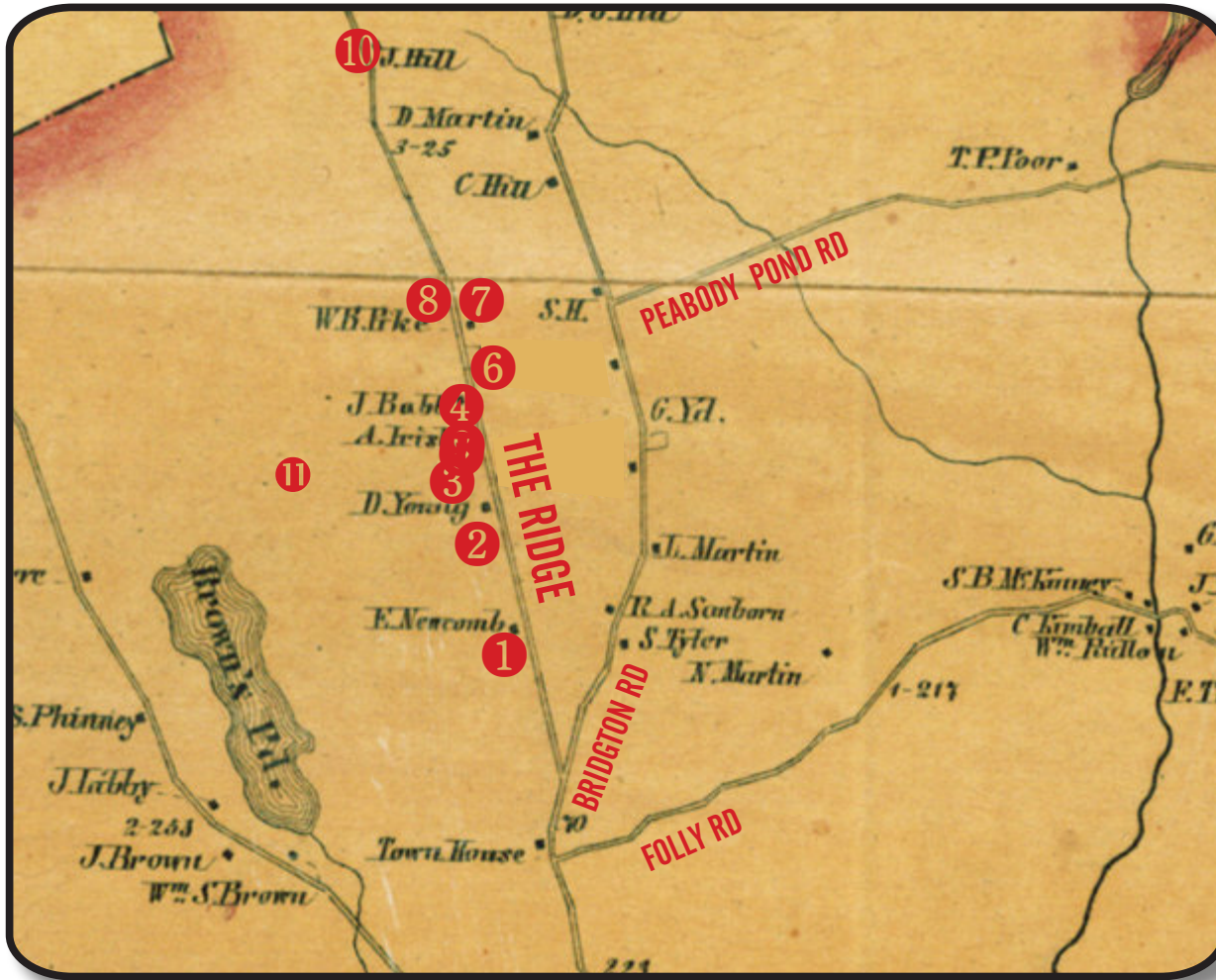


NEIGHBORHOODS OF SEBAGO

HANCOCK POND ROAD, PART 1 : THE RIDGE 2022

January 2022

An excerpt from the 1857 map of Sebago. Superimposed are approximate locations of the sites shown in this year's photos.



- 1 Eben Newcomb House (February)
- 2 Daniel Young House (March)
- 3 John Moody House (April)
- 4 Babb House (May and June)
- 5 Idlewilde Inn (July)
- 6 Mamie Babb House (August)
- 7 John D. Martin Home (September)
- 8 Chessey Blacksmith Shop (October)
- 9 Babb Cemetery (November)
- 10 John Hill House (December)
- 11 Chessey Preserve

On the cover: At the age of 14, Peter Babb entered the American Revolution as a captain's waiter. He served a year with the Continental Army, receiving a severe wound in his ankle. The remarkable flag pictured on the cover, found in the Babb home during a renovation, is a cherished family reminder of his service.

"The Ridge" is the height of land lying between the Bridgton Road and Brown's Pond, served today by the Hancock Pond Road. It was first settled by Benaiah Davis in 1808. During the next two decades several families joined him, including Davises, Potters, Newcombs, Babbs and others, and later by the Knapps and Youngs. A road was cut in 1831 to join the Ridge families to the Bridgton Road, north of the current road, coming in opposite Peabody Pond Road. By 1835 it extended south along the current route. The northern portion was finished in 1843, leading all the way to the Denmark line, becoming known as the Denmark Road. Settlement continued, and when the summer visitor trade developed in the late 1800s, inns and lodging houses appeared. Several of the houses from the 1800s still stand today.

February 2022

Eben Newcomb House

Ebenezer Newcomb's family first came to "The Ridge" in 1812, when he was 12 years old. He married Eliza Babb, the sister of Captain James Babb in 1833. Living in various locations in the vicinity, they eventually came back to settle down here in 1844, raising seven children and building the home seen here. Eliza died in 1853 and Eben married Olive Chapman.

In 1867, Lizzie Rowena Newcomb, Eben's youngest child, married Andrew Reed. Andrew and Lizzie were quite famous in the region for their leadership in the Temperance movement. Lizzie wrote poetry about the need for folks to "sign the pledge," and Andrew was a frequent speaker at the large Temperance Camp Meetings held annually in Sebago Lake Village.

By 1878, when Eben passed away, Andrew's parents had joined the busy household. Abiel S. Reed had a blacksmith shop just across the road. Rebecca Reed was a dressmaker and Olive Newcomb a tailoress. Lizzie died in 1880, leaving two daughters.



By 1886 Andrew Reed was remarried and added his home to the increasing number of summer boarding houses in Sebago, calling his enterprise Maple Farm. In 1889, John H. Lombard purchased the place and took in "summer people" for several more years.

Henry G. Ross renovated the house after he bought it in 1893. Later owners

included the McDonalds and the Colbys.

The house was owned last by Thomas Dodge. It was struck by lightning and burned to the ground in 1979. This house was not rebuilt, but a new house was built on the property a few years later.

March 2022

Daniel Young House



Daniel Young married Ann Babb, a sister of Captain James Babb, moved to Sebago in 1832 and lived in this house. Their twelve children all survived to adulthood, two sons serving as State Legislators and Senators. Almon and Peter B. Young were also well-respected businessmen in the Sebago-Hiram area.

The next owner of this house was Charles A. Newcomb, son of Eben. Barely 19 years old, Charles joined the celebrated Maine 17th Regiment in 1862 and marched off to war. Two years later he was severely wounded at Spotsylvania Court House, one of the horrifically bloody battles of the Civil War. He married Luella Reed, a sister of Andrew Reed, and lived here for seven years. At one

point he was employed by Col. Mattocks of the 17th, on his East Baldwin farm. His poor health eventually led Charles, his wife and six children to Placer County, California, where Luella's sister, Francener Reed Bickford and her husband, John H. Bickford, also from Sebago, operated a prosperous ranch and orchard. These two families are considered "Pioneers of Placer County," in California's "Gold Country."

Later, this was the home of the Daniel and Olive Flint family, who sold it to Reuben and Mary Sawyer. Finally, in 1958, Donald and June Allen bought the house, raising their two children here. June still lives in this house today.

John Moody House

John Moody built this house in 1838 on land that had been the residence of Benaiah Davis for several decades. John and his wife, Betsey, raised their family of seven children here. However, they lost their son Charles in 1841 at the age of 20. This is the earliest dated grave-stone in the adjoining Babb Cemetery.

By 1854 Asa and Patience Irish were living here with their son Charles and daughter Sophronia. Sadly, Sophronia died at age 19, being buried on the day that was supposed to have been her bridal day.



April 2022

In 1865, Charles Irish sold the property to Albert Young, a nephew of Daniel Young, down the road. Albert and his family had lived for a time in Chateaugay, New York, where he enlisted in the 92nd New York regiment, serving over three years during the Civil War. Returning to Maine after the war, Albert and his wife Martha lived here for seven years, raising four boys.

Nathaniel and Mary Martin were the next to live here, with daughter Angeline, from 1873 until 1899

when the property was sold to their granddaughter, Effie, the wife of Wilbur Warren. Wilbur sold to Effie's cousin, Dr. Harry Adelbert Townsend in 1938. Dr. Townsend practiced podiatry in Phippsburg, Massachusetts, for 30 years. Several more Townsend family members lived here before the current owners, Sue and Gerry Barker.

May 2022

Babb House

This photo shows the Babb homestead that housed several generations of Babbs. Peter Babb and his sons James and John were early settlers in Sebago, while the area was still part of Baldwin. James joined Benaiah Davis on the Ridge, and the family has been here ever since.

James Babb was a sergeant in the 1st Brigade 12th Division of the Massachusetts Militia that mustered in Portland to defend the seacoast from British war ships in 1814. He was elected captain of the local militia in 1825, and was known as Captain James for the rest of his life. In 1820, he married Sally, daughter of Colonel David and Sibyl (Fitch) Potter.

Sibyl was a sister of William and Joseph Fitch.

James and Sally's youngest son, James Calvin Babb, took over the farm and taught school. He later served as a trustee of Potter Academy. Tragically, Calvin's first wife and three children all died within a five-year span. In 1862 he married Annette, the daughter of Andrew and Casiah (Irish) Douglass. Two of their children, George and Mamie, lived on the Ridge as adults, but their third child, Will, moved to Portland, dying of pneumonia at age 31.

In 1880, following other Sebago residents who took in summer boarders, Calvin and Annette opened the successful and well-known Elm Cottage. Guest lists printed in the Bridgton News show tourists visiting from across the nation. For more information on Elm Cottage and the Sebago summer boarding industry, see *Sharing Summer* by Susan Cummings.





This is the same house shown in May, but now it has two stories. A second story was sandwiched in between the old house and the roof, probably in 1894 by Calvin Babb, as one of many renovations to the house.

Calvin and Annette Babb's children George and Mary both followed their father's footsteps in the teaching profession. George and his bride, Caroline, spent three years teaching at the Kamehameha School in the Sandwich Islands after his graduation from the University of Maine. In 1894 he became the principal of the Walker Manual Training School in Portland, a position he held until he was called back to the Babb homestead in 1913 to take over for his father. After wife

Caroline's death in 1924, George remarried and moved to the Augusta area to work for the Agricultural Department as a lecturer and inspector.

The homestead was eventually sold to Samuel Chessey Jr, and then passed down to its present owner Joanne Chessey. She and her husband Steve Ristich have renovated the house and run Twin Hearts Farm Bed & Breakfast, thus continuing the tradition of the summer tourist business.

Idlewilde Inn

The success of Elm Cottage (*see May*) inspired Calvin and Annette Babb to expand their business. In 1890, they built this structure across the road and called it Idlewilde Inn. The car in this picture dates the photo to about 1910.



July 2022

The Babbs' anniversary makes the news in Portland! An article in the Portland paper dated June 6, 1912 gave a sketch of their lives and their upcoming celebration.



Uncertainty about the name of the inn is resolved by zooming in on the photo to see the sign over the porch steps.

August 2022

Mamie Babb House

This was the home of Mary Babb, better known as Mamie, the youngest of Calvin and Annette Babb's children. It was built by her father in 1887, and he and Annette lived here with Mamie in their later years. In 1912 Mamie was appointed postmaster, and the Mud City post office moved to her house. She ran it for al-

most 30 years, until it was discontinued in 1940. After Mary's death in 1951, Katherine Boynton lived here. In 1991 she deeded the adjacent land to the town for a new cemetery. The house was later purchased by the Champagne family. It is now the home of Ann and Butch Farley.



Mamie Babb



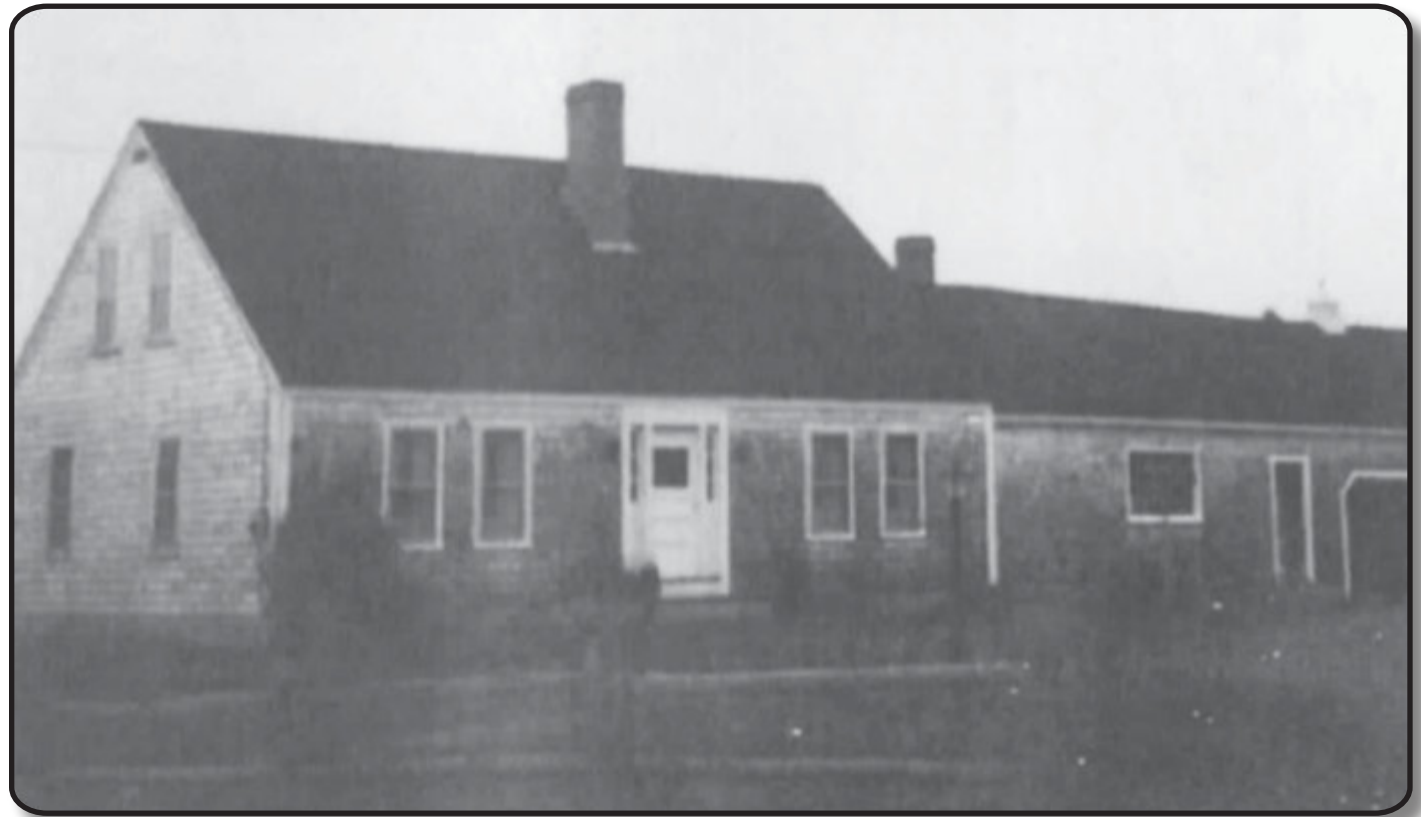
John D. Martin Home

September 2022

William Knapp built this home here in 1831. He was the nephew of Joseph and Sally (Knapp) Fitch and was raised by them in Sebago, along with his brother, B. F. Knapp, after their parents died. William and his wife, Eliza, sold their home and land to William B. Pike in 1836. Two years later William Knapp died of smallpox after contracting it on a trip out west.

Colonel William B. Pike and wife, Louisa, lived here for 20 years with their son and two daughters. William was a militia Colonel and his obituary commented: "He is thought to have been the last field officer of the old militia in this part of the state. He was a gentleman of the strictest honesty and morality, and by industry, thrift and economy had secured an ample estate." In 1856, Pike sold the farm and moved to the Convene area.

The farm was purchased by Elisha Brown of Cornish. He was married to Mary, the eldest daughter of Asa and Patience Irish, who lived just down the road. The Browns raised five children here.



In 1864 Brown sold to John D. Martin, who lived here with his wife Caroline and five sons. John frequently served as a town officer and twice as a State Legislator. He was the Postmaster at Sebago from 1857 until 1861, a Deacon of the Freewill Baptist Church and a member of the Maple Grove Grange.

After John D. Martin's death, the property went through several owners (*see October*). It is now the home of Larry and Sue Farrington.

October 2021

Chessey Blacksmith Shop



No one knows who built this blacksmith shop. It is remembered as Louis Chessey's, but it was probably part of the Martin farm (*see September*) by around 1880. After John D. Martin died in 1887, his widow Caroline married Calvin Winn and lived on the farm until 1903 when she sold it to Nahum Huntress. Sold along with the farm were farriering tools, two carriages and farm animals. Nahum was a granite quarryman and at one time worked in California. He lived on the farm with his daughter Bertha until 1913 when he sold the property to Melvin and Belle Cook. The Cooks lived here for twelve years and raised five children, including a son, Melvin, who served in the Navy during WWII.

In 1925 Louis Chessey purchased the farm and its mowing machine, horse rake, cultivator, spring tooth harrow, hay rack and all personal property. The manure, however, was kept by the Cooks. Louis Chessey lived on the farm until his death in 1961.

Babb Cemetery

November 2022

Known as the Babb Cemetery, this graveyard holds members of several Sebago families, including Babbs, Douglasses, Chadbournes, Davises, Martins and Browns, among others. The earliest stone marks the grave of Charles Moody, who died in 1841 at the age of 20. Today, the yard is still being used to inter members of these families. Among the graves are those of Sebago veterans from many of America's wars, including:

James Babb, War of 1812
John Moody, War of 1812
George Douglas Jr., Civil War
Robert Boynton, WW I
Arthur Douglass, WW II
Herbert Lehmann, WW II
Richard Viles, WW II
Donald Allen, Korea
Norman Cummings, Korea
Clayton Douglass, Korea
Bryon Douglass, Vietnam



*Monument of James Babb
and family*

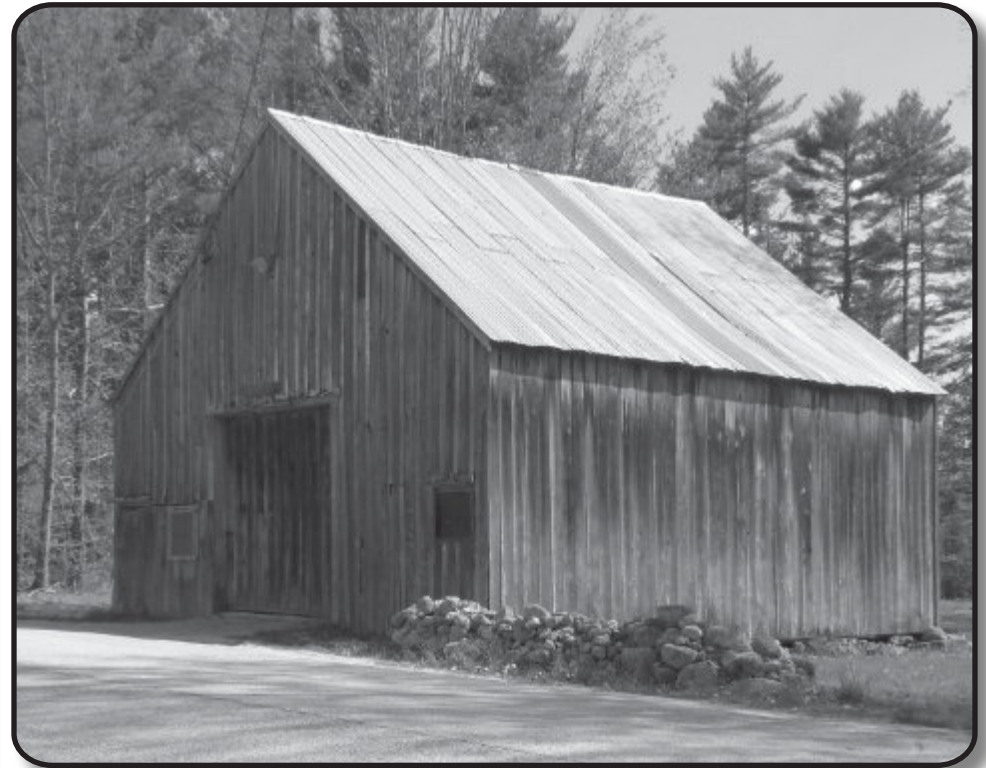
December 2021

This house was the home of John Hill, youngest child of pioneer settlers Daniel and Polly (Lakin) Hill, and his wife Rosanna Martin. They bought the property in 1851, and lived here with their 11 children. It is unclear whether they built the house, or if it was an existing structure that they moved onto their new land. After John's death in 1889, his son Charles F. Hill inherited the property, which he sold to his sister Ida (Hill) Dewhurst in 1903.



Ida's children sold the property after her death in 1915, and it passed through a few owners before being purchased by Alma (Lind) Halbich in 1924. Her nephew Clifford Lind of Melrose, Massachusetts, inherited it and lived here with his wife Adma from 1973 until 1986. He was a Navy veteran, a Sebago selectman, a substitute teacher and the organist for Maple Grove Grange meetings. The property was subsequently owned by Loren Largey, then Christopher Cross, and then his son Mike Cross. It is currently owned by Glen and Angela Seavey.

John Hill Homestead



The Hill barn, across the street from the house. Organ pipes belonging to Clifford Lind were found stored in the barn.



Ida (Hill) Dewhurst, who owned the property in the early 20th century.



*Clumps of wild
gaywings
bloom along the
trail in May.*



Chessey Preserve

In 1996, the Chessey family put about 100 acres of their property into a land trust. Joanne Chessey writes, "The inspiration behind it was to create a forever wild parcel that would be a refuge for animals as well as humans needing a peaceful place in Mother Nature!" A short, easy trail, starting just beyond the Sebago Cemetery, leads walkers from the road into Brown's Pond (formerly know as Sabbathday Pond), shown here. The trail is open to the public.

Coming for 2023: Hancock Pond

If you have pictures and stories to share of your family's home in the last century, please contact a member of the Sebago Historical Society, send a comment to our Facebook page or email us through the Contact page of our website www.sebagohistoricalsociety.org



The Calendar Committee, Sue Cummings, Nancy Sosman and Sherrill Brown, would like to thank all those who invited us into their homes and opened their photo albums and told us the stories behind the pictures. A special thank you to June Allen for taking a ride up the road and pointing out where all of the houses were located. All information is as accurate as can be determined at the time of printing.