

History of 36 Schoolhouse Road, Colebrook, Connecticut

This property originated as a plot of land created by the Proprietors of Windsor, Connecticut in 1760 when they laid out the township. One of the criteria for establishing a new township, established by the Colonial Legislature, was to provide for the establishment and maintenance of the church. This was done by leasing parts of the set-aside land, with all funds applied to either the minister (Ministerial Lot) or the maintenance of the parsonage (Parsonage Lot).

In Colebrook's case, parts of the Parsonage Lot were leased to the Rockwell brothers in 1791 for a period of 999 years.

A committee of the Society of Colebrook sold at public sale part of the Parsonage Lot. The highest bidder was Dr. Isaac Benedict, who bid \$15.57 an acre. He thus paid the committee \$1,450, for which he received a lease for 999 years. It was bounded east and west by highways (tier lines), south on Solomon Rockwell and Brothers and north on the Ministerial Lot. The date of this transaction was May 5, 1797.

The Rockwell's iron works, located on the Ministerial Lot directly north of what was eventually to become 36 Schoolhouse Road, was built by the Rockwells in 1793 on a piece of land within the Ministerial Lot, which was leased for a period of 16 years (1793-1809) for the sum of \$6.00 per year.

On July 14, 1804, Dr. Benedict sold his Parsonage Lot holdings to Elijah Rockwell for \$3,500.00, on which was standing a barn and house frame.

On Benedict's east boundary was a small plot of land that had been leased to Solomon Rockwell & Bros. for a forge place for the term of 12 years beginning on the 1st of August 1797 (1797-1809). This was described as "bounded by the east bank of a small stream, then south on this small brook..." etc.

The land was passed by Elijah to his brother Reuben (the first), who passed it on to his son, Reuben, who sold the property to Edwin M. Tyrrell in 1865, noting that the west end was where the barn had formerly stood. Tyrrell sold the house and property to Susan A. Whiting in 1888.

Elizabeth Whiting inherited the house and property from Susan in 1916, and it has continued to be held by Whiting descendents ever since. When Elizabeth died, she left it to her husband, William McNeill. They have several grown children.