

The Sage Family of Colebrook

A compilation of a list of the most influential families of Colebrook's formative years must include that of Sage. A Sage family genealogy has been compiled by Miss Eleanor Gilfoy, a descendant of Hiram Sage, born in Colebrook on March 29, 1804. Here are some excerpts beginning with the arrival of the Sage family into these western hills:

“Samuel Sage married Prudence Hurlbut in 1755 and they had three sons and five daughters. One of the sons was Enos Sage, born May 27, 1757 in Middletown, Connecticut. When Enos was ten years old, he moved with his father to Sandisfield, Massachusetts.

There were only two houses at that time between New Hartford and Sandisfield, one being in South Colebrook. [Today a replacement house stands in the place of the original at 250 Smith Hill Road.] As a boy, Enos remembered a fine spring of cool water under the hill near the house. They had to blaze a cart path a part of the way through the woods.”

“Enos enlisted in the Revolutionary War three times; first as a private in Captain Soule's Company, Colonel Whitcomb's Massachusetts Regiment, served until June, 1776, at which time he left on furlough, and his brother, Elias Sage, took his place in that company and regiment. He enlisted the second time September 1, 1776 in Captain Samuel Wolcott's Company, serving three months, and the third time in June 1777, serving two months as a private in Captain Elijah Deming's and Wheeler's Companies, Col. Ashley's Massachusetts Regiment. Enos was granted a war pension August 9, 1832.

Enos married Rhoda Chamberlain May 20, 1780 and they had eight children. Over several years, commencing with 1794, Enos bought a square mile of land in Colebrook. In 1797, with the help of his sons, he built a house and barn east of the Rock Schoolhouse, [today, these original structures still survive as the home of Mr. & Mrs. Jon Gray at 23 Sandy Brook Road] and cleared the land, laying up many rods of stone wall. He built a grist mill on Sandy Brook where the Wrinkel Paper Mill was to stand in later years. [Today this is at 3 Campbell Road.] The Sage farm land was disposed of in small parts, but 200 acres were held in the family for over 100 years.”

“Enos' wife, Rhoda, died January 15 1802, 42 years of age. Enos married Eunice Smith Clark June 9 1803. They had seven children, the first child and son was Hiram, born March 29 1804. [It is their portraits that hang in the front room of the Colebrook Historical Society.] Enos Sage died July 16 1839, aged 82, and Eunice, his wife, died on January 21 1848, aged 75.

Hiram married Lucy Judd on October 27 1835. At some time, Hiram bought his father's homestead. Lucy and Hiram had twelve children – 8 girls and 4 boys, born from February 1838 to August 1858.

Hiram hauled stone and brick for his brother's houses and did trucking for his brother Alpha's store. [Today, this is 662 Colebrook Road.] He was a constable and was engaged on the White murder case, taking William Calhoun into custody. He was also tax collector, and represented Colebrook two terms in the Legislature. At one time he owned the Vernon Brothers Paper Mill. He would do the trucking, carrying to Winsted for shipment the great bales of finished goods and returning with the bales of rags and jute. Hiram Sage was also captain of the Colebrook militia. When he was 45 years old,

he had his leg broken while felling a tree. He had to have it amputated twice, first by a neighbor's ax, then by a Dr. Hiekey of Torrington.”

“Albert Buell Sage, first son and fifth child of Hiram and Lucy, was born February 7 1845. When he was 12, he attended the South Berkshire Institute in New Marlboro. In a letter to his sister, Lucia, he said there were between 75 and 80 scholars there. He described his bed as being filled with corn husks and cobs, and was like sleeping on a board. He also said that he went to bed hungry every night. ‘The victuals are good, but not enough.’

Two brothers of Albert, Charles and Frank, kept the farm on Sandy Brook Road going; Frank left in 1888, and moved to New York State, Charles continued on until 1890. In January 1897, Charles and Frank Sage sold the 200 acre farm to Isidore Jasmin.”

[The Jasmin farm remains in the same family, Jon being the son of Walter Gray, who in turn was the son of William Gray, who married Isidore Jasmin's daughter, Lea. The farm passed to William and Lea upon the death of her mother, Apoline Jasmin. For over 200 years, this property has belonged to only two families.]

Historic Bytes

Bob Grigg