

Historic District
of
Royalston

Incorporated 1765

Named for Sir Issac Royal

Anonymous and undated document found in the files of the Royalston Historic District
Commission

Written after 1991, see last paragraph on p 4.

P. Humblet, May 11, 2014

The First Congregational Church of Royalston which is on the west side of the Common was erected in 1851. It replaced an earlier building which burned down the same year. It is of Greek Revival Style and in the interior is a statuette of the Angel Gabriel carved in 1797 from one piece of local pine.

Immediately north of the Church, we find the Rufus Bullock Mansion or Hill House. The earliest part of this house dates to 1764, the rest to 1807. It is Federal in style and was the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton Bullock who was governor of the state in the 1860s. It later became the home of the Hill Family, two of whom, Donald and Malcolm were national father and son tennis champions.

n North of the Hill Mansion is the Phineas S. Newton Library which was built in 1911 and is the Greek Revival style in brick. The original foundations of a library in Royalston go back to 1778. In 1824 the Ladies Benevolent Society began a second one which opened in 1874 and was accepted by the town in 1880.

The Barnett Bullock House, across the street(north) from the library, is Federalistic in style and dates from 1825. Barnett Bullock(1798-1834) built and lived in this house with his wife and eight children. It is now the residence of Dr. D. Stowell,D.D.S.

The Raymond House, north of the Barnett Bullock House was built in 1825 along the Federal Style by Solomon Tenney. Between 1852-1872 it was occupied by ministers of the Congregational Church. It was purchased by the Raymond Family, one of whom, Miss Mary Raymond was a distinguished educator and Headmistress of the Hathaway-Brown School in Cleveland. She and her sister, Caroline, gave to the town the land upon which the Raymond School now stands.

Beyond the Raymond House is the Margaret Nash House built in 1874 by Joseph Raymond along the Federalistic Style. It is still used as a private residence by the Nash Family

At the North end of the Common, in the Vformed by two roads, facing south, is the Goddard House built by Cpt. William Raymond of Athol sometime before 1847. The land was bought from Ebenezer Elliot who died in 1794. Ashbel Goddard moved here soon after 1852. He was a member of a family who later became famous in the field of rocketry.

A neighbor across the road, on the east side, is the Whitney House which is in the Greek Revival Style built somewhere around 1836 by George Miller. It was purchased by George Whitney who was a State Senator, a member of the Governor's Council and a mill owner(George Whitney Woolen Co.).

The next house going south on the east side of the Common is the water's House. The original house, built by George Pierce, in 1820, burned and the present house was erected somewhere around 1900.

"White Heather" directly south of the Water's House is a youngster having been built about 1900 in the Federalistic Style. It was built by J. Howard Lee for his daughter. It was erected upon the site of a palm leaf shop built by Joseph Estabrook in 1802. Mr. Lee's Victorian mansion, between White Heather and the Water's House, now torn down, was purchased from Mr. Estabrook and served various functions; residence, post office, store and an inn in stagecoach days.

The Old Store and Post Office directly across the street from the Church has a house attached which was built about 1810 by Jonathan Sibley. The store built around 1870 was the work of Obadiah Walker.

"The Bastelle" located on the curve is of the period 1830 and is Federalistic in style. It was erected by Rev. Ebenzer Perkins and was purchased by the Bullock Family in the 1920s. During World War II, Empress Zita of Austria-Hungary (1893-1989), her children and entourage stayed here as guests of the family. The Empress later resided in Switzerland.

Across the street, set back from the road is the "The Columns". It was built by Moses Nichols around 1838 in the Greek Revival Style. It was purchased by George F. Miller who was a musician of considerable reputation. The house eventually came into the possession of his grandson Calvin Bullock and the Bullock Family maintains it as a home to this day.

J.E.P. Austin built the house south of "The Columns" around 1839. It is of Greek Revival Style and is known as "The Lightning Rods". Various owners have occupied the house since 1839. It is now the residence of the Bullock-Cole Family.

Next to "The Lightning Rods" is the home of the Newton Family which is Federal in style and was originally Wm. Jerrel's Hatter's Shop moved to this site about 1780. It was completed as a residence around 1853.

At the south end of the Common, facing north, is the Old School House which was constructed around 1835 in the Greek Revival Style. It was used as a school until the 1940s. It is now the home of the Royalston Historical and Village Improvement Society which maintains a museum pertaining to the town within its walls.

Looking north from the Society Building one will see on the west side, the Parsonage which was constructed around 1874. An older building on this site, which served as tavern and store was moved off the Common and is now situated behind the Bastelle on Route 68. The building on Route 68 was the home of Miss Mildred French till her death at 95 in 1991.

Next door to the Parsonage is the Adams-Burr House which was built by Elijah Nichols around 1855. It is Federalistic in style and was purchased by Dr. Frank W. Adams in 1875. Dr. Adams served in the Civil War and practiced in Royalston many years. He wrote an epic poem about the war which is in the society building. His daughter, Winifred Burr, was a poet and painter.

Wm. O. Brown built the Pierce-Stow House around 1850. It is the house next to the Burr-House. Horace Pierce bought it around 1880 and raised nine children here. His daughter, after becoming a widow, returned to live out her remaining years in this house.

The Austin House next to the Pierce-Stow House has parts which date to the 1760s and newer parts dating to the 1820s.

The Town Hall was constructed by Chauncy Chase around 1867. It replaced an earlier building which was both meeting house and church. By the laws of 1831, separation of church and state was now necessary. Its style is Mansard and it contains a large portrait of Sir Issac Royal.

This completes the houses which are found on the Common. On the various roads which one finds throughout the Town of Royalston, you will find many houses which date from the 1760s through the 1860s. All are privately owned and are a joy to behold, for one does not usually see such an abundance of homes of the early years of our country.