

# A-CHS Newsletter

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## KEEN'S CORNER - COOPER



THE KEEN HOUSE

This picture was probably taken previous to 1925. Cecil said it must have been about that time that his father cut logs on the place and hauled them on a sled with a pair of horses to a mill at Ayer's Junction in Charlotte. There the logs were sawed into boards and then into clapboards. When they were done, Henry Keen hauled them home on a truck wagon, and redid the house, clapboards, new windows and painted the whole thing. This picture does not show the ell. Marjorie Frost Crosby loaned the picture. Thanks!

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## KEEN'S CORNER - COOPER

The title represents the earlier known name for this neighborhood. Today most people refer to it as GRANGE HALL CORNER.

Paper sources used for the articles on this neighborhood include Colby's 1881 Atlas of Washington County, Walling's 1861 Map of Washington County, Jones's pre 1838 Plan of Cooper. People who have helped have been Justin Day, Robert Day, Norman Day, Melva and Cecil Keen and Thursa Sawyer.

In this article and the related ones , I've given approximate year of birth in [brackets]. This year was calculated by subtracting the age from the year of census. Of course, the actual year of birth may be the year before or the year after, depending on month of birth and month of census.

(1) ASHLEY FARM: This was the home of John and Elizabeth Cooper from 1822 until their deaths. John Cooper had the 160 acre mill lot on which his house stood, and another 160 acre lot just west of that. He also had other lots about town. A brief biography on John Cooper appears elsewhere in this issue.

Their son and family apparently lived in this house also. William arrived in Cooper prior to 1840 with a family of ten. His wife Eliza (Dutton) died in 1841. The 1850 census lists William [1793], Elizabeth his mother [1770], William S. [1827], Elizabeth P. [1829], Emma P. [1831], Caroline P. [1833], Helen M. [1835], Mary [1838], and Harriot C. [1840]. Also living in the house were Jonas Bowers [1836], Amos Foster [1836], Caroline Newman [1810], and Emma Newman [1838]. The 1860 census lists William, Caroline, Helen, Mary, and Hattie. The older two girls were teachers at the common school. The family isn't listed in the 1870 census.

The Leavitt Vining family was in Cooper before 1840 but not at this site. The 1881 Atlas gives for this site N. and F. Vining. Nathan [1814], son of Leavitt, lived here with his wife Mary E. [1821], and their children Hellen Almira [1842], Percis [1844], Emma [1847], Nathan [1850], Wyman [1853], Fred [1856], Mary [1860], Maria [1862], George [1864], and Willie [1866]. All the children were single except Fred whose wife Edith was 22 and child Otis was one month old also lived in the house. Three other grandchildren were in the house, Charles [1872], Lillian [1873], and Fred [1875]. My records don't indicate who their parents were. Percis is listed as a worker in a cotton mill. So this site was the home of father and son, Nathan and Fred Vining and their extended family.

William and Rhoda (Jones) Morton were here from 1892 until their deaths. Will (1866 - 1943) and Rhoda (1866 - 1960) were the parents of two girls, Lizzie (1894 - 1987) who married Hubert Perkins, and Mildred (1896 - 1984) who married Lee Howe. Will was a farmer and for a time sold grain.

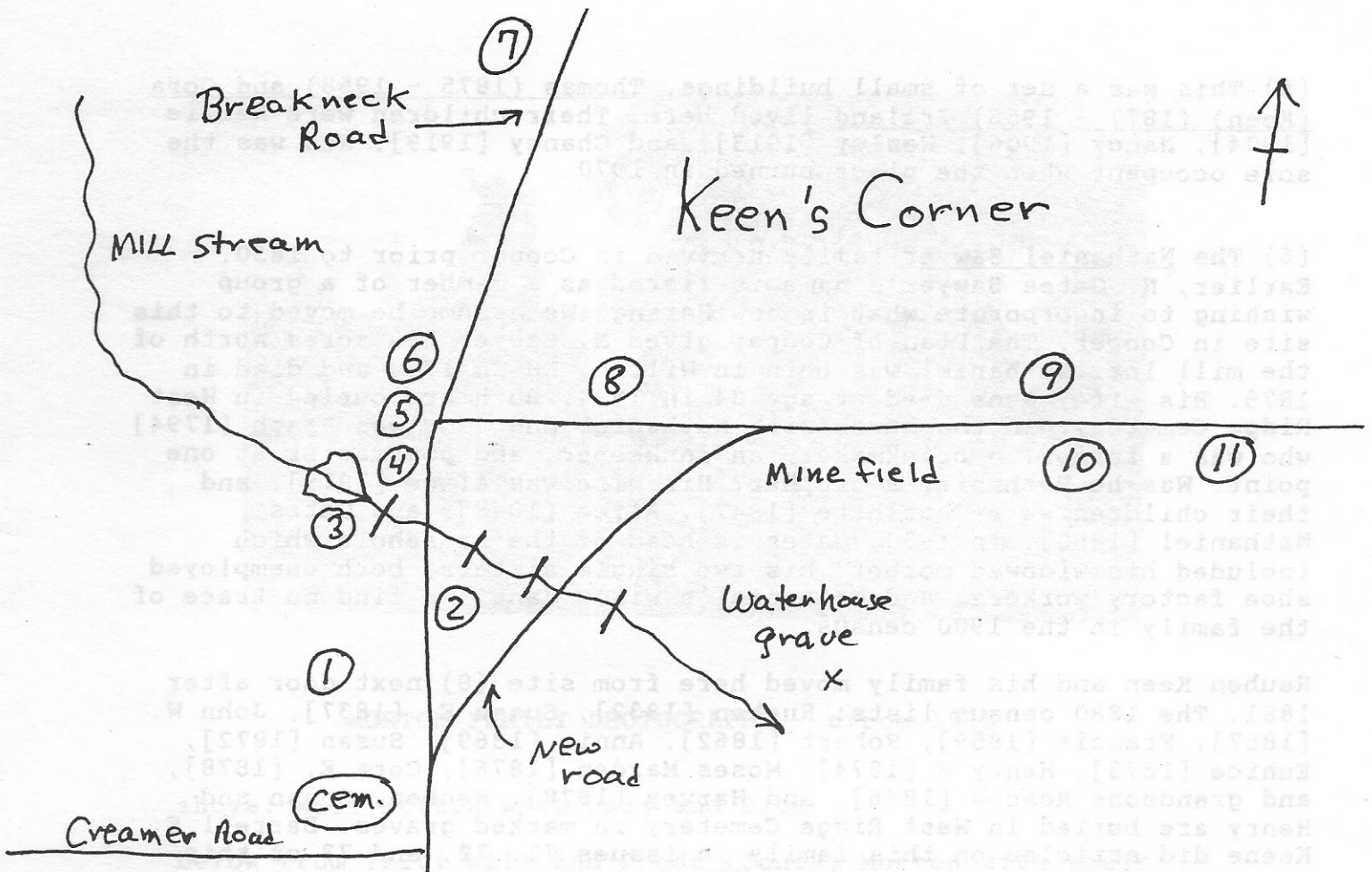
While her parents lived in the north part, Lizzie and Hubert Perkins lived in the south part of this house with their children, Donald and Violet. In the 1960's Lizzie and Hubert spent the winters on Middle Ridge with her sister Mildred. Shortly after Hubert died in 1966, Lizzie moved in with Mildred.

The house was sold to James Flanningan who wanted to restore the house to its original condition. He never really lived in the house and his plans were cut short by a series of strokes.

James and Marilyn Hayward were the last owners and residents of this old house. It was their home when it burned on January 8, 1975.

Between the old foundation and the Cooper Family Cemetery is a mobile home which was set up in 1994 by Wilfred Doucette for a retirement home.

(2) CATHANCE GRANGE NO. 510: Behind the Grange Hall was a stable to protect the horses from the elements. Besides its official use, the Hall was used for the all day town meetings, for weddings, and for dances. See related article on the Grange.



(3) THE DAMS AND MILLS: In 1816 John Cooper built a saw mill he named "Successful Enterprise" and a grist mill he named "Resolution". Cecil remembers four dams along Mill Stream. The approximate locations are marked on the map. Likely the upper dam had a grist mill for that is where the grind stones were. One stone probably is in the foundation for a bridge over the stream. The other was hauled from the stream bed by Cecil and his horse. Cecil's wife Melva had insisted that the stone be saved. It now rests in front of the Cooper Fire Hall.

Walter Wells in his Water Power of Maine relates that in 1868 a saw mill is at this site "with an old fashioned wheel and ponds" that might be greatly improved.

The 1881 Atlas indicates that a Saw Mill was at this site.

A saw mill was in use at the site in the early 1890's for the story is told of young Arthur Creamer showing off his skills on the logs in the mill pond when he missed his step, and ended up in the pond. The felt hat he was wearing was floating amongst the logs.

Carleton Davis had a long lumber mill here from 1957 to 1962. For the next year the mill was operated by Arthur Perkins and Charles White.

(4) Wesley Ireland moved a small building to this site in 1970 and used it as his home until his death in 1989. The remains of the building are still visible.

