

Fred Moss – A talk given to the New Boston Historical Society, September 15, 1996

Frederick L. Moss (1904-2003) was born in Nova Scotia. He lived in New Boston from 1941-1977, and was living in Goffstown when he gave this talk at age 92.

Note: Until 1951, all New Boston students Grades 1-12 attended the Village School which stood where the Fire Department is today. There were two or three grades per classroom. Fred describes how the School Board addressed the need for more classrooms. (The railroad depot was also used, briefly, and the brick Central School was built in 1955, after Fred's story ends.)

From my first wife, Hilda's, diaries I could not find much about being on the New Boston school board except on June 30, 1953 "went to school" and on January six and eight, 1954 "went to New Boston for meetings" which assume were school board meetings. I know I succeeded Paul Mansfield on the board. At my first annual meeting as chairman Lew Foote was the district superintendent. Logan Dickie, Fred Cann, and others picked the financial report apart item by item asking me to give explanations of most every item. As I had not much time to become familiar with all the details I had to refer to Lew. Normally the superintendent is allowed to explain the items to the meeting but they would not let him speak so he and I had to confer and then I would explain how the figures were arrived at as best as I could. This went on for an hour or more as I recall. After the meeting Dickie thanked me and said it was the first time they could understand the financial report.

The school house was getting pretty crowded so a building committee was formed including Logan Dickie, Fred Cann, and others, that I can not recall now, who came up with the idea to use the Whipple cement barn for a school. At that time the state required that class rooms be thirty or thirty six feet square so only four rooms could be got in the cow tie-up part and a corridor would have to be built on the outside, the full length of the tie-up. The plan was voted down as too expensive.



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Whipple's New Cement Barn. New Boston. N. H.

A few years later the crowded situation existed again and another committee was formed consisting of Charlie French, Leon Daniels, myself, and others that I cannot recall now. The committee looked into consolidation with Weare, Milford, Hollis, etc. but without any results so they decided to look into the cement barn again. Much clean-up work had to be done to make it presentable as one of the Daniels had been raising chickings there so there was a foot or more of

sawdust, shavings, and droppings to be removed from the tie-up section and be hosed down. The septic system wasn't working properly so the fire department flushed that out and some repairs had to be done such as broken glass in windows, etc. Leon Daniels did most of the work and I checked the electrical system. A new system would be put in if it was voted to use the barn.

The committee used the same architect as before, Irving Hersey of Durham. The state requirements then would allow six rooms in the tie-up section and the corridor the full length inside and a lunch room and kitchen in the feed room section with a space on the second floor for an office and the hay barn could be used for a gymnasium in the future. There was also plenty space for an athletic field. The committee came in to the meeting with what we thought was a good figure, about \$160,000.00 as I recall. It was voted to accept the plan but lost out by a few votes on the article to finance it.

The members of the former committee, Logan Dickie, Fred Cann, and others, did everything they could think of to defeat the proposition. They had sitting services so parents could come to the meeting, also a relay system where only one could come at a time, and even got people from as far away as Hillsborough still on the voting list to come. This of course delayed the meeting until one or two in the morning by stopping the clock at 12:00 o'clock. We voted twice more on the financing but lost each time so the vote to accept the plan was reconsidered and voted down.

However Charlie, Leon, and I decided to buy the property to try to get some industry into town. Don Byam acted as go between with the owner and we bought it for \$8,000.00 as I recall. When it was sold at auction some years before it went for \$1,500.00 including the house across the road now owned by Daniels. Charlie used part of his inheritance to finance the deal and held first mortgage, Leon was given credit for the work he had done to get the building ready, and I put in \$1,000.00. When Charlie and Marian decided to move to Florida permanently Leon bought the property and I got my \$1,000.00 back.



1st Grade classroom under construction 1951

Charlie came up with the plan to build two one-room school buildings on part of the playground, planning them to be pitched roof New England style but the state required ten foot high ceilings so they had to be flat roofs. Art Boulter was the builder.

by Fred L. Moss