

—Photo and Caption by David F. Lane

GEORGE DODDS HOUSE IN TOWN OF HAMMOND

Across the Triangle road from the Joseph Eugene Seguin sandstone house published last week is another old native sandstone house, that of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Bass, in the Scotch settlement of the town of Hammond. The two houses are of about the same vintage, having been built about 110 years ago. This house, of simple architectural style, occupies a farm of 151.42 acres, the land having been a part of the 28,871-acre tract purchased by David Parish on Sept. 12, 1814.

This farm is made up of two parcels, one of which consists of 102.72 acres and the other of 48.70 acres. George Dodds, one of the early Scotch settlers of the town of Hammond, purchased the larger of these two parcels from George Parish Jan. 15, 1838, and on Jan. 4, 1857, sold it and the house to William Rodger. On Oct. 1, 1856, Rodger bought the second parcel of 48.70 acres from George Parish and added it to the first.

Like George Dodds, William Rodger was also a Scotchman, was born June 17, 1814, and in 1848 was married to Isabel Shiell of the town of Hammond. Rodger, it will also be recalled, owned a portion of the present Seguin farm at one time. William Rodger owned the above house and larger parcel of its farm for about 41 years.

When he died on June 26, 1891, he willed his widow a life use of it and provided that after her death it should go to a son, James H. Rodger. The latter died intestate on Nov. 6, 1902, and the title to the 151.42-acre farm with this stone house and buildings went to his widow, Adelaide, and to a sister and brothers.

However, in less than a year, she conveyed her interest in the property to George H. Rodger, Leslie R. Rodger, Agnes O. Rodger and Ella Rodger Thrall, brothers and sisters of James H. Rodger.

They retained the property approximately a year and a half and then on March 1, 1905, conveyed the house, buildings and 151.42 acres to Alexander Nelson for $7,845.76. Mr. Nelson remained in possession of the premises until his death on Aug. 26, 1916.

Pursuant to a contract which he had executed Aug. 23, 1910, it was conveyed by his executor on July 20, 1925, to William A. Laidlaw, prominent town of Hammond merchant, owner of several farms and onetime assemblyman. Under the terms of that contract Mr. Laidlaw paid $6,500 for the place, and kept it until a few weeks before his death, selling it to Alvin R. Smithers on Oct. 2, 1934.

On Feb. 10, 1940, Mr. Smithers transferred it and other lands to his daughter, Margaret Smithers Wheater, wife of Charles B. Wheater. On July 13, 1948, in accordance with a contract entered into about four years before she deeded it to Arnold and Ella Bass, the present owners. Mrs. Bass was the former Miss Ella Childs, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rella Childs of Kendrew. She is a graduate of the Rensselaer Falls High school and the Ogdensburg Business school, and for a time was secretary to Attorney Edmund Fitzgerald of Ogdensburg. Mr. Bass attended the Hammond schools and follows the occupation of farmer.

Alvin R. Smithers, retired Hammond farmer, died April 8, 1940, at the age of 73. William A. Laidlaw, who died Nov. 29, 1934, aged 63, was born in the town of Macomb June 12, 1871, taught school for a time, married Adelaide Hartman of Redwood Dec. 23, 1902, operated stores at Redwood and Hammond, was a St. Lawrence county assemblyman in 1922, 1923 and 1924, was president of the St. Lawrence county Dairymen's League and was identified also with the G. L. F.