

The Taylor

Jim Carll,

The house known
in Waterboro
1850 by James
from Alfred Gore.

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bought farm

shipped it to

He also opened a



fire barn is located. In addition to the store and shipping business he pieced out cloth to the local women to make shirts, coats, and trousers for clothiers in Boston. The records for the store and the sewing business are still in the house. Also in the house are the postal records for the Waterboro Center post office. James Leavitt was the postmaster for many years. With the profits from his successful businesses, he invested heavily in timberland and became the owner of much of the land in Waterboro Center. The field in back of the house not only provided hay and pasture for the animals but was also used as a "drill field" for men in the militia⁴ and for those going off to the Civil War. Two of James Leavitt's sons, James Jr. and Alonzo fought in the Civil War.

After the death of James in about 1880, the house became a summer residence for the "family." James' son Benjamin, a businessman in Saco, took care of the place and made it his summer home. His wife was Ethelinda Deering of the Deering's Ridge Family. After the death of Benjamin Leavitt the house passed on to his daughter, Mrs. Louella Frey and for many years it was known as the "Frey House." Mrs. Frey's daughters Helen Taylor and Ethelinda Innis later acquired the home. Mrs. Taylor and her husband Neil spent summers in the house until their deaths in the early 1980's. Mrs. Taylor wrote "A Time to Recall," which had this house as its focal point. The Taylor's sons William, Neil, and Howard sold the house to the Town of Waterboro in 1989.

The house is of the Greek Revival style common to country homes of the period, although it appears to be the only one left in Waterboro because of the two great fires of 1911 and 1947. It is truly an unspoiled dwelling owing to the fact that it was lived in year round for only thirty years.

There were six bedrooms upstairs, one of which was converted to a bathroom. Two of these bedrooms, the large ones on the front of the house, appear to have the original 1850's wallpaper.

The downstairs consists of the front hallway, parlor, living room, music room, dining

House

October, 1989

as the "Taylor House"
Center was built in
Leavitt, who came
James Leavitt was an
businessman who
produce locally and
Portland and Boston.
store about where the

room, and kitchen. The parlor also has its original wallpaper.

The woodwork in the house is grained (a technique of painting woodwork in shades of brown and yellow to represent the natural grain of wood). Graining was done with a comb while the paint was still wet and is now almost a lost art. The painter must also have had an artistic flair for a swan and a dove are grained into the cupboard door in the dining room. There is also a rooster grained into the door of the "wood box" in the living room.

The three chimneys accommodate one wood burning cookstove, a large cooking fireplace with a crane and beehive oven, and an original Franklin fireplace.

The ell, which contains the dining room and kitchen, extends into the woodshed where the outhouse, in graduated sizes, is located. The woodshed then extends into the barn. The cellar is unique in that the floor is brick paved, the pantry room is plastered, and the chimney has storage shelves.

The porch was probably added in the late 1800's. It extends across the front of the house and, until recently, across part of the Route 5 side of the house.

To step into this house is to step back in time. The traffic on three sides seems to fade, and you can imagine how the Leavitts lived over one hundred forty years ago, before the Civil War. The Town of Waterboro is very fortunate to have acquired such a rare find in today's world.