

# GOSS FARM

## Brief overview of history from the late 1700's to early 1900's

Nathan Goss bought this land from the Locke family and his son, Gen. Thomas Goss, built the house and barn in the early 1790's.

In 1792 Nathan Goss contributed 15 days and 10 gallons of rum to the superhuman effort Rye men made to dig out Rye harbor to make it more usable for merchant vessels. The Goss family also ran a tidal grist mill near where the Harbor Rd bridge is today on the east side of Ocean Blvd. There was a second tidal mill just to the east of this one on the marsh which could have been used for grist, or lumber products. A third mill for carding was located on Locke Rd.

In the 1800's William Goss was very active on his schooner "Otis" in sailing Rye agricultural goods to nearby ports and as far away as Boston. Potatoes were especially in demand.

In the early years of the Goss Farm it is quite possible that wheat for bread making and oats for feeding livestock were grown, but later it is known that a huge vegetable field was located behind the barn with an especially large asparagus patch. There was also a wild cranberry bog nearby. The orchard was behind the cottage referred to in the next paragraph.

The carriage shed between the house and barn was added at some point. Just behind it was the ice house. Adjacent to the ice house, nearer the barn, was the corn shed and privy (outhouse). About 50 feet behind the carriage shed was a cottage which Sandra Goss Munsey refers to in her 20<sup>th</sup> century Goss Farm history below.

The last two residents of the house were former longtime selectman Bob Goss, who died in 1988, and his wife Frances, who died early in this century. Sadly the house was lost in a mysterious fire in 2009 and then the carriage shed was torn down. After some discussion about developing the land, the majority of the Goss descendants decided to sell the barn and 12 acres of land to the town of Rye which was purchased with Rye Open Space funds and a grant from the US Dept. of Agriculture. The land is to be used for agriculture only and already two farmers are working to grow crops, and there is a community garden and student plantings.

Sally King of the Rye Conservation Commission and Tracy Degnan of the Rockingham County Conservation District spearheaded the effort to get the town to vote yes for funding the restoration of the barn.

Today the barn and land are under the supervision of the Rye Conservation Commission.