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Town of Highgate

DOCUMENTATION OF HISTORIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Higgate

Introduction:

Survey requests to the town selectmen, called petitions, for roads to be laid out by the designated surveyor were usually entered in the current book of town records. Subsequently, once the survey was completed, the direction and distance of each individual course along with the width and any special notes on each road were likewise entered into the record. These records are, in most cases, still available although occasionally almost unreadable.

This report is an overall view of the historic right-of-way widths on roads within the boundaries of the original town of Higgate.

Review of Evidence:

The procedure for establishing the right-of-way widths as originally surveyed is as follows:

The town records in Higgate Town Clerk's Office were searched and any road surveys extracted and copied. Those surveys covered a period from April 1797 to May 1870. The direction (in magnetic bearings) and length (in rods, or sometimes in feet) each course was entered into a computer which plotted a graphic representation of each survey on vellum at a scale commensurate with US Geological Survey 7 1/2 minute quadrangle maps.

Maps from the Beer's Atlas were utilized to locate old property owners and landmarks mentioned in the individual survey descriptions as starting with points, ending points, or passing calls. With this information as a guide, the road surveys plotted on the vellum were overlaid on the USGS quadrangle maps and matched with the roads shown on the maps. As matches were found, the locations were noted and plotted on the Town maps.

A total of 154 historical road surveys were investigated and from these surveys 77% were positively matched with now existing roads or site location, 1% were possible matches and no matches could be determined on 22% of the surveys.

The percentages of Higgate historical surveys widths are as follows:

4 Rods or more - 16%
3 Rods or less - 43%

Unk (Unknown width) - 41%

The history of the Missisquoi Turnpike begins with a petition filed with the Vermont Legislature in 1800 requesting that a turnpike be made from the Massachusetts' border to Canada, running from St. Albans north through Higgate. Three petitions

were filed in 1803 requesting that the public stage road leading from Burlington to Canada become a turnpike. In 1805 five petitions were filed, four for a "Market Turnpike" running from the north line of Highgate south to the intersection of one of the turnpikes from Lansingburgh (refer to Troy) or Troy and one for a "Market Turnpike" from the north line of Highgate to Burlington.

The legislature responded to the petitions in 1805 with an act establishing the Missisquoi Turnpike. The charter, on pages 175 - 181, chapter 96, of the legislative acts establishes a corporation to make a road six rods wide, from the north line of Highgate to the St. Albans court house.

The term for the Missisquoi Turnpike was extended by legislative acts in 1809 (pg. 114, chapter 122) and 1815 (pg. 147-148, chapter 129). In 1811, an act called for a meeting of the turnpike corporation (pg. 118, chapter 100). After 1815 there were no legislative acts regarding the Missisquoi Turnpike. As no surveys of the turnpike were found in Highgate and the Missisquoi Turnpike was not referred to in any of the historical road surveys in Highgate, it would appear that the turnpike was neither built nor officially opened.

The Vermont legislature passed an act, March 8, 1797, pg. 119 - 121, appointing a committee to lay out and survey a post road from Burlington to the province line. The proposed post road was to run through the towns of: Colchester, Milton, Georgia, St. Albans, Swanton and Highgate. In June of the following year (1798), the post road was surveyed and laid out six rods wide in Highgate. (Survey #15) The road ran from the Canadian border south to the Swanton town line, where US 7 is today.

In 1804 a new committee was appointed by legislative act, pg. 19 - 20, chapter 14, to lay out and survey a post or stage road from the courthouse in Burlington to Canada line.

Current VT 207 between Highgate Center and Franklin was referred to in five historic surveys as the Gore Road. Two partial surveys of the Gore Road were found (#88 and #89) but no survey of the whole road was found. No right-of-way width was found in excess of three rods. The Gore Road is shown on a lot map from the early 1800's and referred to in road surveys as early as 1809. The Gore Road was probably laid out prior to 1809 as it appears to have been a major road in Highgate during the early 1800's.

VT 207 running south of Highgate Center to Swanton was laid out four rods wide in 1799 (Survey #4), and a portion was changed in 1811 (Survey #18). In 1811 a portion was straightened (Survey #118).
Conclusions:

VT 78 through the project area (MP 2.30-3.50) was laid in 1831 four rods in width (Survey #46).

SURVEY NUMBER	BOOK/PAGE NUMBER	DATE	WIDTH RODS	MAP	NOTES
1	1-51	03/26/1799	unk	J	TH 23 & 22
2	1-48	03/27/1799	unk	-	Swanton
3	1-53	04/03/1799	unk	J	TH 35 & Swanton
4	1-65	08/23/1799	4	B	VT 207 & TH 7 to TH 29
5	1-156	04/00/1801	2	I	Cutler Pond
6	1-156A	04/00/1801	4	A	From TH 57, TH 22 to TH 7
7	2-26	04/11/1797	unk	J	From TH 38 to TH 59, TH 7, TH 10
8	2-27	04/12/1797	unk	-	Unable to Match
9	2-27A	04/13/1797	unk	J	TH 9
10	2-28	04/13/1797	unk	J	US 7
11	2-29	04/13/1797	unk	K	TH 18, TH 27, US 7
12	2-30	04/17/1797	unk	L	TH 29, TH 1, TH 36
13	2-31	04/18/1797	4	B	TH 1, TH 19, to Rock River Bay
14	2-32	08/14/1798	unk	L	Hog Island to TH 35
15	2-33	06/08/1798	6	A	US 7
16	2-34	08/22/1798	5	A	TH 44
17	2-34A	01/15/1799	4	-	Unable to Match
18	2A-2	08/12/1819	2	I	TH 7 & TH 29
19	2A-2A	08/12/1819	3	E	TH 22
20	2A-2B	08/12/1819	3	E	TH 5
21	2A-2C	08/12/1819	3	E	TH 22
22	2A-22	10/31/1820	4	C	TH 1
23	2A-23	10/21/1820	4	A	TH 38
24	2A-23A	07/00/1820	unk	K	TH 1, VT 78
25	2A-55	08/31/1822	3	F	South of Cutler Pond (TH 20)
26	2A-55A	08/31/1822	3	G	TH 20
27	2A-76	05/05/1824	3	E	East of Cutler Pond
28	2A-77	05/05/1824	2	I	TH 12
29	2A-77A	05/05/1824	2	I	TH 3
30	2A-77B	05/05/1824	2	-	Unable to Match
31	2A-77C	05/05/1824	2	-	Unable to Match
32	2A-78	09/06/1824	unk	L	TH 1 & VT 78
33	2A-99	03/16/1825	2	I	TH 7

SURVEY NUMBER	BOOK/PAGE NUMBER	DATE	WIDTH RODS	MAP	NOTES
34	2A-99A	04/20/1825	unk	L	TH 50
35	2A-99B	04/21/1825	unk	L	Intersection of TH 7 & TH 29
36	2A-99C	04/21/1825	unk	L	VT 207, TH 22
37	2A-100	04/20/1825	unk	-	Unable to Match
38	2A-100A	04/20/1825	unk	K	North side of VT 207
39	2A-146	04/07/1828	unk	K	TH 10
40	2A-146A	04/07/1828	3	-	Unable to Match
41	2A-146B	04/07/1828	unk	K	Between TH 7 & TH 20
42	2A-156	11/15/1828	unk	-	Unable to Match
43	2A-169	07/22/1830	4	-	Hog Island, Swanton
44	2A-184	06/11/1831	3	E	TH 25
45	2A-179	03/04/1831	4	A	TH 6
46	2A-188	08/10/1831	4	D	TH 16, TH 1, VT 78, TH 3
47	2A-198	05/15/1832	3	F	Off East side TH 22
48	2A-199	04/30/1832	4	B	US 7
49	2A-200	06/08/1832	2	I	Near TH 36 & 37
50	2A-200A	06/08/1832	2	I	Off 62
51	2A-201	06/08/1832	2	I	TH 53
52	2A-201A	04/30/1832	3	F	TH 36
53	2A-203	06/09/1832	unk	K	West side TH 22
54	2A-203A	06/09/1832	unk	-	Unable to Match
55	2A-216	06/29/1833	3	-	Unable to Match
56	2A-216A	05/11/1833	unk	-	Unable to Match
57	2A-216B	05/11/1833	unk	-	Unable to Match
58	2A-217	07/09/1833	unk	K	TH 34
59	2A-231	05/10/1834	4	B	TH 6
60	2A-231A	05/10/1834	3	E	TH 44
61	2A-240	04/08/1833	unk	-	Unable to Match
62	2A-242	05/18/1830	4	A	TH 62
63	2A-246	05/10/1834	3	E	West off of TH 1
64	2A-246A	06/10/1835	unk	L	From US 7, West to TH 35
65	2A-267	06/08/1835	unk	-	Hog Island, Swanton
66	2A-252		unk	K	TH 50

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SURVEY NUMBER	BOOK/PAGE NUMBER	DATE	WIDTH RODS	MAP	NOTES
67	2A-262	04/15/1837	unk	L	From TH 6 to TH 62
68	2A-262A	04/15/1837	unk	K	From VT 78 (E. Highgate) to TH 6
69	2A-274	04/06/1838	3	E	TH 36
70	2A-270	06/11/1831	3	F	From TH 24 to TH 25
71	2A-271	10/18/1837	3	E	TH 35
72	2A-302	12/14/1840	unk	K	US 7 from Highgate Spr to Rock R
73	2A-313	09/14/1840	2	-	Unable to Match
74	2A-319	06/18/1841	unk	K	TH 46
75	2A-319A	10/27/1840	unk	-	Unable to Match
76	2A-345	08/31/1843	2	I	TH 49
77	2B-25	11/12/1846	3	E	TH 7 & TH 45
78	2B-25A	11/12/1846	3	F	VT 78
79	2B-26	11/12/1846	3	G	TH 48
80	2B-29	08/31/1846	4	C	Between US 7 & TH 35
81	2B-19	02/28/1846	3	H	TH 6, Bridge in E. Highgate
82	2B-46	05/03/1848	4	A	Between TH 29 & TH 7
83	2B-47	05/03/1848	4	-	Unable to Match
84	2B-47A	05/03/1848	4	C	TH 64
85	2B-48	05/18/1848	3	F	TH 6
86	2B-48A	05/18/1848	3	E	TH 34
87	2B-4	09/27/1851	3	H	TH 32
88	2B-5	09/22/1849	unk	K	VT 207 (N. of Highgate Falls)
89	2B-7	05/29/1852	3	E	VT 207 (N. of Highgate Falls)
90	2B-326	06/23/1856	4	A	VT 78
91	2B-333	05/31/1859	3	G	TH 22
92	2B-336	06/18/1860	3	G	South of TH 66, off TH 5
93	2B-338	06/16/1860	3	-	Unable to Match
94	2B-339		3	G	TH 34
95	2B-362	05/26/1869	3	H	VT 78 NE of E. Highgate
96	2B-364	07/10/1869	3	H	VT 207
97	2B-366	11/08/1869	2	I	TH 30
98	2B-369	05/13/1870	3	M	TH 43
99	2A-165	05/04/1829	unk	-	Unable to Match

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SURVEY NUMBER	BOOK/PAGE NUMBER	DATE	WIDTH RODS	MAP	NOTES
100	2A-246	04/01/1835	unk	-	Unable to Match
101	2A-246A	04/10/1835	3		Same as Survey #63
102	2A-246B	06/03/1835	unk		Same as Survey #64
103	4-4	10/08/1809	3	-	East Side Hog Island, Swanton
104	2B-2	04/05/1851	3	M	TH 16
105	2B-2A		unk	-	Petition, not survey Off S. TH 5
106	5-18	05/24/1811	unk	K	TH 7
107	5-18A	05/24/1811	3	-	Unable to Match
108	5-19	05/29/1811	unk	L	TH 18
109	5-19A	05/29/1811	3	H	TH 18
110	5-20	05/02/1811	3	-	Unable to Match
111	5-20A	05/31/1811	3	H	TH 62
112	5-21	05/04/1811	3	G	TH 32
113	5-21A	05/04/1811	unk	L	Possible, Off N side VT 78
114	5-21B	05/04/1811	unk	J	VT 78, South of East Highgate
115	5-22	05/04/1811	unk	J	TH 22 & TH 24
116	5-22A	05/04/1811	unk	J	VT 207
117	5-23	05/04/1811	unk	J	North side TH 3
118	5-23A	05/31/1811	unk	J	VT 207
119	6-221	12/28/1816	4	A	TH 1
120	6-192	04/10/1816	unk	-	Unable to Match
121	6-192A	04/10/1816	unk	K	TH 22
122	6-38	12/03/1813	unk	K	VT 78
123	6-69	01/03/1817	unk	-	Unable to Match
124	6-70	01/03/1817	unk	K	TH 22
125	6-73	04/14/1813	3	-	Unable to Match
126	6-73A	04/14/1813	3&4	A&G	NW corner, Runs EW to TH 10
127	6-108	05/18/1814	2	I	West of TH 29
128	6-124	10/04/1814	unk	-	Unable to Match
129	2-39	07/00/1803	unk	K	TH 38
130	2-39A	07/20/1803	unk	L	TH 38, TH 3
131	2-71	09/20/1804	unk	-	Unable to Match
132	2-79	02/29/1804	unk	-	Unable to Match

