

A HISTORY OF THE Brundage House



The parcel of property upon which the Brundage house sits today was part of a much larger tract purchased in the 1700's by David Trowbridge, whose family originally emigrated from England and eventually settled in Morris County. The Trowbridge name is well-known in Morris County. The original property was extensive, covering most of the Shongum area and continuing down the other side of the mountain to what is now the 9/11 memorial on West Hanover Avenue. Eventually, portions of the property began to be sold off and the acreage upon which the farmhouse is located became a focal point for both the Trowbridges and subsequent owners, the Brundages.

While David Trowbridge most likely built some type of dwelling on the property, it no longer exists.

The portion of the existing farmhouse (gable front and wing) closest to Millbrook Avenue is thought to have been constructed in the late 1860's by D. A. Trowbridge (David Austin), a great-great grandson of the original property owner. The property has a history of being farmed by many generations of Trowbridges. Gardens, orchards and fields dotted the landscape up until 2000, when the property became a township recreational facility. Records indicate that many children were born in the house, and were often part of large families numbering as many as 14. It is believed that the house and property stayed within the extended Trowbridge family until the early 20th century, often having been sold back and forth to, or inherited by, in-laws, relatives and descendants.

The family for whom the house is now named bought the property in the early 1920's. Charles Brundage,

a Dartmouth College and Carnegie Institute graduate, was an investment banker with a sense of civic responsibility. In 1932, he founded the investment firm of Brundage, Story and Rose in New York. He served as a trustee on boards both locally and in New York, and initiated the first zoning regulations in Randolph during his tenure on the newly-formed Planning Board. His most notable contributions to his community came in the form of donations of land for use as parks—James Andrews Park and Brundage Park—and he was a trustee of the Charles E. and Edna T. Brundage Charitable Scientific and Wild Life Conservation Foundation. The last occupants of the house were William B. Cater, Jr., a grandson of Edna Brundage, and his wife Eileen.

The house is a two-story gable-front-and-wing, common in the rural northeast in the late 1800's. The proliferation of railroads at that time allowed lumber to become readily available locally, and lead to much change in construction techniques for folk dwellings. The abundance of timber also made it easier and less expensive to add on to existing structures. Several outbuildings as well as other houses existed on the property at various times, including the barn pictured above. A white picket fence once surrounded the house, and the front entrance appears to be on the north side of the house, rather than on the street side. It is not known when the brick section of the house was built.

A PRESENTATION OF THE

Historical Society of
Old Randolph

