

The land surrounding the Maple Hill Farm Inn was first cleared and settled in the late 1700's. William Oliver Vaughan, oldest son of Benjamin Vaughan, and a member of one of the founding families of Hallowell, lived on the property between 1806 and his death in 1825. The Vaughan family held a grant of land that extended from the banks of the Kennebec River on the east to the shore of Cobbosseecontee Lake to the west. Maple Hill Farm is located roughly in the middle of this original land grant. While the Vaughans were very active merchants and economists (and politically connected), Benjamin Vaughan wrote in 1800 about his son William Oliver, "For our son, his turn is not mercantile. He is not so anxious for fortune as he is to pursue particular objects which interest his mind. Farming is one of these and in general everything which nature presents in the vegetable and animal line. He can make strenuous and even violent exertions with more satisfaction than he can go through the steady monotonous labor of a counting house. ... If you ask what we project for William, then answer is – nothing specific." The charm of nature and animals that fascinated William still flourishes today at Maple Hill Farm. William Oliver Vaughan commanded his own militia which was pronounced the "finest and best drilled" in the state in 1814. He raised "fine-wooled sheep" and imported superior breeds of cattle while still remaining heavily involved with shipping and trading on the Kennebec River. His own ships sent out lumber and oak staves and returned from the West Indies with sugar, molasses and other commodities to help bring prosperity to the community.

Samuel Currier subsequently lived on the farm. He raised horses and used them to haul fire engines for Hallowell, helping with fires ranging from large manufacturing mills to sloops docked at the riverfront in the 1850's. His son Samuel Currier, Jr. took over the farm from his father and this farm became one of three farms that made up Pine Grove Farm from 1893-1897.



*The Forrest View Farm on the Outlet Road, c. 1927. This is the Gregoire family, who purchased the farm in 1925. It was used to harvest fruit trees and raise cattle. In the late 1980's, the building was converted into a bed and breakfast and is presently known as the Maple Hill Farm B&B Inn.*

When horse-drawn stagecoaches ran between Hallowell and Emery's Grove on Cobbosseecontee Lake, Maple Hill Farm served as a halfway stop for watering the horses.

At some point, there was a fire that destroyed the farmhouse, but when it was rebuilt, there was a large underground water tank constructed for fire protection, and that tank is supposedly still here today.

The present house was built by Winthrop Worcester in 1906. Worcester grew corn and raised beautiful dairy cows on the property. A piece of the house's unique triangular trim that was removed during repairs to the original front porch revealed on its reverse the date the house was built, 1906, along with the signature of the builder, E.B. Stickney of

Hallowell, and the phrase "September was the finest month of the year only two litle [sic] showers for the whole month" in cursive pencil. Worcester married Grace Ella Blake, of Hallowell, in October 1906. Worcester went on to the Shelby Steel Company in Pennsylvania where he manufactured specialized seamless steel tubes, quite a departure from farming in Maine.

On a visit to Maine in the 1990's, Worcester's son presented the Inn with a wooden train that he had crafted himself. After reserving a room here, he was pleased by reading the history of the Inn in a brochure and surprised us with this gift.

The farmhouse passed to the Joseph Gregoire family in 1924 who actively farmed the land, and Cecile Gregoire, Joseph's granddaughter, still lives in her home on a small parcel adjacent to the Inn. The Gregoires sold the farm to Scott and Linda Ballard, descendants of the well-documented midwife Martha Ballard, in 1966 where it continued to be farmed until it was sold and converted to a bed & breakfast in 1988. The present owner, Scott Cowger, saved the house at a foreclosure sale in 1992 and in addition to building the business with partner Vincent Hannan, restored the barn and brought farm animals back to the land.

Renovations to the building which completed the modernization to eight guest rooms with private baths were completed in 2001 with great respect to the original architecture. In addition to restoring the historic fabric of the home, these renovations added guest rooms, a lobby and office, reconstructed the Carriage House (including the incorporation of a large restored window from the State House) to create an innkeepers' apartment, and a *porte-cochère* to connect the two structures.

The addition of the Gathering Place meeting and event center, supporting infrastructure including a modern commercial kitchen and laundry, as well as an electrical-generating wind turbine were completed in 2004, and were "tucked away" at the back of the original farmhouse. The Inn earned the designation of Maine's first certified "Environmental Leader" green lodging establishment in 2005, and a very large solar electric and hot water generating system was added in 2006. William Oliver Vaughan would be proud!



*Maple Hill Farm as it looks today. The Gathering Place (not visible) has been added behind the main Inn (the white building).*