



Brownington Historic District Quest

Brownington, Vermont

Easy

Architectural, Historical

Pavement

1:00

To get there: Take Exit 26 off of Interstate 91, and follow Route 58 East through the village of Orleans. There are signs posted that direct you to take a left off Route 58 to the Old Stone House Museum (and even more of them as there is currently bridge construction that causes a detour). The Old Stone House is only a 5 - 10 minute drive from Orleans village. The Quest starts at the visitor center/administration Building at the Old Stone House Museum, called the Alexander Twilight House.

Clues:

Alexander Twilight in 1830

Built this farmhouse nice and sturdy.

He and Mercy boarded eleven girls

Some had straight hair, some had curls.



From granite steps follow stepping stones

Turn right at the road past lost maples' bones.

Behind the next triplet Maple trees

Is the English barn where critters took their ease.

Although the barn looks right at home

In 1997 it had to roam.

It used to live in Albany, 'tis the truth

At the Lawrence farm of Roland and Ruth.



And now that it's here, it holds treasures dear –

Tools farmers used throughout the year.

So take a minute and peek inside;

See tools to push, to swing or ride.

Leaving the old weathered boards of gray
Head up through the males, the steeple's way.
At the octagon turn north and spy
A square with double brick towers high.

As you stop and gaze, can you do the math?
Would you like to give all these panes a bath?
In all the wall windows, we see 27x24;
And transom, sidelights and fan add even
more!

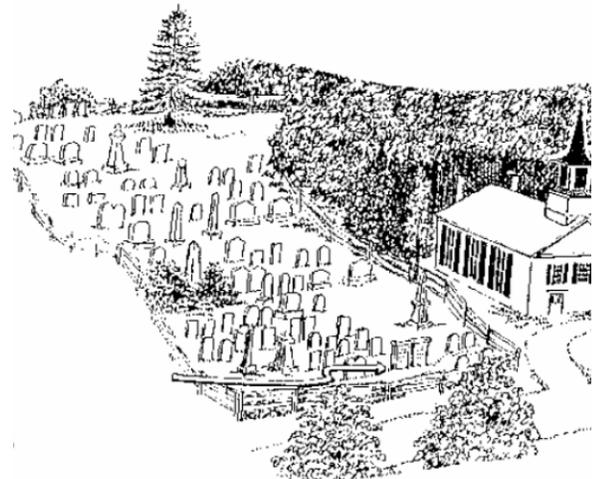
This house with many panes belonged to
Samuel Read Hall
His list of accomplishments is very tall;
Started the first teacher-training school,
wrote the first book to train by,
Brought blackboards to classrooms, taught,
preached ... what a guy!



Turn your back on the post where you'd hitch your steed.
Cross the road and go to where verses you'd read.
Here Mr. Hall and Mr. Twilight where preachers.
They were both preachers and teachers.

From the crowded lofts of the second floor
To a worship hall which houses more
A church was born in the year 1841,
Later remodeled with wealth from a native
son.

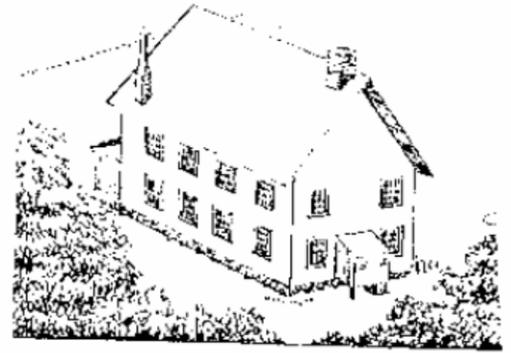
At the stately shape and house of prayer
Approach the front steps, look left, and
stare.
Walk through the gate where creeping
myrtle grows
Serenity lies in ancestral rows.



Many souls repose in this quiet place.
The Twilights lie together, t'wards their school faced.
Civil War soldiers are buried around.
One starved to death in prison bound.

Now head out of the graveyard and go to the road.
Follow the fence line downhill as you're told.

Views of two mountains on each side you'll see,
Pass West Road and stop at the Academy.



Built with Mr. Baxter's money,
Downstairs was learning, the upstairs holy.
In 1869, it moved down hill to this place
Now it's the Grange, it has a new face.

From the hitching post on your right
You'll see the barn where cows spend the night.
Advance past the Maple Grove
And up the road continue to rove.
Turn your back on Twilight's resting place,
And admire the garden that you face.
Now, you've reached Cyrus Eaton's place!



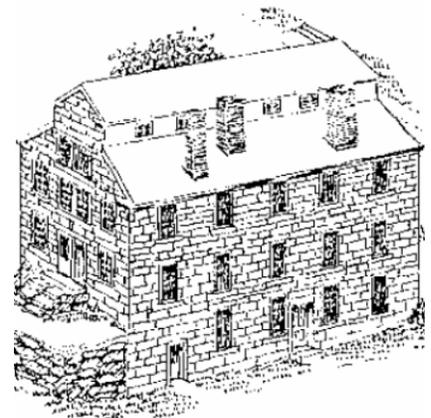
This 1834 vernacular Greek Revival home
Was built by Cyrus Eaton; many acres he owned.
Three children in school he enrolled;
A friend of Alexander Twilight's, we're told.

Wait! Before you leave the Eaton dwelling
Duck behind for some fragrant flower-smelling!
Then head east toward the great granite sight,
But pause at the first home of Mercy and Twilight.



Today this building's a buzzing beehive for kids learning history,
But in its first life, 'cross the road, 'twas the home of Twilight & Mercy.
They built on the big farmhouse to this cozy little place,
Then it was an ell, leading to the barn – a great use of space!

Head to the stone house, past a red door and a wooden floor.
Turn toward the road, walk past four windows and a door.
Around the red oak and right past the great Athenaeum Hall
Turn the corner and go the 4th window in the granite wall.



In 1836, Twilight built his dormitory
From stone cut from a local granite quarry.
'Til 1859 students lived inside, in rooms small.

Now it's a museum, holding treasures for all.

With your back to the window, head straight toward the Gap.
(You'd see it's Willoughby Lake if you had a map.)
Beneath the arching bough of the old apple tree
You'll find the end of this Quest mystery!

Illustrations: C.R. Michaud, 1986,1992,1998