SANBORN ROAD [known today as the abandoned Range Road]

March 30, 1761

Town meeting apointed a Committee and Voted that the said Committee look out a road between the First and Second Ranges of Hundred Acre Lots next to Falmouth line.

May 14, 1762

The Committee appointed . . . report that they have viewed the land appropriated for a road between said Ranges[1/] from the Southwest line [Middle Street, then known as Kings Highway] as far up as the Southerly corner of the Hundred Acre Lot No. 26 [Route 9 which did not then exist] and are of the opinion that a passable road may be made on said appropriated land except a small variation or turning in upon two or three of the lots in the aforesaid Ranges.

Signed Jno. Lewis Pr. order

Entered and recorded Pr. David Mitchell, Town Clerk

May 17, 1762

Town meeting voted to accept and record the report of the Committee with 2 or 3 variations or turnings to be made by the surveyor agreeable to said report.

Note: No record of the actual survey showing the variations from the course of the rangeway has been found.

April 27, 1768

Warrant, 8th Article: Request of Paul Sanborn and others

with regard to making and mending the road between the first and second tier of hundred acre lots in the West Division.

May 11, 1768

8th Article voted dismissed at town meeting.

March 24, 1851

Warrant, 20th Article: To see if the town will discontinue the old town road leading from the bridge near Benjamin Merrill's [on Route 9] to the Harris Road on Sanborn's hill.

March 31, 1851

Town Meeting Voted to dismiss the 20th article.

August 20, 1853

The Subscribers, Selectmen of Cumberland, upon the application of Joseph Sawyer and others to lay out a town way in said town, beginning at the County Road [Route 9] and ending at the Range Road in the vicinity of Benjamin "Morrell's" [see 1857 map] -- having given seven days notice of our intention to lay out the same and stated in said notice the termini thereof by posting up said notice in two public places in said town, and in the vicinity of the proposed route, to wit - at the store of Hiram Billing, and the depot of the Kennebec & Portland Rail Road - in said town on the thirteen day of August instant - and having met at the time and place appointed for the purpose and having personally examined the route proposed - are of the opinion that there is occasion for a town way for the use of said town, as proposed; -

We therefore lay out said way as follows -

Beginning three rods 8 links from the west corner of Cyrus Harlow's land, on the County Road [Route 9] - Thence same course twelve rods and five links across Benjamin Merrill's land to the Range Road - courses and distances taken in the middle of the Road - and the Road to be two rods wide. And we agree with the owners of the land over which the road passes for their damage as follows, to wit - to the said Harlow, nothing, he claiming no damage - To the said Merrill, to pay him twenty dollars, to be paid by said town on the first day of September, 1854; which such laying out with the boundaries and measurements have been filed with the Town Clerk on the 20th day of Aug. Inst., being seven days before this meeting; and we hereby now report such laying out with the boundaries and measurements of the same to said town at a meeting of the Inhabitants regularly warned and notified, for them to accept and allow the same.

We also examined one other route shown us by Mr. Joseph Sawyer. - Beginning 2 rods north westerly from the west corner of Benjamin Merrill's land. Thence north 60 east eight rods across said Merrill's land. Thence same course thirty-three rods across Joseph Sawyer's land. Thence same course 5 rods across Priscilla Merrill's land. Thence same course 12 rods and 11 links across sd. Sawyer's land to the Range Road - the road to be 2 rods wide - courses and distances taken on the northerly side line of the Road - and we awarded to Priscilla Merrill $5.00 and the said Joseph Sawyer $75 - and the said Benj. Merrill $5.00 for damages - to be paid by said town respectively on the first day of Sept. 1854 - And we hereby report such laying out with the boundaries and measurements of the same to said town

for their acceptance, if they think proper - in lieu of the first route reported.

Moses Leighton, Asa Greely - Selectmen

Entered in Town Clerks' Office Aug. 20, 1853

September 2, 1853

Warrant, 2nd Article: To hear the report of the Selectmen relative to laying out a road near Cyrus Harlow's and act thereon.

Warrant, 3rd Article: To see if the town will discontinue the Range road from the County road [Route 9] to Benjamin Merrill's land.

September 12, 1853

Town Meeting Voted that the report of the Selectmen be accepted.

Also Voted that the road as above accepted by the town near Cyrus Harlow's be known as a public highway after the first day of October, 1853.

Also Voted that the Range road be discontinued from the County road to Benjamin Merrill's land.

March 3, 1854

Warrant, 16th Article: Request of Joseph Sawyer to see if the town will repair the road from the Butler house [on the Middle Road] to Cyrus Harlow's [on Route 9] .

March 20, 1854

Town Meeting Voted to dismiss the 16th Article.

November 7, 1863

Warrant, 3rd Article: To see if the town will discontinue the range road or any part thereof from Henry Sturdivant's [on Middle Road] to Joseph Sawyer's homestead [on the rangeway midway between Harris Road and Route 9] .

November 14, 1863

Town Meeting Voted to dismiss the 3rd Article.

March 1, 1938

Town Meeting Voted to discontinue that part of the old range road lying between the Long Wood Road, so-called, and Harris Road.

Oral History

Former road commissioners Fred Robinson, Milton Copp and Normen Christenson all stated that for as long as they can remember, the town has never maintained or kept open that part of the old range road from Middle Road to Harris Road.

Maps

As early as the map from the Cumberland County Atlas 1871, reprinted by the Cumberland Historical Society, this section of the range road appears as a dotted line. On subsequent maps, including U.S. geological surveys, it is either shown as a dotted line or not shown at all.

Deeds

Numerous deeds conveying property located along the old range road were read. A significant number of deeds dated since 1900 do not refer to the Sanborn Road or Range Road as a boundary, as earlier deeds did, but rather refer to "a rangeway" or the "old rangeway". See Book1993, p.385 (1949); B1261,p198 (1927); B3503,p114 (1973); B885,p 127 (1927); B578,p364 (1890) ("to the old Range Road, so called"); B726, p120 (1902); B763,p287 (1904); B882,p449 (1911); B922,p459 (1913); B1781,p491 (1944) ("on the old Range Road"); and B3503,p108 (1973).

County Records

In 1926 the Selectmen petitioned the County Commissioners to redefine the boundaries of several roads including "a town road commonly known as Rangeway Road". The significant aspect of this petition is that the Selectmen describe the terminals of the Rangeway Road as follows: "beginning at Prissey Bridge near the M.C.R.R. Station Cumberland Center and extending in a Northwesterly direction and terminating with the Portland, Gray and Lewiston State Highway at West Cumberland". No mention is made in the proceeding of another section of the Rangeway Road east of Route 9. See County Commissioners Records, Vol. 19, p. 398 (June Term, 1928, Docket No. 432).

A letter dated April 6, 1976 from the County Engineer to the Cumberland Town Manager states that no concrete evidence has been found in the County files that the section of the old range road between Middle and Harris Roads has been discontinued and then concludes, "Our best guess is that it has been."