

The History of the... **THE NORTON HOUSE**

(As published by **Longwood Journey** with information compiled by **Kristen Lee**)

The Norton house is located on the north side of the Old Middle Country Road, behind the Coram Swap and Shop. The house can be seen on the west side of the rear parking lot at the McDonalds restaurant. A home appears on the 1838 map as belonging to Dr. Norton.

The original owner of the property is said to be Captain Nathaniel Norton. The Norton's came from Salem, Massachusetts, sometime before 1670. It was Norton's grandfather, also named Nathaniel, who built the first meeting house in Setauket in 1671.



The Norton House, North of Old Middle Country Road, Photo from the Davis Erhardt Collection

Norton was born in Coram in the year 1743. He was a soldier during the French and Indian War as well as a captain during the American Revolution.

Norton was married three times. His first wife was Elizabeth Norton, who died at the age of 31 in 1775. He married his second wife, Mary, on Feb. 11, 1776. With his second wife he had a son, Samuel. After the death of Mary in 1810 he married the widow Nancy Denton. With this marriage he went to New York City to live until his death in 1837, at the age of 94. His body was returned to Coram, where he was buried.

His son, Dr. Samuel Norton, and his wife, **Cynthia Hutchinson** (sister of Benjamin Hutchinson, Brookhaven Town Clerk), became the owners of the house. Cynthia died in 1824, at the age of 31. Dr. Norton married his second wife Sarah after her death. Doctor Norton died in 1840, at the age of 51. The marriage of Sarah would produce two children, Emma and Albert.

The 1850 census lists Albert as 33 years old and his occupation as a seaman. Also living in the house was Dr. Norton's daughter Emma, who would become the schoolteacher at the Coram School. In 1886, her home would become the site of the Coram Post Office. She would hold the position of postmistress until her death in 1916. She received her original appointment from President Grover Cleveland during her first term.



Miss. Emma Norton, Coram Postmistress (1886-1916), Photo Courtesy of Davis Erhardt Collection

Apparently Miss Norton was a popular postmistress as is evidenced by the following letter written to the family newspaper, the *Christian Worker*:

Coram, March 1, 1894

Dear Grandma: Papa took brother Lester and I for a nice sleigh ride today. Baby Charlie looked as if he wanted to go too. We love to go to the post office, Miss Norton is such a nice lady, and has a parrot named Jack; he sings, laughs, cries and talks, asks and answers questions very wisely. One day Auntie Marie told Miss Norton the children had colds. Jack said, "that is very, very too bad." He calls my name every morning. Did you ever see such a bird? He ought to write you a letter.

*Lovingly,
Eleanor T. Davis*

The home still stands in its present place on the Old Middle Country Road.



«Norton House and property viewed from Middle Country Road in front of the old Coram Iron Works looking northeast.



«The Norton House and property as it appeared in 2015.



«The Norton House viewed from aerial photo (north of Middle Country Road; western neighbor of the McDonald's property)

....added by the Coram Civic Association

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