



1775 Barrie Road

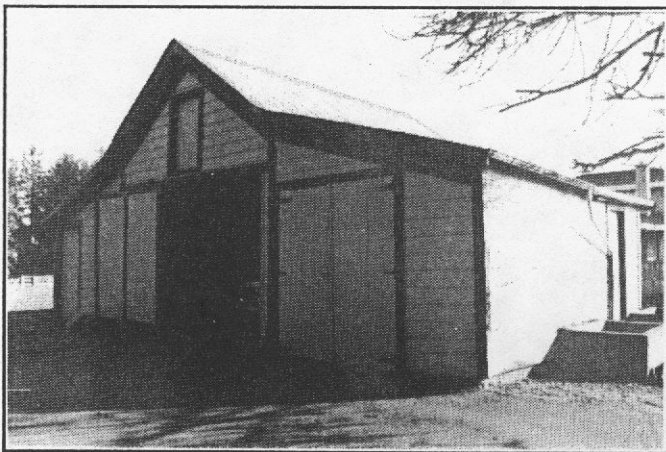
ca. 1885; ca. 1910

**Dr. John Ash; George Fraser and Elizabeth Brodie
Grant Watson**

The oldest structure on this property is a barn, originally a cottage retreat named "Jersey Hall," built for Dr. Ash. He was an English oculist who came to Victoria in 1862. In 1865 he became a member of the Vancouver Island Assembly. After British Columbia joined Confederation, he continued as a Member of the Legislative Assembly until 1876. From 1872 to 1874, he was the first Provincial Secretary.

Elizabeth Watson, a daughter of William C. Grant (see 4320 Torquay Drive), bought this property in 1898 with the savings she had "squirreled away." The family moved out here in 1903. This is the second house built on the property by the Watsons. They sold the first house when "Thrums" was finished about 1910. George, a stonemason, quarried the granite from their property and cut it. Alex Stuart built the house and Isaac Somers did the finishing carpentry. The 1½ storey house is of randomly-coursed granite with shingled gables and dormers. It has a front-gabled roof with hipped-roof side dormers and side entrance porch, but there are unusual half-hips on the gables. The front wall and the garage were also built of granite found on the property.

George Watson served as Reeve of Saanich from 1920 to 1923, during which time he fought for the water system to be installed in Gordon Head (the slogan was "Watson and Water"). He was also a Councillor, Police Commissioner and School Trustee. James Barrie, the author of *Peter Pan* and *A Window in Thrums*, was George's cousin. Hence, the names of Barrie Road and "Thrums." The property is now owned by the Watsons' grandson.



1775 Barrie Road. 1990. Top: Watson's house. Middle: Dr. John Ash's house, now shed at rear of property.