

# Under the Hump

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUSINESS

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Next Meeting Tuesday, February 6th, 7pm Crossett Brook Middle School Cafeteria—Interviews with Jim Harvey and Bob Morse on Town History and Farm Life
- History Expo—June 23rd & 24th—Tunbridge Fairgrounds

The next meeting will be held on the first Tuesday of the month instead of the second because the cafeteria is not available, so mark your calendars and be sure to make the meeting. We will have Jim Harvey and Bob Morse as speakers to reflect on town history and farm life.

It is hard to believe that we are in our second year and we will

need to nominate new officers for this year. Be ready to make nominations and cast your vote.

Vermont History Expo will be taking place at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds on June 23rd and 24th. It was decided at the last meeting that our society would attend. The theme this year is: Travel and Transportation—How did we get from here

to there? We do have enough volunteers to staff the event, but are still in need of artifacts and photos to display. Anyone with items, please contact Don Welch.

For those members that have not renewed their 2006 membership and would like to, be sure to see Mark Morse.



## CROSSETT HILL

### CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER?



Last Issue  
Mary Ethel Welch

The Crossett family of Duxbury can be traced back to Anthony du Crozat born between 1622 and 1624 in France. He later migrated to Ireland and married Laura Thompson in 1647 in Carrickfergus in the county of Antrim. Over the generations some of the derivations of their name were Crozat, Crossit and Crossett. They had three sons: Anthony, William and James and three daughters: Laura, Mary and Alice.

The Crossett family remained in Ireland for three more generations but their son James is the next step in the migration to Duxbury. James b. 1653 married Elizabeth Rogers b. 1657 and they had eight children one of which was William/Samuel b. 1684. William had two marriages. The first marriage to Mary Masterson produced two children: Robert and Hannah. His second marriage to Martha Hamilton produced seven children one of which was Robert born March 9, 1753.

Robert moved from Ulster County in Ireland with his widowed mother and three brothers to Pelham, Massachusetts around 1716 the United States and in 1740 married Mary Savage. Their union produced twelve children and it is their son Edward that found his way to Duxbury.

This is by no means a complete history of the Crossett family. Edward's family was large and his sons Jason, Edward, Roswell and Hezekiah were residents of Duxbury. It is his son Edward that is the father and Janus and grandfather of James Edward that were prominent lumber operators on Crossett Hill.

There are Vermont branches of the Crossett family in Montpelier, Northfield, Bennington but the last surviving member of the Duxbury Crossetts was James Edward Crossett. He passed away three years after his father in 1916.

## CROSSETT FAMILY TREE

*Generation No. 1*

1. EDWARD<sup>5</sup> CROSSETT (*ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born July 25, 1749, and died December 31, 1829 in Phillips Cemetery. He married ELIZABETH CADY. She was born 1754, and died September 17, 1826.

Children of EDWARD CROSSETT and ELIZABETH CADY are:

- i. SUSANNA<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT, b. July 25, 1776.
- ii. ACHSAH CROSSETT, b. August 28, 1778; m. GEORGE WILLESTON.
- iii. ELIZABETH/ELISABETH CROSSETT, b. September 15, 1780.
2. iv. JASON CROSSETT, b. May 16, 1785; d. November 07, 1854.
- v. CHLOE CROSSETT, b. September 05, 1787.
3. vi. REBECCA CROSSETT, b. April 26, 1791.
- vii. EDWARD CROSSETT, b. August 26, 1792.
4. viii. ROSWELL CROSSETT, b. June 03, 1794, Shutesbury, MA; d. November 27, 1859.
5. ix. HOSEA CROSSETT, b. August 21, 1796.
6. x. HEZEKIAH HOWARD CROSSETT, b. 1800.

*Generation No. 2*

2. JASON<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born May 16, 1785, and died November 07, 1854. He married LYDIA CORSE January 01, 1807. She was born 1785, and died 1870.

Children of JASON CROSSETT and LYDIA CORSE are:

7. i. GAD<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT, b. January 17, 1815, Duxbury; d. March 29, 1875, Duxbury.
- ii. ROSWELL CORSE CROSSETT, b. January 16, 1808, Shutesbury, MA.  
Burial: Crossett Hill Cemetery
- iii. WYLLYS HENRY CROSSETT, b. June 16, 1811.
- iv. ELECTA A. CROSSETT, b. January 18, 1813.
- v. EDWIN C. CROSSETT, b. May 17, 1817, Duxbury.
8. vi. GARRY CROSSETT, b. March 03, 1821; d. July 01, 1888.
- vii. LYDIA CROSSETT, b. Unknown.

3. EDWARD<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born August 26, 1792. He married HANNAH HARDICK CARTER. She was born in Hudson NY.

Children of EDWARD CROSSETT and HANNAH CARTER are:

- i. ANALIZA<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT, b. June 11, 1810.
- ii. ANGELINE CROSSETT, b. November 15, 1818.
- iii. CORNELIA CROSSETT, b. March 20, 1820; m. JOSEPH GILMAN.
9. iv. JANUS CROSSETT, b. November 12, 1823.
- v. LUCY ANN CROSSETT, b. November 12, 1825.
- vi. WILLIAM JARVIS CROSSETT, b. June 14, 1828.

4. ROSWELL<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born June 03, 1794 in Shutesbury, MA, and died November 27, 1859. He married EUNICE WELLS. She was born 1793, and died May 30, 1864. Eunice and Roswell are both buried in Crossett Hill Cemetery

Children of ROSWELL CROSSETT and EUNICE WELLS are:

- i. RUBEN<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT, b. February 13, 1819.
- ii. BURTON CROSSETT, b. December 29, 1822; d. November 03, 1868, Crossett Hill Cemetery.
- iii. REBECCA CALISTA CROSSETT, b. September 05, 1823; d. August 15, 1856, Crossett Hill Cemetery;  
m. LYMAN V. TURNER buried in Crossett Hill Cemetery
- iv. JOHN CROSSETT, b. September 11, 1826; d. July 16, 1866, Duxbury; Burial: Crossett Hill Cemetery  
  
m. ELIZA JANE MILIKON, October 26, 1843.
- v. POLLY LOUISA CROSSETT, b. December 09, 1829.
- vi. WILLIAM CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1830; d. January 27, 1863, 30 years 5 months 11 days.
10. vii. LYSANDER CROSSETT, b. June 26, 1831; d. June 18, 1865, Crossett Hill Cemetery.
- viii. BYRON CROSSETT, b. 1841; d. March 06, 1868. Burial: Crossett Hill Cemetery
- ix. EDGAR CROSSETT, m. MINNERVA A. CORSE, September 02, 1865.

5. HOSEA<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born August 21, 1796. He married PERSIA/PERSIS HILLS December 04, 1817. She was born Abt. 1801, and died August 17, 1865 in Phillips Cemetery.

## CROSSETT FAMILY TREE

Children of HOSEA CROSSETT and PERSIA/PERSIS HILLS are:

- i. LOUISA<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1816.
- ii. LORINA CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1823; d. January 03, 1869, Phillips Cemetery.
- iii. LEVI C CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1817.
- iv. AELISH CROSSETT, m. MARTIN JAEHERMAN, October 04, 1870.

6. HEZEKIAH HOWARD<sup>6</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born 1800. He married BETSEY WHEELER March 31, 1824 in Vt Records wedding date 9/8/1824.

Children of HEZEKIAH CROSSETT and BETSEY WHEELER are:

- i. FANNY W.<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT, b. May 04, 1825.
- ii. ERAN/ERON CROSSETT, b. August 17, 1826.
- iii. JANE CROSSETT, b. April 30, 1828; d. April 12, 1908, Wisconsin;  
m. CHARLES POWERS, April 25, 1847.
- iv. HARRIET E. CROSSETT, b. December 18, 1829.
- v. LILLIS/LILLIAN CROSSETT, b. December 14, 1831.
- vi. PHOBE CROSSETT, b. 1834.
- vii. HOWARD CROSSETT, b. April 21, 1836.
- viii. LAURA CROSSETT, b. 1839.
- ix. SALLY CROSSETT, b. 1841.
- x. CHLOE CROSSETT, b. 1843.
- xi. EDWARD CROSSETT, b. 1845.
- xii. HANNAH CROSSETT, b. 1847.
- xiii. ELIZABETH CROSSETT, b. 1848.
- xiv. HEZEKIAH JOHN CROSSETT, b. 1850.

### Generation No. 3

7. GAD<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT (*JASON<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born January 17, 1815 in Duxbury, and died March 29, 1875 in Duxbury. He married MARRIETTA STREETER. She was born September 11, 1814, and died April 16, 1903 in Montpelier.

Children of GAD CROSSETT and MARRIETTA STREETER are:

11. i. JANUS<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT, b. March 1849.
- ii. LUCRETIA ELECTA CROSSETT, b. September 10, 1837; m. LEMUEL CHANDLER.
- iii. LOUISE ELLEN CROSSETT, b. January 18, 1841.
- iv. HENRY WILLIS CROSSETT, b. November 25, 1842.
- v. GEORGE CROSSETT, b. November 20, 1844.
- vi. GEORGIANNA CROSSETT, b. November 20, 1844.
- vii. CORNELIA ANN CROSSETT, b. December 21, 1846.
- viii. JANE CROSSETT, b. March 01, 1849, Montpelier; d. September 30, 1865, Typhoid.
- ix. LUCY ANN CROSSETT, b. May 15, 1851, Moretown; d. February 08, 1863, Dyptheria 11y-8m-21d.
- x. ROSWELL GAD CROSSETT, b. May 15, 1854; d. April 07, 1931, Spokane Washington;  
m. ELLACORDELIA/CORDELLA JONES, April 14, 1882; b. April 24, 1864; d. July 01, 1938.
- xi. ALICE MARTHA CROSSETT, b. May 26, 1857; d. January 18, 1868. Burial: Duxbury Corner
- xii. EDWARD CROSSETT, b. July 04, 1839; d. April 09, 1867 of Consumption, Burial: Duxbury Corner

8. GARRY<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT (*JASON<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born March 03, 1821, and died July 01, 1888. He married (1) CHARLOTTE. She was born Abt. 1824, and died September 21, 1843. He married (2) RACHEL KNIGHT. She died October 02, 1861 in Typhoid. He married (3) FANNY GODFRED May 20, 1862 in Third marriage for Garry at 42yrs. He is buried in the Hope Cemetery.

Child of GARRY CROSSETT and CHARLOTTE is:

- i. GARRY<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1843; d. October 11, 1843, at 3 weeks.  
His mother died three weeks earlier possibly from complications of childbirth  
They are both buried in the Hope Cemetery

Child of GARRY CROSSETT and RACHEL KNIGHT is:

- i. CHARLOTTE JANE<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT, b. Abt. 1850; d. July 06, 1851 at 1 year 2 months.  
Rachel is also buried in the Hope Cemetery with Garry

9. JANUS<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT (*EDWARD<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born November 12, 1823.

## CROSSETT FAMILY TREE

He married (1) ABBIE WHITNEY. She was born in Montpelier.  
 He married (2) RACHEL EURETTA CROSBY 1844,  
 daughter of AMOS CROSBY and FANNY WHEELER. She died 1878.

Children of JANUS CROSSETT and RACHEL CROSBY are:

12. i. MENTA FANNIE<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT.
13. ii. JAMES EDWARD CROSSETT, b. December 06, 1854.

**10.** LYSANDER<sup>7</sup> CROSSETT (*ROS<sup>6</sup>WELL<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born June 26, 1831, and died June 18, 1865 in Crossett Hill Cemetery. I only found limited information about Lysander and did not find his marriage. He has two children that are attributed to him at VT Vital Records department. They are buried at the Crossett Hill Cemetery

Children of LYSANDER CROSSETT are:

- i. EDNA<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT, b. 1852; d. July 09, 1854, age 2 years, 17 days
- ii. FRANK CROSSETT, b. 1853; d. September 30, 1853, age 9 months, 14 days

**Generation No. 4**

**11.** JANUS<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT (*GAD<sup>7</sup>, JASON<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born March 1849. He married ELIZA SMITH.

Children of JANUS CROSSETT and ELIZA SMITH are:

- i. ROY JANUS<sup>9</sup> CROSSETT, b. February 16, 1893.
- ii. LENA MAY CROSSETT, b. May 18, 1875.
- iii. ALICE ELVINA CROSSETT, b. June 24, 1882.
- iv. JENNIE LOUISE CROSSETT, b. 1886.
- v. EDITH MAUDE CROSSETT, b. May 27, 1887.
- vi. JESSE EDWARD CROSSETT, b. November 07, 1887.
- vii. ESTER CROSSETT, b. 1888.
- viii. CHARLES JOHN CROSSETT, b. September 23, 1889.

**12.** MENTA FANNIE<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT (*JANUS<sup>7</sup>, EDWARD<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DUCROZAT*) She married E. W. HUNTLEY August 26, 1863.

Child of MENTA CROSSETT and E. HUNTLEY is:

14. i. MERTIE<sup>9</sup> HUNTLEY.

**13.** JAMES EDWARD<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT (*JANUS<sup>7</sup>, EDWARD<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) was born December 06, 1854. He married MARY JANE MCMULLEN 1874.

Child of JAMES CROSSETT and MARY MCMULLEN is:

15. i. TENIE MAE<sup>9</sup> CROSSETT.

**Generation No. 5**

**14.** MERTIE<sup>9</sup> HUNTLEY (*MENTA FANNIE<sup>8</sup> CROSSETT, JANUS<sup>7</sup>, EDWARD<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) She married PALMER.

Children of MERTIE HUNTLEY and PALMER are:

- i. ANNIE DOROTHY<sup>10</sup> PALMER.
- ii. EBER HUNTLEY PALMER.

**15.** TENIE MAE<sup>9</sup> CROSSETT (*JAMES EDWARD<sup>8</sup>, JANUS<sup>7</sup>, EDWARD<sup>6</sup>, EDWARD<sup>5</sup>, ROBERT<sup>4</sup>, WILLIAM<sup>3</sup>, JAMES<sup>2</sup>, ANTHONY<sup>1</sup> DU CROZAT*) She married PHILIP SHONIO.

Children of TENIE CROSSETT and PHILIP SHONIO are:

- i. JANUS CROSSETT<sup>10</sup> SHONIO. Author of "In Horse and Buggy Days"
- ii. EURETTA CROSBY SHONIO.

## THE LAST CROSSETTS OF DUXBURY

ONE OF DUXBURY'S MOST  
PROMINENT CITIZENS PASSES AWAY  
IN HIS 90TH YEAR.

WATERBURY RECORD  
FEBRUARY 12, 1913

Judge Janus Crossett passed away at his home on Crossett Hill last Thursday evening in his ninetieth year. Mr. Crossett enjoyed fairly good health until ten weeks ago a severe cold increased the weakness coming upon him and he was obliged to take his bed. On the last day of December he had a stroke of paralysis, since which time he had been unable to speak and had lain in a critical condition. For ten days preceding his death the failing had been even more noticeable and for the last week it seemed as though only a tiny spark of life remained until he gradually sank into the sleep from which one does not awaken here.

Janus Crossett was born November 12, 1823 in a log house near the school house in the so called Phillips or Hills district in Duxbury. His parents were among the early settlers. Hannah Hardick Carter was of Holland-Dutch descent, coming here from one of the New York Dutch families in Hudson, N. Y., and bringing a slave as a part of her dowry. His father Edward Crossett was born in Shutesbury, Mass., was of French-Huguenot stock, the name "Crossette" being derived from a cross set in a priest's cap." Three sisters being older, it was a day of great rejoicing when a son was born, so much so that white sugar was ordered used. The boy was quite young when his father died and he shouldered much of the responsibility of the family. His education in school was limited, but

in that which comes front the world he was well versed. In 1844 he married Rachel Euretta Crosby of Duxbury and they went to keeping house on the farm now owned by representative Breen. In a short time they moved to the farm which had since been his home. First in a log house, then a small house, which is now part of the buildings, then into a house he built, which burned in 1867 and the year following into the present structure also built by Mr. Crossett, William Deal of Waterbury being the head carpenter. From this farm he for years conducted a large farming and lumber business until relinquished active management to his son, J. E. Crossett.



JANUS CROSSETT.

Mr and Mrs. Crossett were blessed with two children, Menta Fannie (Mrs. E. W. Huntley) who died thirteen years ago, and James Edward, who survives. Mrs. Crossett died in 1878 and he later married Abbie Whitney of Montpelier, who has been the faithful companion of their later years. Two grandchildren, Mrs. Mertie Huntley Palmer and Mrs. Tenie Crossett Shonio and for great grand-children, Miss Annie Dorothy Palmer, Eber Huntley Palmenr, Janus Crossett Shonio and Euretta Crosby Shonio als respect the memory of a just and good man.

Working hard, Mr. Crossett's greatest pastime was his music. In his home, singing schools, musical conventions and the Congregational choir of Waterbury, ho not only derived pleasure but gave to others.

Mr. Crossett was one of the pioneers in road building and was always working for the up-building of the community and town. He held many important town offices, represented the town three times in the Legislature and in the seventies was Side Judge of Washington County. During the war be was very active, being one of the selectmen of the town at the time. He has voted for each Republican President since he was twenty-one until last Fall and until three years ago had attended every town meeting but one.

Formerly of the Universalist faith, several years ago he became convinced of the worth of the Spiritualist Doctrine and has been a strong believer in its

principles. Actively engaged in the work of the State Spiritualist Association and since its founding, one of the strong supporters of the Queen City Park association, he was secretary and treasurer of this until a few years ago he resigned and was made a director for life.

For thirty years, with one exception, Judge and Mrs. Crossett have spent more or less the summer at the Part, first in a tent and late in a cottage erected at the entrance to the grounds. As long as he had the strength he was constantly working for the beautifying of the Park. This past summer the trip was taken by automobile and the time pleasantly passed at their summer home.

He was the oldest member in point of years, of Winooski Lodge No. 49 F. & A. M. and one of the oldest in membership. His petition was presented to this lodge Feb. 1st. 1860, acted upon

## THE LAST CROSSETTS OF DUXBURY

February 29; he was initiated in March, passed April and raised in May 1860.

The strongest qualities of Judge Crossett's character, however, were shown in his home-life and business.

Fires and floods for the buildings and mill only made more evident the optimism which was his. His daughter's tender tribute was, "I never knew father to say an unkind word in the home." In these closing years, every respect has been shown him and during these days of not being able to communicate, every wish carefully studied by each in the home, that no want should be left unfulfilled. To all those who have so willingly ministered to him there remains the remembrance of one who had been spared to them for many years of counsel and cheer.

The funeral was held from his late home Sunday afternoon Rev. F. T. Crane of the Universalist faith, of

Stowe officiating. W. J. Boyce was in charge. B. R. Demeritt sang the three hymns, "In the Sweet Bye and Bye," "Does Jesus Care" and "Shall We Gather at the River." The bearers were boys who had aided in caring for him and who had grown up in his home, Philip Shonio, Lewis Welch, Ernest Clifton and Fred Ravelin. The burial was in the family lot in the Duxbury Corner cemetery, the services at the grave being in charge of Winooski Lodge, No. 49. C. C. Graves rendered the ritual work and E. G. Miller acted as chaplain. Beautiful set pieces of flowers from the Lodge and the Queen City Park association, 89 carnations from those in the home, and many others from relatives and friends, spoke of many tender memories.

The passing of Judge Crossett, takes Duxbury's oldest resident as well as one of the oldest in the community, and removes from the Hill the last of the older member of the families which gave their name to that locality.

### Judge Janus Crossett

*Legislative Directory*

House Seat 155 Residence: Burnhams 24

Committee Assignment: Distributing

(Distributing Committee: A committee of one member for each county, whose duty it shall be to receive and distribute all public documents and papers, printed for the use of the members: to be denominated as Distributing Committee

### Judge Janus Crossett

*Men of Vermont: Illustrated Biographical History*

...His father dying when Janus was twenty-one years old, from that time the entire care and support of the family devolved upon Janus. Mr. Crossett commencing as a farmer, soon devoted his attention to the lumber business, which he has carried on for more than thirty years. He is a practical man, with a bent for statistics, and during the last forty-four years he has kept a careful record of business matters, which has been of much use as a basis of various settlements. A Republican in politics, he has held one or more town offices constantly for the last forty years. He represented Duxbury in the Legislature in 1855-1856-1857, and was elected assistant judge in 1871. A devoted advocate of temperance, he has never used liquor or tobacco, and carries his three score and ten years as actively as most men do fifty.....

### James Edward Crossett

*Legislative Directory*

House Seat 116 Residence: Montpelier House 39

### James Edward Crossett

*Gazetteer of Washington County*

Selectman, prop. saw-mill, dealer in all kinds of dimension hard and soft wood lumber, leases of James 25 cows and 1,200 sugar trees, owns 24 head cattle, 4 horses, 2 houses and wild land 400

*Men of Vermont: Illustrated Biographical History*

...Educated in public schools of Duxbury. Farmer, manufacturer of lumber, box shooks, and chair stock; in the lumber business thirty eight years. Republican; selectman seventeen years, chairmand of the board eighteen year; justice of the peace two years; represented Duxbury in the Legislature 1890, and at the extra session 1891; liberal in his religious convictions....

## THE LAST CROSSETTS OF DUXBURY

### DEATH OF J. E. CROSSETT

FUNERAL HELD TUESDAY AFTERNOON  
FROM HIS LATE HOME

WATERBURY RECORD

SEPTEMBER 6, 1916

James E. Crossett, one of the older residents of Duxbury, passed away at his home on Crossett Hill at 9:30 Sunday morning. He was the last survivor of the Crossett family.

The deceased was born December 6, 1854, the son of Jane and Euretta Crosby Crossett on the farm where he lived all his life and where he dies. He received his education in the public schools. During his early life he was associated with his father in the farm and lumber business. He married on December 23, 1874, Mary J. McMullin, who survives him.

He has carried on a farm all his life making a specialty of fancy butter and he also owned large lumber mills and tracts of standing timber. Mr. Crossett was a very loyal and devoted citizen and was an active politician, having been town representative in the Legislature in 1890. He was a strong republican. For 18 out of 26 years he served on the board of selectman, being chairman most of the time. He was on the board continuously for the last 11 years, being obligated to resign on account of ill health. He always had the interests of the town at heart. Mr. Crossett was a Universalist.



Besides his wife, he is survived by one daughter, Tenie May, wife of Philip Shonio, two grandchildren, Janus C. Shonio and Euretta Crosby Shonio. His only sister, Mrs. E. W. Huntley, died 17 years ago.

The funeral was held from his late home Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock, the Rev. J. R. Reardon of Barre officiating.

Mr. Miller sang "Sometime We'll Understand" and "Shall I be Forgotten?" The bearers were Lewis Welch, Earnest Clifton, Fred Ravlin, and Otis Colton. There was a large number of out of town friends and relatives present, among them: R.E. Battles of Hardwick, A.C. Huntley of Bolton, Mrs. Ida McGrath of Utica, NY, Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Long, Mrs. Clayton Kew and Mrs. Lizzie Livingston of Fayston; Mr. and Mrs. R. J. McAllister, Robert Maxwell and Guy Hunt of Waitsfield; Mrs. Will Johnson and E. Jacob Morse of Moretown. There were many beautiful floral tributes. Interment was in the family lot in the Duxbury Cemetery.

## CROSSETT HILL CIRCA 1950

Those were unforgettable days, those days of my youth on Crossett Hill. We lived at what was then the last place on the top of the hill, on what was called the Breen Farm, from 1945 to 1955. When we moved up to the farm from Waterbury in 1945 it was well suited for dairy farming in that era. It was a large farm - 500+ acres - with well tended fields, a huge, sound barn, and a big, roomy house. Unfortunately, my father had no interest in or knowledge of dairy farming. He was a logger and the farm had a huge supply of mature trees. So he cut the marketable timber off the farm and bought logging rights to several other tracts of land on Crossett Hill and surrounding communities until 1955 when he ran out of trees and gas. We moved back to Waterbury in 1955 to a more civilized life, I guess, but those Crossett Hill years were special, unique chapters in my life.

There are many tales to tell of that special time. When I get together with my brothers and sisters to this very day, the conversation always seems to inevitably drift to those Crossett Hill days. There is one unalterable fact or descriptor of that life: we were poor. Lord, were we poor... But we did not feel particularly poor nor did we feel like we were somehow beneath the class of other folks - hell, everyone was in the same boat. Everyone up on the hill with whom we associated, played with, went to school with was similarly poor. Patches on the seats of our britches, holes in the soles of our shoes, an outhouse out back as our only toilet, a single cold water spigot in the kitchen as the only source of water (that is if you had water running into the house), no electricity, no telephone, no refrigerator (electric and phone service was not available on that part of Crossett Hill until the late 1940's) ... it was a tough row to hoe.

But I look back on those years with a great deal of fondness. The memories of hardships endured are far offset by the good times we had at the farm. It was a special place, with special, sweet memories. It's my pleasure to share a couple of those memories with my fellow Duxbury Historical Society members.

## THE HIRED MAN

His name was Joseph Cousson, a French Canadian. He could neither read nor write in English. He was undoubtedly an illegal immigrant, but that was a different time and age. No one really gave a damn. He drifted down from Quebec Province to Duxbury sometime well before we ever met him in 1945. He was driving a team of horses down on the Parro farm, where Jill Campbell now lives, when we moved up to Crossett Hill. My Dad bought that team from Mr. Parro and Joe came along in the bargain.

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Joe was an old man when he moved in with us, probably a man of my current age or a little less. We kids called him Old Joe. He got his own bedroom on the farm which means he rated a lot higher in the pecking order than us four boys. My brothers and I all slept in the same big bedroom upstairs. He was a quiet man and had an air of dignity about him. My mother and father were both fond of Old Joe. He was a trustworthy, loyal employee. He spoke very poor, broken English and was much more comfortable in the company of his few, fellow French Canadians who resided in the Duxbury area. He never could pronounce my name correctly - or maybe he just pronounced it incorrectly on purpose. My family and friends always called me Stevie; Old Joe called me Peavey. Maybe it just made it easier for Old Joe. He - and we - also called a cant hook a peavey. One less English word to master for Old Joe.

He was unmarried and didn't seem to have a whole lot of interest in women. At least, it seemed that way to me. I recall one of my brothers telling me that he once inquired of Old Joe why he was not married. Joe's reply in his broken English lexicon: "Like jail, no bail." Seems a bit of a harsh description of married life, but it left no doubt about Joe's stance on that grand institution.

He loved his horses, Maude and Prince, a fine looking pair of grays. Took the kind of care and interest in them that a good parent lavishes on his/her child. My brother John and I would



*Farmhouse that was home to the Crossetts, Bizens and Graces*

sneak up to the horse stable area in the barn after the work day was over and listen to Old Joe talk to his horses as he cleaned, fed, watered, and bedded them down for the night. We would on occasion pull some devilish, devious trick on Old Joe - we'd perch on the manure pile and whistle in the window at him and his horses to try to startle them, or toss a frozen horse turd at his feet. Old Joe would mutter some indecipher-

able French curse or yell at us, but he put up with our nonsense for the most part. If my Dad had ever caught us in such antics, he'd have paddled our derrieres, but we usually escaped detection. And Old Joe was not a man to 'tattle' on us. I am now a bit ashamed of our pestering of Old Joe ... but it seemed a good idea at the time.



*View from the farmhouse on to the open fields*

I recall one day, however, when Old Joe turned the table on us. Well, on John, at least. John and I had come into possession of a new weapon in our arsenal of dirty tricks - pea shooters. Our very own WMDs. Decent fellow that he was, Joe would spend a few minutes in the afternoon, before supper, splitting a bit of wood for the kitchen stove. One such day, John and I sneaked up to the woodshed, waited for an opportune moment, and fired a few, well-directed peas at Old Joe's hind end, just as he was ready to strike a decisive blow to a block of hard wood. Old Joe flinched and uttered a stream of French banalities and came tearing out of the woodshed door, as fast as his aging legs would carry him, to find his tormenters in hasty retreat, heading through the closest barn door. John and I hid out in our hiding place for what seemed an interminably long time and then could not resist the urge to continue our pea shooter assault. We sneaked up to the woodshed and peeked in - but there was no Old Joe in sight. We looked at each other and quickly surmised that we might be in a bad fix. Old Joe wasn't in sight and neither was his horse whip. John, my commander-in-chief, had things pretty well figured out and took off in great haste for the sanctuary of our barn hiding place. I was as close behind him as possible. John just barely made it in through the door when Old Joe appeared as if by magic and snapped that horse whip at John's hind end. He missed his target but the whip wound around John's legs. John did some fearful yelping and hollering that must have been music to Old Joe's ears, but I was lucky enough to come to a skidding stop and reverse directions before Old Joe could reload his whip. I headed for the house, figuring that Joe wouldn't whip my butt in front of my Mom and Dad and I was right. John and I followed Joe's unwrit-



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ten example, though. We did not relay the information to Dad and Dad never questioned us about the screaming and hollering coming from the barn. Both of us realized if the story leaked, Dad would be in Joe's corner.

I don't really know to this day if Old Joe really disliked John and me. God knows he had reason to. But he was never mean or threatening to us - he just kind of kept us at a distance - kind of like you would a skunk in your garage. He was just the opposite with my two sisters. They were kind



and affectionate to Old Joe and he reciprocated their kindness. He would bring the girls some penny candy when he returned from his weekend trip to Waterbury to see his fellow French Canadian friends, but he did not bring back any for Peavey and John. Even at that tender age, I understood why and did not really hold it against the old guy. He'd watch with amusement and pleasure as the two girls played dolls or some such foolish game on the kitchen floor or out in the front yard. But he'd cast a wary eye at John and me when we'd have our heads together, figuring out some new 'game'.

Old Joe left us a couple years before we moved back to Waterbury in 1955. He left on good terms with my Mom and Dad, I believe. He was just getting too old for the teamster role and Dad was working for other loggers more and more of the time, so his horses were not needed on the job. I saw him a few times down in Waterbury after we moved back down there and gave him a ride home a few times when I'd see him walking on the sidewalk. By then, I was old enough to be regretful about my misdeeds of the past, but Old Joe seemed to have made peace with me. He'd gladly welcome a ride and would always thank me in his broken English when he exited the car. And when he walked away from the car, moving ever slower each time I saw him, I always felt a bit of sadness at his departure. It was kind of like watching a member of my family take leave and I guess, in a way, that's what it was.

## RADIO CROSSETT HILL

My first recollection of the Farnham boys was in the late 40's/early 50's, watching them come into sight as they trekked up the road and into the woods at the farm, carrying axes, saws and lunchboxes. Not chainsaws, mind you, but cross-cut saws and bow saws, the tools of trade for that day and age for fellows making their living cutting pulp on Crossett Hill. In those days, loggers cut pulp by the cord. They received a set price for a cord of pulp. It worked out well, I guess. The employer certainly did not have to ride herd on the work crew and the work crew could work at its own pace. Fred Farnham, the father, would be in the lead as they wound their way up the hill and the boys would follow in order. Anywhere from three to five sons would follow Fred and it looked from a distance as if they were marching along to the beat of some unseen drummer. Theirs was a methodical, deliberate pace; they seemed in no particular hurry. But, then, anyone who has cut much pulp would understand the seemed reluctance to engage those tools of trade.

They were all good fellows. Not a mean bone in their bodies it seemed to me. One of them, Floyd, was a huge fan of Gene Autry, the 'singing cowboy' of song and screen. Floyd could sing every word of every Gene Autry song ever recorded. And without a lot of prompting. How that man loved Gene Autry! When Autry would be featured in a Saturday afternoon matinee at the Rialto Theater in Waterbury, Floyd would be there, front and center, wearing a top-of-the-line cowboy hat, a star-spangled shirt, chaps, boots and spurs. Everything but the six shooter. Guess if he'd shown up with that he'd have had to watch the movie by himself. I think at those times in the movie when Gene got in a pickle, Floyd might have fired a few shots at the screen.

It was the custom in those days for the theater operator to spin a few country-western tunes before the show commenced. It kind of got everyone in a six-gun, horse manure mood, I guess. When the music commenced, Floyd would join in heartily when they played a Gene Autry tune, backing up Gene, I guess, or maybe leading him. It was a real deal for the movie-goers; a live performance along with the film. It took a few out-of-towners by surprise (that's what they were called back then, not flatlanders) but it became second nature to the locals.

Floyd just could not seem to get enough of Gene Autry on the screen or on the radio. He became so enamored of Gene that he legally changed his name from Floyd Farnham to Dean Autry. I suspect that Floyd would have preferred and probably requested that his name be changed to Gene Autry rather than Dean, but some wretched bureaucrat frowned upon the former, so Floyd settled for Dean.

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But Dean was still not happy with the scarcity of Gene Autry songs on the local radio station, WDEV, the only station that most of us could tune in on our primitive sets in those days. So Dean came up with a solution to this problem. He designed and constructed a transmitting station in the upstairs of his family home on Crossett Hill! Here was this fellow, with no formal technical training in electronics or broadcasting, constructing a radio transmitter. And it worked! I'm quite sure Dean did not go through the tiresome red tape of getting FCC approval for his venture, he just started his one-man radio venture. Finally ... all the Gene Autry music a man wanted to hear ... right there on your dial at Radio Crossett Hill. A listener had to be in just about a perfect physical location in order to bring in the signal, but I can personally vouch for the fact you could get it loud and clear on your car radio if you were in such a location. I have driven up to Crossett Hill in those days, parked my car at one of those sacred locations, and listened to Dean's show.

### Dean Autry's Hero Gene Autry



Dean branched out a bit from his steady fare of Gene Autry tunes after a short time. Maybe he just wore out his Gene Autry records. But he was not in his real element when he strayed from his roots and broadened his horizons. I remember one day when I was taking some afternoon refreshment at one of my sacred listening locations on Crossett Hill, listening to Dean on Radio Crossett Hill with my brother-in-law, Howard Berno, when Dean announced that the next record was a Simon and Caribuckle platter. Howard and I debated about what Art Garfunkel might have thought about that.

I'm quite sure the local radio station, WDEV, was well aware of this clandestine operation on Crossett Hill and probably could have made Dean's life miserable. But knowing the ownership of that station, I would doubt that they were interested in causing Dean any real trouble. I am not sure to this day when the station stopped operating or how it came to cease operations, but for a short time it was a truly unique endeavor. To some folks, Dean Autry is just another Crossett Hill pulp cutter, but those of us in the know can vouch for the fact that he was owner and operator of Radio Crossett Hill, your voice for Gene Autry songs.

*Many Thanks to Steve Grace for his Contribution*

## IN HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS

*While doing research for Crossett Hill I came across several references to the Crossett Hill Association. A portion of the Breen Farm was donated to the Association so that they would have a picnic location to hold an annual reunion. For almost fifty years the association sponsored the picnic for the residents, former residents, their descendants and teachers to foster the Crossett Hill community spirit. They have since disbanded and the picnic land was turned over to the town in 1989. Janus Crossett Shonio was a member of the association and had the foresight to preserve some of his history of life on the Hill as Steve Grace has done for us as well. Donnie Welch had a copy of J.C. Shonio's "In Horse and Buggy Days" to share which really gives a lot of insight to life on Crossett Hill at the time. The following is a reprint of that text.*

It is quite generally agreed that the changes, technologically and socially of the first half of the 20th century exceed those of any similar period in history by a wide margin. That the future may bring, we can only conjecture, but certainly at this writing, the pace of change has not diminished.

Since my memory reaches back into the closing years of the kerosene lamp, horse and buggy days, and since there is now no one in our family with earlier first hand knowledge, it seems fitting that I should take time to narrate some of these memories for future family reference, and to give, as far as capability will permit, an accurate picture of that era's daily life, and the members of our family who lived it.

To those bonds of human love which have been a part of Crossett Hill history, this humble effort is lovingly dedicated.

J. C. S.

### CROSSETT HILL IN "HORSE & BUGGY DAYS"

My earliest recollection of life on Crossett Hill is a conglomerate vision of kerosene lamps, oxen, butter making, soap making, home made ice cream and apple pie, baked apples, boiled Indian pudding, dried apples, shaved venison, wood fires, and the inevitable "getting up a wood pile" with horse power and drag saw, a small country store in one room of our farm house with everything from yard goods to salt salmon, and saleratus (baking soda), fast driving—horses and collie dogs, bins of apples and potatoes down cellar, a side of beef hanging in the "cold cellar"; rag "pickers" and cream "pickers", of harvest time with all the many varieties of apples, with pie pumpkins and hubbard

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for small boys who used naughty language. This soft soap as well as hard soap was made on the farm of scrap fat from the table and slaughter house and lye obtained by pouring water through barrels of hardwood ashes on a leech, which was an inclined platform with a drain spout running over to a shallow wooden tub. The "cooking" was done in a big iron "cauldron" kettle with a brick arch, the same being used to boil potatoes and apples for the pig's and to heat the water for scalding at butchering time.

Much has been written about the tremendous changes during the current century, and if one decade were to be picked which showed this change must in rural Vermont, it might well be the period from 1920 to 1930. These were the years when the greatest shift from horse and buggy to automobiles took place. In 1920 there were three active livery stables in Waterbury. By 1930 they were completely out of business except that it was possible to put your horse in the one by the "Dry bridge" if you took care of it yourself. Radio also saw its beginning and rapid development in the period from 1920 to 1930. At the same time, one small garage run by Fred Bachus had expanded to five or six active and several smaller establishments. There were also several active agencies including Ford, Chevrolet, Gardner, Willys Knight, and Overland.

This period also saw the virtual disappearance of trolley cars, including the Mt. Mansfield Electric Railway, and the advent of busses, the first one this section being remodeled Cadillac ears. The adaptation to busses was made by two local people, Fred Jewett and his son Edgar.

Previous to this, to get from Burlington to Barre, it was necessary to board the train at Union Station in Burlington and go via shuttle train to Essex Jct., get on the Central Vermont southbound to Montpelier Jct., and change to Montpelier and Barre train. Now, with the advent of Jewett's "Yellow Bus Line", one could step on the bus anywhere along its route in Burlington, and in a little more than an hour, without change be in Montpelier or Barre.

During this same period, radio developed from a few crude sets in 1920 to very satisfactory instruments in regular use by 1930. Our first set was a single tube regenerative set which I built with purchased parts with the help of Napoleon DeGuise, a Waterbury barber for many years. We had a 150 ft ariel from the house to the cupola on the barn, and when the reception was especially good, we could bring in WGY Schenectady, WBZ Springfield and KDKA Pittsburgh.

The thrill of bringing in these programs over the air has never been equaled by television or any of the ensuing wonders of communication. We did not, at the time, however, begin to realize what profound changes the advancements were bound to create in our social, economic and political systems.

A little anecdote which will give a glimmer of light on life at that time follows:

One item which my father made for many years was cow stanchions. He had made about \$60 worth for a big farm in Stowe and had never been able to collect. He suddenly became aware of the fact that the farm had been sold and the owner was about to move West after disposing of his personal property at auction on the following Saturday.

Now, since going to Stowe especially in the winter, required a full day, and because he had little hopes of getting the bill paid, he decided to send me, a fourteen year old boy, with instruction to hid off something or get what I could.

Saturday morning I hitched Rob Roy, our Morgan driving horse, into the pung sleigh. A "pung" was what took the place of a summer delivery wagon, and was, incidentally, the rig my sister Eurette and I drove to high school in. I loaded the milk cans and after leaving them at the milk station, put Rob Roy in at Frank Eaton's livery stable with instructions to feed at noon. I then bearded the trolley car, sometimes referred to as "The Toonerville". Willie Warren, whose wife Ida was my own cousin, was the motorman, and we wound our way from the terminal which was at the end of Seabury Grain Store, through the open fields of several farms, and up the grade into Colbyville, by the rotary converter there, which boosted the current for the steep grades. The trolley then made its way to Waterbury Center and the high trestle, and through fields and woodland up Schutesville grade and roughly following the wagon road to Stowe, where the terminal was near the end of a building known us Charley Burt's big barn.

This was the location of the auction, and I contacted the owner, stated my business, and asked his permission to bid in some items to be paid for by the bill for the stanchions. He said that it would be o.k. if I would help him by bidding up the articles in general, which I agreed to do.

One of the first things to be sold was a black horse, and I showed my lack of wisdom by running up the bids to something over hundred dollars, undoubtedly more than the horse was worth, and suddenly became aware of the fact that the

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owner was desperately trying to sin<sup>1</sup> me to stop bidding. The auctioneer finally managed to get a bid of one dollar higher than mine, and I realized how very close I had come to proving that I was too young and inexperienced to represent my Dad in such a deal.

As the auction went on, by being careful, I was able to get several items at 50 cents to \$1.00, including a nearly full barrel of tractor oil, and several out-of-season items such as haying tools. When the auction was over, the owner appeared satisfied with what I had done and gave me a check for the balance, some seventy dollars.

When I reached home late that night, my Dad looked over the sleigh load of things I had bid off at the auction and said surely it was worth While to have these things we could use rather than a bad debt. I then handed him the check and he was extremely well pleased, and took occasion to boast about what I had accomplished. I, somehow, never got around to telling him how close he came to having a near worthless old horse and a bill for the difference!

Along with the mills and the farm, Grandpa Crossett had, in a room attached to the house, a small creamery with a barrel churn and cream separator run by a small gasoline engine. A "butter worker" was operated by hand, and making the butter was Fred Ravlin's (known as 'Uncle Fred") special job. When 4 or 5 years old, I loved the smell of fresh butter and the taste of an occasional "dab" which he accidentally let get laid over where little fingers could reach it. Sometimes I was allowed to ride with Grandpa Crossett when he delivered the butter, and on one occasion I had an experience which I shall never forget.

My grandfather was a big, powerful man, 260 pounds, and I had seen him reach out over the side of the buggy, grab a wheel by one of the spokes, and slide it down a hill so the horse wouldn't have to hold back as much. Admiring the feat, I tried it myself when he wasn't watching, but my fingers just rattled over the spokes without effect. I figured out that if I could get a good hold when the wheel was stopped, I would be able to slide the wheel, which at that moment was my greatest ambition. So, when my grandfather stopped to talk with someone, I got well set. When the wagon started, I went out over the wheel, turned a somersault in the air und landed in the ditch with the wind knocked out of me. Of course, my grandfather was scared and surprised beyond words, but although he was my idol and was one of the most understanding of men, I never quite had the courage to tell him the whole story.

One of the more pleasant memories or life in the old home-  
stead was when our Waitsfield "cousins" came to visit. These

were cousins sometimes several times removed but very close to our hearts, who lived in Waitsfield and Fayston. They included the Longs, the MacAillisters, the Kews and the Maxwells. Sometimes one family would come, and sometimes two or three, arriving by team late Saturday afternoon. Since there were no blaring televisions, a few hands of cards was indulged in, and on special occasions, the neighbors were invited, a fiddler was provided, and there was square dancing in the dining room. The big event the next day was Sunday dinner. Mother and Grandma Crossett, together with the visiting "women folk", would start preparing as soon as the breakfast dishes were done. Since refrigeration was poor, the meat course usually consisted of some nice fat chickens which had been planned for the occasion, or a big baked ham, home cured from a recipe which included maple sugar, and smoked with corn cobs and maple chips—tender, juicy, and tasty, and covered with cloves, together with fried, freshly gathered eggs, and boiled Indian pudding smothered in fresh cream whipped with maple syrup. Of course there were always the immense slices of home made bread and optional treats served family style, such as boiled cider applesauce, raisin filled cookies, gooseberry marmalade, and pickled pears. Then in the afternoon, to settle their dinners, the men folks would turn the crank on the ice cream freezer, which produced a product which actually was made with a substantial amount of rich Jersey cream. Hardly had our "middles" begun to feel some semblance of normalcy when we were faced with a soup plate of ice cream covered with sauce made with maple syrup und butternut meats.

About 1910 "Uncle" Rob MacAllister bought a new Overland automobile with four cylinder engine, primed through brass "priming cups" on the top of the cylinders and cranked by hand. It was a touring car with collapsible seats, upholstered in leather, and sported a brass radiator, brass hub caps, and brass rods which ran from the front end to the top of the vertical windshield The headlights burned acetylene gas. To us, and especially to small boys, it was the seventh wonder of the world, and whenever he came, he had to make several trips to the school house and back, about two tenths of a mile, just to give people a ride in an automobile, sometimes referred to in those days, as "machines". These earlier models had only rear wheel mechanical brakes which were according to the manufacturer, "self-energizing". What actually occurred was that the bond had s. tendency to wrap around the drum and hold tight when the wheel was turning forward, but the same principle worked against the operator when backing. One Saturday night Uncle Rob" was visiting us and

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he, my father, and I went to Waterbury to get some “Sunday dinner” components, and on the way back, the engine back-fired and stopped about half way up “Mill Hill”. Realizing that he couldn’t hold the car from backing down the hill, and mindful of the gorge at the foot of the hill, Uncle Rob turned the car into the bank beside the road and it tipped over. No one was hurt, but I caused my father concern for a few seconds as I had been thrown through the open windshield into the weeds on the far side of the road and was not immediately visible. Dad yoked up the oxen, Tom and Jerry, and pulled the car the half mile to the house. No particular damage was done to the car except a broken door hinge, and Uncle Rob cleaned the carburetor the next day and made it home on schedule.

It must be remembered that at this time cars were very scarce. C. C. Warren had the first one in Waterbury—in fact, it was #1 in the state and carried tag #1 until that plate was reserved for the governor. He lived in the big brick house on Main Street across from the Common, now taken over by the State, and was one of Grandpa Crossett’s butter customers.

My earliest lessons in economics were from the catalogs of Charles Williams Stores and Sears & Roebuck, together with exploration in my indulgent grandfather’s small country store.

A storekeeper in those days “bought by the barrel and sold by the pound.” There was always a barrel of crackers, a barrel of flour, a barrel of salt pork, a barrel of sugar, a barrel of vinegar, a barrel of molasses, a barrel of salt salmon, a barrel of salt. Also there was always a keg of tripe, a chest of tea, caddies of tobacco, a tank of coal oil (kerosene), as well as home cured hams and bacon, dried beef (unsliced), salt codfish and, of course, bottles of “Quick Relief”, a patent medicine that was supposed to cure everything from colic to consumption. Since the average person could afford only the necessities of life, only basic commodities were stocked, and often a modified barter system was employed. That is to say, that someone would get a piece of salt pork and some other staples on the promise of paying for them in work, logs, eggs, or other acceptable commodities.

I remember Charlie Seaver recounting how he had gone to Grandpa Crossett’s store with some eggs, which were actually being sold in the stores for ten cents a dozen at the time. He said, “Jim insisted on paying me twelve cents a dozen because he was ashamed to ask a hen to work for less than a penny a day.”

Those small country stores were quite common at the time, and I remember stopping in one at Duxbury Corner, run by Mr.

Wisley, when attending Sunday school at the Old Town Hall about 1911 or 1912. There was also one at Ridley’s Station as North Duxbury was then called, and I presume there was one on Scrabble Hill and in South Duxbury.

The vehicles of the “kerosene lamp” era were many and varied, and of course, consisted of two separate groups—one with wheels for summer and one with runners for snow use. The buggies, which were used on the old home place, were two Concord buggies, a covered buggy (belonging to “Uncle Fred”), and a huckboard which my Dad built and which Eurette and I later used in driving to school with a bay horse named Rob Roy. There were, at the time, several other common types such as two seated surreys, piano box buggies, and the two wheel sulky.

In the winter there were various types of sleighs, including some with tops like a covered buggy, and some with springs. Dad had made and presented to Grandpa Crossett a type known as a pung sleigh, which had a wagon box type seat and a body very much like a pick up truck. For hauling, there were dump carts and lumber wagons, and for haying, the lumber wagons were lengthened and a big hay rack put on the bunks. For hauling logs, there were the “bob sleds” and “go devils”. A go devil was a bob sled with a trailer. For other work there were the traverse sleds, which were two heavy sleds in tandem, with double reach and usually equipped with a body for hauling grain, chair stock, sawdust, lumber, etc.

Hauling logs off the mountain by bob sled created a beautiful snow path for sliding and on moonlight nights quite often fifteen or twenty of us would take a set of sleds made for the purpose, sometimes called sliding traverses, and sometimes, double runners, and go a mile or more up the mountain and slide all the way down to the old water mill. Sometimes on a curve the sleds would cut into the bank of snow and we’d have a grand old pile-up, but seldom was anyone injured.

At that time, the road leading from Waterbury, north to Burlington and South to Montpelier and Barre, was gravel, usually referred to as “permanent road”, although in the spring and often in the fall it was, at times, necessary to go around real deep mud holes to get through, and often, for several days at a time, it was barely passable. If someone from the farm wanted to go to Montpelier, they usually drove a horse to Waterbury, “put it up” (charge without feed, 25 cents) at Frank Eaton’s livery stable near the depot, took the train to Montpelier Jct, and changed trains for Montpelier and Barre.

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To get around the area there were electric cars which traveled the principal streets of both cities and plied between the two, following the main road by the gas plant. In those days, a trip to Montpelier and back consumed a full day, usually reaching home after dark at night.

With almost limitless electric energy available nearly everywhere, it is most difficult to realize that not so long ago, power was a serious problem. A form of treadmill for animals was available, ranging in size from the so-called dog power and goat power, up to one large enough to accommodate two large horses. These larger ones developed sufficient power to run a drag saw or threshing machine, but if more power was required, as for sawing logs or running a planing mill or grinding grain, before the turn of the century the only answer was water power. Without doubt this played an important part in the development of Vermont during the first half of the 19th century, as water power in abundance was available in nearly every town in Vermont. I am conscious of at least four developments on the Crossett Hill brook, and I believe remnants of the old flumes and raceways are still visible. At about the middle of the century steam power became available for general use, and since this could be used anywhere, regardless of terrain or climate, states like Vermont began to lose their monopoly.

I remember that Dad had a little steam engine and boiler that ran a band saw and turning lathe in his shop, but when Grandpa Crossett, in 1910, built the box shop and chair stock mill across the road, it was powered by a gasoline engine. This engine was designed and built by Cooley Co of Waterbury and it was from Ed Cooley that I learned enough of the machinist trade to get started at Pratt & Whitney. Dad had the use of this equipment and sold his little steam outfit. The water power saw mill continued to run until 1921 when it was replaced by the steam mill.

Lumbering was conducted in a somewhat different manner when I first remember the mill. Cutting in the woods was started in October or early November. The logs were "skidded" into piles waiting for the first heavy snow fall, and then with bob sleds or go devils, they were hauled to the mill and piled, ready for "Spring sawing." As soon as the spring thaws began and there was sufficient water in the brook, the mill was started and, since the length of time it could be run was somewhat unpredictable, depending on the weather, every effort was made to take full advantage of the water run off. In a normal year there would be periods when the sun would melt the snow during the day and the run off would continue in sufficient quantity to run the water wheel until about ten o'clock at night.

To take full advantage of this condition, Uncle Fred would saw until about 5:00 p.m., then Dad would take over with another crew and saw in the evening until the water "slacked off."

On one such occasion when I was two or three years old, Mother wanted to go somewhere in the evening and Dad took me with him to the mill and sat me on a pile of big timbers which had been piled back of the saw carriage. An especially large log came along and Dad ran the set works on the carriage back to the full capacity. When he started the carriage, the "set works" hit the pile of timbers knocking them over and pinning me underneath. Fortunately they were crossed up enough so a hole was provided for me, and I was more scared than hurt.

For a number of years Fred and Dad did the sawing. Charlie Seaver and August Keene "tailed the saw" and Lewis Welch drove team and "stacked" the lumber with a helper. Ferd Welch and I spent much of our time around the mill during "Spring Sawing" playing in the sawdust and occasionally doing something useful like holding bags to be filled with saw dust and taken to the farm for bedding in the stable.

As I think back over conditions as they existed in my early boyhood, it occurs to me that one thing peculiar to the times was the great number of annual endeavors, many of which were co-operative with two or three neighbors taking part, and often a monotonous chore turned into a more or less pleasurable occasion. Cutting and storing ice, picking apples, husking bees, haying, corn cutting, "raisings" (putting up the frames of a new building) sugaring, and shoveling out after a blizzard, and for the wives, quilting bees, getting together to prepare dried apples or preserves, sewing bees when they helped each other fit a new dress, as well as sugaring off parties and "taffy pulls."

Being dependent one upon the other, especially in cases of illness or tragedy, it was difficult to stay "on the outs" with the rest of the community for very long.

The year was divided as far as our family was concerned, not so much into months, as into work periods, some of which were concurrent and some overlapped. Spring sawing usually ran from March to June with sugaring coming in the middle of spring sawing. "Springs work" on the farm started as soon as the ground was thawed enough for plowing and continued through planting, practically to haying time. The Fourth of July was a big day, not just as a national holiday, but as a rejoicing that all the planting and some of the cultivating had been accomplished, and as a sort of relaxation

## IN HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS

before haying, which usually started just after the Fourth and continued through most of August. Just about as soon as haying time was over, "Falls work" commenced. Picking apples, digging potatoes, cutting corn and building fences for "fall feed, which was a means of utilizing the second crop of hay on selected fields. As soon as these things had been accomplished, it was time to start cutting and skidding logs, and if, perchance, there happened to be a few days between the various periods, there were always roofs to repair, new planking for some section of the stable or repairs to the water wheel or aqueduct, and always the inevitable wood pile for winter.

Greetings between neighbors usually consisted of "Git your haying all cleaned up?" or "How's your falls work coming?"

The comradeship, the mutual helpfulness, the desire to serve one another, while not confined to Crossett Hill, was certainly practiced here to the highest degree. Good times and bad were shared by everyone. Horse and buggy communities were self-sufficient and shared everything from a wake to a wedding. I remember my grandmother returning from helping "lay out" a neighbor who had passed away. Someone expressed their reluctance to touch a dead person, but Grandma Crossett said "Oh pshaw! There is nothing to fear, it's the live ones you have to look out for."

The love of neighbors, the strength of adversity, the desire to perform mutual service, are traits well demonstrated by our ancestors on Crossett Hill.

To keep these traditions alive and in practice, the Crossett Hill Association must always remain dedicated.

*Many Thanks to Donnie Welch for preserving and sharing his collection.*



*This rock is located on the old Cormier homestead currently owned by Sharon Wilson.*



### FRANK'S ROCK

BY DONNIE WELCH

THE YEAR WAS 1952 OR MAYBE EVEN 53,  
WHEN A FEW OF US CURIOS LADS  
FOUND THIS HAND INSCRIBED ROCK,  
DATED 1890, WITH THE INITIAL 'F.P.'

ON THE CORMIER PLACE NEAR A MEADOW'S EDGE,  
I WONDERED WHO THIS INTRIGUER COULD HAVE BEEN  
ETCHING HIS INITIALS ON THE FACE OF THAT LEDGE,  
HOPING SOMEONE WOULD FIND IT THERE AND WHEN?

SO INSPIRED I WAS ALL ON MY OWN,  
TO LEARN HIS NAME AND WHAT HE HAD DONE.  
WHEN THE INSCRUTABLE TASK HAS JUST BEGUN,  
RESEARCH REVEALED THERE WAS LITTLE KNOWN.

HISTORY REFERS TO "PICKETT" AS THEIR NAME,  
HIS PARENTS WERE: BENJAMIN AND SUE;  
AND THEIR ONLY SON WAS FRANK.  
SO, LOGICALLY THIS PAST IS NOW HIS FAME.

D U X B U R Y   H I S T O R I C A L   S O C I E T Y   M E M B E R S H I P

President: Don Welch  
Vice President: Steve Grace  
Treasurer: Mark Morse  
Secretary: Eulie Costello

Phone: 802-244-7558  
Phone: 802-244-5941  
Phone: 802-244-7080  
Phone: 802-244-1742

E-mail: vtmaplemary@adelphia.net  
E-mail: sgrace1022@adelphia.net  
E-mail: markm@gmavt.net  
E-mail: costie@madriver.com

**General Questions**  
**Don Welch, President**  
**136 Hayes Road**  
**Duxbury, VT 05676**

**Membership**  
**Mark Morse, Treasurer**  
**804 Vermont Route 100**  
**South Duxbury, VT 05660**

**Newsletter**  
Kelly Welch  
5631 Vermont Route 100  
Duxbury, VT 05676  
802-244-5627  
Email: kwelch@adelphia.net

If you have any comments or contributions for the newsletter we would love to hear from you.

**Newsletter**  
Maureen Harvey  
1293 River Road  
Duxbury, VT 05676  
802-244-8912  
Email: mharvey@harveygear.com

DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 6TH - 7PM  
CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

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