

# Under the Hump

## NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Next DHS meeting is May 19, 2026. Time and location TBD.

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO OF A PERSON OR PLACE WE CAN USE FOR A MYSTERY PHOTO? IF SO, PLEASE SUBMIT TO A NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBER TODAY! THANK YOU!

## GUESS WHO?



## SOCIETY BUSINESS

Reminder: Dues expired December 31, 2025. Please mail your 2026 dues to Mark Morse, Treasurer (see back of newsletter), which will help defray postage costs of reminders. Dues are \$10 (ten) per calendar year, per person. If you have already submitted your dues please disregard this notice.

### A Note From DHS President Donald Welch

Our local members, officers, trustees, and many other members of our community that volunteer and assist us as the situation arises surely should be commended for ALL of their efforts. And to be sure--there are many times these extra jobs show up. Each officer, trustee, committee member, and others are to be commended for their tireless efforts to ensure that our society operates effectively. For this I applaud you all--for a doing a great job so that many can enjoy your efforts for generations.

### 2025 Fundraiser Updates

The November 2025 fundraisers wrapped up with positive results:

- The wreath sale netted the Society \$960!
- The bake sale outside Kinney's netted the Society \$165!

A huge thank you to everyone who organized the sales, volunteered their time in various capacities, donated items, baked delicious treats, and bought items to support our society. We are grateful for your generosity!

### "Pie for Breakfast" Fundraiser

"Citizens Have Your Say Day" was held on January 10, 2026, in the cafeteria at Crossett Brook Middle School. Folks were asked to bring a pie to share at the "Pie for Breakfast" tables. The Duxbury Historical Society served the pies and refreshments. The DHS thanks the Cold Hollow Cider Mill for their donation of cider and the Cabot Creamery for their donation of cheese slices and whipped cream. We also want to thank all of the individuals who donated food, helped serve, and helped clean up. Proceeds from the pie and refreshments tables netted \$273 for the DHS.

## SOCIETY BUSINESS

## Archival/Preservation Committee Report

Members: Lori Morse, Bonnie Morse, Mark Morse

- Updated family files with new information regarding births, deaths, marriages, etc.

## Donated Artifacts/Documents/Ephemera

- Donor: Donald Welch—
  - A. Copy of a photo of the South Duxbury School taken in 1978; Photo of the South Duxbury Marble Quarry.
  - B. South Duxbury Church Facts provided by Edith Butler.
  - C. Write-up regarding the Good Templars Hall provided by Glencora (Freeman) Kellogg.
  - D. Photo of Edith Butler – Schoolteacher.
  - E. Copy of newspaper article related to the last home on Ward Hill that was destroyed by fire.
  - F. Copy of newspaper article related to lightning strike at South Duxbury Church in 1962.
  - G. Articles related to Charles Corliss 1846-1931 and his marriage to his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Fanny Hill.
- Donor: Larry Frasier—
  - A. Greeting card produced by Lloyd Squier depicting the Waterbury Railroad Depot with contents related to trains and train travel, the contents all Lloyd Squier original prose & graphics.
  - B. Letterhead for the Columbia Mushroom [sic] and Ginseng Co. of Waterbury Center, VT.
  - C. A sales receipt provided to Sayles Bros & Co. for medicines purchased from John F. Henry & Co. of Waterbury, VT.
  - D. A credit coupon provided by the Bank of Waterbury to I. C. & S. Brown in the amount of 10 cents.
  - E. A one dollar note from the Bank of Waterbury dated 1868 or 1888.

## Monetary Donations (10/01/2025 thru 12/31/2025)

Pam Chisholm \* Elizabeth & Dwight Day \* Mame McKee \* Marge & Ed Gormel \*

Breta & Steve Grace \* Kathy & Bob Grace \* Sandy Griffin \* James Hanley \* Brian Lindner \*

Stephen Lindsay & Lisa Beliveau \* Alison & Christian Magnani \* Sarah Page & Robert Westcott \*

Marshall-Carney Family – Memory of Katherine & Howard Sherman \* Theresa & Roy Marshall \*

Dwight Rost \* Jill Smith – Memory of Linda Devlin \* Mary & Ken Spencer \*

Shannon & Mike Thompson \* Greg Trulson \* Shari & George Welch \*

Beverley & Al Young \* Multiple Donations collected at Society Meetings and Meeting House Canisters

## THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

"The Christmas Present"  
The December 23, 1890, Marriage of Fannie Hill and Charles Corliss

Submitted by Skip Flanders

On December 6, 2025, the Duxbury Historical Society presented the story of the December 23, 1890, marriage in the South Duxbury Church of Fannie Hill and Charles Corliss. The presentation of this story was made possible through the efforts of Alice (Backus) DeLong, a long-term Duxbury resident and Duxbury historian. Alice spent her life participating in every aspect of Duxbury life. She carefully recorded, saved, and preserved every bit of history she encountered about Duxbury and its residents. Alice was born in 1911 and married Eldon DeLong in 1938. She was a member of South Duxbury Church and passed away in 2008 at age 96.

It is likely that Alice knew and talked with people who were at the Christmas Exercises in the South Duxbury Church on December 23, 1890, when widow Fannie Hill and divorced Charles Corliss were married. It is Alice's notes of events that night that formed the basis of the story of Fannie and Charles. After Alice's death all her historical records were presented to the Duxbury Historical Society. Donald Welch, a Duxbury Historian in his own right, became familiar with Alice's notes on Fannie and Charles and thought it deserved to be told as a part of Duxbury's history but also the history of the South Duxbury Church. Aside from Alice's notes describing the marriage was a small note in the newspaper on Jan 7, 1891, which recorded that Fannie Hill and Charles Corliss were married at the Christmas exercise at the Duxbury Congregational Church by Reverend Webster with a large audience in attendance.

Fannie Hill was a widow living on Ward Hill with her two boys, ages 3 and 6. Her husband Irving Hill died in 1888. Charles Corliss was a Civil War Veteran who enlisted at age 16 and lost much of his hearing due to an illness. Charles, who was divorced in 1884, lived on Ward Hill. Charles was raising his two boys, ages 12 and 14. Fannie and Charles came separately to the December 23, 1890, Christmas Exercises at the South Duxbury Congregational Church and were seated opposite each other across the aisle.

The Duxbury Historical Society enlisted the assistance of Waterbury playwright George Woodard to write a script to tell the story of Fannie and Charles's 1890 "Christmas Present." The program opened with Duxbury Historical Society member Skip Flanders presenting a message on the history of the Christmas Carol *The Twelve Days of Christmas* and how it was used in early Germany as a hidden way to educate the children on the story of the Catholic Church. The "Christmas Present" cast consisted of George Woodard playing Narrator and Pastor, Ramona Godfrey playing Fannie Hill, and Mark Morse playing Charles Corliss, with numerous others assisting in the presentation.

During the handing out of the gifts at the 1890 Christmas Exercise, Charles Corliss asked Fannie Hill to marry him as he did not bring a Christmas present to share. Fannie said yes to his proposal and Reverend Webster married them that evening with a large audience in attendance as reported in the newspaper.



Skip Flanders presenting the history of the *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.



Front to back: Ramona Godfrey as Fannie Hill, passing out the gifts, assisted by Phyllis Arsenault-Berry and Donald Welch playing townspeople.



Left to right: Ramona Godfrey as Fannie Hill, George Woodard as Narrator and Pastor, and Mark Morse as Charles Corliss.



Back to front: Patti Delaney, Jill Chase, Beth Gilpin, and Lori Morse as the choir.

Shawn Perry photos.

## THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Fannie and Charles went on to live on Ward Hill. In May of 1891 the oldest son of Charles, Johnnie, was killed by a falling limb while he was cutting a tree. His brother Walter pulled him home on a sled.

Fannie and Charles had three children together: son Percy L. Corliss, born in September 1891; daughter Kate M. Corliss, born in May 1893; and daughter Ina Belle Corliss, born in March 1895. In May 1895 Fannie died of consumption and is buried beside her first husband in the Waterbury Route 100 Cemetery. In May 1896, a year after Fannie's death, Charles married Annice Marble in Fayston. In August 1895, Kate, the oldest daughter of Fannie and Charles, died and is buried in the Waterbury Route 100 Cemetery with Fannie. In July 1909, Ina Belle, the youngest daughter of Fannie and Charles, died at age 14 from Tuberculosis. She is buried in the South Duxbury Cemetery next to her father. In September 1931 Charles died in Fayston. His funeral was held in the South Duxbury Church where he was married, and he is buried in the South Duxbury Cemetery across from the Church.

Percy Corliss was the only son of Fannie and Charles. Percy lived in Fayston and was married to Elsie Guyette. They had six sons and a daughter: sons Charles, Leroy, Roger, Clifton, Eugene, Leon, and daughter Charlotte. There are numerous descendants living today.

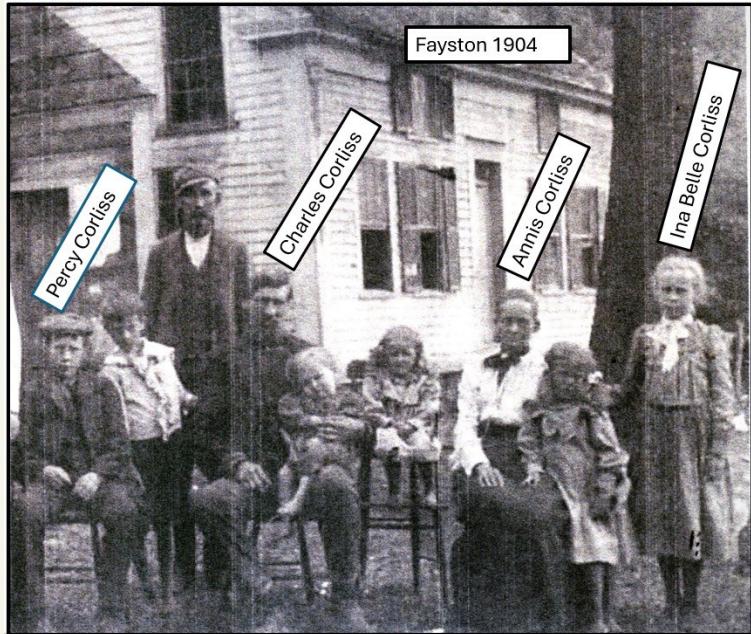
One son, Eugene Corliss lived in the area after a 20-year career in the service. Eugene married Mildred Shover and had four sons: James, Ron, Rick and Steve. Son Ron lives in Waterbury and was able to attend the Duxbury Historical Society service with his wife Janet, and was recognized at the conclusion of the program. A picture was taken with Ron and his wife Janet with Ramona Godfrey as Fannie and Mark Morse as Charles Corliss.

Also included below is a 1904 picture of Charles and members of his family including son Percy and daughter Ina Belle with his third wife Annice Marble.

Shawn Perry photo.



Ron Corliss and his wife Janet with Ramona Godfrey as Fannie Hill (far left), and Mark Morse as Charles Corliss (far right).



1904 photo of Charles Corliss and members of his family.

The Duxbury Historical Society would like to thank George Woodard for his assistance in putting the program together, all the players in the program, those who helped in making the church ready, and for providing the refreshments. It is a wonderful piece of history to be shared for not only the South Duxbury Church but in the lives of early Duxbury residents. Thank you to all and especially for the efforts of Alice DeLong and Donald Welch for preserving it for us to enjoy.

THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT



Skip Flanders presenting the history of the Christmas Carol *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.



Ramona Godfrey as Fannie Hill, Mark Morse as Charles Corliss, and George Woodard as Narrator and Pastor.



Donald Welch and Phyllis Arsenault-Berry as townspeople, and Fannie get ready to pass out the gifts.



Fannie accepting Charles's marriage proposal.



Charles and Fannie walk down the aisle after being married.

## FOUND IN THE ARCHIVES

*Christmas Party at the Church in South Duxbury, December 1890*  
As written by Mrs. Glencora Freeman Kellogg, 1959

One Christmas it was decided to have a community Christmas tree at the church. It was a gala affair and there was a large tree with everything on it from bags made of window-screen cloth filled with popcorn and candy to long underwear.

In those days things were not done up in packages wrapped with fancy paper and tied with ribbons, but had the name written on a piece of paper and either pinned or sewed to the article. Many of the unbreakable things were thrown out into the audience for the recipient to catch.

Charles Corliss was married there that night to his third wife.\*

It was a bitter cold night and our old mare got so lame from standing in the horse shed that we had a hard time getting back to Dowsville.

\*Editor's Note: research reveals that it was his second marriage.

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*As Mrs. Alice Turner Bisbee told her daughter:*

That Mr. Corliss came with his coonskin leggings and old clothes to the Christmas party. He got overcome by the sense of giving that pervaded the air, and with tears in his eyes and voice he arose, saying, "Everyone has something to give someone else tonight. I haven't anything, but I'd like to do something to make someone happy."

Turning to Mrs. Fanny Hill in the audience, he said without preamble, "Will you marry me?" (Implying, no doubt, that he'd make her happy.)

And Mrs. Hill consented, catching the minister who was present, without his copy of the marriage ceremony. He had to ad lib, which must have been effective, for town records reveal them duly married on Dec. 25, 1890.\*

\*Editor's Note: research reveals the date was Dec. 23, 1890.

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*As copied from a news clipping in the Electa Louizell scrapbook:*

"Christmas exercises were held at the Congregational house in South Duxbury and passed off very pleasantly. After the literary exercises and remarks by Rev. Harvey Webster, the pastor, before the distribution of the presents, Charles Corliss and Mrs. Fanny Hill were married, the ceremony being witnessed by a large audience."

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*Charles B. Corliss:*

Charles B. Corliss was born in June of 1846 in Fayston, VT, to Benjamin & Luana (Marble) Corliss. He died September 17, 1931 in Fayston, VT. He is buried in the South Duxbury, VT cemetery. Occupation: Farmer.

Marriages:

February 22, 1875: Eliza "Lizzie" Hoffman of Duxbury VT  
December 23, 1890: Fanny E. (Ladd) Hill in South Duxbury, VT, at the church  
May 7, 1896: Annice "Annie" Marble

Notes:

- Wife Eliza was born in Ireland, the daughter of Elias and Elizabeth (Sanders) Hoffman. She died in 1936 and is buried in Oregon.
- Wife Fanny had been previously married (Hill being her married name).
- Civil War Veteran—Enlisted December 3, 1863 credited to Fayston, VT in Co. 'G' 6th Vermont Infantry. Discharged June 23, 1865 due to wounds received on September 19, 1864. He was rendered deaf by his injury.
- At one time he had a serious altercation with his son Walter which left him bruised about his head.

SING-A-LONG



Left to right: Nina Towne, Karen Winchester, and Ann Harvey.

On December 21, 2025, the Duxbury Historical Society held a Holiday Sing-Along at the South Duxbury Meeting House.



Shawn Perry photos.



DUXBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
CONTACT INFORMATION

## Membership

Mark Morse, Treasurer  
804 VT Route 100  
South Duxbury, VT 05660

## Newsletter

## **Webmaster**

Ken Spencer Phone: 802-279-2575 E-mail: kenspencer197@gmail.com

**DONATE TODAY / SUPPORT THE RESTORATION PROJECT**

**[www.DuxburyVT.com](http://www.DuxburyVT.com)**

**DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING -  
MAY 19, 2026. TIME & LOCATION TBD.**

DUXBURY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY, INC.  
804 VT ROUTE 100  
SOUTH DUXBURY, VT  
05660