

Under the Hump

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Next Meeting Tuesday, November 13th, 7 pm. Crossett Brook Middle School
- Bring your dues to renew your membership at the next meeting. Help save the mailing costs.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER?



Last Issue
Cheryl Touchette

SUMMER PICNIC

Another successful picnic was held at the South Duxbury Church in August. Great weather and enjoyable conversation made for a nice day. Everyone brought food to share and enjoyed the pot luck lunch.

A short meeting was held and then the members retired to the church for a presentation



childhood summers then turned into year round residency as an adult. Her account of her South Duxbury history was both entertaining and enlightening.



of the church history by Joanne Berno. Organ music was provided by Ken Scott for the members to join in song.

Stephanie Koonz provided a history of her family visits to South Duxbury during the summers and the many years of participation in the church. Her



Photos by S. Perry

DAVIS FAMILY

WALES TO
NOVA SCOTIA
TO DUXBURY, VT
1647 - 2007

The trail of the Davis Family in Duxbury, Vermont begins in Cardigan, Wales. In the year 1647 three brothers, Guideon, Philip, and Francis sons of Francis Davis in Cardigan, Wales sailed for America. Gideon born in 1615 died at sea, Phillip born in 1617 and Francis born in 1626 made a safe voyage to America. They first landed in Nova Scotia and then located in Amesbury, Massachusetts.

Francis Davis, the ancestor of the Davis family in Duxbury, Vermont, married Gartrett Emerson of England in 1649. Francis and Gartrett had a son Francis born June 1, 1652 in Amesbury, Mass.

Francis married Mary Taylor in 1674 and settled on the Powwow River near Amesbury, Mass. They had a son Thomas born in 1679 who married Mary Martin on Dec 15, 1709. Mary Martin was a great grand daughter of Susannah North who was hanged as a witch during the Salem witch craft trial in 1649.

Thomas and Mary had a son Amos born on Nov 28, 1718 in Amesbury, Mass. Amos married first Alice Currier and then a second marriage to Hannah Davis. Amos and Hannah had two sons Amos born Oct 26, 1752 and Benjamin born Oct 24, 1754 in Newton, NH across the river from Salisbury Mass. Amos Davis Sr. was in Newton, NH in 1758, in Upson, NH in 1765, in Danville, NH in 1767 and in Bradford Vermont from 1768 to 1784. Amos Sr. died in Warner, NH in 1803.

In 1768 Amos Davis moved his family including Amos Jr. and Benjamin to Moorestown, Vermont later renamed Bradford on the Connecticut River. In 1773 Amos Davis was elected a Tax collector and tyingman in Moorestown. The Davis family continued to reside in Moorestown during the Revolutionary War. Both Benjamin, his brother Amos and brother in law Stephen Jenkins served as soldiers going out on numerous scouts from Moorestown.

Benjamin Davis was at the Battle of Saratoga when Gen. Burgoyne surrendered on October 17, 1777. Benjamin was listed on the roster under Captain Peter Olcott and received three pound sterling for service and for 270 miles traveled in one month and 4 days from September 23, 1777. This company was formed shortly after receiving news of the battle between British General Burgoyne and American General Gates on September 19, 1777. The company returned home on October 27, 1777 arriving ten days after Burgoyne surrendered on October 17, 1777.

Benjamin Davis is listed as Capt. Benjamin Davis on his grave stone in the Graves Cemetery in Duxbury although there is no record that he actually served as a captain. The title was likely used as recognition of his military service.

Benjamin Davis married Betsey Jenkins in Moorestown on or about 1773.

Benjamin and Betsey had eight children born in Bradford including Abigail born May 28, 1774, Amos born Dec, 17 1775, Betsey born April 18, 1778, Hannah born April 14, 1783, Polly born May 18, 1785, Elijah born Nov 6, 1787, John Baron born Oct 2, 1790, and Lydia Styles born Aug 9, 1792.



On April 4, 1793 Benjamin sold his homestead in Bradford to his brother in law Stephen Jenkins and moved with his family to Duxbury Vermont. Moving to Duxbury with him were his wife Betsey and four children John Baron, Lydia Styles, Polly, and Hannah. Also moving with him to Duxbury was his married son Amos, his wife, and 2 children. After settling in Duxbury Benjamin and Betsey had a son Andrew born on November 23, 1796. Betsey Jenkins Davis died on April 14 1814 and is buried in Graves Cemetery. Benjamin remarried to Jerusha (last name unknown). Benjamin died on Oct 13, 1830 and is buried in the Graves Cemetery.

Benjamin settled on land near the mouth of Ridley Brook then called Duxbury Brook and the Winooski River. The deed for the lot when conveyed to Andrew and Martha Davis in 1834 reads: Beginning at a stake and stones standing a little above the mouth of Duxbury Brook, thence South 28° West 160 rods to a White Ash Tree, thence South 62° East 150 Rods to Yellow Birch Tree, thence North 28° East to the now traveled road thence West by the side of said road to a Maple Tree East of the meadow, thence North on the brow of the hill east of Meadow to the Onion River thence down said River to the first mentioned bound. Division of the Original Right of James O'Brison and John Berdan.

The land and home recently owned by Irene Kennedy Chapman a descendant of Benjamin Davis who recently passed away and is now owned by her son Donald Chapman.

DAVIS FAMILY

Benjamin Davis was elected Duxbury's first representative in 1794 and went to Rutland for the legislative session held in September and October. He was again the representative in



Davis Homestead

1795 going to Windsor for three months August, September and October. Benjamin held a town office almost continuously from 1794 thru 1818. In 1802 Benjamin was one of three person voted by the town to build a bridge over Duxbury Brook.

According to research by Alice DeLong there was some confusion in the lot settled by both Benjamin and his son Amos Davis. In 1797 the proprietors voted that Benjamin Davis and Josiah Towle be entitled to their settlements on Lots 3 & 4 in the third Division laid out to the original rights of Jacob Joralmon and Abraham Goodwin in lieu of their draft. In 1797 the proprietors voted that Amos Davis could have his settlement on Lot 12 in the 3rd Divisions in lieu of his draft, but 11 days after at a meeting they disallowed his settlement on the lot.

In addition to Benjamin's son Amos, five of Benjamin's children are known to have settled in the Duxbury Area. His oldest son Amos was recorded in the 1800 census but nothing is found of him or his family after that.

Hannah Davis came to Duxbury with Benjamin and Betsey, married Giles Pinneo, and is buried in Graves Cemetery Duxbury.

Elijah Davis, another son of Benjamin and Betsey married Deborah Phillips on Sept 18, 1808 and they are buried in Warren, Vermont. Deborah was the daughter of Joseph Phillips and Martha Bascomb of Greenfield, Mass who were early settlers of Duxbury. They had six children Andrew Burton Carlos Davis who was a business man in the Waterbury, Dux-

bury Waitsfield area; Benjamin; Polly who married Nathaniel Stockwell; Lorenzo; Joseph Phillips and Andrew Davis.

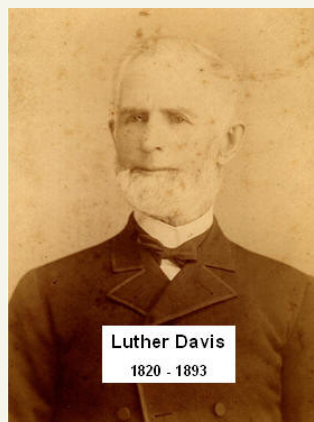
John Baron Davis married first Lucinda Cobb and second Nancy Atkins. John Baron died in July 16, 1861 and is buried in Graves Cemetery.

Benjamin and Betsey's youngest child Andrew Davis was born in Duxbury on Nov. 23, 1796 and married Martha Phillips on May 10, 1817 in Duxbury. Martha was the sister of Deborah Phillips who married Andrew's older brother Elijah. Deborah parents Joseph and Martha Bascomb Phillips are buried in the Phillips Cemetery on Route 100. Most of the current descendants of Benjamin Davis still living in the area are descendants of Andrew and Martha.

Andrew and Martha had 11 children all born in Duxbury. Andrew and Martha lived on Benjamin's Homestead which is the recent home of Irene Kennedy Chapman.

Children of Andrew and Martha included Almon C. Davis born May 1, 1818. At the age of 23 after teaching school a few years moved to Westminster, Ontario where he married and raised a family. He died in Sept 30, 1892 and is buried there. Almon had a son Levi who returned to Waterbury and married Hattie Smith of Colchester. One of their daughters was Minnie Davis who married Stephen Guptil, father to Ken Guptil.

Andrew and Martha's second child was Luther Davis born Sept 20, 1820 and died Mar 26, 1893. He married first



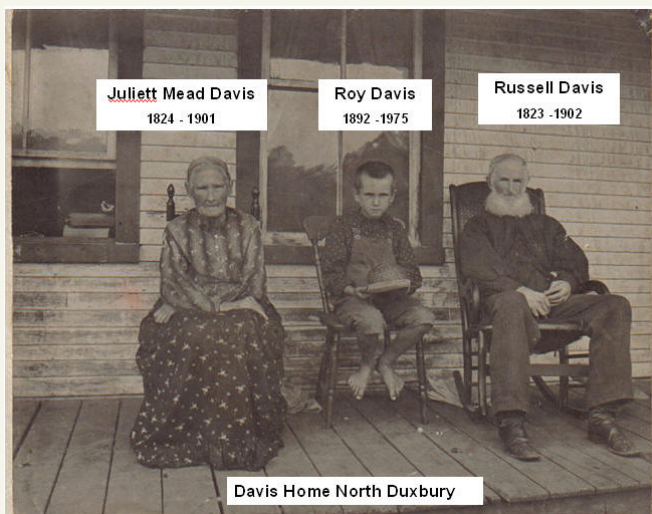
Luther Davis
1820 - 1893

Mary Sherman and second Mary Ann Wright and is buried in Hope cemetery. He built the house where Dac Rowe lived and was a business man that owned considerable property in Waterbury, included lots on Bank hill where the Conti Block is now. He was a partner with Thaddeus B. Crossett and Philo Towle.

The third son was Russell Davis born on Oct 16, 1823. Russell married Juliaett Daphne Mead on March 17, 1847. Juliaett was the daughter of Silas Mead. She was also the grand daughter of Thomas Mead the first settler in Washington County who settled on the present location of the Scribner Settlement Farm on Route 2 in Middlesex. Juliaett was born in the farm house near the Middlesex interchange where Silas Mead lived later

DAVIS FAMILY

the home of Ward Knapp. There is a story that Silas Meads wife was of Indian descent and when the railroad went through in 1849 the train had hit and killed one of their cows. Mrs. Mead was upset, went out, and greased up the tracks to stop the train near her house. As we will see later most of the present day descendants of Benjamin in Duxbury are through Russell and Juliette.



Their fourth child was Laura Ann Davis who married Russell J. Morse and is buried in Bolton VT.

George D. Davis was born Sept 23, 1829, died May 31, 1850, and is buried in Graves Cemetery.

Mary Jane Davis was born Mar 10, 1832b and died Sept 15, 1880 and is buried in Graves Cemetery. She never married.

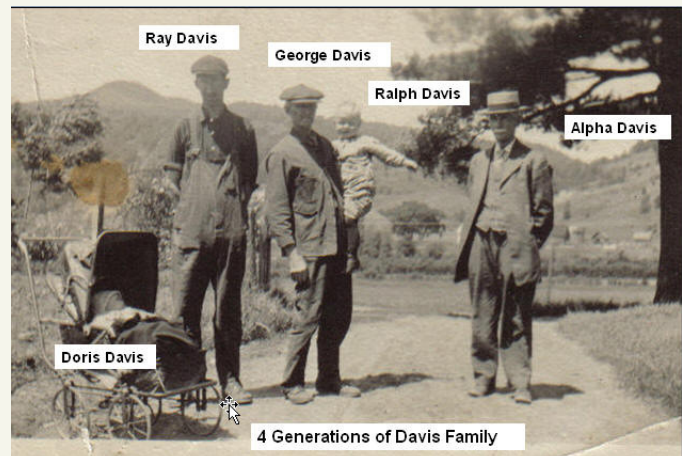
Dorcas Davis was born 1833 and no more is know about her.

Harvey Davis was born Mar 21, 1835 and died young on Sept 21, 1843 and is buried in the Graves Cemetery.

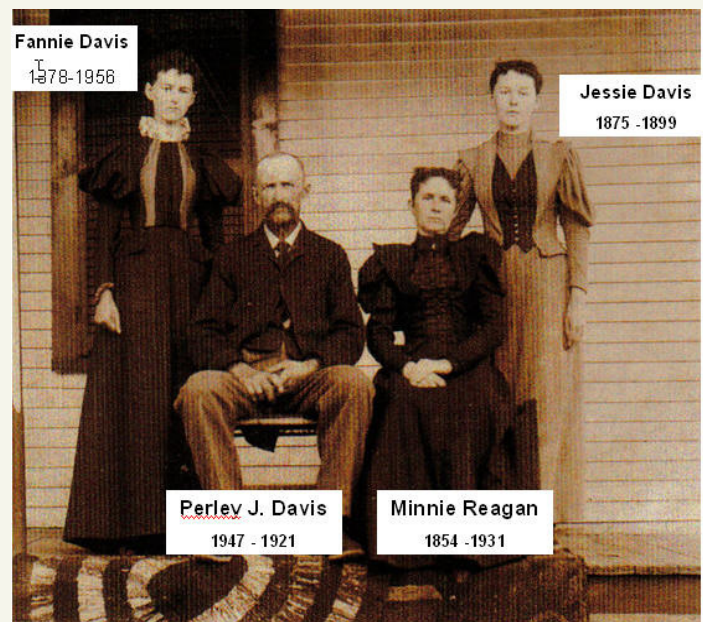
Avery J. Davis was born May 3, 1836 and moved to Wisconsin and married Celina Van Slyke in Wisconsin.

Silas B. Davis was born Apr 24, 1847 and died March 10, 1862. He married Alma Phillips on April 26, 1861 and is buried in the Graves Cemetery.

The youngest child of Andrew and Martha was Alpha W. Davis born on Jan 15, 1847. He married Mary S. Sumner on Nov 22, 1882. Both are buried in Hope cemetery. Alpha was a Waterbury business man and owned considerable property in Waterbury Village and in Town. He owned the farm where the Green Mountain Cabins were located.



Russell Davis and Juliette Mead had three sons. Perley J. Davis was born on Dec. 17, 1847 and later married Minnie Reagan in 1874. Perley Davis died on Dec 1, 1921 and his wife Minnie in 1931. They are buried in Hope cemetery Waterbury. They had two daughters, Jessie May Davis who died in Burlington on June 4, 1956 and Fannie Davis who died in 1899. There are no descendants. Perley Davis owned a farm in Waterbury on Route 2 just opposite the railroad bridge in North Duxbury. It was later owned by John Williams. As told by Irene Davis Chapman the two brothers Perley and Fred would often wade across the Winoski River or walk across the long railroad trestle to visit each other.

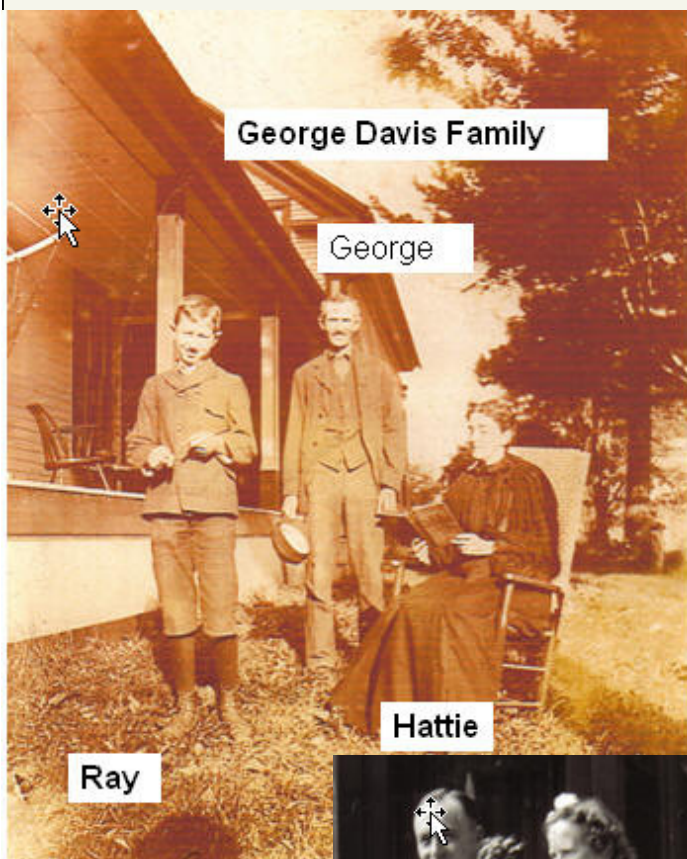


RUSSELL DAVIS FAMILY



DAVIS FAMILY

The second son was George Washington Davis born on Nov 30, 1852. George married Harriet Francis Turner on Jan 1, 1884. George purchased the well known Davis Farm adjacent to were Ralph P. Davis lives from Azro Davis who purchased it in 1851. George and Hattie had one son Ray Turner Davis born on Oct 5, 1887. Harriet Frances Turner born August 27, 1857 was the daughter of Lyman Venello Turner and Lestina H. Crossett.



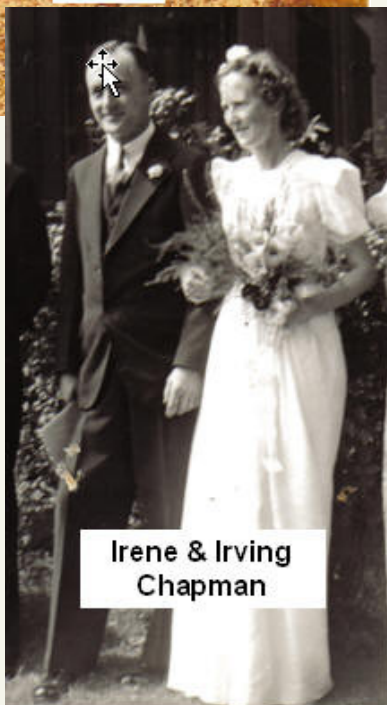
George Davis Family

George

Hattie

Ray

Fred Craig Davis was the youngest son of Russell and Juliette born on June 7, 1857. Fred married Carrie Nancy Carleton in Feb 16, 1882. Fred and Carrie had one daughter Alice May born on Dec 8 1883. Alice married Howard P. Kennedy and they had one daughter Irene Juliet born July 12 1914. Irene married Irving Chapman in 1942 and they had one son Donald who lives on the



Irene & Irving Chapman



Fred C. Davis

original homestead. Fred and Carrie Davis had a son Roy C. Davis born on March 29, 1892 who married Nancy Conley. They had a son Richard Davis.



GEORGE & HATTIE WITH SON RAY

SOME OF THE DAVIS DESCENDANTS

Guideon b. 1615 d. 1647

Philip b. 1617

Francis b. 1626 m. Gartrett Emerson in 1649

Francis 6-1-1652 m. Mary Taylor 1674

Thomas b. 1679 m. Mary Martin 12-15-1709

Amos b. 11-28-1718 d. 1803 m. Alice Currier

2nd m. Hannah Davis

Amos b. 10-26-1752

Benjamin 10-24-1754 m. Betsey Jenkins about 1773

Abigail b. 5-28-1774

Amos b. 12-17-1775 m. with two children

Betsey b. 4-18-1778

Hannah b. 4-14-1783 m. Giles Pinneo

Polly b. 5-18-1785

Elijah b. 11-6-1787 m. Deborah Phillips on 9-18-1808

Andrew Burton Carlos

Benjamin

Polly m. Nathaniel Stockwell

Lorenzo

Joseph Phillip

John Baron b. 10-2-1790 d. 7-16-1861 m. Lucinda Cobb

2nd m. Nancy Atkins

Azro - First owner of the Davis Farm on River Road

Lydia Styles b. 8-9-1792

Andrew born in Duxbury 11-23-1796 m. Martha Phillips on 5-10-1817

Almon b. 5-1-1818 d. 9-30-1892

Luther b. 9-20-1820 d. 3-26, 1893 m. Mary Sherman

2nd m. Mary Ann Wright

Russell b. 10-16-1823 m. **Juliaett** Daphne Mead on 3-17-1847

Perley J. b. 12-17-1847 d. 12-1-1921 m. **Minnie Reagan**

Jessie May d. 6-4-1956

Fannie d. 1899

George Washington b. 11-30-1852

m. on 1-1-1884 **Harriet Francis Turner** b. 8-27-1857

Ray Turner b. 10-5-1887 d. 1980

m. **Ethel Preston** d. 8-22-1927

2nd m. to **Marion Peaslee Kimball** - no children

Ralph Preston b. 11-15-1918

m. in 1945 **Helen Burbank**

Ethel

Ralph C.

Gloria Ann

Doris Maybelle b. 2-16-1921

m. Donald R. Flanders in 1941

Pearl "Skip"

Ray

Sidney

Fred Craig b. 6-7-1857 m. Carrie Nancy Carleton on 2-16-1882

Alice May b. 12-8-1883 m. Howard P. Kennedy

Irene Juliet b. 7-12-1914 m. **Irving Chapman** in 1942

Donald

Roy C. b. 3-29-1892 m. Nancy Conley

Richard

Laura Ann m. Russell J. Morse

George D. b. 9-23-1829 d. 5-31-1850

Mary Jane b. 3-10-1932 d. 9-15-1880

Dorcas b. 1833

Harvey b. 3-21-1835 d. 9-21-1843

Avery J. b. 5-3-1836 m. Celina Van Slyke

Silas B. b. 4-24-1847 d. 3-10-1862 m. Alma Phillips

Alpha W. b. 1-15-1847 m. Mary S. Sumner on 11-22-1882

Names in bold type have photos within the article. A more complete genealogy will be posted on the website.

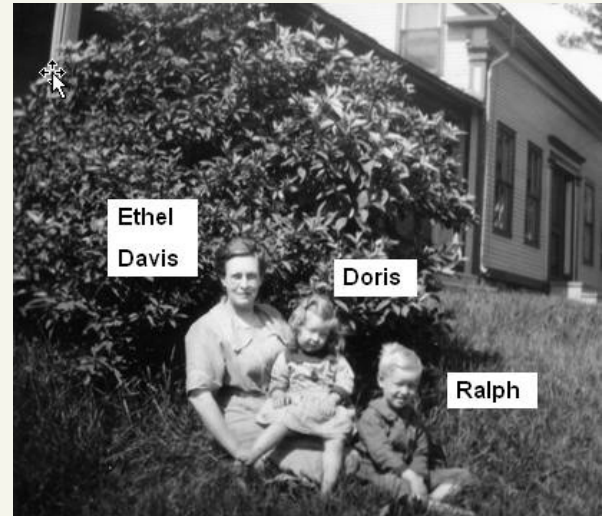
RAY TURNER DAVIS FAMILY

Ray Turner Davis married first Ethel Preston daughter of Rufus and Emiline Nelson Preston who lived on the Preston Farm near the Davis farm on the River road now the home of Debbie Spooner. Rufus and Emiline Preston both died young and an Aunt and Uncle, Melissa Preston and Martin Van Buren Hayden, sold their farm in Bolton and moved to the Preston Farm to raise the Preston Children.

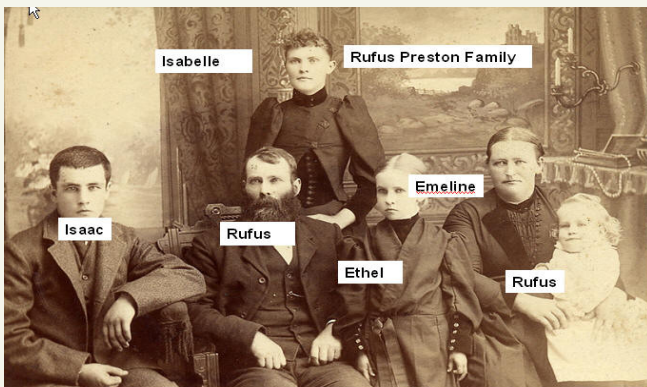
Ray and Ethel had two children Ralph Preston Davis born Nov 15, 1918 and Doris Maybelle Davis born February 16, 1921. Ethel died on August 22, 1927 and Ray later married Marion Peaslee Kimball in 1932. Marion Davis was elected the first woman representative from



**Ray T. & Ethel P. Davis
With Ralph Preston Davis**



Doris Davis married Donald R. Flanders in 1941. Donald had come from North Hyde Park and was working on the Preston Farm for Lula and Rufus Preston when he met Doris. This was the same farm where Doris and Ralph's mother Ethel Preston was born. Donald and Doris Flanders had three sons Pearl "Skip" Flanders, Ray Flanders, and Sidney Flanders.



Duxbury in 1949. Ray also served his town on the Selectboard and was elected to the legislature. In 1977 Ray was honored at town meeting for having attended 69 consecutive town meetings since he took the freeman's oath at age 21. Ray continued to attend town meeting until his death in 1980 for 72 consecutive town meetings.

Ralph married Helen Burbank of Hyde Park in 1945. Ralph and Helen had three children Ethel May, Ralph Charles and Gloria Ann.



The Graves cemetery where many of the Davis family members are buried has been in under the care of the Davis family for many years. In the 1920. Ray Davis and his brother in law Rufus Preston spent a lot of time filling in sunken graves and resetting and aligning grave stones. The Cemetery has had



Ray T. & Marion P. Kimball

only three caretakers since then, Ray and Ralph Davis mowed the



Marion, Ray, Doris and Ralph

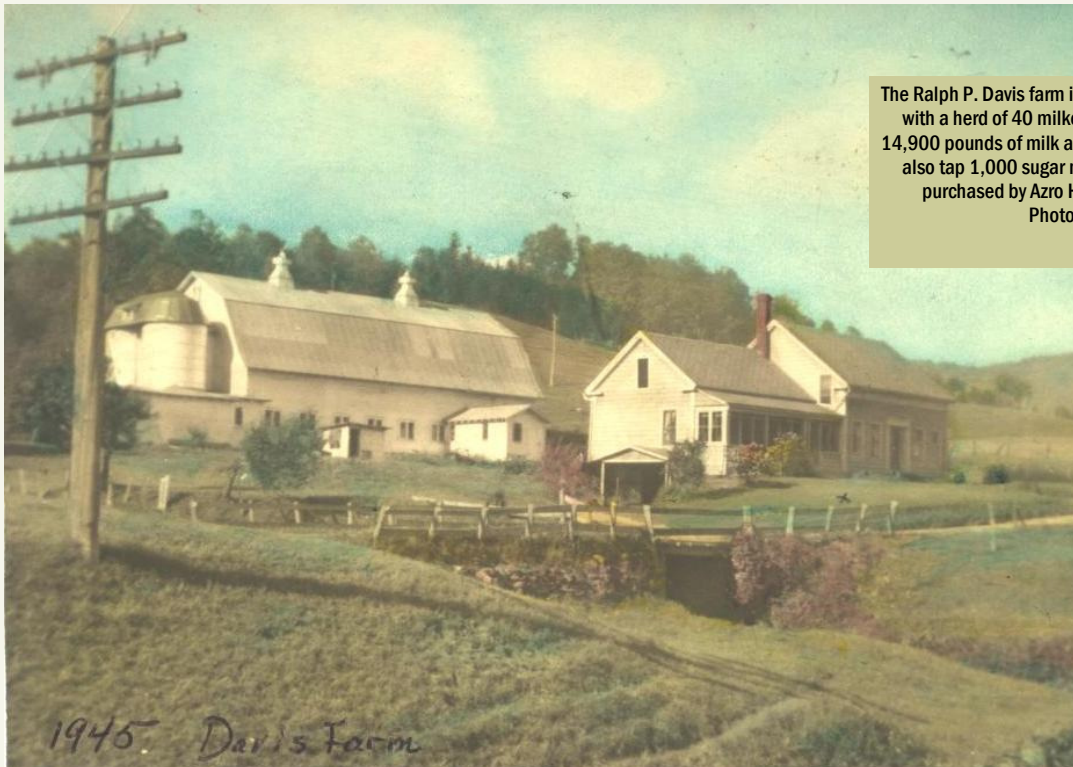
cemetery after the farming chores for many years. A Cemetery association was formed and Donald Flanders was the care taker for many years and then the responsibility passed to his son Ray Flanders, the current care taker.

RAY TURNER DAVIS FAMILY

The Davis family has a long history of service to their community. After Benjamin Davis served his town, Russell Davis served on the selectboard and in the Legislature representing Duxbury in 1904. Ray Davis served as selectman as well as represented Duxbury in the Legislature. Ralph P. Davis served the town of Duxbury on the selectboard for many years and his son Ralph C. Davis has served on the planning Commission.

MANY THANKS TO SKIP FLANDERS
FOR THIS ARTICLE

HE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK FLORENCE
TURNER, MARION DAVIS, DORIS FLANDERS, AND
RALPH DAVIS FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN THE
RESEARCH OF THIS INFORMATION.



The Ralph P. Davis farm in Duxbury consisted of 400 acres, with a herd of 40 milkers. The present herd average is 14,900 pounds of milk and 500 pounds of fat. The Davises also tap 1,000 sugar maples. The farm was originally purchased by Azro H. and Martha Davis in 1851.
Photo taken in 1945

THE FIRE

Aunt Lula Preston had her brother staying with her for a visit and the time came for him to return to his home. Don Flanders and Ralph took him to Connecticut and then went on to NYC. While they were gone a new pump was installed for the milking machines. The old pump exhaust had an exit route through the barn wall which was surrounded by tin. The new pump was moved closer to the wall and the tin was removed, so the pump came in contact with the barn wall and started a fire.

Ray was down in the field mowing and saw smoke coming from the barn. He raced to the barn and the fire department came and deposited their hoses in the Winooski to bring water up to put out the fire. Cars weren't willing to wait so they went over

the hoses and broke them and the water supply. By the time they got the water supply reestablished the fire was so hot around the motor that they could not move it away from the barn and the barn was on its way to being totally engulfed. The cows were out in the pasture at the time with the exception of one that made her escape. The cats high tailed it out of there and the chickens were thrown out the back window by a helpful neighbor, George West.

It was September and the building, milking equipment and hay were lost. Warren Roby had taken the hay from the Green Mountain Power meadows to his farm in Middlesex. They were able to draw it back before winter and have enough to feed the cattle for the winter. Plant and Griffith Lumber Yard made a kit for a barn and it was rebuilt before winter and still stands today in the same location as the barn that burned.

AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST
JANUARY 1, 1955

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**VERMONT CASH-CROP WOODLOT
LASTS LONGER THAN LIFETIME**

By WILLIAM GILMAN

The field that never needs anything but harvesting on the dairy farm of Ray and son Ralph Davis in the Town of Duxbury, Vermont, is the woodlot. It runs them a handy \$1,000 to \$1,500 income a year—pretty good pay for the work that they and a team of horses do part-time.

On 164 acres of rough land that's not at all bad, considering there's never seeding, weeding or feeding to do. (You might call culling out undesirable trees "weeding," but these "weeds" bring in cordwood income).

One of the unusual things about the Davis woodlot is that they've kept accurate books on every item, so they know exactly what they're talking about in dollars and cents. Most of the income ends up in their pockets—one pocket or the other because if it isn't "profit" it's likely to be the wages they figure for themselves or their team. Unlike many farmers, they don't forget their labor's worth something, and they charge the town rate. It adds up to their doing something profitable rather than sit around in winter these mechanized days worrying how the price of milk from their herd of 40 Holsteins has dropped.

Can anybody work up a woodlot like that, and won't it run out?

Not if you keep outside loggers from coming in and butchering it, say the Davises.

In 1942, when their County Forester, Art Heitmann, first visited them, he went over all the operation of logging and maple syrup-making, and said, "No use me marking trees for you to cut—go right on as you have. You've got a million board feet here though I've tallied nothing under six inches. If you keep on here the way you have, looks like the woodlot can be harvested forever."

Ray explains the sustained yield method is now in the third generation—it started with his own dad 80 years ago.

The Davises now take out what they've time for—around 20,000 to 25,000 board feet a year. It runs around three-quarters softwood. Best of the hardwood goes to a veneer mill. Heitmann found them doing better than the minimums he was suggesting—cut nothing under 9.6 inches diameter (breast-high) in hardwoods, under 11 inches in softwoods. The Davises are cutting at minimums around 18 inches. Their complaint is exactly the reverse of the usual cry—they're being pushed too hard keeping up with the growing timber.

In a year, they produce around 200 gallons of syrup. Bulk of their work and income comes from heavier stuff, like the logs they bring to the roadside. In a sample year, only big expense was the \$151 paid for trucking the logs to mills.



Keep Records - Same year, against the syrup that brought \$625, they charged the 14 cords of wood, at \$10 a cord, for boiling the sap. This wood, of course, was another of their products—mostly tops from logging. Against the syrup, also, they charged their \$200 for labor and \$100 for use of their team.

Same way, other logging by-products became 70 cords of firewood for their own furnaces at the two homes, at \$2 a cord, and 21 more cords of 12" firewood sold at \$5 per. Logs grossed them \$693, out of which they figured \$200 for their own labor and \$150 for the team.

As a sort of bonus, they got lumber for Ray's new house.

His woodlot philosophy is simply stated. "Why cut the small stuff, or allow it to get hurt by careless logging?

It's only when it gets up there 8 to 10 inches in diameter that it really starts putting on fast growth. And, of course, why stand for weed trees that crowd out good ones?"

The frequent practice of clear-cutting a woodlot for every saleable log in it, whether done by farmer or hired logger or contractor, leaves Davis disgusted. "All you end up with is stumps and brush. Maybe you'll even have to plant trees so's decent ones will come in again, instead of just weed trees."

It's all simple enough, in the opinion of Ray and his son, "You can spoil a woodlot in a mighty short time—or make it last longer than a lifetime."

FARM WORK IN PHOTOGRAPHS



Left - Ray T. Davis in the center with his team and workers

Below left - Ray T. on the stack of hay with workers and horses Prince and Colonel

Below Right - Ralph P. with team on the way to the sugar woods



Hattie & George Davis on their way to church and with a calf below
Grandparents of Ralph Preston Davis



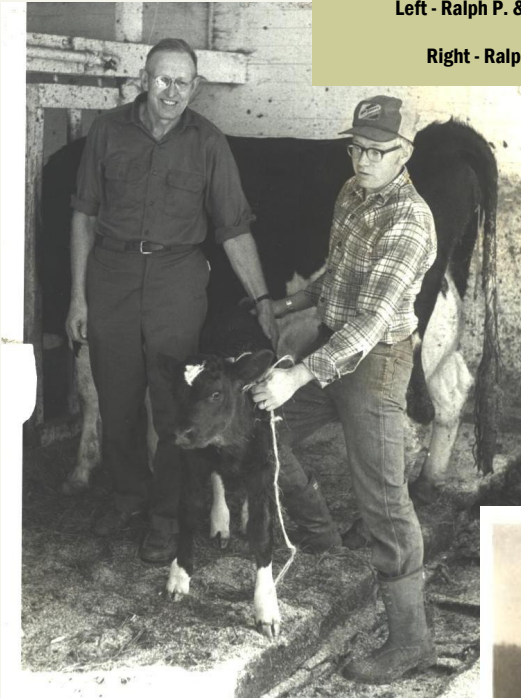
Doris and Ralph P. Davis

Doris 2 1/2 yrs Ralph near

FARM WORK IN PHOTOGRAPHS

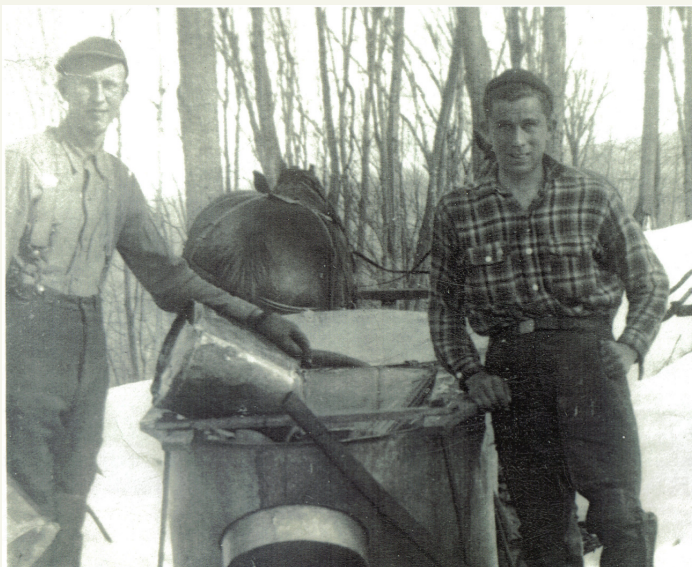
Left - Ralph P. & Ralph C. in the barn with a calf

Right - Ralph C. working in the corn field



Ray T. Davis with his team and work wagon.

Lightening hit the tree on the right which toppled and started a fire in the house. The lightening then jumped to the barn and struck Ralph P. while he was holding milking equipment



Above - Ralph P. and Charlie Kennedy gathering sap

Right - Ralph P. boiling sap



HELEN BURBANK AND RALPH P. DAVIS

Helen Burbank of Hyde Park went to Lamoille Central Academy and then on to Johnson Normal School to earn her teaching degree to pursue her dream of teaching. During the war the need for teachers was great so they sent them off on assignment before their three year study requirement was completed. The school would monitor them as they completed their training on the job and get their certification. After a little more than two years, Helen was asked to interview for a position in this area. She was so shy she only wanted to be interviewed by Rupert Spencer, her high school principal and math teacher instead of the usual interview with Dean and Dac Rowe. They had two openings, one in Middlesex and the other in North Duxbury. The north Duxbury location was far more accessible for a young woman without a car and home of her own. She found accommodations in North Duxbury with Howard and Alice Kennedy and her shoes took her where she needed to go. She worked for the school board which at that time was Lula Preston, Fred Ravlin and Marion Davis.

While she was at the North Duxbury school, children that were absent from school for more than a few days were required to be reported to the truant officer. The Santa-more children that lived up on the hump had the impossible task of trying to make it to school through four miles of snow drifts that would keep an adult at home. Although common sense would commend the wise choice of staying inside where it was warm, the report needed to be made to the truant officer, Ralph P. Davis. Ralph would head up in the car and bring them down. Helen taught there at North Duxbury and then went on to a new position in South Woodbury. Before she headed off to South Woodbury she received an engagement ring from the truant officer and returned to Duxbury after her year contract was fulfilled. When she returned to Duxbury her vocation of teaching changed from that to a farmer's wife.

His sister Doris had met Don Flanders who was working for her Aunt Lula Preston. She left the farm when they mar-

ried. After Rufus Preston had died Don stayed to help on the farm until they left when he went to Johnson to work in the talc mine. From there he went on to work on the Arms Jersey farm in Burlington, Winnisquam dairy and then was employed by the State of Vermont doing highway maintenance.



Wedding Photo June 5, 1945

Ralph was working on the farm with his father Ray. They divided the main farm house and shared it with Ralph's father Ray and stepmother Marion. Ray later built a home a short distance down the road and continued to do farm chores as long as he was able until his death.

Ralph would milk about 20 head of cattle in the morning and then come in for breakfast with Helen along with all the other hungry soles on the farm. Milk was taken into Waterbury to be sold first to Winnisquam Dairy and then to the Mt. Mansfield Dairy by the railroad that later became United Farmers. With the introduction of the bulk tank, the milk was kept on the farm in the tank and then picked up by the

Cabot Creamery. In addition to selling the milk, they sold eggs at Towne's market where the radio station now stands. The well trained horses knew the route and stops in the sugar woods which helped bring the syrup to market as well. Calves were sold to other farmers and for their own use they butchered beef and hogs. Helen canned and preserved the bounty from the gardens. Fifteen thousand board feet of lumber were sent to the mills for sale as well as cord wood for other houses in the area. Additional cord wood was worked up for use in their own two houses. There were chores from sunrise to sundown.

In addition to the work that they had on the farm they had started a family in 1946 with the arrival of Ethel. Ralph C. arrived in 1948 and was followed by Gloria in 1957. When Ethel started school Helen was approached by Irene Durkee and Rosalie Chase and was convinced she should start a kindergarten. She returned to her natural vocation and established a widely respected kindergarten which she ran

HELEN BURBANK AND RALPH P. DAVIS

for eleven years. She single handedly provided lesson plans, playground equipment and class instruction for many children. In addition to the kindergarten she taught in Barre town, Rumney and Middlesex village schools in the late 60's and early 70's. If that wasn't enough they hosted numerous fresh air children and Helen taught Sunday school at the Congregation church from 1951 to 1963.

Ralph and Helen supported the 4-H programs for their children as well as other children in the community. Helen was very active in the

Duxbury Hill and Dale Home Dem and excelled in home economics. Her skill in sewing, embroidery, bobbin lace, knitting, crochet and quilting is award winning. She was also voted Farm Wife of the Year in 1985 by the Vermont Farm Bureau. They established a Farm Bureau scholarship with Raphael and Joyce Lowe that is

awarded annually to a student studying agriculture. Ralph is one of Duxbury's most supportive citizens. He served the town as a selectman for more than 30 years as well as the tax collector and justice of the peace.

As many farmers decided to get out the business Ralph and Helen's farm increased from the original twenty head that they started with. The Frasier and Ladue farms had closed down and they acquired their cattle and used the pastures for grazing and mowing. They ended up with about 40 milkers and 15 to 20 young cows when they sold the cattle in May of 1989. They were the last operating dairy in Duxbury.

They made a success of their farm but were very familiar with the hardships of farm life. Ralph was working with his father on a maple tree on December 3rd of 1953 that had a split with a seam up the middle. They got into the seam and apparently they had not notched it enough and it

pinched the saw. They put the wedge in and when they did it popped back and caught his foot. It dragged him down the hill by his foot until it went over a sag in ground and deposited him in it. The tree had enough momentum that it kept on going and left him in the sag, but not before it tore off the bottom of his foot. He and his father had hiked to the log site and with the damage to his foot walking was not an option. The chain saws had been dragged up the hill in a box and Yankee ingenuity turned in into a sled to get Ralph out of the woods. Months of hospitalization and surgery to repair his

foot and graft skin back on, was the next stop for the sled.

They knew the hardships that farm life could bring, but nothing could prepare them for the worst hardship they would endure. The loss of their youngest daughter Gloria to a farming accident bringing in the hay.

Their daughter Ethel pursued a career in nursing and moved out of Vermont when she married her husband Dominick Monturori. Their son Ralph C. spent many hours as a young man helping on the farm in all aspects of operation. He later

went on to serve in the military and ultimately settled into a home on the family farm and took a job with the State of Vermont where he works today.

Each of them each had two children bringing four grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren to Ralph and Helen and the continuation of the Davis clan.



Ralph and Helen in 2007 displaying the Century Farm Award they received from the Vermont State Grange in 1979

WEBSITE BICENTENNIAL FAMILIES PAGE

The Davis Family generously provided numerous pieces of information and photos. Since we didn't have enough room to include them all in the newsletter, they will be the first entry for the Bicentennial Families pages of the website.

We ask that other members of Bicentennial Families take the time to look in their archives for an information that we could include in these family histories.

WWW.DUXBURYVT.COM

MEMORIES - BY RALPH P. DAVIS

Martin Van Buren Hayden and his wife Melissa Preston brought up Uncle Rufus Preston and his sister Ethel after the Preston's father and mother died. Ethel was 8 years old when her mother died and 11 years old when her father died. They lived on the Preston farm which is where Debbie Spooner lives now. Ethel Preston married Ray T. Davis and was Ralph's mother. Martin Hayden had sheep and they ran all over the neighborhood. Mr. Hayden would often get the hired help up early in the morning and then in the winter he would go back to bed behind the stove.

Mrs. Hayden did a lot of knitting; she would knit a pair of mittens before breakfast. One cold morning, about 20 below 0, she came out and asked Dad, Ray if he would like ice cream before he went to the woods.

Later after Mother, Ethel died in August 1927, Uncle Rufus Preston and his wife Lula would stop and pick up Ralph and his sister Doris to go to church and then for a picnic some where. Often they would drive to Smugglers Notch. Lula didn't want his father Ray to get married again.

Ralph described the barns at the Rufus Preston home, now where Debbie Spooner lives. The barn was below the road and was on piers with the manure underneath. The barnyard was on the end toward Bolton Falls. There was a raspberry patch by the barn. The barn was taken out in the 27 flood and a Sears Roebuck barn was ordered and rebuilt above the road in the present location. The barn came with all precut lumber. The roof rafters came too short so the pitch of the roof is steeper than it was supposed to be. They paid for the barn by having barn dances until it got too noisy and too much drinking that his wife Lula put a stop to it. Ralph told about the time Rufus tried to make an ice pond and one horse fell in the mud and the other horse on top of him. Before they could get the second horse up the first one had smothered in the mud. Aunt Lula was awful mad at them.

One of the Turners told his hired man to never unhitch the team and leave the wagon outdoors. So even at noon he always put the wagon in the shed as long as he worked.

Fred Ravelin, was a farmer, road foreman and also a mill sawyer. He lived up on Crossett Hill. One night on the way home out of Waterbury a man was thumbing a ride, so he picked him without asking where he wanted to go. When Fred turned at the feed bag, the man wants to get out. Fred said you did not say where you wanted to go.

Homer Kennedy most always sold goods and he would always plan to visit and to eat somewhere at meal time. He was town officer, tax collector 1943 to 1950, 7 years select-

man from 1957 to 1976 almost 20 years.

Back in the 1930 or so the passenger train from Boston to Montreal went off the track just across the river at North Duxbury and landed on its side on the ice. They had a lot of frozen fish in the baggage car and people went and took a lot home.

The original barn on the Davis Farm burned in 1939. Ralph and Don Flanders were in New York City at the Worlds Fair at the time. They had taken Lula Preston's Brother Lee back and then some one took them to the Worlds Fair. The barn burned when someone installed a new motor for the milking machine and the exhaust pipe was too close to the wood and caught fire. It went right up through the barn in the old dry cob webs. The new barn was also a precut Barn from Plant and Griffiths in Jonesville.

One time his Father, Ray bought a four year old colt from a neighbor up the road. He worked good but one day drawing logs out of the woods on Green Mt Power he made an extra trip. When he got loaded the horse refused to pull. He got a beech switch and used it until he started. Ray said it was a ride down the hill he won't forget but the horse never refused to lug again.

George Morse, Charlotte Barney's grand father and George Pape a blacksmith near the school house at North Duxbury were full of it. Morse used to store his traverse sled and horses at the mill across the track from the railroad station. So one summer Pape painted the sled and repaired Morse's sled so it looked like new. Morse came along one day said what a good sled it was so Pape sold it to him - his own sled.

Uncle Fred, Fred Davis, had a good guard dog and most people had hard cider in kegs down cellar. He said with his dog no one would ever get his hard cider. So some men brought some meat up at night to feed the dog while they took his keg of cider up the brook to hide. Guess they told him about it later.

As remembered by Ralph P. Davis

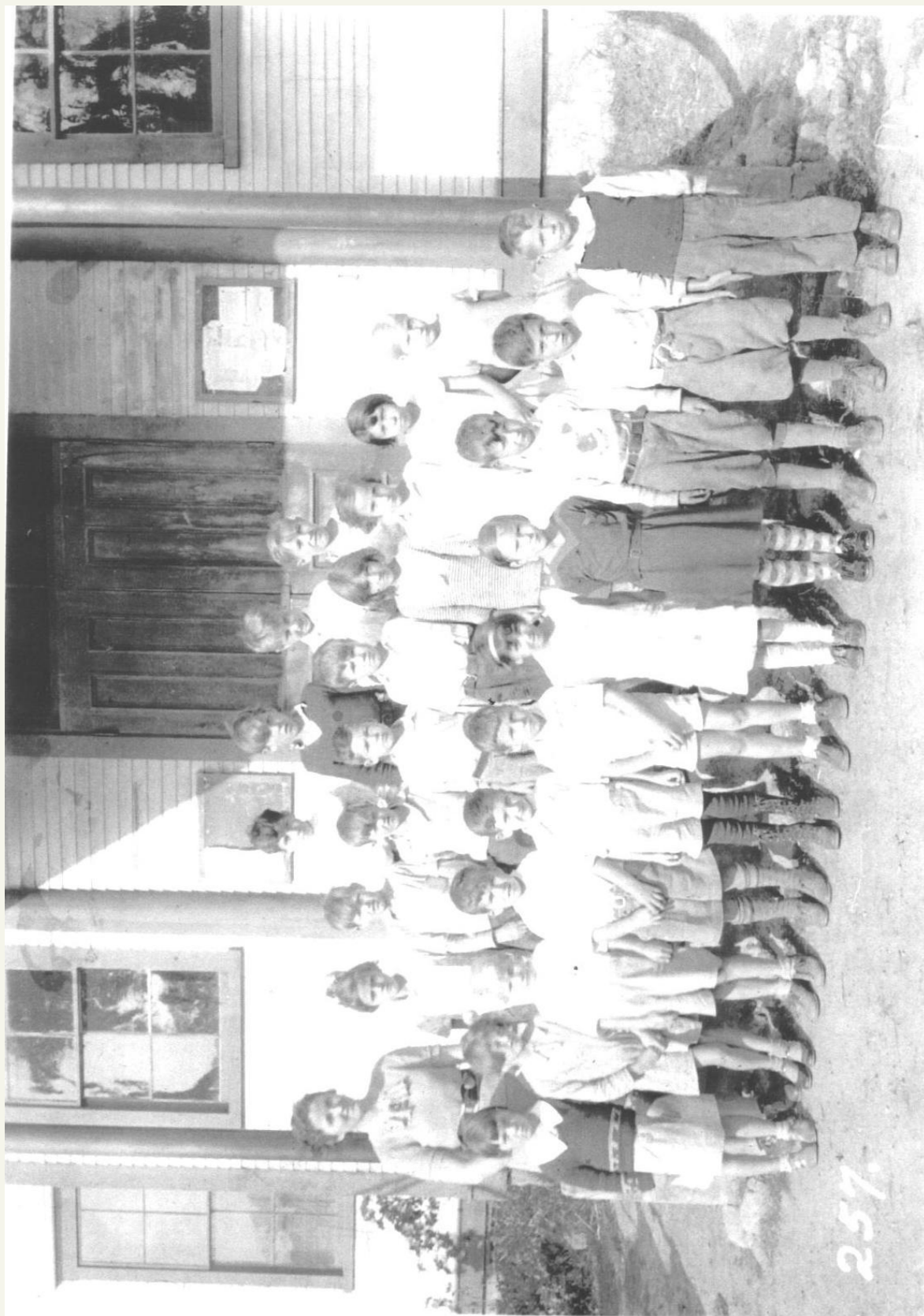
Compiled by Skip Flanders during the winter of 2001

BICENTENNIAL FAMILIES

The Davis Family along with the Morse family are among the Bicentennial Families in Duxbury. A Bicentennial family had a member living in Duxbury-Waterbury Area in the 1800 census and has maintained a member living in the area continuously for 200 years. It is has been a goal of a small group of interested genealogists to identify and recognize these families. Any one who has information on these families or who would like to assist in this project should contact Skip Flanders.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY US?

We need your help. In an effort to collect, archive and preserve some of our history we would like to put some names to the faces. Do you know who these people might be? If you know someone that might be able to identify some faces, please pass it on and being the information to a meeting or contact Maureen Harvey or Donnie Welch. Bring your information to the next meeting and we will add it to the photo.



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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

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

DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING NOVEMBER 13TH
CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL - 7 PM

D U X B U R Y H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y N E W S L E T T E R
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