

Under the Hump

SOCIETY BUSINESS

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 8
meeting at CBMS,
7 pm

- Membership dues for 2012 will be collected at the meeting. Dues are \$10/year per person

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS SOCIETY MEMBER?



Next Meeting

Following the November 8 business meeting, we will show an array of photos from the November 1927 flood and the August 2011 flood. If you have any copies of photos to share with the group, please bring them along.

Memberships expire December 31, 2011. Dues for 2012 will be collected at the meeting. Dues are \$10/year per person.

Duxbury Historical Society's Flood Relief Effort

Responding to the town select board's request, our society immediately organized a relief effort in the town select board's office and also used one bay of the garage. The garage bay was used for all donations except for the food, which was in the office. Non-perishable food was collected and presented to those in need. Bag lunches were prepared there for four days and delivered to the victims and volunteer workers. After the fourth day, lunches were prepared at Saint Leo's and delivered from there. We also assisted in preparing lunches at Saint Leo's Hall. 616 bag lunches were prepared and delivered between noon and evening lunches that involved D.H.S. During the period that D.H.S. was involved with preparing and delivering lunches from Saint Leo's, we were first associated with the Red Cross and later with the Salvation Army.

What a great effort was made by ALL that contributed in any way to make this relief effort a total success. The Duxbury Historical Society wishes to thank all of you dedicated people that helped the victims of tropical storm Irene in any way.

Duxbury Select Board Party

Our society wishes to commend those members that organized the community party for the select board held on Sunday, September 25th.

We were entertained by music from a trio consisting of Eileen and Phil Baker and Jean Bataille. A crowd of 90 to 100 enjoyed the music and the potluck dinner that followed. Lots of fun was also had by the kids playing games such as water balloons, caterpillar and tug-of-war. Lars Dickson was a hit of the day with his ROCKET! Everyone had a nice visit and the weather was perfect.

The Duxbury Historical Society extends thanks to the Izor family, the Patterson family, and Eileen, Phil and Jean for making it an enjoyable day.

—Last Issue's Trivia Answers—

City Nicknames:

Barre—Granite Center of the World

Bennington—Vermont's Most Historic Town

Burlington—Queen City of Vermont, Year Round Vacationland

Montpelier—Green Mountain City

Rutland—Marble City

Springfield—Cradle of Industry

The Only U.S. President Born on the 4th of July:

Calvin Coolidge

Source: <http://www.sec.state.vt.us/kids/funfacts.html>

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Archival/Preservation Committee Report

Committee members: Eulie Costello, Lori Morse, Debbie Sweetser, Bonnie Morse, Mark Morse

Since the last newsletter we met on October 8 where we accepted and logged the following donations:

- newspaper clippings on the 1950 Pauline Molony murder—donated by Linda Durkee
- two CDs of pictures titled "Wilder/Cota" and "Wilder/Koonz"—donated by Julie Wilder
- graduation gown of Irene Harvey—donated by Linda Durkee
- Hiram Ward's 1874 diary—donated by Kitty Werner

We provided 3 hours of research support for information regarding the Hiram Ward family. We provided 5 hours of research support for information regarding Professor Monroe and the Callahan family.

We also have reviewed computer hardware and software which will meet our needs not only for the archival committee but also the newsletter committee, treasurer, program committee and webmaster/website. We have received approval to make the computer purchase by the trustees and hope to have everything in place before the February meeting.

Monetary Donations

Dick Lindsley—Research Support * Julie & Daphne Cates—Research Support
Theresa & Gordon Wood—Newsletter Support

250th Celebration Committee Report

Committee members: Stephanie Koonz (chairperson), Ken Scott, Mary Ethel Welch, Kelly Welch, Ed Gormel, Willie Docto, Myra Perry, Justin Blackman, Sam and Megan Perry (adjunct)

The first meeting of the 250th celebration committee was held on September 14. Secretary and treasurer were elected and it was decided our purpose would be "to re-enact and celebrate, by a variety of programs and events, the history of Duxbury, Vermont." A brainstorming session proceeded with great ideas of how to fundraise for some of our celebrations and what those events might be.

We are all truly excited about the suggestions and will meet again in October.

Please stay posted for future details. You can find future information on the town website and upcoming Waterbury Record editions.

Annual Picnic

Our annual potluck picnic was held on Sunday, August 14 in the Sunshine Hall next to the South Duxbury church. Lunch began at noon and many people ate outside on the lawn since the weather was so beautiful. Lunch was followed by a short business meeting. We discussed Duxbury's semiquincentennial birthday and how we can celebrate. Committees were formed to start making plans. The door prizes were won by Megan Perry and Dorothy Griffith.



Megan Perry & Dorothy Griffith with their door prizes.

Myra Perry photos.

FLOOD RELIEF EFFORT

We filled the Duxbury select board's office and one bay of the town garage with donated food, clothing, bedding, kitchen supplies, back to school items, toys, and more. We also received a generous shipment of donated goods from our "sister town," Duxbury, Massachusetts. Thank you to everyone who donated and volunteered for the effort.



DUXBURY SELECT BOARD PARTY

The community party was held on Sunday, September 25th with approximately 90-100 friends and neighbors attending. We had a potluck dinner and barbecue, musical entertainment, and games.

A special thank you to the Izor family, the Patterson family, Eileen & Phil Baker, and Jean Bataille for making the day enjoyable for all.



Phil Baker, Eileen Baker, and Jean Bataille provided musical entertainment.



Mark Morse was "king of the grill."

DUXBURY SELECT BOARD PARTY



Everyone enjoyed the games including the caterpillar competition, tug-of-war, and water balloon toss.



DUXBURY IN THE CIVIL WAR

Correction: In the August issue of 'Under the Hump,' in the article regarding Duxbury in the Civil War, there is a mistake in naming the wife of Charles Franklin. His wife's maiden name was Boyden not Saxton as printed. I apologize for the error. Mark Morse

Chapter IV

The Close of 1861

By Mark H. Morse

As we enter the fall of 1861 the enlistments for the area begin to wane. Although the war is escalating and the Union is winning few battles, no additional requests for troops are received from Washington. Volunteers around the north continue to sign up in an effort to fill the regiments being formed. Knowing now that the war will not be settled quickly as hoped, Lincoln's objective is to out man the Confederate army, aware that he can field a large numerical advantage of soldiers.

The last men to sign up from Duxbury in 1861 include two more Shonio brothers, twins George and Luther, Julius McMurphy, and Luke Monroe Lewis.

George Shonio enlisted October 9, 1861 and was assigned to Company 'G' of the 6th Vermont Infantry at the rank of private. He was a live-in farm laborer for George & Clarissa Turner in Dowsville who were neighbors of his when he was growing up. His unit was not involved in any battles in 1861, instead wintering at Camp Griffin, VA. The unit's first action was April 6, 1862 at Warwick Creek, VA during the peninsula campaign. On June 29, 1862 George was wounded and taken prisoner in the battle of Savage's station where the 6th suffered heavy losses. He was paroled on August 3, 1862 and returned to service. The 6th participated in the Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Funkstown, and Mine Run campaigns during 1863. On September 1, 1863 George was transferred to the Veterans Reserve Corps and mustered out of service on October 17, 1863. He soon reenlisted on May 19, 1864 and participated in General Grant's overland campaign. He served until the end of the war mustering out on July 8, 1865. By 1880 George was married to Mary Frizzel and was living in Kentland, Indiana working as a harness maker. He later moved to Frederick, South Dakota where he died on July 16, 1914.

Luther Shonio enlisted soon after George on November 21, 1861. He was assigned to the 1st Vermont Volunteer Light Artillery Battery as a musician. This Battery was initially attached to the 8th Vermont Infantry. In the spring of 1862 the Battery was detached from the 8th Infantry and was dispatched to serve garrison duty in the southern Mississippi river valley. While the battery was stationed at Baton Rouge, Luther unfortunately succumbed to disease (possibly malaria) on September 3, 1863. He is buried in the Baton Rouge National Cemetery, LA.

Julius McMurphy and his mother Hannah (Hobbs) McMurphy lived near the bottom of Ward Hill. Julius enlisted at age 23 on December 10, 1861. A private in Company 'E', 8th Vermont Volunteer Infantry, he was taken prisoner dur-

ing the battle of Bayou des Allemands, Louisiana and imprisoned until his parole on November 13, 1862. He was later wounded at the battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana on June 14, 1863 and died due to complications from his wounds on November 16, 1863.

Luke Monroe Lewis was born in Bolton, VT on July 16, 1840, the son of Hiram and Betsy (Stockwell) Lewis. The family later moved to Scrabble Hill in Duxbury. Luke was anxious to join the Union Army once the first request for troops was made by President Lincoln, however, his parents would not hear of it. So upon his 21st birthday Luke headed out on foot to Montpelier with musket in hand to enlist, much to the dismay of his parents. Upon arriving in Montpelier, Luke was advised that he would not be mustered into service until they had enough new enlistees to fill a train. It wasn't until October 30, 1861 that Luke was officially enlisted. Luke had requested to be assigned to a Sharpshooters regiment. He was sent to Randolph to see if he could qualify. Once there he was asked to shoot at a 'dot' on a tree several yards away. Using his own personal musket he was successful in hitting the dot and was therefore mustered into Company 'E' of the United States Sharp Shooters regiment at the rank of Private. His initial assignment was to defend Washington, DC against potential enemy assaults. These units wintered here until the spring campaign of 1862. Soon after his first assignment, the Union Army purchased Sharps rifles to improve the sharpshooter regiments' effectiveness. This weapon was a great improvement over the single shot muzzle loading musket which was heavy and long and could be fired only 3 times within a minute by the best marksmen while under enemy fire. In con-



Luke Monroe Lewis

Photos on both pages courtesy of Lynn Lewis, Jr.

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

trast, the Sharps rifle, while still a single shot, was much shorter and lighter and was breech loaded with cartridge ammunition. Thus, it could be fired several times a minute, giving the user a great advantage over the enemy who was using a musket. Luke's Sharps rifle is still revered today by his great-grandsons Lynn & Paul Lewis who are fortunate enough to have possession of that same rifle nearly 150 years after Luke mustered out of service in November 1864, having served honorably for three years.

Luke participated in several battles including two at Falmouth, 2nd Bull Run, South Mountain, Front Royal, Antietam, Petersburg, Cold Harbor, and several other lesser known engagements. For his efforts he met with some unpleasant circumstances having been wounded twice. He was first wounded in the head by a rifle shot at the battle of Front Royal in May 1862 but he refused to be taken to the hospital because he felt they were death traps and he would not survive the confinement. He was again injured by artillery fire at the battle of Antietam in September 1862. He had no choice but to be hospitalized from the 'grapeshot' injuries he received in his right arm and side. He was sent to recover at a hospital in Philadelphia, PA. After several weeks in the hospital he was released and returned to duty carrying with him some grapeshot that was never removed from his torso.

Luke considered his assistance with capturing five Con-



Luke Monroe Lewis

federate soldiers as one of the most notable events of his enlistment. En-route to Petersburg, Luke and Private Stockwell (Luke's cousin) were relieved of duty and given permission to go for water for the unit. They made their way through a deep ravine to a stream and filled canteens. Upon their return they were surprised to come upon 5 Confederates (2 officers, 3 privates) approaching them. Luke, whose official enlistment was up in 4 days, told Stockwell that there was no way he was going to get captured now and end up in Libby prison, so he told the Confederates to "Step forward and throw down their weapons." The head officer, believing they had come upon a full unit of Union troops, agreed to surrender. Luke and

Stockwell proceeded to march the prisoners on to their unit's encampment. Once turning over the Confederates to the commanding officer he replied, "It's not often that two men can capture five." upon which the Confederate officer stated, "If we had known there was only two we wouldn't have given up our weapons." Luke responded, "If we'd had ammo we wouldn't have asked you to!" and they broke open their Sharps revealing empty chambers.

Luke mustered out on November 9, 1864 and returned to his farm in Duxbury. In 1865 he married Clara Fargo of Huntington. They had four children, two of which died in infancy. Luke died on March 8, 1910 from heart disease and is buried in Maplewood cemetery in Huntington, VT.

As 1861 came to a close the war was not going well for the Union forces. Virtually every major battle that had taken place was either a draw or an outright victory for the Confederate Army. Neither side had expected the conflict to last this long but it was now clear to each that this was going to be an extended conflict with huge sacrifices in human life for both sides.

Sources: Duxbury Historical Society – Family Archives; US Census; Vermontcivilwar.org; Lynn Lewis, Jr.



Luke Monroe Lewis and his wife Clara (Fargo) Lewis. It is believed that this photo was taken around 1905. The house is currently known as the Chapman house.

D U X B U R Y T O W N C L E R K S

Duxbury Town Clerks 1770-Present

1770-1792: Samuel Averill	1856-1872: Isaiah Huntley
1792-1793: Walter Avery	1872-1916: E.W. Huntley
1793-1799: Daniel Kennan	1916-1926: Mertie Huntley Palmer
1800-1802: Joseph Nash	1926-1936: Inda M.J. Donovan
1802-1811: Jesse Arms	1936-1937: Evalina K. Breen
1811-1812: Ebenezer Corse	1937-1941: Sadie K. Morse
1812-1814: Joseph Nash	1941-1948: Lester S. Hills
1814-1815: James Smalley	1948-1970: Stella Merchant
1815-1818: Jesse Arms	1970-1986: Barbara A. Morse
1818-1819: Pliny Nash	1986-1994: Leta M. Berno
1819-1821: Calvin Huntley	1994-2000: Bonnie D. Morse
1821-1846: Ira Arms	2000-present: J. Kenneth Scott
1846-1856: Nathan Huntley	

On May 10, 1770 the proprietors of the Duxbury Land Grants chose Samuel Averill of Kent, Massachusetts to be their township clerk. The first settlement in Duxbury was made by Walter Avery and Stephen Tilden around 1786. The first town meeting was held at the home of Walter Avery on March 26, 1792. Walter Avery was chosen to be the town clerk and held that position for one year.

The superintendent's report first appeared in the town report of 1901.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

I have made twenty visits in the several schools, and, with a few exceptions, found them doing very good work. Nearly all our teachers were very earnest workers, ready to profit by any suggestions offered them, and trying to do their best for the welfare of the pupils.

I found the greatest improvement in the schools where the teachers were retained throughout the year. It is not always easy to obtain teachers who will remain a year, or more, if they are successful enough so we care to keep them, but this should be done in all cases where it is possible. Few people realize how difficult it is to get first-class teachers in our district schools, especially the back districts. We have very few teachers who are residents of our town, and when we have to go to other places for them we must offer some inducement or we won't get the best of teachers.

The school in district number six has been conveyed to number three this winter, at a less expense than would be required to have a school there. If this could be done in some of the other districts, the result would be better.

SUPPLIES.

Our schools are fairly well furnished with supplies, a few books, blackboards, etc., having been added this year. If we get a little each year, and discretion be used in selecting, we shall soon have our schools well supplied at not a very great expense.

The school buildings should also be kept in good repair by doing what is necessary each year, and it will be for the interest of the town in the end.

SCHOOL BOARD.

In order to make our schools a success we must have a more uniform system of teaching. It is not sufficient for you to know that a teacher holds a certificate, but you should qualify yourselves to such an extent that when you talk with a teacher before engaging her you will be able to find out her methods, and, if they are not what you want in your schools, then don't put them there.

Schools are not taught by the methods of ten or twenty years ago, and a teacher who will not take the trouble to work up to the present time will not take the trouble of doing much work in school. So engage your teachers before the best are taken by other towns. Get the very best you can, and when you get a good one, keep her, if not in one school in some other, and in this way you will find your schools going on without much trouble to you.

PARENTS.

Your co-operation is needed to make our schools what they should be. First of all, send your children to school regularly. The attendance is not all that it should be, and the blame lies principally with you. Do not expect that your children can accomplish much in school if they remain at home two or three days in a week. The school is costing you as much as though they were getting the benefit of it, and you would feel better satisfied with the money spent in schools if you knew some of it came back to your children.

Supposing you do not strictly approve of a teacher, it does no good to say so after she has been placed in a school. She is there to teach, and it is your duty to aid and support her in every way, and get all you can out of the school, and then, if you have any reason to complain, go to the school authority and do so; if your complaint is reasonable, they will listen to you and you will gain more than you will by complaining to your neighbors and before your children.

I will also remind you of the fact that you have to pay for the books and paper used in school, and it will be for your interest to instruct your children how they should be used. This is practically the teachers' duty, and I hope they will not neglect it in the future as some of them have in the past. If the rules in regard to use of books were more strictly enforced, there would be less destruction of them.

I regret that the laws in regard to truancy are not carried out more faithfully.

There are several children in town who remain away from school day after day for the simplest reasons, and, nothing being done about it, they will continue to do so.

I sincerely hope that we may have a truant officer this coming year, and one that will not fail to do his duty in every case, and our schools will surely be greatly improved by his efforts.

I submit this report to the citizens of Duxbury, and hope that our schools may receive some little good from my suggestions.

ALICE V. HEALEY.

DUXBURY TOWN CLERKS

Early town reports were primarily a listing of the expenditures from the treasury. The title of town clerk did not appear until the 1904 report.

Town Officers Ending March 1904.

Moderator,	B. R. Demeritt
Town Clerk and Treasurer,	E. W. Huntley
Selectmen,	{ S. M. Turner J. E. Crossett T. H. Hoy }
Overseer,	O. C. Turner
Constable and Collector,	B. F. Turner
Listers,	{ E. James Morse Richard Lyman E. G. Miller }
Auditors,	{ S. S. Foster A. J. Durkee L. A. Morse }
Trustee,	E. W. Huntley
Fence viewers,	{ G. S. Carlton Geo. Farnsworth O. C. Turner }
Town Grand Juror,	B. R. Demeritt
Inspector of Leather,	Daniel Morse
Inspector of Wood, Etc.,	Buel Morse
School Directors,	{ A. H. Graves, 2 years L. K. Murray, 1 year E. F. Palmer Jr. }
Road Commissioner,	A. J. Patterson
Agent to Prosecute and Defend Suits,	B. R. Demeritt

At right: The health reports started in the 1920s and changed quite a bit within that decade. This early report conveyed the diseases that were present in the town. They quickly morphed into the vital statistics list. They started with a list of the children born that year and added the marriages and deaths a few years later.

REPORT OF DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICER

There were no unusual health conditions in town during the year. Twenty-one cases of communicable diseases were reported to this office.

Two of the schools were closed at the time of my visit. The examination of these children will be taken up later.

Parents of some of the defective children have already had their defects corrected, and others will be operated on next summer.

A spirit of co-operation in all health matters has been cheerfully extended me. The town officials have been most loyal at all times.

Communicable Diseases Reported

Whooping Cough	6
Measles	6
Mumps	0
Chicken Pox	2
German Measles	0
Scarlet Fever	5
Diphtheria	0
Pollomyelitis	0
Influenza	1
Typhoid Fever	1
Pneumonia	0
Total	21

Medical Inspection of Schools

No. of schools inspected	4
" " pupils examined	46
" " " defectives	16
Health Talks in school	4

Births and Deaths

No. of births reported during the year 1920.	
Male	3
Female	10
No. of deaths reported during the year 1920.	
Male	4
Female	3
Sanitary Inspections	4
Houses quarantined	14
Visits to quarantined families	0
Nuisances investigated	4

Respectfully submitted,

CLARENCE H. BURR, M. D.,
District Health Officer.

The town report carried a swastika on the cover for the years of 1927- 1931.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFICERS

Of The

TOWN OF DUXBURY, VERMONT



For the Year Ending

February 1, 1927

THE RECORD PRESS
Waterbury, Vt.
1926

DUXBURY TOWN CLERKS

Photo from the Duxbury Historical Society archives.



Eber W. Huntley with his grandchildren,
Annie Dorothy Palmer and Eber Huntley Palmer.

Eber W. Huntley was Duxbury's town clerk from 1872-1916.

He was born in Duxbury to Gilbert and Mary (Nash) Huntley on November 11, 1839. He lived all his life in Duxbury. In 1863, he married Menta Crossett and they had one child, Mertie Eurette. He was Duxbury's representative in legislature in 1882 and was also county senator in 1908.

Eber had many trades but his favorite was a 45-year career as the Duxbury town clerk. Mertie succeeded him after his death in 1916.

The Washington County Gazetteer for 1783-1889 had the following biography about Mr. Huntley:

Eber W. Huntley's saw-mill is located on the site of the first mill built in the town. About sixty-five or seventy years ago W. E. Corse built the first mill on this site. It had an upright saw, run by the old style undershot water-wheel. This property remained in the hands of Mr. Corse until October 27, 1867, when it became the property of D. E. Farrand, who placed in it one of Lane's circular mills and an improved water-wheel. Mr. Farrand sold it to George B. Wrisley in 1871, and Mr. Wrisley conveyed it to Samuel S. Foster in 1872. In the fall of 1886 the mill was consumed by fire, and Mr. Foster sold the site and grounds to Mr. Huntley, who built the present mill on the old site. Mr. Huntley is doing a good business in dressed lumber, chair stock, and hard wood flooring. He employs seven or eight men, and his output is about 500,000 feet per year.

The following is an excerpt from Mr. Huntley's obituary, 1916.

Judge Eber W. Huntley
Town Clerk and Treasurer of Duxbury for 45 Years
Death Follows Long Illness

Thursday afternoon the people of the town and vicinity paid tribute to their friend and neighbor, Judge Eber W. Huntley in one of the largest attended funerals held for years in this community. At one-thirty a service was held at his late home for the relatives and other who came. During this service, about 60 members of the Masonic fraternity and numbers of the Odd Fellows were in waiting to act as an escort to the Town Hall, where at half past two public services were held in the hall in the building of which he had put so much of himself and in the room where last March he had received his 45th election as town clerk and treasurer of his native town. At both of these services the Rev. William L. Boicourt pastor of the Congregational Church at Waterbury, which the deceased attended, officiated assisted by the Rev. George E. Ladd of Woodstock, who was pastor of the local church at the time of the death of Mrs. Huntley. At both these services these pastors paid honor to the worth of Mr. Huntley in his home as well as a public citizen.

Eber Willard Huntley was born in Duxbury, November 11, 1839, the son of Gilbert and Mary Nash Huntley and had always lived in and been devoted to his native town. He was educated in the public schools and at the People's Academy in Morrisville. For a time he taught school and later engaged in farming, working also at his trade as carpenter. In 1869 he bought the place where he has since resided and died last Tuesday morning at a quarter of one. In 1886 he bought of S.S. Foster the mill near his home and engaged in this business until ten years ago he sold to the Demeritt & Palmer Packing company, now the Demeritt Co. Mr. Huntley served his home town in almost every official capacity. He had been Justice of the Peace for many years and was Health Officer at the time of his death. In 1881 he represented his home town in legislature, and in 1908 the county senate. In both of these houses he

was a valued member. He also served four years as assistant judge of Washington County. What he considered the greatest honor however that ever came to him was his continuous election as town clerk and treasurer of Duxbury. For the past few years he has served on many important county committees. He was a member of the Camel's Hump Club, the Twenty-Five Club of Dillingham Grange of Emerald Rebekah Lodge, No. 33 of Mentor Lodge I.O.O. F., No. 51 of Winooski Lodge No. 49, F. and A.M., of Waterbury Chapter No. 24, R.A.M., and Mt. Zion Commandery No. 9 K.T.

Mr. Huntley married in 1863 Menta F. Crossett, daughter of Judge Janus Crossett of Duxbury. Mrs. Huntley died 17 years ago. During these later years, his only child, Mertie Eurette, wife of Edwin F. Palmer, and family have lived with him and to them his life has been much devoted. To his grandchildren, Annie Dorothy Palmer and Eber Huntley Palmer, he gave deeply of his interest and help, which was reciprocated by a great depth of affection.

The deceased is also survived by one sister, Mrs. Delana Stevens of Essex Junction, who is critically ill; and one brother A.C. Huntley of Bolton.

Although having for years arteriosclerosis, Judge Huntley had a determination to overcome all obstacles and by his constant activity kept from people his true condition. Only in the home was the seriousness of his trouble known. Nine weeks ago he was obliged to take his bed, with acute nephritis, complicated with a bad heart. Since that time a registered nurse has been in constant attendance and at the last two were on the case. Until two weeks before his decease hopes were entertained that he might yet be able to be about the house again. Then complications arose which made even a partial recovery hopeless. His mind was clear almost to the last and he instructed those nearest him with his usual business acumen.

Not only the members of the family but of the town, community and county are mourning the going of one who has always had the determination to do the right thing at all times and under all circumstances.

DUXBURY TOWN CLERKS

Lester S. Hills served as town clerk from 1941-1948.

Lester was born in Fayston on April 26, 1876 and settled in Duxbury in 1888. On December 24, 1898, he married Lilla M. Sherman. They had three children: Sydney, Stella, and Everett. Stella later followed in his footsteps and became town clerk in 1948. Lester operated a dairy farm, was overseer of the poor, a lister, town treasurer, and Duxbury's representative in legislature in 1923.



Lester Hills



Everett, Lilla (Sherman), Lester (seated), Sydney, Stella



Lester using the town snow plow on Duxbury Hill in the 1930s. Person with him is unknown.

Photos courtesy of the Roger Merchant Family.

DUXBURY TOWN CLERKS



Stella Merchant in front of her home and town office.

Stella Merchant was town clerk from 1948-1970. One of her sons, Roger Merchant, writes:

Our mother took the position very, very seriously. She really enjoyed that she could help the townspeople and welcomed them any time of the day. She equally greeted the out-of-towners who might need information from the records. We were amazed many times to see her handle an attorney in a three piece suit alongside a local farmer fresh from doing barn chores. There was usually laughter from that room.

About the only thing that is uppermost in our memories was deer season. The evening before and the morning of the season opening, the driveway would be full of cars, mostly with out of state plates and the living room would be standing room only with hunters purchasing their hunting license. Most were pleasant and polite but there was always a few that were celebrating the start of their "vacation." Overall it usually turned out to be a friendly and happy time as many of the hunters came each year and became well known to us—old home days.

I do remember the time—I think it was the spring of 1941—I came down with scarlet fever. At that time it was a serious illness and the house was put under quarantine. I think it was for 30 days and no one could pass the quarantine sign they put on the front door. Gramp Hills was town clerk at this time and he used his Yankee common sense, closed off the office from the rest of the house, opened the window to the back porch and placed a sign on the lawn to give the direction to the rear of the house for town business. He also placed a small table and chairs by the window. He was open for business. Much like a toll booth operator today. Don't remember how many townspeople might have climbed through that window.



Photos courtesy of the Roger Merchant Family.

This photo was taken in the 1930s before the Merchants lived there. The town clerk's office was located in part of the house for about 80 years.

DUXBURY TOWN CLERKS



Barbara Morse in front of the town clerk's office, located in a barn on her property from 1970-1977.



Barbara Morse in the town clerk's office.
Photo taken in early 1971.

Photos from the Alice DeLong archives.

Barbara A. Morse was town clerk from 1970-1986. The following was written by one of her sons, Willis Morse.

In December 1970 Barbara A. Morse was appointed town clerk and treasurer to replace Stella Merchant who resigned to care for her husband, Gurden, who was in poor health. The town clerk and treasurer records and equipment was moved from Stella's house to a barn on Barbara's property. Barbara was elected town clerk at the town meeting in 1971 and was reelected 14 more times until her retirement in March of 1986 serving a total of 15 years and approximately 3 months. From December 1970 until March 1979, a period of 8 years and 3 months, Barbara also served as town treasurer which was common in Duxbury and other small towns at that time.

When Barbara first became town clerk and treasurer they were essentially part-time jobs. This equipment included file cabinets, a small safe used for holding money and important financial records, and a large safe used primarily for holding land records. The space was small but generally adequate at that time. All deeds and records to be recorded were typed by hand and had to be proofread usually with another family member. The salary for town clerk and treasurer was \$600 per year plus recording fees, 50¢ for each fishing or hunting license sold (approximately 100), and 1% of taxes collected by the treasurer. The total amount rarely exceeded \$3,000. Hunting and fishing licenses were often sold on weekends and nights, particularly the night before the regular deer season.

In just a few years the amount of work in the 2 jobs increased substantially. The passage of subdivision laws and Act 250 plus subdivisions and many more land sales in Duxbury significantly increased the number of documents to be recorded including deeds, mortgages, mortgage assignments, and subdivision permits and related documents. In

1977 a new town office building was built adjacent to the town garage on former State land. This structure was partially funded by "Revenue Sharing." Fred Collins and students in his industrial arts class assisted in its construction. Barbara loved the new office which had much more space, a vault for record storage, a bathroom, and central heating and she could walk to work. In 1979, with the increased workload, she no longer wanted to be treasurer. The town clerk's salary was changed to \$3000 but with no fees. In late 1981 or early 1982 a copying machine was purchased which saved a lot of recording time and eliminated the need for proofreading.

During her several years as town clerk and treasurer Barbara saw some major changes in the job. It changed from a part-time job on private property to a full-time job in a public office. She had to attend very few selectmen/select board meetings when she started but attended many of them before retiring. She retired knowing she would miss the people but felt it was time to move on.



Barbara Morse later in life, with her sister Mary Reagan, and friend Bernice McDonald.

D U X B U R Y T O W N C L E R K S

Leta M. Berno was elected town clerk at the town meeting in March 1986 and served until March, 1994. She also served as town treasurer from March, 1991 until March, 1994.

Bonnie D. Morse was town clerk from 1994-2000. She writes:

I started the town clerk and treasurer's job during Town Meeting of 1994. I was fortunate to have my mother-in-law, Barbara Morse, just down the road from the office. She taught me how to do land record recordings and filings. When the State of Vermont learned I was holding both positions, they sent someone to show me how to record vital records and complete marriage licenses.

During my years on the job, the selectmen bought a computer, printer, and the NEMRC computer system. I learned how to use the NEMRC software which computerized the accounting system. We were then able to print dog licenses, W-2s, check lists, budget sheets, payroll checks, and accounts payable. The town purchased the gravel pit, signed the land for the Crossett Brook Middle School, and built the Crossett Hill Bridge. There was also a time when FEMA came to town due to road washouts on Ward Hill and Camel's Hump.

I found the job very interesting in many ways. You are the first person people meet whether they are visiting or starting a home here. The office was always busy with people doing genealogy, record searches, or mapping, and you get to personally know lawyers and real estate agents.

I resigned in November of 2000 and started working for the State of Vermont. The thing I miss the most about being town clerk is visiting with my Duxbury neighbors. I enjoyed learning about their families, hearing their stories, and sharing a laugh.



Photo courtesy of Bonnie Morse.

Before the NEMRC computer system was purchased, auditing was completed by hand and with an adding machine. This is a photo of Dorothy Merchant, Barbara Morse, and Anna Grow auditing in the 1990s.

J. Kenneth Scott has been town clerk since 2000. He is Duxbury's 25th town clerk and celebrated his 60th birthday on September 16.

Born in rural Tennessee on a sheep farm in Murfreesboro, Ken did his graduate work at the Cincinnati Conservatory and received his Master's degree in Pipe Organ performance. This degree has served him well, using his talent as organist at local churches and playing at many weddings and other ceremonies.

Ken worked from 1978-1997 at Boston University in the Development Alumni Department. His focus there was on fundraising for the Huntington Theater Company. After having spent vacations in Vermont, skiing in Stowe, and traveling Route 2 through Montpelier to Burlington, he saw an ad for land for sale in Duxbury. He purchased the land he owns on Westcott Road in 1994.

In 1997 he built his home and moved permanently to Duxbury. While working at the Northfield Savings bank he became a member of the Duxbury select board in 1998 and started as part-time in the town clerk's office in July 2000 and took over the position from Bonnie Morse in November of 2000.

Ken notes that when he started in the office in 2000 he and Bonnie were working in Record Book 73. Now, 11 years later, he is soon to be finished with Book 115, noting the growth and activity in the town of Duxbury.

—Kelly Welch

P O T P O U R R I

German Holiday Customs Related To Duxbury Club

DUXBURY — The Hill 'N' Dale Home Demonstration Club met Dec. 15 at the home of their new member, Mrs. Mariann Parker, for an afternoon meeting. President, Mrs. Dorothy Catchapaw presided over the ten members.

Mrs. Ella Vaughn gave the council report and the club volunteered to send seven pies to the Farm Show in Barre in January.

The club voted to make up a Christmas basket for the Boudreau Nursing Home.

Mrs. Edwinna Giddings, recreation leader, conducted a "scrambled words" game about Christmas.

Mrs. Parker spoke on Christmas in Germany and played carols.

Mrs. Parker arrived Dec. 22, 1949 from Munich, Germany, at E. Kilmer, N. J. with her husband.

In Germany, Christmas starts on Dec. 1. She explained about the Advent calendar, which she showed. She said they decorate their dining room with an enormous wreath hanging from the ceiling over the table with four candles, known as bronze, gold, silver and copper. One is lighted each Sunday of the month before Christmas.

She said their stores are opened on Sundays for Christmas shopping.

Dec. 6, St. Nicholas and St. Rupprechte arrive. St. Nicholas carries a large book from which he reads the good and the bad things the children have done. St. Rupprechte wears a heavy chain around his waist and carries a switch he uses on

the bad children. He has been known to dump the bad children into the river, she said.

On Christmas Eve, they have their big feast. This is the only time they have oranges, which are imported from Italy.

The doors to the living room are always locked one week before Christmas. Their tree which reaches from ceiling to floor and has lighted wax candles, is believed to have been brought by an angel and taken out the same way on Jan. 7.

Their presents are always on the table and on top of these are nuts, candy and cookies.

On Jan. 1 the tree is lighted again and on Jan. 7 it disappears.

Mrs. Parker served a German cake made with almonds.

The next meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 19 at Mrs. Florence Eastman's.

The topic will be "New Fabrics" with Mrs. Ella Vaughn in charge.

Duxbury Women Discuss Fabrics

DUXBURY — The Hill 'N' Dale Homemakers Club held an evening meeting at Mrs. Florence Eastman's Jan. 19 with ten members and one guest present.

Mrs. Helen Green, substitute secretary for Mrs. Maude Griffin who was ill, read a letter from the State Hospital thanking the group for their Operation Gift Lift participation at Christmas time.

Mrs. Helen Davis thanked the group in behalf of the Beudreau Nursing Home and also mentioned the Farm Show. Mrs. Dorothy Cathapaw reported she took the basket of food from the club to the nursing home, along with the Mad Patchers 4-H Club favors and gifts.

A letter about civil defense was read by Mrs. Florence Eastman. She and Mrs. Mariann Parker told of their experiences in fall-out shelters in England and Germany, respectively.

The topic was "New Fabrics" with Mrs. Ella Vaughn showing samples of new fabrics and explaining about each. She said the deep piles were imitation furs and usually synthetics. She also showed corduroy, velvet and velveteen, cotton suede, which is similar to flannel and is machine washable. Nylon suede, which has a cotton back, can be cut in any direction and is also machine washable. She also showed bonded fabrics most of which require dry cleaning.

Mrs. Davis and daughter, Ethel, who had attended a 4-H special meeting on fabrics last spring, also brought samples of several materials.

The next meeting will be held Feb. 16 at 1 p.m. at Mrs. Dorothy Catchapaw's. The topic will be "Insurance Planning."

January, 1967

December, 1966

Mrs. Merchant Welcomed Back By Duxbury Club

DUXBURY — The Hill 'N' Dale Homemakers recently met at Mrs. Ella Vaughn's for a dinner meeting. The picnic planned at the "Pines" was cancelled due to heavy showers. Twelve members and three children were present.

Mrs. Anna Grow presided.

The group welcomed Mrs. Stella Merchant, who has been unable to attend for nine months due to fractures of both hips.

Thank-you letters were read from the Elizabeth Lund Home, IFYE, Duxbury Live Wires 4-H Club and Camp Downer for donations received.

Mrs. Ralph Davis, delegate, reported on the State Homemakers Council meeting held in Burlington in July. Mrs. Helen Green accompanied Mrs. Davis the first day and both attended the banquet.

The group voted to attend a food demonstration to be held at the Green Mt. Power in Montpelier in September.

Mrs. Maude Griffin, secretary, was instructed to write Mrs. Hazel Brown, the county agent, to inquire about the new club books, which were due in July.

Two dollars was voted to assist the Japanese AFS student, who is staying with the Frank Bailey family in Waterbury Center.

Mrs. Stella Merchant, the health leader, read a paper on emotionally disturbed children and how the pupils, teachers and parents could help them.

Mrs. Anna Grow presented the topic, "Simple Home Repairs," covering removal of spots from wallpaper, repairing breaks in plaster, a broken window, sticking window sashes, drawers and doors, setting up curtain rods, to renew a compression washer, splicing electrical cords, attaching an outlet plug to a cord and mending a defective garden hose.

It was suggested a two-cent fine be charged to those who visited during the business meeting.

The September meeting will be held at 1 p.m. at Mrs. Elsie Colton's. The topic will be unknown until the books arrive from the extension office.

Colored slides taken at the club's June meeting when the IFYE student presented the program, and of the New York World's Fair, will be shown at the September meeting. This will be the club's international program and it is hoped to have the foreign exchange student speak when it is convenient for his schedule. Mrs. Ralph Davis, the recreation leader, will present the slides and program.

Home Dem Dines At Mrs. Griffin's Home In Duxbury

DUXBURY — Nine members of the Hill 'N' Dale Home Demonstration group met Nov. 17 at Mrs. Frank Griffin's for a pot-luck dinner.

Mrs. Griffin announced the spring council meeting would be held May 8 and the Farm Show, Jan. 24-26 in Barre.

The club voted to send \$5 to "Operation Gift Lift," which is sponsored by the council.

A questionnaire, "The New Ten Commandments for Parents," was read by Mrs. Griffin and discussed by all members.

The topic was "Christmas Ideas" with members displaying gifts they had made.

Mrs. Mariann Parker, a new member, will host the Dec. 15 meeting at 1 p.m. at which time members will exchange gifts.

November, 1966

November, 1965

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

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Vice President: Maureen Harvey
Treasurer: Mark Morse
Secretary: Eulie Costello

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

www.DuxburyVT.com

DON'T FORGET THE NEXT MEETING - NOV. 8
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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