

The Old Ware Barn on Route 35

The Historical Society maintains a case in the lobby at Town Hall with displays that are updated from time to time. Our next display will feature the Ware/Phoenix Barn, on Route 35, which dates to 1793. It was the home of Deacon Joseph Ware (1809-1892) after he moved here to farm around 1830, and later of his son, Judge John Ware (1854-1944), with whom he started a livestock and droving business in 1865. The exact dates of construction of the original large barn and its addition are unknown. The Phoenixes purchased the farm in 1958.

The farm's large barn with two cupolas was a local landmark. The east cupola was topped by a weathervane, a three-dimensional copper cow with horns. Ned recalls that he and his father Ed measured the barn, which was 141' by 40'. The barn's beams were 8x8s, joined in typical mortise-and-tenon fashion. All timbers were mill sawn, except those in the topmost framing of the original barn which were hand-hewn. These were re-used from an older, smaller barn, perhaps the first barn on the farm.

Of special interest is Ned's information that a "second barn" had been added to the west end to lengthen the original barn. He had heard it was added by John Ware, likely in the 1920's. The addition was

about one-third of the total length of the final landmark barn.

When the second portion was added, all the siding and slate were removed from the original barn, and the expanded barn was entirely boarded with new 8" boards and roofed with new (very large) 14" x 24" slates. This uniform cladding made the barn appear to have always been that long. The illusion was assisted by the two cupolas, placed (by looks, not by measurement) a similar distance from each end.

The size of the barn, its progressing deterioration (sills rotting, frame sagging), and lack of adequate funding made proper repair impossible for the Phoenix family. Even after son Perry spent a summer repairing the underpinnings, it was apparent that it would not be possible for them to save the old barn. Noel Fisher, a builder of homes in Connecticut, was particularly interested in its 40-foot-long beams which he could re-use profitably, so he bought the barn. Roger Brown and Otto Tarbell were hired by the Phoenixes to remove the roof slate first. Dismantling of the barn began August 1, 1980 and was finished shortly after August 31. The stones forming the foundation of the barn and its ramps were left in place. It is not known whether the barn's beams were used for post-and-beam frames or simply interior decoration.



Visit our NEW Web Site

Our new web site includes an enhanced *Barn Tour*, a *Townshend Timeline*, Newsletters, new Photos, a List of Resources, a *Town Hall Painted Curtains Exhibit*, and much more at www.townshendvt.org



Winfield Scott Montgomery

Escaped Slave Becomes a Doctor and an Educator

The Union Army bivouacs were a magnet for "contrabands," slaves who had escaped their masters and sought refuge in the northern camps. One of the contrabands who appeared at the camp of Capt. Dutton's 8th Regiment, Company H was Winfield Scott Montgomery, then about nine. He had been born in 1853 on a plantation in Mississippi and was a house servant on another plantation, in Algiers, Louisiana, when he discovered the Union soldiers in his neighborhood. In a narrative of his life, Montgomery wrote:

Through the providence of God, a regiment of the Northern Army, the Eighth Vermont Volunteers, which invested New Orleans, was stationed at Algiers. While on errands I saw the boys in blue and dimly divined that their presence meant good to me.

Montgomery fled his plantation, joined the camp of the 8th Regiment and attached himself to Dutton, who became his protector. When the regiment left the Gulf in June, 1864 to campaign in Virginia, Montgomery went with them and was put in charge of the surgeon's instruments.

When Dutton returned to Vermont in 1864 to recover from battle wounds, he took Montgomery with him. In Montgomery's own words:

The winds of destiny blew me into the home of the wife of Colonel Dutton.... Accepted as member of the family, I grew up with the boys and girls, who accorded me full companionship.

Montgomery lived on in Townshend, Vermont, for almost nine years after the war. He attended Leland and Gray Seminary and then graduated Dartmouth with high honors in 1878. He also earned a medical degree from Howard University in 1890, and later received an honorary M.A.

After graduating Dartmouth, Montgomery began a career in public education of black students that lasted 42 years in Washington, DC. At a time when there were few educational opportunities for slaves freed by the Emancipation Proclamation, he became supervisor for the only college preparatory school open to blacks. He rose to the position of supervising principal for the black school system in the District of Columbia, which included schools for the blind, the speech-impaired, and the delinquent, as well as vocational schools and night schools.

Montgomery was a family man who married Emma R. Wilder in 1883 and had 5 children, among them, one son, Wilder T. Montgomery who, in addition to a grandson, Wilder T. Montgomery Jr., also graduated from Dartmouth.

When Dr. Montgomery died in 1928, a tribute from a colleague praised Montgomery's unusual executive ability and qualities of leadership in education--based on Montgomery's complete faith and confidence in his race. Another tribute reported that his career represented a "panoramic recital of the triumphant emergence of the race from serfdom."

Vermont African American Heritage Trail

A new brochure is available on line at:
<https://www.vermontvacation.com/landing-pages/itineraries/african-american-heritage-trail>

Those Jones Boys!

Part II of a series on Maple Hill Farm

Part I of the series tells about Charles and Kathrina Jones running a farm and summer boarding house on Windham Hill Road with their two young sons, Perley (born 1899) and Robbie (born 1901).

The brothers grew up the same way every country boy did at that time: learning to do whatever had to be done in much the same way that their father and grandfathers had. Electricity didn't come to Windham Hill until 1940, so man and boy-power was combined with horse and ox-power, with a lot of sweat all around, to get the heavy work done.



Perley Jones with a yoke of young oxen. Robbie holds a third ox by the neck. (Photo c 1910). This appears to be Acton Rd.

Back then, as soon as a boy was old enough to be out of his mother's care, he had farm chores to do. In addition to horses and oxen, the Joneses had cows, sheep, chickens, and pigs. They had hayfields and gardens, fruit trees, sugar maples and hardwood for heating. My father and his brother were counted on to do their part of all the work from early boyhood on. This included care of the animals, clearing fields, fixing fences, cutting and stacking firewood, mending harnesses, hauling maple syrup, and whatever else needed doing. By 1913, Mildred Amidon became a member of the family and helped out with the new baby, Evelyn Jones.

--Priscilla Jones Mounts



Mildred Amidon, age 13 (a "member of the family,") and Robbie Jones, age 12 (1913)



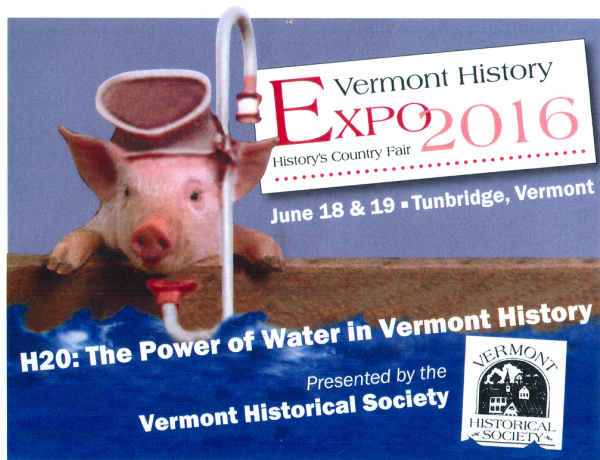
Sheep at Maple Hill, 1915

Self-Guided Maple Sugar Tour

March 19, 2016; 11am to 4pm

- #1 Taft Hill Farm 1657 Back Windham Rd
- #2 Meadows Bee Farm, 4980 Windham Hill Rd
- #3 C. Marchant 961 Rt 35 (Grafton Rd)
- #4 Mitchell Putnam 555 Rt 35 (Athens Rd)

Maple Syrup Tasting at
West Townshend Country Store
March 19, 2016; 11am-4pm



P.O. Box 202, Townshend, VT 05353

"Expo is down-home fun whether you are 8 or 88," says Amanda Gustin, Coordinator of the Vermont History Expo. This year's theme is "H2O: The Power of Water in Vermont History." From favorite swimming holes, like the one below Scott Bridge, to water-powered mills, to historic bridges, to the snow that has made Vermont a winter sports mecca, water has played a significant role in the history of Vermont. Nearly 150 history groups, including Townshend Historical Society, will be joined by artists, crafters, and authors, to make this expo a not-to-be missed event. Save the dates.

It's not too late to join! Support our efforts to preserve Townshend history and share it through projects such as this newsletter.

Annual dues are \$10 per individuals and \$15 for families. Join through our new website or mail your dues to;

THS, Box 202, Townshend, VT 05353



Lattice work repairs on Scott Bridge in January, 2016

Scott Bridge Update

An engineer's report in 2012, stated a need for extensive structural work on Scott Bridge, "new roof, lighter deck, steel beams, and replacement of deteriorated lattice work." Federal funding was found for 81 percent and the state of Vermont will pay for the remainder.

The original 1870 bridge was a 166' town lattice truss on the Route 30 side. The king post trusses extended it over a dry bed to the State Forest Road. While there is no date for this king-post addition, it appears that the 1927 Flood (even worse than the Irene Flood) dug out an area on the south end so that an extension was needed to span the gulch.

Mike Renaud, contractor for the restoration, confirmed that the project is right on schedule. The bridge is presently supported by steel cribbing and the southern end has now been enclosed and heated so that work can progress during the winter months. One half of the lattice-work has now been replaced with new Douglas fir. When the project is finished, the bridge will be open for pedestrians and cyclists.