**JOHN TRICKEY**

**and the**

**TRICKEY FARM**

Overview of farming in area

First settlers mainly subsistence farmers drawn here by plentiful cheap land; grew crops to support selves. Lack of commercial transportation; took products to market in own wagons; hay, straw, potash. Drew grain to be ground at grist mills, either locally or in neighboring localities (e.g., Sharon)

Railroad came 1865; ship crops to market; growth of boom towns such as Worcester;

Hops last 30 yrs of 19th century; 1909 blue mold attacked blossoms

At one time 30% of hops from Otsego Co

Potatoes came into prime 100 yrs ago; long lines at RR sidings

Still see potato warehouse on RR Ave

Ponderosa prominent

Gone by 1940s; market speculation; poor quality

Dairy always; small farms dotted landscape every road

Predominant after hops and potatoes

Large dairies – Chamberlain, later Smith farm

Century farms – Hollenbecks, Ives, Hillis, McClintock

Some prominent Tauzel, Golja, Kersman, Bobnick, Rand, Shafer, Conte, Umbach, Milavec; 7 left

Causes of decline – small, rocky, hilly; soil played out, milk checks vary; equipment, fertilizer, stock; buildings; taxes, can't compete w/Mohawk Valley, Midwest; hard life; society mobile; farm children go to college, move away

Farms go, towns go; boutique, gentrified agriculture; horses, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas; leasing, shift to heifers and veal; commuters, retirees, small businesses, subdividing as farmer's retirement safeguard

John Trickey b. Aug 7 1809 Brookfield NH central NH near Wolfeboro, Lake Winnepesaukee now population 668

Became businessman in Dover, 20 mi SE, no of Portsmouth near ME border. now 26,000+

Influential in anti-slavery politics; friend of US Sen John P. Hale (Free Soil-NH)

Hale, abolitionist, received 156,000 votes for Pres in 1852

1861 – moved to Boston – family lived in Waverly, Mass.

went into lumber business w/E.H. Jewett – Trickey & Jewett

supplied lumber to US Navy including Monitor-class war vessels

0Continued political activity – friend of US Sen Henry Wilson (Free Soil-MA), later VP 1873-75 during Grant's 2nd term

WT: “It was then Mr. Trickey's custom to work all day in one navy yard, and ride during the night to the next yard. The strain upon his health, and this, followed by serious business reverses, laid the foundation of the disease which [later] caused his death.”

Letter from great-grandson Herbert Pickett Jr:

“In the panic of 1873, John co-signed too many notes for friends, but was able to cover himself, when he had a stroke, and when recovered was penniless. He went to work in a livery stable, where a man he had helped financially drove in, and discovered him. He said to John, 'My checkbook is yours. What do you want to do?' John said, 'I want to live in the same town as my daughter, married to a minister in Worcester, New York.' So John moved there with his wife, his daughter Ellen, and his sons Edward and George ...”

Around 1870 – came to Worcester, lived originally in Wilson house at 217 Main St; Bradley Ritton built it in 1856 – sold to Trickey.

WT -- “In 1872 he purchased property in this village and ... made it his home, and from that time forward he took the deepest interest in everything that pertained to the wellbeing of this place. He spent his money lavishly in building, repairing and beautifying his property. He gave lavishly to every worthy project, public and private ...”

The property he bought was 192 Main St – the old Daniel Waters farm – the Millard Inn – the John Trickey House

1808/10 Robert Queal, from Ireland, owned part of farm

1827/30 Deacon Stimson built the house preceding the Trickey house, where Daniel Waters lived. His wife Elmira, Stimson dau, lived there when Trickey bought it

1845 Geo Clarke sold “a large plot” to Daniel Waters

88 original acres in 1872 – Inn, school playground, all properties behind the ones on Main St all the way to opposite West Hill Rd, Legion Field, RR underpass to more land across Schenevus Creek. Next west of old Dist #6 one-room white wooden schoolhouse 1860s-1874

Old Dan Waters moved up Decatur Creek, built two houses across the creek and set up a sawmill.

Trickey removed the old buildings:

Waters house divided into 2 parts. One moved to So Hill Road and became Julius Hadsell home. Now torn down

Other part moved to Elm St; Mrs Waters still in it until 1880s; called “Dumont” house; later

Estella Wright, Robert Wright home; Foundation remains of another house (probably the L.C. Griggs house on 1868 map) were unearthed during modern repairs to WCS western driveway

New Trickey mansion built on the site (STOCK FARM ILLUSTRATION)

Completed Jan 1876 by Phillip Crippen and Geo Stam, well-known local carpenters. Crippen was the farm manager and lived in the house for at least a year/

WT -- “It contains upwards of 30 rooms all finished in the highest style ... Large fireplaces are built in several rooms ... These are ornamented by a marble mantle-piece ... [it is] one of the most commodious farm houses in this section of the country” and has a complete dairy department.

WHS file -- “the largest and most elaborate farmhouse in the valley. In the west wing was a creamery with running water, large separator pans, etc.”

Mrs. Millard -- “There are 26 large rooms and 26 small rooms such as closets and baths.”

Third floor furnished as a ballroom

Initials “JT” still etched in glass of front door

Rest of Jersey Stock Farm in addition to house and creamery: (BARN ILLUSTRATION)

Barn to house herd of Jersey cows also built by Crippen & Stam 50x100 feet with 35x80 extension on west end -- “largest and best equipped in the valley” BB - “... the two cross beams in the construction were each a foot square, iron plated at the joints and all united with iron trusses holding the joints together.” WT -- “Some of the largest timbers were brought here from Maine, but the major portion ... was sawed from native pine at the Waters saw mill on the Decatur creek and at the VanBenthuysen mill [the old electric plant] ... The roof was of slate.”

Ice house

Tannery built by Waters; removed by Trickey 1882

Pastures

Stock -- WT “[Trickey] keeps a fine lot of Alderny cattle which are noted for their rich milk and butter, for which he commands the highest market price.”

Horses – WT -- “He keeps a good line of horse flesh, some of the finest Norman breed. He has a colt of this kind which is only 10 months old that weighs 830 pounds, and another which weighs 1365 pounds. He also has a two year old that weighs 1230 pounds.” Horse barn just east of main barn, running south, was 35x80. Horses Tom and Betsy on illustration.

WFF - “The old basket phaeton [was] drawn by a spanking team of horses. The passenger was protected from sun or rain by a white umbrella-shaped canopy top with blue fringe held in place by an adjustable rod attached to the back. The running gear was carmine-striped with black hub caps and brass bands.”

A spring on the farm supplied both sides of Main St from West Hill Rd to the business section.

WFF (from Pickett letter) - “There was one of those boundary fights which

often occurred. Mr. Trickey had a huge stone sunk into the ground, weighing tons. The top and much smaller portion was a conventional stone gate post. That put an end to the nocturnal moving of fences.”

Civic affairs:

1870/71 Trickey gave money to ME Church to build a bell tower and purchase a bell. Also gave the communion service – still used?

Owner of Lot 164 in MG Cem, where he is buried

1875 One of the first patrons of The Worcester Times

1878 Contributor to Hurd's History of Otsego County

1878 Fall – WFF - “Mr. Trickey extended a general invitation to a 'husking bee.' Two hundred and fifty people responded, including a large turnout from Schenevus with the Schenevus Valley Band. The Worcester Empire Band was also there. Ears of corn from his large crop were laid out in heaps along the whole length of the barn floor. When the husks had been stripped, all were invited to the house for a New England supper of baked beans, corn bread, pumpkin pie, donuts and coffee. Following this came a social dance on the second floor of the great barn, with music by the Schenevus string band, until nearly one o'clock.”

Trickey married twice. Wife Elizabeth J. Young b. Dover NH May 7, 1812 d. May 12, 1882 in Worcester; bur MG

Two months later July 18, 1882 5 a.m. Trickey dies at residence surrounded by his children; obit in same issue of WT as that of Mary Todd Lincoln; bur MG July 20

7 sons, 2 dau Charles W; John W; Nathaniel Y, Fordyce P; Ellen A; Annie D; George O; Matthew M; Edward K; all living at his death

2 children remained in Wor: Geo O. Trickey 1850-1894 bur MG

Ellen A. 1846-1922 mar Elmer Ellsworth Pickett, a Trickey farm employee. Trickey had given his blessing to the marriage, which took place after his death; bur MG

her son Herb Pickett 1889-1961 bur MG

1882? or 1886? -- Ellen and Elmer Pickett received the equity in the property from [Andrew?] Pierce, “who owned it” (Herb Pickett letter)

1892 – Charles Goodell, potato dealer, bought the property. Herb Pickett letter: “It was quite heavily mortgaged. [The Picketts] could never make a go of it and Charley Goodell saved our lives when his wife Frances forced him to buy it.” Goodell later was longest-lasting Worcester Supervisor (1896-1919).

1899; April 3 – Fire at Goodell home

WT -- “Shortly before 9 o'clock flames were discovered bursting through the roof of the rear part of [the Goodell home]. ... The fire could not have occurred at a more inopportune hour; several meetings were in progress ... there were few people on the streets ... Mr. Goodell was at a meeting of the Red Men and his wife was [at] the Fortnightly ... As usual there were about 30 firemen and 230 chief engineers to direct the work. ... After a three hours' fight the flames were extinguished. ... The loss is somewhat difficult to estimate. The house was insured for $3,000 ... The entire roof besides several rear upper rooms were destroyed. ... 1,000 bushels of potatoes ... at 60 cents a bushel ... are probably a total loss. ... Some ... furniture was ... smashed [by careless handling] ... Thieves carried off considerable property ...”

1921 – A.E. Hamilton buys

1925; Wednesday, July 29 – Barn completely destroyed by fire

WT -- “One of the largest and most spectacular fires .. took place last Wednesday afternoon when the mammoth barn on the old Trickey farm ... was burned to the ground ... with all its contents. About 20 minutes after three Mr. Hamilton was ... mowing his lawn ... [when he noticed] smoke issuing from the cupola. ... The blaze gained such headway that it was evident at once that the building could not be saved. ... in 40 minutes the building together with the horse barn, silos and additions were almost completely consumed. ... The origin of the fire ... is believed to have been ... spontaneous combustion.

“Mr. Hamilton had practically finished haying only a few days before and ... much of his farm machinery and about 60 tons of hay were lost. The second floor ... had been fitted up as a henhouse with running water and electric lights, modern nests, etc., [and nearly 1,000 hens died.]”

BB --“In addition to the main barn, a cow stable with hay loft overhead, and a horse barn also with lofts filled with hay, were consumed. Help was summoned from Schenevus and Cobleskill and firemen from both villages responded. The milk house and ice house received some damage, but firemen managed to save them.”

WT -- “The barn and contents were insured for about $15,000, which will hardly cover one-half of the loss.”

1929 – Jesse & Rena Millard bought the property; summer tourist home and later a summer home for Rema's son Dexter C. Beasley and his wife Mary Lou; Millards also ran a winter tourist home in Fla. Jesse dies 1968; Rena 1973; both bur. MG

Probably 1930/31 – Some of the land was conveyed to the school for a playground. Some later to the American Legion for parkland

1937 Sept. – Worcester Rotary Club formed at Millard Inn

1981 Sept. – Dexter Beasley deeds property to the American University. (He was a 1929 graduate.)

1985 July 5/6 – Beasley contents sold at auction. He dies Nov. 13, 1985 bur. MG

1986 – George & Virginia (“Ginger”) Bruce buy; restore property and open “John Trickey House” B&B

[Pass out obituary]

[Display loose-leaf notebook]