

Smith, Cornwall, Percival and Austin Families

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Capt. Dan Cornwall was born in Connecticut about the year 1753. He married **Rachel Hall** and came to Cornwallsville, and settled on the farm now owned by **Benamin Hubbard**, in 1788. His first log house he built some 30 or 40 rods S.W. of the present house. He experienced some trouble in getting good title to his land, being obliged to pay for it twice over, before his right was undisputed. They were two weeks coming from New Haven in a sail vessel to Catskill, and when they reached their new home, they were far away "out west" to their friends they left behind. But they brought their faith and their religious principles with them. They were both members of the Congregational Church in Connecticut, and very soon after the formation of the Presbyterian Church in Durham, they both united by letter on the 13th of January, 1793. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and commanded a company of Connecticut volunteers, and drew a pension as long as he lived. When he became old and venerable, he was often appointed Moderator at the annual town meetings. He died on Christmas Eve 1843, and **Rachel**, his wife died May 8, 1855, nearly one hundred years old. They had six children---**David, Amos, Dan, Rachel, Nancy** and **Vina**. **David** married **Mary Johnson**, a sister of the late **Edward Johnson**. He went to California, and traveled somewhat in Mexico; received fatal injuries in Mexico during an earthquake there, returned to California where he died. **Amos** married **Elizabeth Hand**, a sister of **Alfred Hand Esq.**, of Durham. He became a merchant in Catskill, and died there. His family now live in Catskill. One of his daughters married **Hon. Lyman Tremain** of Durham, and another daughter married **Robert E. Austin Esq.**, of Catskill. **Dan** never married, lived and died in Cornwallsville. **Rachel** married **Charles Baldwin** and lived and died in Volney, Oswego County. **Nancy** married **Charles S. Hitchcock**, and lived and died in Cornwallsville. **Vina** was never married---lived and died in Cornwallsville.

John and **Paul Percival** were among the first settlers of Cornwallsville. I cannot tell much about them, especially **John**; probably he was **Paul's** brother; he may have lived with his brother on the **Charles Wetmore** place, perhaps as joint owner. **Paul** lived there, and sold the place in 1806 to **Moses Austin**. His son **Elkannah** owned the farm now owned by **William Borthwick**, and lived there until he became an old man, when he moved to "Broadway", near Durham, and finally he and his wife went to live with their adopted daughter, **Gertrude Ames**, who married **Mr. William Pierce** of Durham, where they both died in a good old age.

Moses Austin was born in Wallingford, Conn., about the year 1768; came to Durham at the age of 20 years, and bought land near where **Asbury Strong** now lives. The farm still goes by the name of the "Austin Place"; the house, long since disappeared, and the barn was destroyed by a fire two or three years ago. His neighbors were **Charles Johnson**, and a **Mr. Ford** who lived in the same house. **Mr. Ford** was taken violently ill, and **Mr. Austin** rode on horseback, and in the night, to the city of Hudson for medicine. But it was in vain. **Mr. Ford** died, and **Mr. Austin** was often heard to say that it was one of the most melancholy recollections of his life. In 1806 he bought the farm now owned by **Mr. Charles Wetmore**, and built the large house now standing; occupying in the meantime the old block house which stood nearby. He was a prosperous business man, --- owned a woolen factory in Cairo,---was engaged in various business enterprises, and became very wealthy. He held several offices in the town, was at one time Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and, in 1819, 20, 21, and 22 he was one of the members of the New York State Senate from the Middle district. The whole State at that time was comprised in four Senatorial districts under the Constitution of 1777, and they were called the Southern, Middle, Eastern and Western districts. The Middle district, by an Act of 1815, was represented by nine senators, and consisted of the following ten counties, viz: Albany, Chenango, Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Orange, Otsego, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster. The senators from this large district in the year 1819 were: **Moses Austin, Jabez D. Hammond, John Lounsbury, John Noyes, Isaac Ogden, William Ross, Peter Swart, Martin VanBuren** and **Abraham VanVechten**. In 1822 under the new Constitution, the Senatorial districts were very much changed.

Mr. Austin was twice married. His first wife was **Elizabeth Cooper** of Chatham, Conn. She was the sister of **Miles Cooper**, who married an aunt of **Dr. J.B. Cowles** of Durham, and lived in Western New York. **Mr. Austin's** second wife was **Salie Humphreys** of Derby, Conn. She was a niece of the **Hon. and Gen. David Humphreys**, who was a U.S. Minister to the Court of Spain and Portugal. **Mr. Austin** had quite a large family. One of his sons, **Elias Austin**, lived on the farm, and was at one time Supervisor of the town; he has two daughters and one son now living in Cairo. His brother **Aaron Austin** lived on the "old Austin place," and died in Cornwallsville. Another brother lived in Durham, and his descendents now live in Windham. **Aaron's** children, mostly daughters, married and settled

in Durham. **Mr. Austin** spent the evening of his life at Cairo, and died there on the 2nd of May, 1848, aged 80 years.

And now before we go over "Rose Hill," we will record some additional facts about the **Smith's** of Cornwallsville, which will bring it down to the memory of the present generation. **Capt. Thomas Smith** and **Charity**, his wife were buried at "Quaker Orchard," a locality about two miles S.E. of Cornwallsville, which received its name from the springing up of self-sowed apple trees, the seed of which were scattered by people attending a camp meeting at the place. **Thomas Smith, Jr.**, married for his first wife a **Mott**, and **Bela T. Smith** was their only child. His second wife was **Clarissa Hubbard**, and the children were **Helen**, who is the wife of **Joseph M. Smith**, and **Isaac Smith**, now of Tarrytown.

Zoath Smith, the third son of the Captain, married for his first wife a **Blakesley**, and their children were **Lucy Walker** and **Savilla Farrand**, wife of **Hollis Farrand** of Ohio. His second wife was **Olive Merwin**, daughter of **Miles Merwin** of Connecticut, who was a brother of **David** and **Daniel Merwin** of Durham, N.Y. He lived on the farm where the late **Zoath Smith**, his son, died a few years ago. **Fletcher**, his oldest son married **Rebecca Jerome**, a daughter of **John Jerome**, formerly of Bovina, Delaware County, who at this time lived where **Horatio Hough** does. He died quite young, leaving a family of small children, (now living in New York), and greatly mourned by the Methodist Church, of which he was a very active member. **Mary** married **Andrew Jerome**, and their children now live in Cornwallsville. **Vince** was not married. **Samuel** married **Caroline Adams**, a daughter of **Joseph Adams**, who was half-brother of **Col. Pluto Adams**. They lived where **Bela T. Smith** does, and **Joseph A. Smith** of Windham and **Armenius Smith** of Hervey Street, were their sons. He was a very earnest Christian man and his death was caused by exposure in attending camp meeting at Cooksburgh in 1869.

Phebe was the wife of **Ellsworth Strong Esq.**, and **Polly** married a **Mr. Lamb** of Lamb's Corners, Albany County. **Zoath, Jr.**, the youngest, married **Diantha Ingalls** of Westerlo, Albany Co. He died only a few

years ago, after suffering uncomplainingly for a long time from inflammatory rheumatism. He was a good man.

Bela, the youngest son of **Capt. Smith**, was born in Connecticut in 1784, and consequently was four years old when the family came to Cornwallsville to live. He remembered one thing that took place on the journey; and that was seeing his oldest sister **Anna** milk the cow on board the vessel as they were coming up the river. He became a Christian at age 17, and an earnest and faithful preacher in the Methodist Church. Finally his health failed, and he bought the farm now owned by his son **Joseph M.**, and died there in 1847, aged 64. His wife was **Rhoda Merwin**, a sister of his brother **Zoath's** wife, and their children were **Bela, Rhoda, Charles, Joseph M., Mary, Thomas** and **James**. **Bela Smith, Jr.**, married **Amanda Jerome**, sister to **Mrs. Fletcher Smith, Mrs. Rev Gould**, and **Andrew Jerome**. They have one son in New York and three daughters living in Cornwallsville; one the oldest, married **Calvin Borthwick**. **Rhoda** married **John B. Strong** late of Cornwallsville, and now lives very happily with her children.

Charles married **Rachel Hitchcock**, and was a merchant in Cornwallsville; they both died early, greatly beloved, leaving one daughter **Hattie**, the wife of **Will H. Strong**. She has recently passed away. **Joseph M.** married **Helen Smith**, daughter of **Thomas Smith Jr.** They have one son, **Nathan Bangs**, of Amsterdam, NY. **Mary** was not married. **Thomas** married **Martha Buck**, a daughter of **Rev. Mr. Buck**, who was a Presiding Elder in the New York Conference. He is a minister, and lives in Morrisania, NY. **James**, the youngest, married **Mary Pierson**, and he now lives in New York City. He is also a preacher.

Mercy, the youngest child of **Capt. Smith**, married **Harris Giddins**, and removed to Ohio. He is spoken of as a very talented preacher of the Gospel. I am not sure about the orthography of the name; it was in early days spelled Giddins; but I have an idea that it may be the same as the Ohio name Giddings. Be that as it may, there are few families that have exerted so great and so good an influence in this town as the **Smith's** of Cornwallsville.