

The Blood Family on Putney's West Hill, 1782 - 1920

William B. Darrow

February 2021

CONTENTS

I. Introduction: West Hill's Vanished Community.

Stone walls, abandoned roads, cellar holes and ancient graveyards.

II. 1780-1840: The Blood Family Settles on West Hill.

Robert and Thankful (Proctor) Blood come to Putney from Massachusetts and build a house on Dusty Ridge; their first son Oliver and Anna (Woolley) Blood build a second house nearby. The network of roads, schools and churches on West Hill at that time. Third son Peter Blood settles on another West Hill farm. Death of Robert and Thankful; first internments in Dusty Ridge Cemetery. Oliver's daughter Eunice marries B. Parkman Wood to begin the Putney Wood family.

III. 1840-1890: The Blood Farm Continues as Many West Hill Farms are Deserted.

Mid-19th century developments cause many early West Hill farms to be abandoned. Some farmers find temporary respite in sheep and wool. Five Putney Bloods fight in the Civil War - three survive. Third generation Bloods Oliver Jr and Luke continue the Dusty Ridge farm. Luke and Martha (Warren) Blood lose three children ages 3 - 6. The Wood family settles on Orchard Hill. Fratricide by a son of Anna (Blood) Woolley. Aunt Sarah helps-out Oliver B Wood. Ollie's escapade. Oliver Jr expands the Dusty Ridge farm.

IV. 1892-1920: The Blood's Dusty Ridge Farm Finally Comes to an End.

Third-generation Bloods die off – Oliver Blood Jr in 1892; Oliver B. Wood in 1900; and Luke Blood in 1901. Both of Oliver Jr's sons die prematurely shortly after their father's death. In 1899 Luke's son Herbert takes over the farm, but he leaves Dusty Ridge in 1920 and dies prematurely in 1922.

Appendices

- 1 Bibliography
- 2 Four Generations of Dusty Ridge Bloods
- 3 Excerpts from the Cory - Carpenter Map of Early Putney
- 4 Photos: the Robert Blood/Oliver Jr (Upper) House
- 5 Photos: the Oliver Blood Sr/Luke (Lower) House
- 6 Photos: the John Townshend House
- 7 Photos: the Charles Blood/Page Farm on West Hill Road
- 8 Photos: the Oliver Blood Wood Farm on Orchard Hill

1. Introduction: West Hill's Vanished Community.

The town of Putney lies in southeastern Vermont, bordered by the Connecticut River on its east and a north-south mountainous ridgeline on its west. To the north is the town of Westminster, to the south is Dummerston. Putney village is in the southeast corner of town, where Sacketts Brook falls toward the nearby Connecticut River. West of the village a range of hills rises gradually over several miles to the top of the ridge. The highest point is Putney Mountain, 1,657 feet above sea level and 1,267 feet above the village. The west side of the ridge descends steeply into the town of Brookline. The Putney side of the ridge, with its series of sloping hills, is called West Hill.

Southeastern Vermont is an old region in the history of the State.ⁱ Decades of conflict over control of the broader territory, first between France and England, and then between the colonies of New York and New Hampshire, eased in the late 1770s and early 1780s. Yankees from Massachusetts and Connecticut then migrated north into Vermont, many settling in Windham County.ⁱⁱ By 1790 Putney's population rose to 1,848 persons, making it the second most populous town in Windham County after Guilford. Early Putney settlers favored West Hill for high ground. The hill was safe from flooding rivers and streams; it offered a vantage point from which to see approaching visitors; and it provided strong sun early in the day when the valley was partly shaded and/or foggy. Early settlers may also have wished to distance themselves from the Connecticut River, used by Native Americans for centuries.ⁱⁱⁱ Because early farms were largely self-sufficient, distance from the village was of little consequence. From the 1780s through the 1830s much of Putney's population was on West Hill.

West Hill farms established in the late 1700s and early 1800s were for the most part gone by the late 1800s. Between 1790 and 1920 Putney's population fell 75%, to a low of 761. Today evidence of early West Hill settlement includes stone walls and abandoned roads running through woods that were once fields. A short walk through the woods on West Hill reveals such traces. Not far away are cellar holes where houses once stood, and derelict family graveyards. The few West Hill farm houses that survive from that era are the exception to the rule.

This paper seeks a view into that vanished West Hill community by tracing the arc, from inception to demise, of one family farm. High on Dusty Ridge, in the northwest corner of Putney, the Blood family owned and operated a farm from about 1782 to 1920 – nearly 140 years. Throughout the 19th century the Blood farm seems to have remained prosperous when most neighboring farms were deserted. Near the turn of the century, however, when the family's third generation died, the farm did not transition to an enduring fourth generation. Parts of it were sold in 1892, and the remainder was sold around 1920. The last Bloods to grow up on Dusty Ridge and the last to leave – three unmarried sisters – died in the 1940s and 50s. By that time the Blood farm was a fading memory.

The extended Blood family ran two additional West Hill farms in the 1800s. One was on West Hill Road near what is now Putney School, owned and operated by three generations of the family from 1820 to 1927, the second was on Orchard Hill. All three farms were successful during the 19th century. The focus of this paper is the Dusty Ridge farm.

To reach Dusty Ridge, a traveler driving north into Putney village turns left up Kimball Hill, then proceeds along the flats of Westminster West Road for about three-quarters of a mile before turning left again up West Hill Road. West Hill Road climbs nearly due west over a series of ascending hills. Bearing right onto Aiken Road, one passes the former home of U.S. Senator George Aiken (a West Hill farmer before he entered politics). Nearly five miles from the village is Dusty Ridge Road. Continuing up that dirt road, the land levels off at about 1,180 feet above sea level. The top of Dusty Ridge is a high plateau in the northwest corner of Putney.

In the woods at the southern end of the plateau is a small graveyard. Brush grows among the tombstones, some of which have fallen over. Here are the graves of those who spent their lives on Dusty Ridge in the late 1700s and 1800s.

II. 1780-1840: The Blood Family Settles on West Hill

In about 1782 Robert Blood and his wife Thankful Proctor moved to Putney from their home in Groton, Massachusetts. Both came from well-established Massachusetts families. Robert Blood's great-grandfather, also named Robert Blood, emigrated to America from Nottingham, England in 1620-40. Many English citizens came to the British Colonies during those decades to escape political and religious tyranny. During the 1640s and '50s Robert Blood and his brother John bought properties aggregating about 2000 acres just north of Concord, Massachusetts, in and around what is now the town of Carlisle. That property became known as Blood Farms. When Robert married Elizabeth Willard in 1653, his father-in-law conveyed to him another 1000 acres as a dowry.

A dispute between the Bloods and the town of Concord came to a head in 1684 when constables seeking to collect taxes at the Blood Farms were "roughly received" by Robert Blood and two of his sons (who met them "with contumelious speeches accompanied by actual violence to their persons"). Harris, p. 4; see also Hudson, pp. 487-89. This resulted in a significant fine for "vilifying his Majesty's authority." The Bloods contended that because their land was outside the borders of Concord, they did not have to pay taxes to Concord. Concord contended that it provided benefits to the Bloods, such that taxes were due. In 1686 the matter was resolved in a settlement (providing for taxes to be paid to Concord).

The Robert Blood who came to Putney was born in Groton, Massachusetts in 1733. After losing his first wife, he married Thankful Proctor in 1768, and the couple had six children in Dunstable and two more in Groton. Robert sold several real estate parcels in Massachusetts before the couple made the trek 70 miles east and slightly north to Putney with eight children ages 1 to 12. Robert was age 56 and Thankful was 38.

The first, 1790 United States Census lists Robert Blood in Putney along with nine household members – doubtless Thankful and the eight children. Every Census through 1920 found the Blood family on Dusty Ridge. In Putney Robert purchased 100 acres from Joseph Allyn in June 1785; 50 acres from Asa Caryl in May 1786; and 10 acres from Samuel Wheat in November 1791. In May 1797 Robert's sons Oliver and Peter Blood bought another 50 acres from Thomas Nichols. A March 1813 deed from Robert Blood to his son Jonathan Blood for \$1000 paid for a 90-acre parcel of land in Putney, provided that Jonathan support his parents

during their natural lives. These were among the earliest of many land purchases by the Dusty Ridge Bloods.

Robert and Thankful's first child Oliver, born in 1769 in Dunstable, was 12 years-old when his family came to Putney. Oliver grew up to run the Blood farm during the early 19th Century after his father's death. At age 29 in 1799, he married young Grafton, Vermont woman Hannah "Anna" Woolley. The 1800 Census in Putney listed two Blood households: that of Robert and Thankful, and that of Oliver and Anna. In 1800 Robert and Thankful were ages 68 and 56; Oliver and Anna were 31 and 17.

In 1805-06 Oliver – no doubt with the help of siblings and his father – built a house for his growing family. By 1806 four of Oliver and Anna's nine children had been born. Maps of Putney at that time show two Blood houses on Dusty Ridge: the Robert Blood house on top of the ridge, and the Oliver Blood house about a half-mile southwest at a slightly lower elevation. The map of "Original Town Lines with Houses and Roads in Existence About A.D. 1800," by Clifford E. Cory and Moncure C. Carpender (excerpt in addendum), identifies House #67 atop Dusty Ridge as that of "Robert Blood, 1794." Just to the south is House #68, designated "John Townsend, 1799." South and slightly west of those two houses is House #69, marked "Oliver Blood, 1806." A portion of that map is attached. Similarly, the "Ed Dodd Map," made by Westminster West resident Ed Dodd, shows the Robert Blood house on the upper plateau on Dusty Ridge, just north of the Townsend house, and the Oliver Blood house in the lower, southwest location.^{iv}

During the late 1700s and early 1800s a network of roads connected West Hill families to each other and to West Hill schools and churches. When the Bloods were on Dusty Ridge at that time, roads led in four directions. Only one of those roads is maintained today: Dusty Ridge Road, which ends on Dusty Ridge and leads down West Hill toward Putney village (referenced above). Two centuries ago, however, there were other roads. The Cory/Carpender map shows: (1) a road leading west from Dusty Ridge down the mountain to Brookline, Newfane and the West River valley; (2) a road (visible today between two stone walls across from the Townsend house) leading easterly toward lower Dusty Ridge Road and Wheat's Tavern (#101 on the map), as well as Putney's No. 2 brick schoolhouse on Tavern Hill Road (#71); (3) a road leading south along the heights of the ridge, becoming what is now Banning Road (accessed by turning left after starting west toward Brookline from Dusty Ridge); and (4) a road (called Gully Road) from the lower Blood house on Dusty Ridge leading south across a stream in a gully before connecting to a road (called Eddy Road) running southwest between Orchard Hill and Banning Road. Taking Gully Road from Dusty Ridge to Eddy Road, one could then turn right to Banning Road, or left to Orchard Hill (and the nearby No. 5 schoolhouse and church). Putney's First Baptist Church (1790-1836) was on Orchard Hill, and the Second Baptist Church (1837-1860) was at the bottom of what is now Leon Wood Road, across from the No. 5 School House.^v

This network of roads allowed the Bloods direct routes to other hill farm families (including relatives on Orchard Hill, described below), as well as schoolhouses and church, all while remaining on West Hill and avoiding the five-mile trip down to the village in the valley. Roads (1) and (2) together were a stage coach and mail route between a tavern in Brookline and Wheat's Tavern on Tavern Hill Road. "After leaving the Benson Tavern . . . in Brookline and

crossing the mountain by the Oliver Blood farm, the next tavern was ‘S. Wheat’s Tavern’ built in 1807.” Brattleboro Reformer, June 11, 1930 letter (adding that the Wheats also maintained a store, a blacksmith shop, and a cider mill, and sold cider brandy for 30 cents a gallon). Road (3) above also provided access to Dummerston Center – perhaps closer than Putney village. Most of these roads have not been used for a century or more, and the churches disappeared over 150 years ago. Both schoolhouses remain standing.

Vermont hill farms from the late 1700s to the 1830s were largely self-sufficient. Searles, p. 8 (“simple, largely self-sufficient and mutually interdependent existences”). Farmers and their families derived subsistence primarily from their farms, marketing only incidental surplus. The family produced its own raw materials and fabricated its own finished products. Fuel for the fire came from the nearby woods, which also furnished timber for the house, barn, and fences. Wagons were repaired on the farm, where horses were shod. Wheat and corn raised on the farm contributed to the family diet, as did “the pig, sheep, and cow, with the game that the farmer might catch.” Wilson at 17. Thread and cloth were spun and woven. “What little cash the hill-country farmer needed to pay taxes or to buy a few necessities he procured by selling products which could easily be transported . . . even over steep hill roads.” *Id.*

Oliver and Anna’s first child, a daughter named Hannah, was born on March 6, 1801. She developed cancer and died at age 12 on March 30, 1813. On the day of Hannah’s death Anna gave birth to a seventh child, another daughter, whom she and Oliver also named Hannah. This event is confirmed by the death certificate of Hannah I, listing March 30 1813 as the date she succumbed to cancer, and the birth certificate of Hannah II, listing that same date. Hannah I appears to be the first person interred in the Dusty Ridge Cemetery. Meanwhile, Anna was caring for five other children born between the two Hannahs: Mary (age 10); Eunice (age 8); Anna (age 7); Sarah (age 4); and Oliver Jr (age 3). Hannah II also died prematurely, in 1856 at age 43, for unknown reasons. After the birth of Hannah II, Mary and Oliver had three more children: Luke in 1815, Adams in 1819, and John in 1821.

Robert Blood died in February, 1816 at age 87. Thankful died in June, 1828 at age 83. The family buried the couple together on Dusty Ridge with their first grandchild, Hannah.

When the 1830 Census taker arrived on Dusty Ridge, he found Oliver, age 61 and Anna, 46, in a household of 11 persons, including children Eunice, age 26; Anna, 24; Sarah, 22; Oliver Jr, 20; Luke, 15; Adams, 11; and John, 9. Oldest child Mary in 1823 married Brattleboro man Marshal Temple. The couple settled on a farm in Hopkinton, Massachusetts and raised nine children.

In 1833 Oliver and Anna’s daughter Eunice married Hopkinton, Massachusetts man Brick Parkman Wood, the progenitor of the Wood family in Putney. Eunice may have met B. Parkman visiting her sister Mary in Hopkinton. The 1840 Census lists Eunice and Parkman in Putney with their first child Eunice Jr, born in 1836. The couple had five children in Putney, the last of whom was Oliver Blood Wood, born in 1848. Named after his grandfather Oliver Blood Sr and his uncle Oliver Blood Jr, Oliver B Wood was the first of multiple Wood descendants named Oliver. Eunice and Parkman evidently lived on Orchard Hill when they had their children.^{vi} Their house, about a mile south of Dusty Ridge, is House # 53 on the Cory/Carpender

map. Associated with the Wood family for much of the 1800s, it came to be known as the Oliver B Wood place, as he lived in it and farmed the surrounding area for the last three decades of the 19th century. Oliver B's second son was Leon Oliver Wood (1887-1955), well-known and admired in Putney. One can still find Leon's carvings in rocks and trees on Dusty Ridge and West Hill. As an adult Leon Wood lived for many years in House # 51 on the Cory/Carpenter map, next to the house in which he grew up (the Oliver B Wood place).

Robert and Thankful's middle son Peter Blood married Jane Willson of Putney in 1801. During 1802-17 the couple had six children on Dusty Ridge: Charles F; John; Peter Jr; Louisa; Paulina; and Jane. The oldest – Charles – and the two youngest – Paulina and Jane – played significant roles in a second Blood farm. Around 1820 Peter and Jane's family moved from Dusty Ridge to a property straddling West Hill Road slightly west of the current turn-off for Putney School. It was known in the 20th century as the Page farm (or the Allen house). The house is identified on the Cory–Carpenter map as House # 97, built in 1776 by John Willson.^{vii} John Willson appears to have been Jane's father. His death in March, 1820 could explain why Jane and Peter Blood took possession of the farm at around that time. Jane had one sibling, an older sister named Lydia, married to Job Joslyn. That family may also have had some ownership rights in John Willson's farm. A handwritten note on the back of a copy of the photo of the farm in the Appendix indicates that ownership passed from John Willson to Job Joslyn to Peter Blood. In any event, Peter Blood owned the farm from about 1820 to his death in 1840. Oldest son Charles Blood then owned and operated the farm from 1840 to his death in 1882 (when it was transferred to two nephews). The 1856 Map of Windham County, Vermont by C. McClellan & Co., as well as the 1869 Map of Windham County, by F. W. Beers & Co., both show "C. Blood" at the location.

When Charles Blood owned the property, the farmhouse on the north side of West Hill Road was attached to several sizable barns. Today only an amended form of the house remains. The December, 1897 obituary for Peter's daughter Paulina in the Vermont Phoenix states that she "was born on the Oliver Blood farm . . . July 26, 1813," but moved to the West Hill Road farm when she was 7 years-old. "Aunt" Paulina spent most of her life there. Both of the women married to her brother Charles Blood died prematurely. In 1841 he married Lydia Joslyn, daughter of Job and Lydia (Willson) Joslin, who died in 1844. In 1846 he married Eliza Harding, who died in 1857 after giving birth to one daughter, Mary Ann Blood (1849-1933). As a result, in 1857 Charles was a single widower in his mid-50s with an eight-year-old daughter. Aunt Paulina became the enduring woman on the Charles Blood farm; she is listed there in the four 1850-1880 Censuses.

Charles was considered an expert on sheep in the 1840s when they were a agricultural staple in Vermont. The Windham County Agricultural Society ("WCAS") appointed him judge – the person who awards prizes – of Putney sheep at the September 1844 Annual Fair. Vermont Phoenix, August 2, 1844. It seems reasonable to infer that Charles was a West Hill sheep farmer in the early 1840s. In 1850 the WCAS made him judge of milk cows and heifers at that year's Annual Fair (held in Newfane). In 1853 he was elected Putney's representative to the Vermont General Assembly (he ran as a Whig), as reported in the Vermont Watchman and State Journal (Montpelier), September 22, 1853. At the 1857 WCAS Annual Fair (held in Montpelier), the

Vermont Phoenix reported that, “Among the Durhams the bull exhibited by Charles Blood, of Putney, attracted the most attention.” That bull won first prize.

Charles Blood’s little sister Jane in 1843 married Reuben G. Page in Brattleboro, a mechanic and laborer according to the 1850-70 Censuses. The Censuses indicate that Jane’s family lived elsewhere in Putney during 1850-70, but as of 1880 they lived on the Charles Blood Farm, where Reuben was a “farmer.” Charles and Aunt Paulina, ages 77 and 66, otherwise were alone on the farm that year. Jane’s sons Charles R. Page (1845-1920), age 33, and William A. Page (1854-1933), age 26, are also listed as “farmers” on the farm of their Uncle Charles Blood in 1880. When Charles Blood died two years later in 1882, the farm was transferred to Charles and William Page. As of 1910, the Page brothers grew broadleaf, “wrapper” tobacco, used to wrap smoking tobacco (as with cigars). The March 20, 1920 obituary for Charles Page refers to the farm as “the ancestral home of the Bloods, his mother’s family.” In 1927 William Page sold the “ancestral home” to Darius Allen. It had belonged to descendants of Robert Blood for over a century. William kept a lot of land across the road from the farmhouse on which he built a modest retirement home. His daughter Ethel Page – granddaughter of Jane Blood – was a school teacher who retired there in the 1950s. She died in 1989 at age 96.

III. 1840-1890: The Bloods Continue Farming as Many West Hill Farms Fail.

In the middle decades of the 1800s economic forces began pushing Vermont hill farmers to produce primarily – not incidentally – for the market. Hill farms that had existed for decades as self-sufficient family enterprises had to become more commercial. Many West Hill residents were unable or unwilling to make that change, particularly on small farms miles from increasing village commerce and the railroads. Between 1830 and 1870 a multitude of the Bloods’ West Hill neighbors’ homes and farm were abandoned. In many instances first generation settlers died off and their children moved elsewhere. Thus, most of the homes and farms on Banning Road occupied in 1810 were empty by 1860, as the men and women who built them died and their children left. The Dusty Ridge Blood farm remained prosperous, as did the nearby Wood farm on Orchard Hill and, it appears, the Charles Blood farm. The Bloods’ considerable land holdings, and a large extended family that had lived on West Hill for generations, may have helped make them more resilient. It is also likely that the three farms successfully adapted to changing circumstances.

A historian writing in the late 1880s about Putney in 1833 observed, “[a]t that time Putney had a larger population than it now has, and much of this was on its [now] greatly deserted hillsides.” Vermont Historical Gazetteer, Vol. V., p. 256. Nowhere in Vermont “was the desertion of farms so noticeable as in the older sections, particularly in Windham County. . . .” Wilson, p. 108.

Visiting West Hill in the summer of 1891, D.L. Mansfield found “only three houses left standing” on the road stretching along West Hill from Dusty Ridge to Dummerston. Vermont Phoenix, 25 Dec 1891, p. 2. From the abandoned Joseph Allyn farm and the Gideon Cudworth house on the south end of the road, continuing north along the ridge to the Blood’s, Mansfield determined that all other farms and houses been deserted. The road travelled by Mansfield in 1891 appears on the Cory-Carpender map as today’s Banning Road. The map depicts 18 cellar

holes along that road from the Allyn and Cudworth places (## 36 and 31) to Dusty Ridge. In addition, “on the road running west from the Gideon Cudworth place into Brookline all the farms are abandoned and all the houses are gone” The Cory/Carpender map shows four more cellar holes along that road. In short, by the summer of 1891 only 3 of 22 houses remained standing on those two roads.

The reasons for the abandonment of so many West Hill farms and the accompanying decline in Putney’s population were obscure to some contemporaries (and some historians still squabble about it). An observer of West Hill in the late 1880s noted that, “for some reason, there has for forty years past been a gradual decrease in the number of inhabitants, and many of the farms have been appropriated for grazing purposes. Cattle and sheep now occupy the fields which were once cultivated by the hand of man.” *Vermont Historical Gazetteer - Vol. V*, “Putney,” Rev. Amos Foster, p. 218.^{viii}

A significant factor was the opening of lands west of New England. In the mid-19th century New Englanders and new American immigrants had the option of moving westward, utilizing rapidly expanding railroads and the Erie Canal (opened in 1825). Those who may otherwise have settled in Putney, and some Putney natives thinking about their futures, went west. The mid-west offered vast, level fields with rich, deep soils and few rocks. Railroads connected midwestern farms to markets in the Northeast, where midwestern products competed with Vermont products to drive down prices. For example, 19th century Vermont wheat production was eradicated. Vermont production fell 15% between 1849 and 1869, and remaining production fell 92% between 1869 and 1899. It was simply cheaper to grow wheat and get it to market in and from the mid-west. Similarly, between 1820 and 1845 pork and beef prices went down about 50%. Corn produced in New England for 40-50 cents a bushel could be raised in Illinois for 12-15 cents. Wilson, p. 65. Land in the mid-west also was cheaper than in New England.

The railroad began snaking into northern New England from Boston in the mid-1830s. The Bellows Falls Times, January 14, 1849, page 1, reported on the first train to reach that town (evidently on the east side of the river):

The engine came up in grand style, and when opposite our village the monster gave one of its most savage yells, frightening men, women, and children considerable, and giving forth deafening howls from all the dogs in the neighborhood.

Wilson writes that 1849 “marked the high point of railroad construction in Vermont.” In February of that year rail was laid north from Massachusetts into Brattleboro, and “was soon extended up to Bellow Falls.” Wilson, p. 41. That rail line went through Putney.

The railroad opened Windham County to a varied and competitive outside world. Today, in the age of electronics, the railroad may seem quaint. But it was a dramatic development in the mid-1800s. Vermont hill farms may have experienced a net benefit for a decade or so, by being in ready contact with southern New England markets. Soon, however, a flood of farm products from the prairie states challenged hill farms by bringing down prices.

The mid-19th century also introduced the Industrial Revolution, with new and improved farm tools, and new job opportunities in New England cities. For example, Rutland, Vermont native and blacksmith John Deere moved to Illinois in 1836, and that same decade began producing pitchforks, shovels, and the first commercially successful cast-steel plow with a polished, self-scouring surface. Farms that had relied upon a simple one-piece plow, and a sickle made by a village blacksmith (who may have accepted farm products in trade), now learned of new, more effective tools requiring cash purchase. Similarly, while early settlers made cloth, thread, and clothes at home, now factory-made fabrics and clothing could be purchased. To acquire these tools and domestic products required cash, which in turn required a more commercial farm.

New factories offered jobs that for many contrasted favorably with hard farm life. A stream of young women left the farm for new Massachusetts textile mills. Life on a hill farm in the early and mid-19th century offered little future for most women except marriage, and they knew that marrying a farmer was serious business – they had seen their mothers wear themselves out with farm work and bearing and caring for multiple children.^{ix} It was not a realistic option for most young farm women without funds to move to the western frontier, but they could find work at one of the new southern New England mills. In 1845 50-75% of the young women working in Lowell, Massachusetts textile mills came from Northern New England, including 1,200 from Vermont. Wilson, pp. 67-71.^x

Members of the Blood family were not immune to the idea of moving west. Robert Blood's youngest son Jonathan, and Jonathan's (second) son Horace, both moved west from Putney in the 1830s. In 1802 Jonathan married Putney woman Mary "Polly" Scott, and the couple had six children. In the 1930s they moved 375 miles west to Aurora, New York, southeast of Buffalo. The 1830 Census places the family in Putney, but the 1840 Census found them in Aurora. Jonathan Blood died there in 1845 at age 64; Polly in 1866 at 81. Their son Horace Willard Blood, born in Putney in 1804, married Putney woman Nancy Fairbanks and in the 1830s the couple had five children in Putney. They then followed Horace's parents to Aurora, where Nancy had nine more (!). In early 1870 Horace and Nancy sold their New York farm and moved to Remington, Indiana, where they are listed in the 1870 and 1880 Censuses. Horace Blood died there in 1889 at age 89. Nancy predeceased him in 1885 at age 79. The couple is buried together in Remington. Another Blood extended family member who went west (in the 1860s) was Solon Woolley, the son of Oliver Jr's sister Anna Blood. He returned after a decade in Kansas, as discussed below.

In the 1830s-60s sheep provided many Vermont farmers a temporary respite. Mills making wool fabric and clothing created a strong demand for good wool. And Vermont hill farms were well-suited for sheep. The joke was that a sheep's nose was so narrow that it could reach between the rocks to graze. By 1840 in Vermont there were 1,681,000 sheep – more than five for every person. During the early 1840s the Governor of Vermont described wool as "the staple of the State." Wilson, p. 81. By 1850, however, rising western wool production brought down prices. In Windham County in 1851 it cost \$1.25 - \$1.50 to keep a sheep for a year, and the average annual wool per head was three pounds. Wool that year sold for 40 cents a pound, which amounted to \$1.20 per sheep – less than the cost of production. Wilson, p. 84. The Civil

War brought an upsurge in demand for wool for uniforms and shawls, but it did not last. By the late 1860s Vermont farmers were selling sheep.^{xi}

Oliver Blood Sr's sons Oliver Jr and Luke Blood managed the Dusty Ridge farm in the last half of the 19th Century. In 1844 Oliver Jr married Mary A. Hills of Brookline. That same year Oliver Jr's little brother Adams Blood died at age 25 (of unknown causes). When Oliver Jr and Mary had their first son in 1847, they named him Adams. The 1850 U.S. Census found Oliver Jr and Mary, ages 40 and 33, living with Adams (age 3). They lived in the upper house; Mary was pregnant with their second of four children, Reuben, who would be born in 1851. Meanwhile Oliver Sr, 80 years-old, was living in the lower house that he built, with Anna, 68, and three of their adult children: Luke (age 30), Sarah (35), and Hannah (33). Notably, Luke is the only one of the five with "farmer" listed as his occupation. The 1850 Census lists the value of Oliver Jr's real estate as \$5000, and the value of Luke's as \$2500.

At the October 13, 1852 Windham County Fair in Fayettville (called Newfane after 1882), Luke won first place for two-year-old steers, and second place for three-year-old steers. He doubtless walked his steers to the County Fair down the (now abandoned) road from Dusty Ridge to Brookline, which abuts Newfane.

In the mid-1850s the Townshend family transferred ownership of their Dusty Ridge property to Westminster man Lorenzo Field. John Townshend died in 1827, and his wife Eunice (Fairbanks) died in 1837. Their son John Townshend Jr appears to have been on the farm in 1850. John Jr died in 1858, and evidently none of his eight sons chose to farm Dusty Ridge. However, one of his four daughters, Martha Townshend, married Lorenzo Field. The 1850 Census lists Lorenzo as a "harness maker" in Westminster.^{xii} In 1853 his first wife, with whom he had one child, died. In June of 1854, when Lorenzo was 38, he married 36-year-old Martha Townshend. The couple settled in the Townshend house on Dusty Ridge and had three children in the late 1850s. Martha died in early 1860 at age 44. Lorenzo then married a third time, to Dummerston woman Elvira Haven. That couple had two children while raising Lorenzo's four other children in the Townshend house. After Lorenzo's death in 1888, the Townshend/Field property was sold in 1889.

Returning to the Dusty Ridge Blood farm, after Oliver Blood Sr died in 1860, Luke and his family remained in the lower house for the remainder of the century. The "History of Putney, 1753-1953" refers to "the Luke Blood farm, where George Heller now lives." Page 57; see also page 180 (describing the Bloods, including Luke and Oliver Jr's sister "Aunt Sarah," called that "by all who knew her").

The 1860 Census was taken in June of that year, four months after Oliver Sr's death in February. In 1853 Luke married Marlboro, Vermont woman Martha Jane Warren. The Census lists Luke and Martha with their two children Albee, age 2, and Eva, 10 months. Living with Luke's family was his widowed mother Anna, age 78; his sister Aunt Sarah, age 45; and his nephew Franklin, age 13. Franklin was the son of Luke's little brother John Blood. He may have just been visiting Luke's family – the 1860 Census also lists him in his parents' Grafton household. In the second, upper Dusty Ridge house Oliver Jr and Mary, ages 50 and 43, lived with their first three children: Adams, 13, Reuben, 9, and Sarah, 2. In 1860 Luke's real estate

was valued at \$2,000; Oliver Jr's at \$3,350. Aunt Sarah also lists \$550 in real estate value. Anna died in April, 1864 at age 80. Her children buried her in the family plot. Anna's gravestone is inscribed, *Mother thou hast gone and left us, To the realms of bliss on high, Forever with the blessed to roam, And never more to die.*

In the 1860's Luke Blood continued to raise prize-winning cattle; Oliver Jr also won awards for cattle. At the Windham County Agricultural Society's 1863 annual competition, Luke won first place for "steers – three years old," first place for "steers – two years old," and second place for "yearlings." Both Oliver and Luke won awards at the 1865 competition. In the 1869 competition Luke won awards for his two-year-old steers, as well as for "fat" (finished) cattle; he also listed pears and peaches for sale.

In early September 1861 Luke and Martha lost their first-born child Alba, then three years old. The boy's death certificate lists "Dysentery" as the cause of death. Alba's parents buried him near his grandparents and his cousin Hannah, beneath a tombstone inscribed, *Sad the thought that we shall never meet thee, Alba, here again. But thy loveliness will ever in our bleeding hearts remain.*

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, over 34,000 Vermont men volunteered to join the Union Army. Less than half returned to become permanent Vermont residents. In addition to those killed (5,128) and discharged due to wounds (5,022),^{xiii} others chose to settle elsewhere after seeing the outside world.

Five of Robert Blood's great-grandsons joined the Union Army from Putney – only three survived. Lyman B. Wood (1839-1916) (Eunice and Parkman Wood's first son), enlisted in May, 1864 in the 16th Vermont Volunteers Company B. After service he mustered out in Ohio and returned to Putney, where he raised a family and died at age 77 in 1916. Franklin Blood (1847-1864), son of John Blood (1821-1903), enlisted as a teenager in December, 1863 with Vermont's 1st Cavalry. He was taken prisoner two months later on March 2, 1864, and died in captivity in Virginia the following July at age 17 or 18 (his month and day of birth have not been located). Dorr James Blood, grandson of Jonathan Blood (1781-1845), born in Putney in 1833, also enlisted. He was wounded in the Battle of Bull Run but survived the war. Dorr followed his parents to Remington, Indiana where he raised a family, dying in 1929 at age 96.

Two of Peter Blood Jr's (1806-1880) sons enlisted in the Union Army: Dorr Decalvis Blood and Charles J. Blood, born in Putney in 1837 and 1845, respectively. Older brother Dorr enlisted in 1861 in Company C of the 2d Vermont Volunteers. He fought in two major engagements. In the Battle of Bull Run in the summer of 1861 Dorr received a gun-shot wound in his left thigh and returned to Putney. After healing he rejoined his Company. In September 1862 at the Battle of Antietam in Maryland he was hit with another musket ball, this time in his right hip. It left a wound that never healed. Dorr was discharged a Sergeant in April, 1864. He married in Putney and raised a family before dying in 1895 at age 58. His obituary in the Vermont Phoenix described Dorr's service in the Civil War, and observed that "when a man nurses upon his body an ugly and aggravating wound for a third of a century without uttering the least word of complaint, there centers upon him a great deal of respect for his patience and

cheerfulness.” Dorr’s little brother Charles J. Blood enlisted at age 18 in December, 1863 in the 8th Vermont Volunteers, Company I. On September 19, 1864 he was killed at age 19 in Virginia during the Third Battle of Winchester.

The 1870 Census found Luke and Martha in the lower house living with their children Eva (age 10 and “attending school”); Anna (age 7, “attending school”); Herbert (age 4); and Mary (age 2), as well as Aunt Sarah (age 60). Martha was pregnant with another son, born in December 1870, named Orlin. Oliver and Mary lived in the upper house with their children Adams (age 22); Reuben (19); Sarah (12 and “attending school”); and Ollie (7 and “attending school”). That year Luke’s real estate was valued at \$3000; Oliver Jr’s at \$7000. The two households also list “personal estates” valued at \$6000 (Luke) and \$16,500 (Oliver Jr). At the October, 1873 Windham County Fair both Luke and Oliver displayed teams of working oxen.

In mid-March of 1874 Luke’s wife Martha gave birth to their last child, Olive. The following month tragedy struck the couple again: in April their daughter Mary, 5 years-old, caught Scarlett Fever and died. Three days later their son Orlin, 3 years-old, died from the same disease. Luke and Martha returned to the family cemetery to bury two more children. The epitaphs on Mary and Orlin’s tombstones are too faint to read.

In October 1876 Oliver Jr and his sister Aunt Sarah were drawn into an unfortunate family affair involving the children of their older sister Anna. Anna, like their brother John, settled in Grafton, about a dozen miles north of Brookline. She married Grafton farmer Samuel Woolley Jr in 1827 or 1828. The marriage may have had problems at the outset. In 1831 Samuel published a newspaper notice reading: “This is to caution all persons against harboring or trusting ANNA, MY WIFE on my account, as I shall pay no debts of her contracting, as her father Oliver Blood [Sr] of Putney did on the fifteenth of September, 1830, bind himself to take her and maintain her from all expenses to me. SAMUEL WOOLLEY JR, Grafton.” Vermont Intelligencer (Bellows Falls), March 14, 1831. After Anna gave birth to seven children during 1828-46, Samuel died in 1852.

Anna and Samuel Woolley’s son Solon S. Woolley, age 10 when his father died, went west in 1866 and lived in Kansas until 1876. In Kansas he married and had three children. Meanwhile, in Grafton older brother Franklin married, had five children, and farmed both the homestead farm and a second farm that his (deceased) father had purchased two miles away. In March of 1876 Solon returned to Grafton with his family. Franklin and Anna arranged for him to live at and run the second farm, where Anna would also live. Franklin and his family resided on and farmed the homestead place.

By the summer the two brothers were quarrelling. Solon decided that there was not enough hay on his farm, and helped himself to a wagonful from the homestead barn without consulting Franklin. Upon discovering this, Franklin went to Solon’s farm with a neighbor and retrieved the hay. This angered Solon, who sued Franklin for trespass. As relations continued to deteriorate, in October Franklin, age 45, appealed to his uncle Oliver Blood. On October 24 Oliver received Franklin’s letter expressing concern about the well-being of his mother Anna (Oliver’s sister), and asserting that Solon, age 34, abused her and took her property. The next

day, October 25, Oliver and Aunt Sarah traveled down the mountain to Grafton. At the Woolley homestead they asked Franklin to accompany them on a visit to Solon and Anna, so they could all talk together and resolve matters.

When Oliver, Sarah, and Franklin arrived at Solon's house, Solon came to the door with a revolver and ordered Franklin off the premises. Oliver and Sarah pleaded with him to be sensible and put down the gun. Oliver later indicated that he initially thought Solon was kidding. Franklin did not retreat, and Solon shot him. Franklin ran back toward the road, with Solon in pursuit and Aunt Sarah running after her two nephews. After a short distance Franklin collapsed and Solon returned to the house. Franklin told Sarah that he was shot and couldn't stand up. He said that he wanted to see his mother before he died. Sarah called for Anna. However, as Sarah later explained, after "my sister started [toward Franklin], Solon took hold of her and turned her around." Oliver joined Sarah and the two raised Franklin's shirt and found the bullet hole in his stomach. They brought him to his house and summonsed a doctor. Aunt Sarah stayed with Franklin's wife and children until he died at home two days later. Anna later stated that when Solon and his wife Julia saw Franklin approaching, Julia loaded the pistol and passed it to Solon, saying that she would use it if he didn't.

The fratricide was described in detail by the papers, including the Rutland Daily Herald on October 31, 1876. Franklin evidently was a well-regarded Grafton farmer. The night after he died, Solon's house was burned to the ground. "The excitement attending the murder was greatly increased by the burning of Solon Woolley's house Friday night." Bellows Falls Times, Nov 3, 1876. According to Ludlow's Black River Gazette, the fire was "the work of an incendiary."

The early April, 1877 homicide trial in *State of Vermont v. Solon S. Wooley* in Windham County Court was covered in detail by the Argus and Patriot newspaper in Montpelier. Oliver and Sarah testified for the State, along with neighbors and doctors. Solon took the stand in his defense and testified that the shooting was not intentional. He asserted that ever since he returned from the west his brother Franklin abused and mistreated him as well as his wife Julia. Solon claimed that he brought out the pistol only to scare Franklin, and that it went off by accident. The jury came back after 30 minutes of deliberation with a verdict of second-degree murder. The sentence was life imprisonment.

In 1877 Julia gave birth to Solon's fourth child, Leon S. Woolley, conceived after the murder but before trial. The baby died a year later of "cholera infantum." The 1880 Census lists Solon as a "prisoner" at Windsor State Prison. In January, 1881 Julia Woolley initiated *In re the Estate of S.S. Woolley* in Kansas probate court to have Solon's (modest) Kansas real estate liquidated for the benefit of herself and their three children. Her petition explains that her husband S.S. Woolley "is and has been for the last four years an imprisoned criminal for life . . . and is now in the penitentiary of the State of Vermont."

The last information located as to Solon Woolley involves his escape from custody. On Aug 9, 1895 the Brattleboro Reformer reported the arrest of Solon's then 21-year-old son, living with a foster family in Hinesburg, after he killed a neighbor's dog with a scythe (noting that, "the

vicious instincts of his blood were constantly showing themselves . . . with an especial propensity to cruelty to animals”). The story added that Solon had been transferred from Windsor State Prison to the Vermont State Hospital for the Insane in Waterbury. Having persuaded the hospital that he was well enough to be “allowed to go out blackberrying,” Solon left and did not return – “that was the last that was seen of him.”

Oliver B Wood married Nellie Whitney in 1869 in Putney. The couple had a son, William A. Wood, born in 1870. In mid-1875 Nellie died of Consumption at age 24. Shortly after the Franklin Woolley debacle Aunt Sarah moved from Dusty Ridge to Oliver B’s house to take care of young “Willie.” The 1880 Census lists Aunt Sarah as “housekeeper” at the Wood house on Orchard Hill. Carrie Woolley, the teenaged daughter of deceased Franklin Woolley, also lived at the Orchard Hill house – as a “boarder” in 1880. In 1881 Oliver B remarried to Mary Jane “Jennie” Ellis and had six children as noted above (the first named Nellie). Aunt Sarah remained with the Wood family until her death in 1889 at age 81. Her 1880 will leaves her estate to Oliver B Wood. As explicitly directed in her will, Aunt Sarah was buried on Dusty Ridge.^{xiv}

In 1880 Luke and Martha, ages 64 and 50, lived in the lower house with their four surviving children: Eva, Anna, and Olive (ages 20, 18 and 5), and Herbert (14). Meanwhile, Oliver Jr and Mary, ages 70 and 63, were in the upper house with two of their three sons, Reuben (age 29) and “Ollie” (Oliver III, age 18). First-born Adams had moved to a farm in southeast Westminster – around a mile from Dusty Ridge – where he farmed for about 30 years. Remaining child Sarah in 1879 married Robert James Holton and moved to his Dummerston farm. The 1880 Census added some information (such as where parents were born) but dropped the valuation of real and personal property.

In August of 1881 an adventure involving Oliver Jr’s youngest child Ollie landed the family in the newspapers again. An overview of this “rather singular case” was published in the Vermont Phoenix on September 2, 1881, captioned, “THE LOST BOY RETURNED: A Full Account of His Disappearance; The Anxious Search; The Stories of the ‘Mediums’; How He Came to Himself and was Brought Back Unharmless.” The story explained that “Mr. Oliver Blood, the father of the wandering youth, is a somewhat eccentric but well-to-do farmer of Putney, who owns a large farm located on a high hill in the northwest part of the town.” “Mrs. Blood is an aunt of Col. H.E. Hill, an enterprising and well-known cotton broker of Boston, who with his family was spending two or three weeks at the farm.” At about 5 p.m. on Sunday afternoon Col. Hill went for a walk with Ollie and his brother Reuben. At the foot of Windmill Hill, about a mile from the house, they found an unknown flock of sheep grazing in one of the Blood’s pastures. Ollie went to drive out the sheep, while Reuben went on to visit his older brother Adams, and Col. Hill headed back to Dusty Ridge. After Col. Hill and Reuben returned to the Blood farm “night came but Ollie did not.” At about 8:30 p.m. Oliver and Reuben went out searching for him. “All night the father wandered over the hills and through the woods, searching and calling for his boy, but in vain.”

The Rutland Daily Herald on August 27 reported that Ollie was “somewhat eccentric in his habits,” and “had not visited the village of Putney more than three times in his life. He was,

however, a favored son. . . .” The paper described Ollie’s home as “a red painted, tidily kept farm house, situated in an out-of-the-way part of town.” The Herald added that when he disappeared, Ollie left his watch and cash at home, suggesting that he had not planned to leave.

On Monday morning the search resumed with family and neighbors. Newspapers reported that the town of Putney was in a “state of great excitement” over the missing son of a “prominent citizen.” Papers provided a physical description of Ollie: “He was 19 years-old, tall and slim, about six feet with a light complexion,” adding, “the general impression is that he has been kidnapped.” Swanton Courier, Aug 27, 1881. Two “mediums” came forward and opined that (1) Ollie had been kidnapped and brought to New York City for ransom, and (2) he had run away to New York City, aided by his mother.

“On Tuesday about 125 persons joined in a thorough search of the surrounding region” without avail. Searchers found scratched on a rock in a pasture fence near where Ollie was last seen the words, “Dear Mother, this will be alright sometime. Good-bye. Ollie Blood.” On Wednesday a third medium “appeared on the scene who, after going through certain maneuvers with a ‘wand,’” confirmed the kidnapping theory and implicated Col. Hill. Late on Wednesday someone in neighboring Brookline reported seeing a fellow fitting the description of Ollie. Ollie’s brother Reuben Blood, and his Uncle Oliver B Wood, proceeded to Brookline and found the report credible: on the evening of his disappearance Ollie had been near the West River bridge headed toward “Fayetteville” (the old name for Newfane). The next morning Reuben and Oliver B returned to Brookline, then went on to Fayetteville, ultimately tracking Ollie as far as Arlington, on the border with New York State. Meanwhile, that same day (Thursday) a telegram was received stating that Ollie had surfaced in Eagle Bridge, New York, close to the Vermont border and 65 miles from Putney. Older brother “Adams Blood at once started with his team for Eagle Bridge, and returned with Ollie Saturday night.” Pressed for an explanation, Ollie said that Sunday night on impulse he decided to run away. He left the message for his mother then walked west, sleeping in barns and sheds and eating berries and apples. After several days he decided to drown himself. After partly undressing he jumped into a river west of Eagle Bridge. Gaining consciousness on a downstream shore, Ollie had second thoughts and missed home. On the road a man picked him up and brought him back to Eagle Bridge. The Blood family “greatly rejoiced” at Ollie’s recovery and was “deeply thankful to their neighbors and others who assisted with the search.”

The following summer of 1882 Dummerston writer D.L. Mansfield visited West Hill and wrote about it for the Vermont Phoenix. In 1891 he wrote a longer, better-known article about a later visit, referenced above. On July 7, 1882 the first piece was published, titled “Putney West Hill – A Brief Sketch of Its Early Settlement.” Mansfield stated that, “[t]he first settlements . . . were made soon after 1780, by persons from the southeastern part of Massachusetts.” After describing several West Hill farms no longer in their prime, he wrote that:

The soil in this locality, though rocky, is very good, and such as those farmers preferred to cultivate. It produced abundant crops of hay and grain, which enabled them to keep a large stock of cattle. They supported large families, and managed to accumulate

property. They were hardworking people; heavy stone walls enclose the fields and pastures on each farm, which must have cost them much labor.

Mansfield noted that at the site of the Allyn homestead (#35 on the Cory-Carpender map), “we espied two slate gravestones lying in the pasture across the road,” inscribed with the names of two first settlers, Joseph and Mary Allyn, the graves of whom had “been sadly neglected.” The couple’s son Rev. Lewis Allyn “preached for many years in the Baptist Church” on West Hill.

Mansfield observed that from the summit of West Hill “may be seen not less than fifty townships, lying in Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and the view in mid-summer is unsurpassed by any in New England.” His description reveals the amount of cleared land in 1882. Today most of West Hill is wooded.

Two years later, in July of 1884 the following description of the Blood farm appeared in the Windham County Gazetteer:

Robert Blood came to Putney from Groton, Mass., about 1782, and settled where his grandson, Oliver Blood, now resides, the farm having since remained in the possession of the Blood family. He died in 1816, aged eighty-four. His son Oliver, who was twelve years old when he came here, spent his life on the homestead farm, and died there in 1860, in his ninety-first year. He was succeeded on the homestead by his son, the present occupant. Another son, Luke, resides on road 2. Miss Sarah Blood and Mrs. Eunice Wood, of this town, and John Blood, of Grafton, Vt., are descendants of this family.

Pp. 272-86. Earlier that same year Oliver Blood bought the farm of I.X. Hayward, as reported in the Vermont Phoenix on February 1, 1884.

In October of 1891 Mansfield toured West Hill again, and wrote his longer piece, titled “Historical Putney West Hill: A Chapter of Unpublished History.” He appears to have felt the need to preserve some history at the end of an era. Having witnessed the multitude of abandoned farms and houses along Banning Road (as noted on pages 8-9 above), he arrived on Dusty Ridge and wrote the following:

In the next range of farms . . . several prosperous farmers are now living, some of them being descendants of the first settlers. Oliver Blood lives near the north end of the range and his brother Luke about one-third of a mile further south, and between these two places is the farm of Lorenzo Field, first settled by John Townsend. Robert Blood, the grandfather of Oliver and Luke, came to Putney from Groton, MA about 1782 and settled where either Oliver or Luke now lives. One authority says Oliver’s, and the other Luke’s as the ancestral farm. Robert died in 1816, aged 84. Oliver, his son, died in 1860 in his 91st year.

Vermont Phoenix, 25 Dec 1891, page 2.

It is significant that in 1891 the Blood farm was not only still in operation but prosperous. At that time most neighboring West Hill farms had long since been abandoned (as observed by

Mansfield). The Blood farm was in fact expanding as Oliver Jr bought other area farms. In addition to his 1884 purchase of the Hayward farm (above), in September 1890 it was reported that “John Bell has sold his farm on West Hill to Oliver Blood for \$700.” *Deerfield Valley Times* (Wilmington VT) September 26, 1890. In November, 1889 it was reported that Oliver Blood of Putney “has bought at administrator’s sale the farm belonging to the estate of the late Horace Carpenter in Westminster West, a back-hill farm of 240 acres, and one of the best dairy farms in this section, containing 40 acres of heavy timber, beach and maple. Price \$1,625.” *Vermont Phoenix*, November 22, 1889. Along the same vein, on February 26, 1881 the *Vermont Phoenix* reported that an area carpenter had “bought a large bill of lumber” to be “used by him this coming season in building a 40x80 barn for Oliver Blood to take the place of those burned.” It appears that as of the 1880s and into 1891, in contrast to most other West Hill farms, the Blood farm was indeed doing well.

IV. 1892-1920: The Blood Farm on Dusty Ridge Finally Comes to an End.

As the 19th century drew to a close, the third generation Bloods farming Dusty Ridge – Oliver Jr. and Luke – were old. If the family farm was to continue the fourth generation needed to take over. In 1891 this did not seem problematic: Oliver and Luke had three adult sons in Reuben, Ollie and Herbert, and Luke had three daughters. Tragically, all three sons died prematurely, and none of the three daughters married or farmed.

Oliver Jr died on January 16, 1892 at age 82. At the time his sons Reuben and Ollie were ages 40 and 30, respectively, and no doubt were expected to continue the farm. Reuben, however, became ill and died three days after his father, on January 19. Reuben had married in 1888, and left a widow and a two-year-old son, Arthur. A short newspaper report stated that, “Oliver Blood, 82, a life-long resident and wealthy farmer of Putney, died of pneumonia Sunday. He leaves a wife, two sons, Adams and Ollie Blood of Putney, and a daughter, the wife of Robert Holden of Dummerston. Reuben Blood, another son, died of complications growing out of an attack of the grip Tuesday.” *Burlington Weekly Free Press*, January 28, 1892. The death certificates state that Oliver died of kidney disease and Reuben died of pneumonia. The deaths of Oliver and Reuben left widowed Mary and Ollie alone in the upper house.

In the Spring of 1892 the probate court approved Mary’s petition to sell out-lying parcels of Oliver’s real estate. The May 6, 1892 *Vermont Phoenix* reported on the “Sale of the Property of the Late Oliver Blood.” “Spirited bidding” attended the auction of 10 lots of land on Tuesday, May 3. Well-known West Hill farmers Oliver B Wood and Julius Washburn each bought lots. Mary kept the deeds to the upper house on Dusty Ridge and about 300 acres of land around it. That acreage, it appears, included the Field/Townshend farm, which Oliver evidently purchased after the death of Lorenzo Field. We do not know why Oliver Jr purchased so much property late in life. Nor do we know why Mary, shortly after his death, opted to sell it. But by doing so she consolidated the farm on Dusty Ridge and reduced property tax exposure.

The day after the auction, on May 4 of 1892, Ollie committed suicide. According to the papers he “had been suffering from melancholia caused by his father’s death.” One paper, describing Oliver’s funeral at his home the prior January reported that Ollie had been in the

house but was “unable” to attend the service. The same newspaper that on Friday May 6 reported the Tuesday real estate auction also reported, in an abutting story, that early on Wednesday morning, while “deranged,” Ollie shot himself in the head with a rifle and died that afternoon (“the ball entering the front and passing nearly through the head”). The probate court handling Ollie’s estate valued it as over \$13,500 – an amount allowing a 30-year-old man in 1892 many options in life. But for Ollie losing both his father and his brother was unbearable.

The early 1892 deaths of Oliver, Reuben, and Ollie left Mary, age 75, alone in the upper house on Dusty Ridge. Her two surviving children, Adams and Sarah, were married and settled in Westminster and Dummerston, respectively. Mary opted to move in with Sarah in Dummerston, where she died of heart disease in May 1893, a year after Ollie’s suicide. Her estate was valued in probate after expenses at over \$13,000. It was divided between Sarah, Adams, and the sole offspring of Reuben Blood, his son Arthur (age 2 when his father died).^{xv} The deeds to the upper Dusty Ridge properties passed to Sarah. Sarah resided for a time at her family’s house on Dusty Ridge, as reported by the Vermont Phoenix on December 24, 1897. By the June 1900 Census, however, she was back in Dummerston, a childless widow after her husband died earlier that year. No member of Oliver Blood’s family would continue his farm.

What of Luke Blood and his family in the lower house? As the turn of the century approached, Luke was in his 80’s and Martha was nearly 70. Two of their three sons died as children (Alba and Orlin), leaving one: Herbert, age 33, along with the three daughters, Eva, Anna, and Olive, ages 41, 38, and 26 in 1900.

In early 1899, Herbert Blood announced that he would continue the Dusty Ridge farm. He obtained titles to his Uncle Oliver’s house and land from his cousin Sarah (Blood) Holton. The Vermont Phoenix reported on April 28, 1899 that:

Herbert Blood has taken deeds this week from Mrs. Sarah B. Holten of the Lorenzo Field farm and the Oliver Blood farm on West Hill. These farms contain about 150 acres each. Mr. Blood has also bought of Adams Blood within a short time the Shaw’s pasture of 80 acres. Mr. Blood will stock the farms with cattle and will carry them on in connection with his home farm.

Id. at page 9. Reference to Herbert’s “home farm” probably meant the farm of his father Luke Blood.

Herbert would not take on the Dusty Ridge farm alone: on May 4, 1899 he married Putney woman Nellie Jane Blodgett, then age 28. The newspaper announcement of the wedding wished the new couple well:

Herbert Blood, son of Mr. and Mrs. Luke Blood, and Nellie Blodgett, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Blodgett, were married at the Congregational parsonage last Thursday evening, Rev. Clarence J. Harris performing the ceremony. The affair was not public. Mr. Blood has recently bought the Oliver Blood farm on West Hill, and he and Mrs. Blood will keep house there, carrying on the farm in connection with some other farms which Mr. Blood owns. Mr. and Mrs. Blood are among the best known of the young

people on West Hill, and their many friends extend to them best wishes for a prosperous and happy future.

Vermont Phoenix, May 12, 1899, page 9.

The 1900 Census, taken on January 14th and 15th of 1900, found Herbert and Nellie on Dusty Ridge in the upper house. Luke and Martha, ages 84 and 69, were living with Eva, Anna, and Olive in the lower house. In late 1900 Herbert obtained reinforcements on the farm: one “E. Bovie” moved into the Townsend/Field house and “will work for Herbert Blood,” according to the Vermont Phoenix on November 30 1900.

In August, 1900 Oliver B Wood died in his sleep at age 52 of heart disease in his Orchard Hill house.^{xvi} He left his wife Jennie (Ellis) Wood with children ages 1 – 16 (Leon was 12). Jennie decided to sell the farm. A published notice announced an auction of the “first class farm” to take place November 2, 1900 and listed items to be sold. Evidently the Oliver B Wood farm, like the Blood’s, had been a successful enterprise. Stating that “this will be one of the largest auction sales held in this vicinity in recent years,” the notice opens a window to a substantial, diversified West Hill farm in 1900. The farm sold dairy products, including milk, cream and butter, as well as steers, tobacco, hay, corn, winter rye, apples and apple cider. Oliver B used a series of then modern agricultural tools, including a milk and cream separator, a small grist mill, scales, a corn planter and seed sower, mowing machines, various transportation vehicles, and a multitude of other tools indicating robust on-farm maintenance as well as carpentry capability.

We do not have a list of items from the nearby Dusty Ridge farm run by Oliver B Wood’s uncles. Accordingly, the 1900 auction notice is of interest. It lists the following:

Stock: 15 cows, 10 calves, one Holstein bull, 4 four-year-old steers, 4 three-year-old steers, 4 three-year-old heifers, 10 yearling steers and heifers, 1 cosset, 2 fat hogs, 1 pair horses – good workers and drivers, will weigh about 1000 pounds each. Hay and Grain: 40 to 50 tons of good hay, 120 tons of silage, 50 bushels of corn, 15 bushels of winter rye. Farming tools, etc.: 1 No. 5 Separator [used to separate cream from milk], 1 sheep power, 1 horse power (Boyer and Sons make) [believed to be early, portable steam engines], 1 Ensilage cutter with 24-foot carrier [used to chop silage and feed it into a silo], 1 grist mill, 1 circular saw and frame, 1 tobacco setter, 3 dump carts, 2 large truck wagons, 1 two-seated express wagon with pole and shafts, 1 basket surrey, 1 piano box buggy wagon, 1 skeleton buggy, 2 booted buggies, 3 traverse sleds, 2 long sleds, 1 Eclipse corn planter, 1 seed sower, 1 set scales, 2 Granite State mowing machines, 1 horse rake, 5 plows, 2 harrows, 1 pulveriser, 1 cultivator, 2 pair work harnesses, 2 breast plate harness, 1 wheelbarrow, 1 set pulley blocks, 3 scalding tubs, 1 large farmer’s stove and kettle, 4 forty-quart milk cans, 1 barrel churn, 1 first-class butter worker – nearly new, 1 fanning mill, 3 sets tobacco shears, tobacco needles, 5 ladders, 20 cider barrels, 500 gallons or more of vinegar, chains, forks, hoes, shovels, rakes, saws, nails, wiffletree, bars, blankets, halters, whips, baskets of all kinds, 1000 feet of lumber, more or less, and 1000 other tools and articles too numerous to mention found on a first class farm.

Luke Blood died a year after Oliver B Wood, in October, 1901 at age 86. His obituary observed that he was a “sterling old New England citizen. His long and useful life was marked by industry and devotion to duty.” Luke was “born June 24, 1815 on the farm which had been in the Blood family for many years . . .” The obituary observed that Luke left one son (Herbert), one brother (John, in Grafton, age 82) and three daughters, “the last of a large family.” Vermont Phoenix, November 1, 1901, p. 7.

In 1910 Luke’s wife Martha, age 79, was living with her three spinster daughters Eva (age 50), Anna (47) and Olive (36), in the lower house on Dusty Ridge. The occupation of her daughters is listed as “none.” Martha died in May, 1911 at age 80. Her obituary stated that during her final three months of illness she “received the tender care of her three daughters,” and that “to the last she showed a keen interest in all that pertained to the farm and the neighborhood.” Born in Marlboro, Vermont in 1830, she was “the last of the family in her generation.” After marrying Luke Blood in 1853 she “came to West Hill, Putney, and there rounded out her four-score years on the place to where she came as a bride 58 years ago.” Her four children left the epitaph, “*Somewhere yet on the hilltop, Of the country that has no pain, She stands in her beautiful doorway, To bid us welcome again.*”

At this point in the nearly 140-year, four generation history of the Blood farm, Herbert was the sole remaining member of the family farming Dusty Ridge. One of the economic pressures facing him was property taxes. The steady drain of population and farms led some towns to raise taxes. In the case of the Blood farm, taxes were substantial. An 1897 newspaper article reported that Luke Blood’s tax liability that year was \$10,740 – a huge sum at the time. Phoenix, June 12 1897, p. 7. A 1905 article captioned “Heavy Tax Payers” lists Putney land owners paying taxes over \$3,000. Included are “Mrs. Luke Blood,” paying \$4,876; Herbert Blood paying \$3,525, and Eva Blood paying \$4,120. Phoenix, June 9, 1905, page 5. In short, it appears that the Bloods’ aggregate Dusty Ridge tax liability was over \$10,000 a year.

Herbert raised a variety of fruits and vegetables. At a late September, 1905 agricultural display at Agricultural Hall in Brattleboro “Herbert A. Blood of Putney had a fine display of Green Mountain Potatoes.” Windham County Reformer, September 29, 1905. At Putney’s October 1910 Grange Fair local farmers (including E.W. Aiken, father of future Senator George Aiken) exhibited agricultural products. The October 21 1910 Vermont Phoenix reported that “H.A. Blood” won a first for Northern Spy apples; first for Porter apples; first for Bell Flower apples; second for Pound Sweet apples; a third for Potatoes; a second for corn; a first for carrots; first and second for grapes; and second for Sheldon pears. “Mrs. H.A. Blood” won a “special” for her pansies. In 1910 Herbert was an officer of the Congregational Church and “Master” of the Putney Grange. At a September, 1911 Grange fair Herbert won awards for potatoes and pears. Future Senator George Aiken, another young grower of small fruits with a farm near that of Oliver B Wood’s, also attended Grange functions. A June, 1912 Vermont Phoenix article reports both men attending a Putney Grange meeting (at which Mrs. Blood “gave a reading”).

Although Herbert Blood was able to grow fine fruits and vegetables, either there was not enough profit at the farmgate or he was not enjoying the work. As the second decade of the 1900s came to a close, Herbert and Nellie decided that farming was not for them. In July, 1919

Herbert “sold his farm on West Hill, known as the Fields and Oliver Blood farms, to Charles Townsend of Brattleboro.” Vermont Phoenix, July 11, 1919, p. 2.^{xvii} Herbert bought “the Miles place” near Putney village, planning to take possession as soon as a tenant moved out. The 1920 Census in January of that year found Herbert and Nellie still on the farm, childless at ages 54 and 48, awaiting the move to the village. Meanwhile, it appears that two of Luke’s three daughters also were still on Dusty Ridge in 1920. The Census found Olive and Eva living together at ages 43 and 60, now described as “farmers.” Anna, age 58, had moved to a different Putney residence, where she listed her occupation as “seamstress.”

In 1920 Herbert and Nellie moved to their new house. Within two years both were dead. Nellie died in June, 1922 at age 51, “after fourteen years of continuous ill health.” Phoenix, June 30, 1922. Her death certificate cites a Cerebral Hemorrhage and Epilepsy. A month later Herbert committed suicide at age 56. His obituary stated that, “the end came unexpectedly, almost at the same hour of his wife’s death four weeks ago. He felt her loss keenly, and the release from the constant care and devotion he had given her through many years of illness affected him deeply.” The death certificate states that Herbert was a “widowed farmer” who died of “Strychnine Poisoning - Homicidal.” Putney’s Dr. L.H. Bugbee, the attending physician, deemed suicide a homicide (the killing of a human being).

On August 16, 1922 Herbert Blood’s possessions were auctioned at his house, “on the Westminster West Road about one mile from Putney village.” Vermont Phoenix, August 11, 1922. The list of items for sale indicates that Herbert either continued farming at the new place, or brought equipment there from Dusty Ridge. He had a substantial collection of then current agricultural equipment. In addition to two horses, two cows, 40 fowl, 12 chicks, and two tons of new hay, the listing included a John Deere-Syracuse Sulky Plow; a manure spreader; a McCormick-Deering Horse-Drawn Mower; a Champion wagon with bunks and hay wagon; sleds; buggies; 3 sidehill plows; sugaring equipment including an evaporator; a cream separator; and a variety of other farm equipment and household items.

In 1922 Oliver Jr’s son Adams was 75 years-old. He had sold his Westminster Farm in 1905, several years after his wife died, and moved in with his sister Sarah in Dummerston. Sarah died in 1919 at age 61. Adams died in 1927 at age 80.

During the 1920s and ‘30s Luke and Martha’s three daughters, Eva, Anna and Olive, engaged in various activities at the Putney Federated Church. By 1930 all three had left Dusty Ridge and moved to town. For the first time since 1782 there were no Bloods on Dusty Ridge. Eva and Olive are listed in the 1930 Census on what is now Westminster Road, while Anna lived alone on Brattleboro Road. Olive’s 1945 death notice states that she was living on “north Main Street, Putney.” Eva died in 1949 at age 90 in the Brattleboro Retreat.

Anna Blood was the last surviving member of her family. In 1955 she died at age 93, at Pines Convalescent Home in West Chesterfield, NH. By that time, memory of her large family had faded. Anna’s obituary in the Brattleboro Reformer confused her grandfather Oliver and his father Robert, stating that the former was “one of the early settlers of Putney.” In 1955, over 170

years after Robert Blood settled on West Hill and about 35 years after the family left Dusty Ridge, it seems no-one remembered.

Dedicated to my father, 20th century West Hill farmer William H. Darrow Jr, who loved Putney history and the old Putney natives he knew in the 1930s-60s. He collected most of the attached photographs, writing on the backs what they depicted. Thanks to Mary Heller-Osgood, George Heller Jr, and Evan Darrow for assistance.

NOTES

ⁱ In 1687 land in the future town of Vernon was obtained from Native Americans of that area in exchange for “200 fathoms of Wampum and £57 value of trading goods.” Vermont Historical Gazetteer, Vol. 5, “The Towns of Windham County” (1891), p. 275. In 1715 Massachusetts ordered the first survey of southeastern Vermont (Putney, Dummerston and Brattleboro), by a crew including surveyors, helpers, and Abenaki familiar with the area. In 1724 Windham County became home to Vermont’s first permanent white settlement (Fort Dummer in Brattleboro). Starting in 1733 tall white pines in Putney’s Great Meadows were cut and floated down the Connecticut River for the British Royal Navy to use as ship masts. In 1736 the General Court of Massachusetts voted to lay out four townships on the west side of the Connecticut River: No. 1, Westminster; No. 2, Putney; No. 3, Dummerston; and No. 4, Brattleboro. In 1740 Putney’s first fort was built in the clearing on the Great Meadows. Putney was chartered in 1753.

ⁱⁱ Northern migration was inhibited by conflicts over control of the northern frontier. The contest between England and France culminated in the French and Indian War (1754-63). The 1763 Treaty of Paris ceded control of land east of the Mississippi River to the British. Another struggle for control then ensued between the British Colony of New York and early settlers granted land by New Hampshire’s Royal Governor John Wentworth. New York insisted that the King gave it authority over lands between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers. Wentworth, however, had bestowed land grants in that area for years – land grants upon which settlers cleared land and started farms and families. New York courts issued eviction orders against such settlers, which armed New York sheriffs sought to enforce. This dispute – giving rise to Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys protecting the “grants” – preceded the American Revolution and continued during it. Due in part to these conflicts, in 1762 there were only three families in Putney, a number that increased to 15 in 1765 (outside the Great Meadows). Hall, *History of Eastern Vermont*, p. 95. The first blacksmith in town, Capt. Daniel Jewett, “commenced about the year 1773.” Hall, p. 96. During the Revolution, citizens of the area met in the town of Westminster in 1777 and declared Vermont an independent republic (a declaration rejected by New York). After the Revolution ended in 1783 a steady stream of settlers began moving into Vermont. In 1791 it became the 13th State. The State’s population jumped 80% between 1790 and 1800, and 40% again between 1800 and 1810.

iii While we know that early settlers favored high ground, we don't really know why. Searles writes that early Vermont settlers "usually chose to place their houses on high points of land to maximize availability of the best soil, avoid flooding, and escape swamp fevers." *Two Vermonts*, p. 6. Yet loamy, rich alluvial valley soils are generally superior to hill soils and are easier to cultivate. Hence the multitude of farms operating today along Route 22 from Ferrisburgh to Fair Haven, and in the Connecticut River Valley. The meaning of "swamp fever" is unclear. Wilson, ordinarily thoroughly researched, submits that settlers preferred the hills because "narrow valleys were often subject to destructive spring floods" and "land along the streams was apt to be swampy." *The Hill Country of Northern New England*, p. 124. However, much of the Connecticut River Valley is not fairly described as "narrow." And even if some lowland streams produce swampy areas (such as Sacketts Brook along southern Westminster West Road near Sand Hill Road), there are ample nearby areas that are sufficiently drained (such as the Goodell Farm, operated throughout the 19th century by the Tafts followed by the Washburns, on Westminster West Road less than a mile north of Sand Hill Road). Wilson adds that flooded waterways are often clogged with fallen tree trunks and beaver dams, such that the drier high ground was more readily cultivated. Again, however, he seems to exaggerate the extent of flooding, at least in Windham County. Also, the necessity of clearing rocks from hill fields and ways may counterbalance river valley obstacles. It appears that early settlers preferred high ground over both narrow and wide valleys as well as well-drained and swampy areas. As to concern about Native Americans, during the French and Indian War the French encouraged Native Americans allies to raid northern settlers, and the British did the same during the Revolution (while discouraging the scalping and murder of women and children). See *Indian and Tory Raids on the Otter Valley, 1777-1782*, by Wynn Underwood, *Vermont Quarterly*, Vol XV, No. 4, October, 1947 (accessible on the internet at <https://vermonthistory.org/journal/misc/Indian&ToryRaids.pdf>.) The British campaign relied upon Indian raiding parties to terrorize northern settlers by plundering and burning farms and taking males captive. In response, in early 1780 the American military built Fort Vengeance in Pittsford, Vermont (so named after a soldier who left the Fort alone was killed and scalped). In the October 1780 "Royalton Raid," 300 Mohawk Indians led by British officers attacked and burned the towns of Royalton, Sharon and Tunbridge along the White River in eastern Vermont. The January, 1832 pension application by Putney Revolutionary Soldier Zenas Hyde, who in 1777 fought at the Battle of Bennington, states that in May, 1780 he and another man were "called upon by the authority of the Town of Putney to go into the service of the United States and that they did accordingly at that time march in said service from said Putney to Pittsford, Vermont, on Otter Creek and were stationed at the new fort [Fort Vengeance] commanded by Major Ebenezer Allen . . . that they were employed as Rangers to guard the frontier; that he frequently made excursion between said fort and Crown Point on Lake Champlain; that he served . . . 'til . . . December, seven full months." Cautious Yankees choosing where to settle in the northern frontier during the 1780s probably were familiar with these circumstances.

iv John Townsend was a contemporary of Robert Blood. The Townsend house and farm was transferred to Lorenzo Field in the mid-1850s, as discussed below. The 1856 Map of Windham County, Vermont by C. McClellan & Co., and the 1869 Map of Windham County, by F. W. Beers & Co., show both Blood houses, but identify the upper house as that of "O. Blood" and the lower house as that of "L. Blood." That is consistent with the circumstances of 1856 and '69. In those years third generation Bloods lived in both houses: Oliver Sr's son Luke Blood was

in the lower house with his family, and Luke's older brother Oliver Jr and family lived in the upper house.

^v “The First Baptist Church of Putney was organized November 12, 1787, consisting of about 40 members, and composed of persons residing in the west part of the town – an industrious, thrifty people, mostly farmers. In the year 1790 a house of worship was erected on the heights near where Oliver Wood now lives In 1836 the old meeting house was taken down and the following year a new meeting house was erected on a new site, far more convenient than the former one. . . . Many years of spiritual prosperity were enjoyed by the church and good numbers were occasionally added to its membership until it became one of the largest and most prosperous of the Baptist churches in the Windham County Association. . . . At this period a large proportion of the inhabitants of the town resided in the west part of the town, were a church-going people, [and] their congregations were large on the Sabbath. The church was prosperous until about 1840 or 1845 when in consequence of the large emigration and death of its members the society began to decline and became extinct about 1860, and their house of worship was sold, taken down, and the material used for other purposes.” Vermont Historical Gazetteer, Vol. V (Brandon 1891), “The Towns of Windham County,” Putney’s Baptist Church, by Rev. Henry C. Bacon, p. 237. A May 24, 1836 Putney town record indicates that the Selectmen discontinued Eddy Road and Gully Road that day.

^{vi} Two newspaper pieces about Parkman and Eunice’s son, Civil War veteran Lyman Wood, indicate that Lyman was born in the Orchard Hill house in 1837. The remains of a stone foundation just north of the house reportedly are all that’s left of a cider mill. After the house burned in the late 1800s, Oliver B Wood rebuilt it. In 1912 Horace Scott bought the house from Oliver B’s widow Jennie Wood. In late 1914 Scott sold it to Green Mt Orchards. Green Mountain Orchards owned the house and land for about a century, during which time the surrounding fields were used to grow raspberries and apples. Eunice and Parkman’s fourth son David Henry Wood (1845-1907) is the father of Gilbert “Gilly” Wood (1881-1979). Gilly Wood and his wife Elma (Fuller) used to bring children to West Hill schoolhouses in a horse-drawn carriage. In the 20th Century after the brick #2 School House on Tavern Hill Road was no longer used for school, Gilly and Elma acquired it and lived in it with their daughter Rachel (1919-1978). David Henry Wood was also the father of Willis Herbert Wood (1874-1953), who in turn was the father of Cecil (1913-2000) and Errol Wood (1926-2016) two more much-admired Wood men remembered by many current Putney residents.

^{vii} The spelling of Jane’s last name varies between Willson and Wilson. It is Willson on the March, 1801 notice of wedding to Peter Blood, but is Wilson on her 1864 gravestone. Similarly, her father’s name appears to be Willson in the 1800 Census, but Wilson in the 1790 and 1810 Censuses.

^{viii} Wilson analogized the abandonment of northern New England hill farms in the late 1800s to a “winter” following the “summer” of self-sufficient farming. *The Hill Country*, p. 95. Several historians challenge the analogy, contending that Vermont communities and culture remained creative and vigorous during the late 1800s. Searles concedes that in the wake of the great “Yankee Exodus,” “no state . . . seemed more physically and ideologically diminished by migration than Vermont.” *Two Vermonts*, p. 23. But it does not follow, he urges, that rural communities were in “decline” -- “the association with abandoned farms with general

agricultural retreat is inaccurate.” *Id.* at 25. Whether or not the abandonment of West Hill farms described by 19th century observers noted in this paper and evidenced by the multitude of cellar holes (for example on Banning Road), reflects “decline” or “retreat” may seem a bit rhetorical. Many from agricultural communities understandably view the widespread abandonment of hill farms and population decline as a form of decline or retreat. At the same time, it is probably true that others found growing stability and commerce in valley villages near railroads, and that “creative destruction” required by the market contributed to the failure of hill farms. Similarly, some hill farms transitioned to sheep, then tobacco or dairy, or small fruit.

^{ix} The Vermont Historical Gazetteer points out that a good half of early hill farming work fell to women, who in addition to bearing and caring for children, “picked their own wools, carded their own rolls, spun their own yarn, drove their own looms, made their own cloth, cut, made and mended their own garments, . . . made their own soap, bottomed their own chairs, braided their own baskets, wove their own carpets, quilts and coverlets, picked their own geese, milked their own cows, fed their own calves, and went visiting on their own feet . . . and this last they frequently accomplished barefoot, carrying their only pair of shoes in their hands to save wear until they approached the meeting house.” Wilson, p. 30.

^x Factors leading to the abandonment of hill farms in the 1800s besides the comparative ease of working midwestern soil and the difficult transition from small, self-sufficient farms to more commercial farms, include the location of hill farms miles from the village (and the railroad) on rough, hilly roads; the fact that hill farm fields were small and typically surrounded by steep or otherwise unusable land (such that if the farmer wanted more level fields he could not simply buy abutting acreage, but had to purchase a whole neighboring farm); long, cold Vermont winters; and significant property taxes without exceptions for farms. Wilson, pp. 116-124.

^{xi} Farmers who replaced sheep with cows moved toward a winning formula. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Vermont dairy farms did well, particularly those specializing in fresh milk, cream and eggs. Such perishables had to be produced close to New England markets, placing the Midwest at a disadvantage. Many dairy farms, however, were in the valleys, not the hills. Apple orchards also exploited a feature present in Vermont but not the Midwest: air drainage from the hills during spring frosts that can kill buds (heavier cold air settles on the lower valley floor).

^{xii} Lorenzo Field was the youngest son of Connecticut born, Yale educated Rev. Timothy Field, Minister of Westminster’s Congregational Church from 1807-1835. Rev. Field’s first cousins included Cyrus West Field (1819-92), an entrepreneur and financier with the Atlantic Telegraph Company when it laid the first telegraph cable across the Atlantic Ocean in 1858, and Justice Stephen Johnson Field (1816-99), appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court by President Lincoln.

^{xiii} These numbers are from the 1866 report of Vermont’s Adjutant General Peter S. Washburn, summarized in the North Star newspaper (Danville, Vermont) dated Nov. 10, 1866.

^{xiv} Aunt Sarah was the last Blood buried on Dusty Ridge. Dusty Ridge family members who died after her (and some before) are buried in Putney’s Mount Pleasant Cemetery, just north

of the village. West Hill Road Bloods who died in the 1840s-60s, including Peter Blood and his wife Jane Willson Blood; that couple's son John; and Charles Blood's first wife Lydia (Joslyn) Blood, are buried in Putney's Old North Burying Ground at the bottom of West Hill Road. Charles Blood and his second wife Eliza Harding, as well as Aunt Paulina, are in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

^{xv} Arthur Hills Blood died in Los Angeles in 1938.

^{xvi} Oliver B. Wood is buried in the West Hill Cemetery, along with his parents B. Parkman Wood and Eunice (Blood) Wood, his wives, his siblings, his children and grandchildren, and the larger Wood family.

^{xvii} Charles "Chas" Townsend (1878-1971), a descendant of John Townsend, appears to have lived in the upper house for several years before moving to Dummerston before 1930.

Bibliography

The History of Concord, Massachusetts, Vol 1: Colonial Concord, A. S. Hudson (Erudite Press, Concord 1904).

The Story of the Bloods: including an Account of the Early Generations of the Family in America in Genealogical lines from Robert Blood of Concord and Richard Blood of Groton, Roger D. Harris (G.K. Hall & Co. Boston, 1960).

History of Eastern Vermont, from its Earliest Settlement to the Close of the Eighteenth century, Benjamin H. Hall (Albany, N.Y., J. Munsell, 1865).

The Hill Country of Northern New England; Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1930, Harold Fisher Wilson (Columbia Univ. 1936).

Two Vermonts: Geography and Identity, 1865-1010, Paul M. Searles (Univ. N.H. Press, Durham, 2006).

Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windham County, Vt., 1724-1884, compiled and published by Hamilton Child, Syracuse, NY, July, 1884.

The Selling of Vermont: From Agriculture to Tourism, 1860-1910, Andrea Rebeck, Vermont History, Winter 1976, V. 44, No. 1.

The History of Putney, Vermont, 1753-1953, edited by Edith De Wolfe and others (Fortnightly Club of Putney, Vermont, 1953).

U.S. Censuses, public records and Vermont Newspaper articles.

Putney, Vermont: Showing Original Town Lines with Houses and Roads in Existence About AD 1800, Carpender, Moncure C. and Clifford E. Cory (1947).

DUSTY RIDGE BLOOD GENERATIONS

Generation 1

**Robert Blood (1733-1816) &
Thankful Proctor (1744-1828)**

Children:

Oliver Blood (1769-1860)
Robert Blood Jr (1771-1860)
Betsey Blood (1772-1851)
Peter Blood (1774-1840)
Henry Blood (1776-1864)
Zacheus Blood (1776-1841)
Sybel Blood (1778-1845)
Jonathan Blood (1781-1845)

Generation 2

**Oliver Blood (1769-1860) &
Anna Woolley (1783-1864)**

Children:

Hannah Blood (1801-1813)
Mary C. Blood (1802-1877)
Eunice Blood (1804-1885)
Anna Blood (1806-1880)
Sarah Blood (1808-1889)
Oliver Blood Jr (1810-1892)
Hannah Blood (1813-1856)
Luke Blood (1815-1901)
Adams A. Blood (1819-1844)
John Blood (1821-1903)

Generation 3

**Oliver Blood Jr (1810-1892)
& Mary A Hills (1817-1893)**

Children:

Adams Abel Blood (1847-1927)
Reuben R. Blood (1851-1892)
Sarah S. Blood (1858-1919)
Oliver "Ollie" Blood (1862-1892)

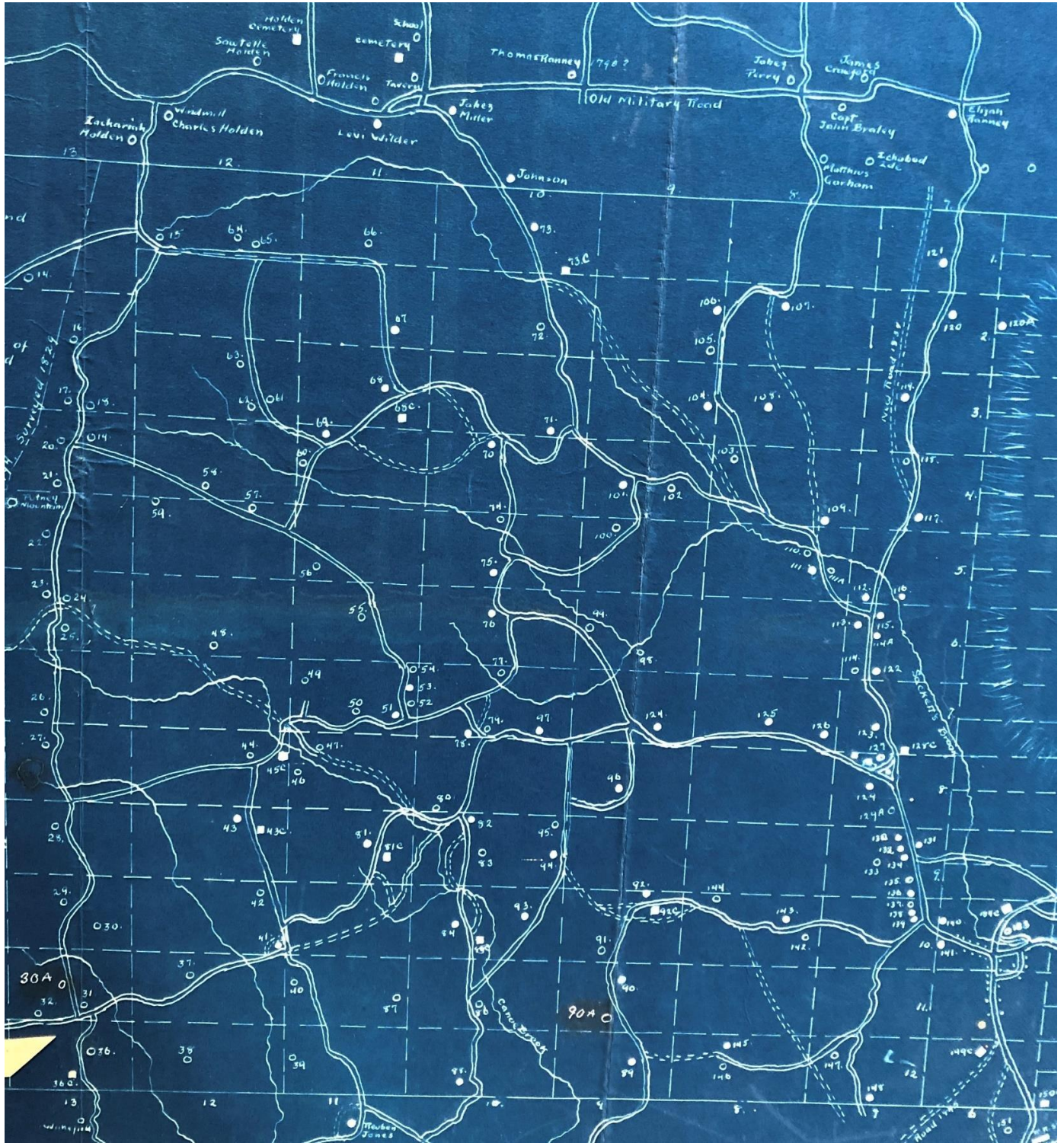
**Luke Blood (1815-1901) &
Martha Jane Warren (1830-1911)**

Children:

Alba L. Blood (1858-1861)
Eva Jane Blood (1859-1949)
Anna Ruth Blood (1862-1955)
Herbert Albin Blood (1865-1922)
Mary Emma Blood (1868-1874)
Orlando "Orlin" P Blood (1870-74)
Olive Maria Blood (1874-1945).

Generation 4

**Herbert Albin Blood (1865-1922) &
Nellie Jane Blodgett (1871-1922)**



Excerpt from Cory/Carpender map showing West Hill about 1800; key on next page. Open circles indicate cellar holes, white circles indicate houses still in use in 1947.

1. John Turner
2. Joseph Taft
3. Ezekial Willson
4. Charles Osgood
5. Samuel Bennett
6. Jonathan Radway
7. Daniel Benson
8. William Robbins
9. Robbins Cemetery
9. Peter Benson
10. Brick Church
- 11.
12. Round School House
- 13.
14. Stone House
15. Gideon Moore, 1787
16. George Pierce
17. Sylvester Johnson
18. Elisha Johnson
19. Lewis Miller, 1830
20. Stone Pig Pen
21. Barnebas Thurber
22. Silas Fairbanks, 1793
23. Asa Carpenter, 1808
24. Hatter's Shop
25. Perry Knight, 1823
26. Abiah Fuller
27. Dyer Jay
28. Wilmarth Radway
29. Joslyn Cudworth
30. Dyer Jay
31. Charles or Gideon Cudworth 1775
32. No. 3, Brick, School
33. John Read
34. Samuel Cudworth
35. Joseph Jay
36. Joseph Allyn
36. Allyn Cemetery
- 37.
38. Horace Kidder
39. Seth Cary
- 40.
41. William Perry
42. Ezekial Pierce
43. Moses Jay
43. Jay Cemetery
44. Lucas Willson, 1775
45. Dipping Hole Cemetery
46. Grist Mill
47. Grist Mill House
48. Asa Fuller
49. Lucas Willson Jr.
50. Abial Fisher
51. John Snow
52. 1st Baptist Church, 1790-1830
53. John Snow 1790
54. Jacob Burdett
55. John Talbot
- 56.
- 57.
- 58.
- 59.
60. David Gates
61. Heuker Gleason, 1791
62. Amos Beckwith
63. Darius Gleason
64. Robert Martin
65. Round Cellar Hole
66. John Bowen
67. Robert Blood, 1794
68. John Townshend, 1799
68. Townshend Cemetery
69. Oliver Blood, 1806
70. Daniel Jewett, 1774
71. No. 2 School House, 1817
72. John Bowen
73. William McWain, 1779
73. McWain Cemetery
74. John Townshend, 3rd
75. Jonas Snow, 1785
76. John Black
77. Benjamin Willson, 1782
78. No. 5 School House
79. 2^d Baptist Church, 1837
80. Major Alec Edwards
81. Daniel Davis, 1791
81. Davis Cemetery
82. Elijah Shaw, 1802-1806
83. Valentine Kerr
84. Christopher Ormsbee, 1782
85. West Hill Cemetery
86. Peleg Winslow
87. Tannery
88. Joseph Winslow
- 89.
- 90.
91. No. 9 School House
92. Aaron Houghton, 1792
92. Houghton Cemetery
93. Aaron Martin
94. John Shaw, 1789
95. Job Joslyn, 1802
96. James Smith, 1788
97. John Willson, House built 1776
98. Zenas Hides Sawmill
99. Jonah Johnson
100. Daniel Cushing
101. Samuel Wheat's Tavern, 1801
102. James Wheat
- 103.
- 104.
105. Abijah Moore
- 106.
- 107.
- 108.
- 109.
110. Crawford's Mill
111. Theophilus Crawford, 1799
- 112.
- 113.
114. Noah Sakin's 1st House, 1788
114. Noah Sakin's 2^d House
- 115.
116. Joshua Parker, 1764
- 117.
118. Willard Taft
119. Eleazor Nichols, 1784-1804
120. John Roberts
- 120A.
- 121.
122. Deacon C. C. Taft
123. Rev. Josiah Goodhue, 1776
- 124.
125. Joshua Hide
126. Jefferson Smith
127. 1st Congregational Church
128. Old North Burying Ground
- 129.
130. Major James Fitch, 1779
131. Major James Fitch, 1809
132. Foster A. Wheeler's Store
- 133.
134. Moses Johnson, 1773
- 135.
- 136.
- 137.
- 138.
139. Charles Kathan
140. Campbell
141. Hon. Phineas White
142. Dennis Luckling
- 143.
144. Arieal Jones
- 145.
146. Clark Campbell
- 147.
148. Alexander Campbell
149. Maple Grove Cemetery
150. Kathan Cemetery
151. Gardner Kathan
152. Capt. John Kathan, 1752
153. Capt. Asbel Johnson
154. Charles Shrigley
155. Timothy Underwood, 1778
156. T. Underwood's Brickyard
157. Jacob Lowell's 1st House, 1787
158. Lowell Cemetery
159. No. 13 School House, 1836
160. Amos Jones
161. Grindal Reynolds
162. Elijah Houghton
- 163.
164. Jonathan Twist, 1793-1804
165. Capt. James Clay, 1774
- 166.
167. Capt. James Clay, Jr.
168. Ephraim Clay
169. No. 7 School House
170. Warren Parker
171. East Putney Cemetery
172. Samuel Minott's Grist Mill, 1768
173. Samuel Minott's Saw Mill, 1768
174. Blacksmith Shop
175. Roswell Parkers Felling Mill
176. Mill
177. 1st Methodist Church
- 178.
179. Joseph Lusher
- 180.
181. William Clough
182. John Wilder
183. Old Toan House, 1812
184. Mount Pleasant Cemetery
185. Benajar Spaulding
186. Moses Perry
- 187.
188. Israel Keyes
- 189.
- 190.
191. Asa Washburn, 1785
192. Nathaniel Reynolds
193. Tenney
194. John Wilder, 1796
195. No. 11 School House
- 196.
197. Blacksmith Shop
198. Carriage Shop
199. Mill
- 200.
- 201.
202. Isaac Palmer, 1784
- 203.
204. Josiah White, 1785
205. William Bennett
206. Caleb Harding
207. No. 8 School House
208. Capt. David Foster, 1783
- 209.
- 210.
- 211.
212. Rufus Pierce, 1796
213. Saw Mill House
214. Saw Mill
215. Clover Hulling Mill
- 216.
- 217.
- 218.
- 219.
- 220.
- 221.
- 222.
- 223.
- 224.
- 225.
- 226.
227. Tall House 2^d Bridge
228. John & Joseph Perry, 1762
229. Thomas Aplin, 1789
229. Aplin Cemetery
230. Widow Green
- 231.
111. A. Amos Haile, 1782.
129. A. James Cummings, 1769
30. A. David Jay
90. A. Watto Pond
188. A. Town Farm Pond



The Robert/Oliver Jr Blood (upper) house on Dusty Ridge. It burned in the early 1950s and no longer exists. *Photos courtesy of Evan Darrow.*



The Oliver/Luke Blood (lower) house on Dusty Ridge. It burned in the late 1950s and no longer exists. *Photos courtesy of George Heller Jr.*



The John Townshend House. Above around 1900-10, when the house was in use and still had its barns; below, the 1930s when it was deserted. The house still exists and has been thoroughly renovated. *Photos courtesy of Evan Darrow.*



The Charles Blood - Page Farm on West Hill Road around 1910, with members of the Page family. The lower photo depicts Page men harvesting tobacco across the road from the house and barns, with Elm-Leigh Farm (now Putney School) in the background.

Photos courtesy of Putney Historical Society and Evan Darrow.



The Oliver B. Wood place on Orchard Hill. Top: the house, barns, and silo viewed from the field below the house. Bottom: the view southeast from below the house, with the Blood-Page farm at center right, and the recently built Elm-Leigh Farm at distant left. Both pictures from around 1915-16 after Green Mountain Orchards planted young apple trees. *Photos courtesy of Evan Darrow.*