



KNOW YOUR ROOTS

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A ROMANCE

There are many romances in our family, but the oldest one I can trace binds two of our greatest ancestral grandparents, Jasper Crane and our grandparent-to-be Robert Treat.

The friendship of Jasper Crane and Robert Treat began when they were both settlers of the original New Haven Colony in the seventeenth century. (See Know Your Roots – Volume VII, Issue 2, April 2002.) In the fan chart of Mary Ann Crane (Weebly Issue 1, June 2009), you can see Jasper Crane in the same generation as Robert Treat even though there was a big difference in their ages.

Jasper Crane also has as illustrious a history in our country as Robert Treat. He was also a prominent member of the New Haven Colony and settled in Branford. He, like Robert Treat who had settled in Milford close by, was also Magistrate of the Colony of Massachusetts at the same time. They became disenchanted with the rules that were being set forth, and the two of them banded together to look for unchartered territory to the west. Thus began this symbiotic relationship of these two men, one considerably older than the other.

After making a deal with the Indians and paying them for the land, Jasper Crane and Robert Treat, with several other families, moved to this new area in 1667 and called it New Jersey. And that is where my story begins with the families in New Jersey.

Family of Jasper Crane and Alice Leave

John, born about 1635

Hannah, born about 1639

Delivered, born July 12, 1642

Mercy (or Mary), baptized March 1, 1645

Azariah, born 1649

Jasper, born April 2, 1651

Family of Robert Treat and Jane Tapp (from his will)

Samuel, baptized 1648

John, baptized 1650

Mary, baptized May 23, 1652

Robert (Capt), born August 14, 1654

Sara, baptized October 9, 1656

Abigail, baptized 1659 (died young)

Hannah, born January 29, 1660

Joseph (Capt), born September 17, 1662

Jane

Ann

Jasper Crane and Robert Treat continued to serve their new community together. They both had marriageable children. What could be better than a union between the two families cementing the friendship of these two men? At this time, in English customs, the man dominated. Women had very little to say and children even less. That was obvious when men moved their whole families at will, as these men had proven in the past. So it stands to reason a blending of their families would make them very happy.

There is no doubt all the families knew each other. The wives socialized together and all the offspring did also. Azariah was eighteen and Mary Treat fifteen when they arrived in what is now New Jersey. I can envision the parties and many social gatherings taking place with these young people of the Crane family and the Treat family. I can see Mary being good friends with the three older girls of the Cranes. After all, a girl of 15 at that time was considered to be practically a woman.

Even in the colonies each settlement had to have a school that taught grammar, Latin, penmanship, reading and arithmetic and this school would include girls although separated from the boys. So no child of these families was unlettered. There had to be a school. But men were definitely the heads of the families and women were mostly subordinate. Even though both Jasper and Robert were non-conformists in their religion, I'm sure their social customs remained the same.

I like to think that a romance developed during these festivities between Azariah and Mary. By English law, Mary could not marry until she was eighteen. I can imagine Azariah asking Robert Treat for Mary's hand in marriage. I'm sure both families were pleased. I don't want to think that it was an arranged marriage, but it could have been because the fathers served so many years in different capacities together. Certainly Robert would have given his assent readily.



We know that by English custom, which was still very prevalent in the colonies, fathers were expected to provide their daughters with dowries. History tells us that Robert was very generous with his children. I would suspect that this house he built for his daughter was her dowry. The wedding took place in 1672 in New Jersey, and thus began our legacy with the Treat family. There is no record of the affair except the date.

This marriage joined two families of two intrepid pioneers of our land. Jasper and Robert were adventurers and men who followed their principles. Much has been written about their exploits, many of which they achieved together. They were courageous and fearless of the unknown.

In the end, Jasper died in 1680 and was buried in New Jersey. Robert Treat on the other hand returned to Milford, Connecticut and added many more accomplishments before he died in 1710 and was buried in Milford.

From this union of these two families our Treat heritage began. Azariah and Mary had nine children, among them John Winthrop who is the next of our Cranes. I'll let you dream a little about Azariah and Mary's romance. As for me, I believe their marriage was a love match.

Note: Look for the next issue September 1.

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