

The Fossil

Volume 120, No. 2, Whole No. 398 ♦ Sunnyvale, California ♦ January 2024

Mrs. Minter and the Shoggoths

by David Goudsward

H. P. Lovecraft occasionally employs a very subtle brand of humor in his works. This manifests as names and descriptions in his story that have little, if any, impact on the plot. This sly whimsy manifests as inside jokes, only recognized by his peers in *Amateur Journalism*.

In "The Shadow Out of Time" (1936), the character names and backstory would be recognizable to NAPA legend Charles "Tryout" Smith and UAPA officer Myrta Little, and few others. They are derived from a visit to Haverhill, Mass., to visit Smith. While visiting Haverhill's original burying ground, a quick walk from Smith's Boardman Street home, Lovecraft went to see the grave of Salem Witch Trial judge Nathaniel Saltonstall. Lovecraft noticed a well-preserved colonial stone for Nathaniel Peaslee, which he adopted as the protagonist's name in his "The Shadow Out of Time."

In the novella, Professor Nathaniel Peaslee of Arkham University was born in the family home on Boardman Street in Haverhill. Boardman Street is the road up to the top of scenic Golden Hill, a short stroll Lovecraft and Tryout took from Smith's nearby home. Peaslee develops amnesia. After he recovers, he discovers his mind was transferred to the body of an extraterrestrial in Earth's ancient past.

In the same paragraph where Professor Peaslee says he had no interest in the supernatural before his bout of amnesia that drives the story, Lovecraft mentions the maiden name of Peaslee's wife—Alice Keezar. Although no Alice Keezar is buried in Pentucket, a stone marks the burial of "Sarjant John Keyzar." John Keezar was killed in 1696/7 during an Indian raid. Sergeant



Lovecraft used subtle references in stories that his friends recognized. (A Shoggoth appears on the right cover.)

Keezar was the father of cobbler John Keezer, immortalized by Haverhill's beloved native son John Greenleaf Whittier in his ballad "Cobbler Keezar's Vision" (1861). In that poem, the cobbler is transported through time in a mystical vision and sees the glorious future of the Republic. So, in addition to using local names and places, he casually has a man who goes back in time married to a woman who is a descendant of a man who went forward in time.

In 1934-35, HPL assembled material for a memorial volume on Edith Minter to be published by W. Paul Cook. It never materialized. Still, he ended up with many of her papers and manuscripts (now at Brown University's John Hay Library). One letter was written in 1853 by her great-uncle George Washington Tupper. Tupper was a forty-niner toward the end of the California Gold Rush. So naturally, when Nathaniel Peaslee takes a nighttime stroll in the Australian outback, the only expedition member he encounters is an Aussie miner named Tupper.

An even more obscure inside joke appears in "In the Vault," inspired by a Tryout Smith suggestion. The story appeared in the November 1925 issue of *The Tryout*, with a dedication to C. W. Smith. A small town undertaker accidentally locks himself in the receiving vault among the coffins, waiting for spring thaw for burial. He is forced to stack the coffins to reach a transom window. As he forces the window, his feet break through the lid of the top coffin, injuring his ankles. Dr. Davis, the elderly village physician, is horrified to discover that pettiness can live beyond death.

In an atypical rural supernatural revenge tale,

Lovecraft stresses the fact that Dr. Davis is old. The story was finished in September 1925, the same month the UAPA president Edgar Davis' sister Ada started classes at Boston University Medical School, making her a very young Dr. Davis. Dr. A. Frances Davis opened her practice in the family house in Merrimac in 1934, where it remained until 1966.

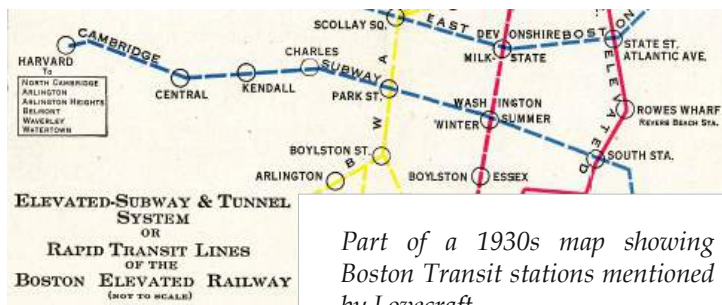
Other mentions are more obvious.

"I had largely given over my inquiries into what Professor Angell called the 'Cthulhu Cult,' and was visiting a learned friend of Paterson, New Jersey; the curator of a local museum and a mineralogist of note. Examining one day the reserve specimens roughly set on the storage shelves in a rear room of the museum, my eye was caught by an odd picture in one of the old papers spread beneath the stones. It was the Sydney Bulletin ... and the picture was a half-tone cut of a hideous stone image almost identical with that which Legrasse had found in the swamp."

- "The Call of Cthulhu" (1926)

The narrator's "learned friend" was Lovecraft's old acquaintance James F. Morton, amateur journalist and the museum curator in Paterson, New Jersey. Morton had single-handedly elevated the museum's geology collection to national prominence. Lovecraft's letters mention accompanying Morton on several rock-hunting expeditions. A later trip to California had Robert Barlow and E. Hoffmann Price similarly scampering up slopes in search of specimens.

But the most elegant inside joke was in "At the Mountains of Madness (1931)." A Miskatonic University expedition to Antarctica has gone very wrong. The sole survivors, Professor Dyer and grad student Danforth, are fleeing the subterranean caverns they



Part of a 1930s map showing Boston Transit stations mentioned by Lovecraft.

discovered in an unmapped mountain range. What they have found is ancient, extraterrestrial, and in hot pursuit. Danforth has gone mad with fear and keeps repeating the subway stops of the "Boston-Cambridge Tunnel." Dyer knows why Danforth endlessly chants the subway stops, but it is too horrific to explain.

Danforth's chant is "South Station Under - Washington Under - Park Street Under - Kendall - Central - Harvard." Today, the Boston-Cambridge Tunnel still exists and is better known as the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority's Red Line. The stations Lovecraft mentions still bear similar names they did in the years the writer frequented Boston. Only Washington Under has changed to Downtown Crossing, and Charles/ MGH is a new stop between Park and Kendall.

As to why Lovecraft chose this stretch of trolley line for Danforth's tenuous grip on reality, it was a well-known stretch of mass transit to him and other Amateur Journalists. South Station is where the southbound trains and buses arrive and depart (including to/from Providence). The route, South Station to Harvard, was the route to 20 Webster Road, the home of Edith Minitier. Danforth was chanting the mass transit route to the home of Amateur Journalism's doyenne! ♦

President's Message

Female Amateurs of the 1880s: A Virginia Trio and Massachusetts Duo

by Ken Faig, Jr.

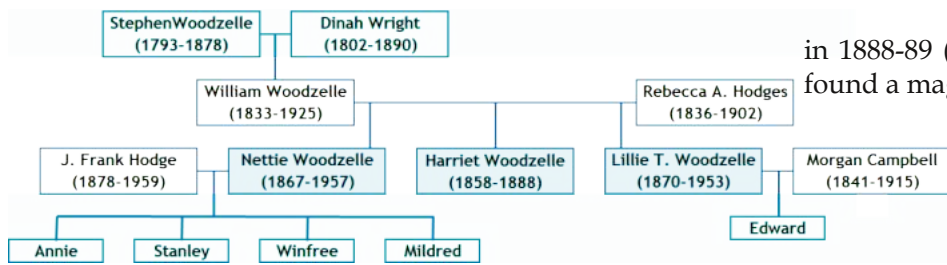
WRITING on "Women in Amateurdome" in the "Women's Representative" section of *Violet* for February 1886, Edith May Dowe mentioned Frances A. Parsons and Jennie M. Day, co-editors of *Duett* (A.A.S. date range 1885-86) in Westfield, Massachusetts, as members of the Young Women's Amateur Press Association (Y.W.A.P.A.) Later in the same column, she complained of the silence of "Bertha" (i.e., Bertha S. York Grant) and the Woodzelle sisters of Cleeks Mills, Virginia. Bertha was treasurer of Y.W.A.P.A., but Miss Dowe (later Mrs. Minitier) did not mention whether the Woodzelles were members.

I researched Bertha for the last issue of *THE FOSSIL*, so decided to discover what I could find out about Parsons, Day, and the Woodzelles.

The Woodzelle Sisters, Cleeks Mills, Virginia

Edith May Dowe did not name the Woodzelle sisters in her column, but Truman Spencer in *The History of Amateur Journalism* (The Fossils, 1957) mentions three: Fannie, Nettie, and Lillie.

The 1880 census enumerated the following household in Warm Springs, Bath County, Virginia (all except head born in Virginia of Virginia-born parents):



William Woodzelle (head), age 47, farmer, born Virginia of English-born parents; Rebekah Woodzelle (wife), age 44, housekeeper; Harriet F. Woodzelle (daughter), age 20; Lucy E. Woodzelle (daughter), age 20; Nettie B. Woodzelle (daughter), age 15; Lilla F. Woodzelle (daughter), age 11; Martin L. Woodzelle (son), age 26, school teacher.

William Woodzelle (1833-1925) was the son of Stephen Woodzelle (1793-1878) and Dinah Wright (1802-1890). He served in the Civil War for the Confederacy with Company G of the 11th Virginia Cavalry. His wife was Rebecca Ann Hodges (1836-1902).

Harriet Frances "Fannie" Woodzelle was born on May 29, 1858 and died of diabetes on May 28, 1888, one day before her thirtieth birthday. Her birth and death both occurred in Bath County, Virginia. Spencer (p. 202) notes that Fannie gained fame as an amateur author from Cleeks Mills, Virginia.

Nettie B. Woodzelle (born Jan. 4, 1867 Warm Springs, Bath County, Virginia, died March 4, 1957 Bath County, Virginia) married 1903 James William Franklin Hodge (1878-1959). They had one child, Edward C. Hodge (1904-1980). She returned her proxy late to NAPA's 1902 convention in New York City because of the recent death of her mother; the convention received and counted her proxy ballot despite its lateness and sent a telegram of condolence to Miss Woodzelle (Spencer, p. 61). She was elected an executive judge at that convention.

Lillie T. Woodzelle (born Dec. 29, 1869, died Sept. 8, 1953 Warm Springs, Bath County, Virginia) married Oct. 28, 1891 (Bath County, Virginia) Morgan Brown Campbell (1841-1915). Her husband was a medical doctor. They had four children: Annie (1893-1980), Stanley (1895-1978), Winfree (1900-1993), and Mildred (1906-1988). She is buried in Monterey Cemetery, Monterey, Virginia. Lillie's book *Cassandra* (56 pp.) was published by the Mercury Magazine Company in Burlington, Iowa in 1889 (Spencer, p. 226).

The Woodzelle sisters probably became amateur journalists in the mid-1880s. Fannie was still active when she died in 1888. A search of NAPA membership lists by Dave Tribby shows Lillie on the rolls until 1891 and Nettie until 1903, the years that each were married. They may have been mainly author members of amateurdom. Nettie edited five issues of *Beech Brook Breeze*

in 1888-89 (see Dave Tribby's sidebar), but I have not found a magazine title for either of the others.

As for Cleek's Mills, the mill was operated by George Washington Cleek (1835-1910). The site, along the Sam Sneed Highway (route 220) between Warm Springs and Monterey, can best be found by searching for Cleek Cemetery, where George Washington Cleek is buried. The post office for Cleek's Mills was discontinued in 1900 after sixty years of operation and the postal address for the Woodzelles became Warm Springs.

Frances Amelia Parsons (1866-1933), Westfield, Mass.

Frances Amelia Parsons was born Dec. 26, 1866 in Westfield, Mass., the daughter of Henry Abner Parsons (born May 27, 1832 Granby, Mass., died Feb. 3, 1901 Westfield, Mass.) and [Elizabeth] Betsey Frances [Fanny] Goodrich (b. 1836 Chester, Mass., died March 17, 1888 Westfield, Mass.), who married on May 22, 1859 in Westfield. Henry was the son of Russell Parsons (1806-1880) and Emma L. Hathaway (1805-1893), who married in Granby on Dec. 1, 1830. Russell Parsons (FamilySearch index K8YL WCM) was the son of Daniel Parsons (1780-1852) and Achsah Humeston (1782-1868). Betsey was the daughter of Warren Goodrich (born 1785 Connecticut) and Ann Bowers (born 1789 Connecticut). Henry, his parents, and his wife are buried in Pine Hill Cemetery in Westfield.

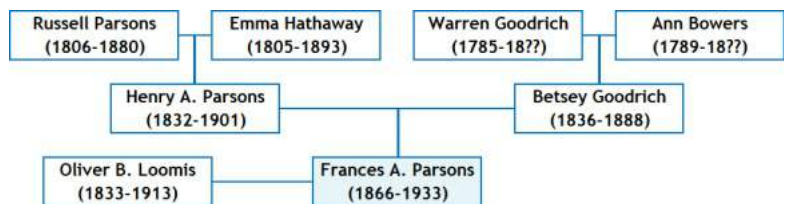
When enumerated in the 1860 census, Henry A. Parsons, age 28, was working in Westfield as a painter. That census stated his place of birth as Connecticut. The 1865 Massachusetts census enumerated Henry and his wife in Westfield. Henry's occupation was stated as carriage maker, his place of birth as Massachusetts.

The 1870 census enumerated the following household in Westfield (all members born in Massachusetts): Henry Parsons, age 38, painter; Fanny B. Parsons, age 34, housekeeper; Frances Parsons, age 3, at home; Loring Kellogg, age 44, farmer; Mary A. Kellogg, housekeeper, age 41.

Henry A. Parsons was initiated as a member of the Mt. Moriah Masonic Lodge in Westfield on June 2, 1886. His occupation was stated as carriage maker.

The New England Amateur Press Association convention in Boston in July 1890 elected Frances A. Parsons as editor to serve under president James F. Morton (Spencer, p. 216).

The 1900 census enumerated the following household at 12 Bush Street in Westfield: Henry A. Parsons



(head), age 67, widower, born May 1833 Massachusetts of Massachusetts-born parents, retired; Frances A. Parsons (daughter), age 33, single, born December 1866 Massachusetts, school teacher. Living at the same address but in a separate household is Dwight H. Parsons (born March 1, 1841 Massachusetts, died Dec. 9, 1924 Westfield) and his wife Lucetta. I have not been able to discover the relationship between Dwight H. Parsons and Henry Abner Parsons, but they were no closer than second cousins.

The 1902 Westfield City Directory listed Miss Frances A. Parsons, teacher, Training School, boarder at 12 Bush. The information in the 1904 and 1908 directories was the same except no occupation was shown for Frances in 1908.

In 1908, Frances Parsons married Oliver Bush Loomis (born Feb. 23, 1833 Southwick, Mass., died August 29, 1914 Westfield), the son of Walter Looms (1785-1866) and Clarissa Bush (1795-1891). It was the groom's second marriage, the bride's first. Oliver had married first Isabel "Bell" C. Palmer (b. Dec. 9, 1849 Elizabethtown, New York, died July 14, 1907), the daughter of Aaron Palmer (d. 1872) and Samantha Lewis (d. 1876). Westfield City Directories show that Oliver lived at 10 Bush Street since at least 1896.

The 1910 census enumerated Oliver and Frances at 10 Bush Street in Westfield. Oliver had been born in Massachusetts of Massachusetts-born parents. His occupation was stated as retired. Frances had borne no children, and had no occupation stated. The 1915, 1916,

Beech Brook Breeze

by Dave Tribby

ALTHOUGH Ken Faig found no amateur papers published by any of the Woodzelle sisters, my own search turned up the journal *Beech Brook Breeze* edited by Nettie and published by W. H. Mundy out of Burlingame, Kansas. It was recorded on microfilm by the Kansas Historical Society and then made available to Newspapers.com.

Mundy announced the new publication in the June 1888 issue of *The Burlingame Echo and Sons & Daughters of Veterans*, which he both edited and published. "The 'Breeze' will be a monthly periodical, devoted to the cause and advancement of Amateur Journalism. Miss Woodzelle is a talented writer; ... she has contributed to several different papers; conducted a 'Girls Department' in *Progress*; has been as active as circumstances would permit." The new paper would match the *Echo's* format of eight two-column pages.

The first issue, dated September 1888, starts with a poem, "Beech Brook," by Sylvae Amecus. Next up is "Intercession," a story by the editor's sister Lillie, which runs just over three pages. Nellie pens a poem "A Query/Reply" and then reviews other amateur papers in "Zephyrs." In "Salutation" she offers editorial remarks:

This month we launch our boat for the first time upon the tide of the literary world as an editress.

We expect rough sailing—to encounter storms,—strike other boats—be nearly (or perhaps quite) capsized,—meet with all kinds of discouragement

ments &c., but it can not all be clouds and no sunshine, or so many youths of America would not be willing to "embark and be lost."

I have been connected with Amateur Journalism for about four years. During that time our associations have been very pleasant. Have contributed to several different Amateur papers, but this is my first attempt to edit a paper myself.

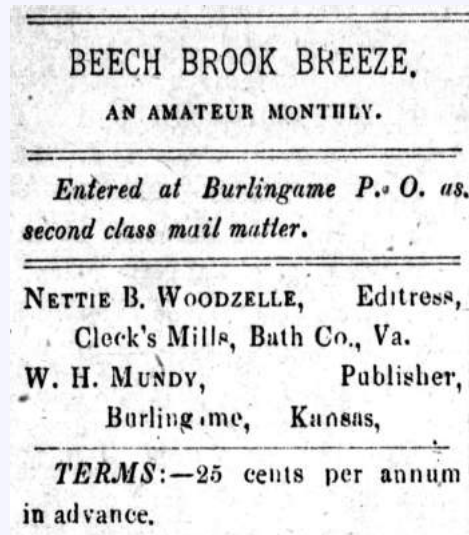
We kindly invite criticism, and need all the help we can get.

All literary original contributions of merit shall find a place in our columns, and will be pleased to receive any number exchange, from Amateur Journals sending a copy of their paper, to both the Editor and the Publisher.

There are a number of short advertisements, mainly from amateur publishers and printers but also this from Lillie: "I have quite a number of unpublished articles written by my deceased sister, which I will sell to any Amateur who is willing to pay for them. Quite a number of the stories are serials." There is also a notice from the publisher apologizing for numerous typesetting errors.

Vol I., No. 2, for December 1888, was similar in content but only four pages in length. It included the first part of "Reclaimed," a story by Nettie, two of her poems, and her review of amateur papers. There was a closing note, "We are not able to put out only half the size of our paper this month; but will make it alright with our subscribers."

The next issue, labeled "Vol. 1, Nos. 3 & 4. Jan. & Feb. 1889," was back to



eight pages. Nettie completed her story (it ran nearly seven pages over the two issues) and there was the full-page poem "Why?" by E. J. Kay. In "Amateur Notes," Nettie remarks, "We are well aware that the 'Breeze' does not come up to the standard it ought, but Amateur Journalism is an institution for the Youths of America to improve their education, talent, and journals. ... After this No. we hope to have our paper out regularly every month, and also on time."

Vol. I, No. 5, for March 1889 featured Nettie's poetry and another of Lillie's stories, "Wooing In Dakota." An essay by "Eric," "Recollections of Christmas," filled two pages. Nettie wrote an editorial calling for more kindness when criticizing the work of Amateurs. There was also a brief notice, "We are sorry to say, that on account of poor health of the Publisher, *Beech Brook Breeze*, with this issue, will be no more." ♦

1918, and 1919 Westfield city directories listed Frances Parsons Loomis, widow of Oliver B., with house at 10 Bush. The 1920 census enumerated Frances at the same address. She was a 53-year-old widow with no employment listed.

The 1924 Westfield directory listed Frances Loomis, widow of Oliver B., with residence at 5 Woronoco Avenue. The 1932 Westfield directory listed Frances Parsons Loomis, widow of Oliver B., with house at 6 Pleasant.

Frances Loomis (nee Parsons) died of cancer of the uterus in Westfield on Sunday, April 30, 1933 (volume 88 page 462). Her final occupation was recorded as education director for the Orphan Society. She was buried with her husband in Pine Hill Cemetery in Westfield.

Note that Frances Parsons lived at 12 Bush Street between 1896 and 1908 and at 10 Bush Street between 1910 and 1920. Thus she and her *Duett* partner, Jennie M. Day, who lived at 25 Bush Street for most of her life, were close neighbors for an extended period.

Jennie Mariah Day (1867-1941), Westfield, Mass.

Jennie Mariah Day was born on March 3, 1867, in Dana, Worcester County, Mass., the daughter of Horace James Day (born Nov. 2, 1837 Orange, Mass., died April 16, 1906 Westfield, Mass.) and Mary J. Chamberlin (born 1842 Massachusetts, died Oct. 5, 1874 Westfield, Mass.). Her parents married on May 1, 1860 in Boston, and are buried in Pine Hill Cemetery in Westfield. Her father was the son of James Day (baptized Oct. 2, 1796 New Salem, Massachusetts, died Jan. 8, 1856) and Maria Adams (born 1798 New Salem, Mass., died Dec. 28, 1875 New Salem, Mass.). Maria, the daughter of Amos and Lois (----) Adams, married her second husband Chester Powers (born 1791 New Salem, Mass.) in New Salem on May 3, 1866. Jennie's mother was the daughter of Amasa Chamberlin (born 1797 Mass., died April 24, 1875) and Sarah C. Gleason (born 1804 Mass., died May 5, 1881).

According to John Alphonso Day's *Descendants of Anthony Day of Gloucester, Mass., 1645* (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1902), Jennie was Jennie(8) [Horace James(7) James(6-5) Peltiah(4) Samuel(3) Ezekiel(2) Anthony(1)] in her direct paternal line. Anthony(1) Day died in Gloucester, Mass. on April 23, 1707, aged ninety. Samuel(3) Day was still of Gloucester. James(5) died in New Salem on June 19, 1830, ages seventy-five.

The 1870 census captured the family still in Dana (all household members born in Massachusetts): Horace J. Day, age 34, piano shop worker; Mary J. Day, age 28, housekeeper; George E. Day, age 5, at home; Jennie M. Day, age 3, at home; Sarah G. Chamberlin, age 66, at home.

The 1900 census enumerated Horace J. Day, age 62, widower, machinist, and Jennie M. Day, age 33, single, school teacher, as boarders in the household of William Oakes at 25 Bush Street in Westfield. Oakes, a 70-year-old widower born in Massachusetts of Massachusetts-born parents, worked as a pattern maker.

The Westfield directories had listed Horace and his daughter at 25 Bush Street as early as 1896. The 1896 directory identified Jennie as a teacher at the Court Street school.

The 1910 census enumerated Jennie M. Day, age 43, single, teacher, in the household of Lawson F. and Katy

Jennie M. Day

by Truman J. Spencer

[From her entry in the 1891 *Literary Cyclopaedia of Amateur Journalism*.]

Miss Jennie M. Day, sister of Mr. George E. Day, contributed her first poem to the *Point* for November 1883, entitled "Bitter Sweet." Her poems were of a simple, sweet nature, and were not numerous. With Miss Frances A. Parsons she edited the *Duett*. She wrote one sketch, of considerable power, entitled "John," and published in *Arena*, April 1888. [There follows a list of seven additional poems written between 1884 and 1888. Two of her poems are reprinted, including the following.]



Jennie Day's 1923
passport photo

Ox-Eye Daisies

O, some may like the lily fair,
Or give the rose their praises;
But give to me a sweeter flower
Our modest ox-eye daisies.

The blossoms of my childhood's choice
When earth seemed fair before me.
Thou modest, unpretentious flower,
I from my heart adore thee!

Desert the lonely fields and lanes
To lend my love thy graces;
And ne'er could mortal wish to see
Two fairer, sweeter faces.

With silvery light thy petals shine
'Gainst throat of snowy whiteness;
And brightly gleam they golden eyes
'Mid locks of sunny brightness.

Fit emblem of a soul so pure!
The blossom of my praises.
May more, like her, as fitly wear
The sweet and modest daisies.

O. (----) Cartter at 25 Bush. Lawson (born 1846 Massachusetts) was a blacksmith and Katy (born 1858 Massachusetts) was a florist. Jennie was described as Lawson's cousin by marriage.

The 1919 Westfield directory described Jennie as a teacher boarding at 25 Bush. The 1920 census enumerated the following household at 25 Bush Street in Westfield (all members born Massachusetts of Massachusetts-born parents): Lawson F. Carter (head), age 73, helper (greenhouse); Kate M. Carter (wife), age 62, manager (greenhouse); Jennie Day (cousin), age 52, single, teacher (public school); Bertha Ryan (foster child), age 29, single, clerk (greenhouse); Frederick Chamberlin (cousin), age 40, single, florist (greenhouse).

In 1923 Jennie applied for a United States passport in order to travel for pleasure to England, Scotland, Belgium, Holland, France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Russia, sailing from Montreal in June. She was described as 45 years old, stature of 5 feet, 3½ inches, with blue eyes, light brown hair, light complexion, and oval face. The person vouching for her identification was Frances A. Loomis, who had known her for 25 years.

The 1927 Westfield directory listed Mrs. Katie M. Cartter, Jennie M. Day, and Oakes' Greenhouses at 25

Bush. The 1930 census enumerated the following household at 25 Bush Street in Westfield (all members born Massachusetts of Massachusetts-born parents): Katie M. Cartter (head), age 72, widow, florist; Bertha E. Cartter (foster daughter), age 39, single, florist; Jennie M. Day (roomer), age 62, single, teacher, grammar school. The 1940 Westfield directory continued to list Jennie M. Day as residing at 25 Bush. Jennie died in Westfield on Oct. 4, 1941, and was buried with her parents in Pine Hill Cemetery.

Jennie's brother George Edward Day (born Sept. 21, 1864 Dana, Mass., died Oct. 31, 1919 Fort Meyer, Alexandria, Virginia) was also an amateur journalist, and member of The Fossils. His poetry collection *Wild Rose and Thistle* was published by Frank Roe Batchelder from Worcester in 1885. He married July 2, 1897 (Norwood, Mass.) Nettie Mabel Fisher (born 1868 South Dedham, Mass.), the daughter of William C. and Emily L. (----) Atkins. The groom was a resident of Lynn and the bride a resident of Norwood at the time of their marriage. Edward worked for the YMCA during his married years. He and his wife had children Curtis Fisher Day (1898-1968), Emily A. Day (1903-1994) and Jane Chamberlain Day (born 1908). His widow and their children lived in Somerville, Mass. in 1920 and 1930. ♦

Intercession

by Lillie Taybor Woodzelle

Beech Brook Breeze, Vol. I, No. 1, September 1888

"My name is Tonny Brown, Sir,
I tend my daddy's mill;
I wear broadcloth o' Sundays,
An' daddy foots the bill,"

roared a young man in a deep bass voice, as he strode along a well beaten orchard path one sunny afternoon in the hazy month of September. He wore his coat flung over his left shoulder, his hat tipped sidewise, and his trousers stuffed in his boots. The crickets ceased their lazy chirping and leapt away as he approached, and the tall plumes of goldenrod nodded knowingly in the warm sunlight.

"Oh, Bettie Dean's a daisy,
She milks her mammy's cows;
An ev'ry time I goes that way,
I smiles to her an' bows.
We has sich time o' Sunday nights,
A sparkin' by the gate —"

The song ceased abruptly, as a rosy apple dropped plump on the singer's head, knocking his hat off in a most unceremonious manner. On turning round

he beheld a plump, brighteyed damsel on a stepladder, with a basket of apples on her arm.

"Up to your tricks again, I see!" he exclaimed throwing himself at full length on the grass in the shade.

"Come down, Lolly pop. I want to talk to you."

The girl descended the ladder, placed her basket on the ground, and sat down.

"What brings you here at this unseasonable hour of the day?" she asked, picking up first one, then another of the apples in her basket, and pressing her round little thumb against their brilliant sides. The plain gingham dress fitted to perfection the roundness of her figure, and the jaunty white apron (once elaborately trimmed with lace) presented a



Lillie T. Woodzelle
(from *Ancestry.com*)

conspicuous green stain, and a very stringy appearance. Her black hair curled closely to her pretty head; her eyes were large, soft and black; but, try as she might, Beulah Vernon could not turn them both in the same direction.

"Why are you not at the store?" she asked, as her companion seemed in no hurry to answer.

"Well, you see I got into another confounded scrape; old Fiddle strings lost all patience, and dumped me out."

"Goodness!" ejaculated Miss Beulah, trying the flavor of an apple with her white teeth.

"I see you *all* blame me! I *did* think that a fellow could get a little sympathy from you," exclaimed the young man pounding the ground savagely with the heel of his boot.

"What are you going to do?" asked the girl.

"That's what I don't know. I'm afraid my day of grace is about over," he replied.

"I fancy it is, unless you mend your gait," answered Beulah gravely.

"I tell you, Harvey, if you promise real solemn, to be good, I'll help you out," she added, after a moment's pause.

"You! What can YOU do?" he questioned.

"Ohm I'll fix it," with a wise little nod. "But remember, you must promise; for if you go and raise another row and implicate me I'll break friendship with you. I don't know but what I ought to do it any way you are becoming so degenerated."

"No, Beulah, don't do that. You are the only friend I have, and if you *can* do any thing I'll promise humbly to do my best. I don't mind old Ridley's wrath, but I hate to face my father."

"Well, if you'll take these apples to the house and pare them for Aunttio's dumplings I'll go right off and plead your cause."

"Don't you intent to—to primp any?" asked Harvey, as the girl snatched up her old sun bonnet and prepared to depart.

"No," said Beulah, "I don't look *much* awful, do I?"

"Oh, you will do," answered the man, "but Fred Cole's in the store."

"I don't care if he is," cried the girl as she darted away.

"A lady to see you, Mr. Ridley," announced the head clerk with a smile, as

he threw open the door of Mr. Ridley's private counting room.

The old gentleman behind the desk looked up with such nervous haste that his glasses fell from his nose.

"Yes, ahem!" he began, catching and settling them back in their customary place, more nervous than ever, as Beulah entered the room all flushed and smiling.

"Good evening, Mr. Ridley," she said demurely.

"Yes, ahem! Miss Beulah, glad—most happy. Will you be seated?"

"Not if you are very busy; but I would like to talk with you a moment."

"Certainly. To be sure—nothing at *all* to do—most happy—sit down."

Beulah sat down.

"Do you know, Mr. Ridley," she began, that "Uncle will be very angry when he learns that you have turned Harvey off?"

Mr. Ridley's fat fingers fluttered among his papers, fidgeted with his pen, and overturned his ink bottle. The bewitching "cross eyed" girl was getting too hard for him.

"Sorry, Miss Beulah—nice man, your Uncle—fine boy, this Harvey—late hours—much wine—tardy—books in confusion. Fact is,—can't stand it," answered the merchant.

"But Harvey is very sorry, Mr. Ridley, and if you would try him once more I really think he would do better. Beside, you know that you can't afford to forfeit the esteem of such a man as my Uncle, if Harvey is a little wild," said Beulah.

"True, Miss Beulah, I can't nor yours either—hard work, indigestion—too hasty. After all he's but a boy."

Beulah saw her advantage and smiled very sweetly.

"I tell you what's a fact, my dear," resumed the merchant, growing bolder.

"Too much business—no one to talk to. A man gets cross. You are a fine girl—a bright, handsome girl. You couldn't—oh no, you *couldn't*, now could you?" an Mr. Ridley hurried around to where Beulah sat and essayed to take her hand; dropping his glasses and upsetting a basket of wastepaper as he did so.

"Oh, let me think! Let me think!" gasped the girl, drawing back.

"Yes, ahem!" assented Ridley, "sudden—think about it, think kindly—think all you please. Tell Master Harvey to come over in the morning. Much business—can't spare him—fine boy. *I'll* talk to the old gentlemen tomorrow myself. Meanwhile, my dear, *think!*"

"Oh thank you, Mr. Ridley. It is so kind of you; and I *do* think Harvey will do better," and Beulah rose to go.

"Good by my dear, and don't forget," the merchant bowed his caller out with many smiles and much deference.

It is evident that Mr. Ridley did wait upon "the old gentleman" in person the following day; and Beulah must really have *thought*, for Harvey Vernon was heard to remark that "the next girl he had his eye on he would not send to intercede with old Fiddle strings for him."

Faig Returns to Podcast

FOSSIL president Ken Faig, Jr. paid his second visit to the 30+ *Minutes with H. P. Lovecraft* podcast. On the December 13 episode, "People & Places," he spoke for 90 minutes with hosts Richard Wilson, David Guffy, and Mark Griffin. After starting with Lovecraft's ancestry, he shared stories about a large number of Lovecraft's family members, neighbors, and acquaintances, providing details resulting from his painstaking research. Ken noted several mysteries that further study might resolve.

The podcast is available for free download on a number of services, such as Apple Podcasts or Spotify, or you can visit the website

anchor.fm/lcpl/episodes/People--Places-e2d7jtc

During the podcast, Ken mentioned his latest book, *Lovecraftian People and Places* (Hippocampus Press, 354

pages, 2022), which covers many of the topics discussed in the podcast. He mentioned a second, related, volume will soon be published. ♦

Time to Renew?

Many Fossil memberships and subscriptions come due in January. Please check the expiration date on your mailing label, and if you are due before the next issue (April 2024) please send your renewal to Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson — and consider donating a few dollars extra if you want THE FOSSIL to continue to be printed in color. ♦

Webmaster Report

by Dave Tribby

DURING 2023 our website (www.thefossils.org) had a total of 33,929 visitors, or 93 per day, up from the 2022 average of 70 visitors per day. The total number of hits in 2023, including visitor traffic plus queries from “bots” that continuously search the Web and also malicious attacks that try to exploit vulnerabilities, totaled an amazing 250,336, or 686 per day.

Electronic issues of THE FOSSIL continue to attract more readers than the print edition. The number of visitors who accessed the 2023 issues:

January 2023	113
April 2023	107
July 2023	85
October 2023	34

Several earlier issues each had more than 80 visitor downloads during the year: July 2006 (202), July 2009 (145), April 2012 (107), and July 2005 (82).

Please drop by and look over the website, where you can find out about Fossil awards, download issues of THE FOSSIL going back to 2004, follow links that help you research away history, and find descriptions of public collections of amateur journals. ♦

Printed Word, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer, The; Printer's and Journalist's News, The; Printer's Choice, The; Printer's Correspondent, The; Printer Crowe's M.O. Paper; Printer's Devil; Printer's Friend; Printer's Helper, The; Printer's Ink; Printer's Lament, A; Printer's Letter; Printer's Pet, The; Printer's Publication; Printer's Scrap Box; Printer's Solvent Guide; Printer's Tribune, The; Printer's Voice; Printer's Interesting Observations; Printers Advertiser, The; Printers' Devil, The; Printers Devil, The; Printers Equipment; Printers' Exchange, The; Printers' Ink; Printers' Journal; Printers' Monthly; Printers News, The; Printers' Pastime; Printers Pi; Printers' Pi, The; Printers' Press, The; Printers Progress; Printers' Trading Post; Printers Wants; Printinax; Printing & Publishing; Printing Advertiser, The; Printing Ink: Correction Fluid; and Printshop, The.

We will be sure to keep you posted about progress on the master list as well as the PBS Wisconsin filming project we reported on earlier this year.

In the meantime, we extend our sincere thanks and best wishes for 2024. ♦

The Fossil

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of The Fossils, a non-profit organization for anyone interested in the history of amateur journalism. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join. Dues are \$15 annually, or \$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to THE FOSSIL without privileges of membership, is \$10. For further information, contact the secretary-treasurer or visit our website:

www.thefossils.org

Fossil Board: 2022 - 2024

Ken Faig, Jr., PRESIDENT, 2020 Chestnut Ave. Apt. 405, Glenview, IL 60025; president@thefossils.org

John Horn, 24300 Chenal Parkway, #71, Little Rock, AR 72223; jhorn@thefossils.org

David Goudsward, 5141 Second Road, Lake Worth, FL 33467; dgoudsward@thefossils.org

Appointed Officers

Official Editor: Dave Tribby, 1529 Fantail Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; editor@thefossils.org

Secretary-Treasurer: Tom Parson, 157 South Logan Street, Denver, CO 80209; s-t@thefossils.org

Librarian: Mike Horvat, 22275 SW 102nd Place, Tualatin, OR 97062; librarian@thefossils.org

Webmaster: Dave Tribby (contact information above)

LAJ Update

by Robin E. Rider

Curator of Special Collections
University of Wisconsin-Madison

DEAR FRIENDS of the LAJ Collection,

I want to take this opportunity to express our thanks to all of you for your ongoing support of the Library of Amateur Journalism Collection through generous donations to the Leland M. Hawes, Jr. Fund for the Library of Amateur Journalism (University of Wisconsin Foundation).

The Special Collections student who has been working diligently on the master list of titles reached slightly past the midpoint of the folders for the letter “P” by the end of fall semester 2023, and the list of titles A-P now numbers more than 4100. Although that student is now off to London for spring semester, another Special Collections student will take over the title list project in January.

You won't, I think, be surprised that we were finding plenty of titles beginning with the letter “P.” Consider the following variants: *Print-In; Print Shop; Printcraft; Printcraft Messenger, The; Printed Pig, The;*