

maintenance of that building. The income from memberships is used for all other expenses such as supplies, equipment for the museum, postage, printing, liability insurance and the Mineral Springs Park.

This means that we have to count on the memberships for the day-by-day operation of the Society.

Most members have renewed for '87, but some have not. If you have an '86 after your name on this Newsletter, please renew. And if we are wrong, let us know!

NEW HISTORY

We are trying hard to find some able writer to record the town's history from Frisbie's 1867 to the present. And we're still looking. Meanwhile the earlier days give us facts and stories worth repeating. Here are a few, and more later on:

THE OLD, OLD CEMETERY

Luther Filmore deeded to the town a plot of land for a cemetery in 1787 (our Old Cemetery). But people started coming to Middletown in 1774 and there must have been some early deaths.

There is an early reference to an unmarked burial ground on the north side of Poultney River across from the "nail factory", but no markers.

The first town meeting in 1785 lists 44 "freemen". The next in 1801 names all but four of them. These are Elisha Gilbert, Chauncey Graves,

and Isiah Johnson. None of these are buried in the Old Cemetery, and none are mentioned later in Frisbie's History. Could these be the ones in the unmarked graves?

TIMES WERE TOUGH THEN

In the Old Cemetery there are 676 graves. 137 of them - or about 20% - are those of children who lived no longer than five years.

And in the Stiles Cemetery, located at the intersection of the Middletown, Wells and Poultney town lines, the 13 family graves contain six of children who died before their sixth birthday.

AND IN A LIGHTER VEIN

Remember the popular movie many years ago, "The King and I", that told the story of a missionary and his wife who went out to Siam - now Thailand? The husband to teach the King the English language and the wife to care for the royal couple's children?

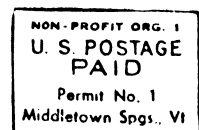
Jesse Caswell was sent out by our Congregational Church in 1840 as a missionary to Siam. Both he and his wife developed a warm friendship with the King and Queen.

Ten years later Caswell became ill and died. The King wept at his funeral, and for years afterwards kept in touch with Mrs. Caswell over here!

H. M. Derrin

Research Chairman

Middletown Springs Historical Society
Middletown Springs, VT 05757



*Mr. David Wright
Town 05757*