

Ferrin A. Cross deserved far better than he got. The father of four children and the husband of a young wife, Ferrin was persuaded by circumstances beyond his control to become involved in a young man's war from which he did not return.

Ferrin was born in Bridgewater, New Hampshire on May 28, 1829. ^[1] He was raised there in Coos County by his parents, Abijah and Sarah (Ferrin) Cross. He had eight siblings: Sylvester (1816-?); Lamira (1817-1823); Susan (1818-?); Simeon (1820-1823); Jonathan (1823-?); Abigail Heath (1824-?); George (1827-?); and Alma (1836-1914). ^[2] The public records do not disclose much information about how Ferrin spent his youth and younger adult years. Since his father was a farmer, it is assumed that he, too, became a worker of the land.

Although Ferrin was born in New Hampshire, he did live for a time in Goshen, Vermont. In 1853, he married a local Goshen girl named Antoinette Amelia Brown. They were married in Goshen on December 7, 1853. The service was officiated by Rev. Sherman Ford of Salisbury, Vermont. ^[3] They made Goshen their home long enough for them to have their first child born there. The young couple had their first daughter on February 19, 1855. ^[4] By 1860, Ferrin and family had moved to his home state of New Hampshire. Their new home was in Clarksville. The Cross' stayed there for a short time and then moved to nearby Stewartstown. It was there that Eliza (Elsie Adeliza) was born on March 7, 1856. ^[5] Ferrin operated a small farm in Clarksville. Right next door to him lived his baby brother, Alma Maroni Cross. He also owned and operated a small farm. He was married to Rebecca Poor (Pour) and they had a three year old daughter named Iris (Alice). ^[6]

The two Cross families lived a quiet life in a small New England town. At thirty-one and twenty-five, respectively, life was very good and the future was promising. Then April 12, 1861 came along. With the fall of Fort Sumter, a great patriotic fever flashed across the land, North and South. In every city and village in the nation, men and boys were

signing up to go off to war. For four months, the two brothers must have agonized over what to do - go or stay; help defend the Union or remain home and provide for their families. There was no grandfather to leave the wives and children with since he had passed away decades before. If they went off to fight, they would be leaving their wives and children alone to fend for themselves.

Something very powerful came along in August of 1861 to force their decision. On August 12, exactly one year to the day of the firing on Fort Sumter, both Ferrin and his youngest brother enlisted in the Thirteenth New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry. Both were assigned to Company H. Alma, seven years younger than Ferrin, went in as a private. Ferrin, being thirty-three, was enrolled as a corporal. ^[7]

The Regiment was mustered-in September 20, 1862 at Concord, New Hampshire. It left for Washington, D.C. on October 5. Until November, the Thirteenth was stationed at Fort Albany, one of the many "forts" encircling the Capital on guard duty. At the beginning of December, the Regiment marched to Falmouth, Virginia where it took part in the Battle of Fredericksburg on the twelfth through fifteenth of December, 1862. On the first of December, Ferrin left the Thirteenth at Camp Casey sick. ^[8] January 20- 24, the unit was part of Burnside's "Mud March" on its way to the siege of Suffolk April 12 through May 4, 1863. Ferrin returned to Company H on February 28 after recovering from his illness. ^[9] During July, 1863, the Thirteenth moved to Portsmouth, Virginia. March 19 saw them moved to Yorktown where the Regiment participated in Butler's operations around the James River and against Petersburg and Richmond. April 30, 1864 found Ferrin on Provost Guard duty at Portsmouth. During May, the Thirteenth was engaged in action at Drewry's Bluff and Bermuda Hundred. In late May, the Regiment marched to Cold Harbor. ^[10]

The Battle of Cold Harbor occurred over a number of days from May 31-June 12, 1864 just outside Richmond's city limits. The main part of the battle was a frontal assault on

Confederate lines. In the early morning darkness and fog of June 3, 1864, five Union corps, including the Thirteenth New Hampshire, drew up in a straight line of battle seven miles long and, on the sound of the signal gun, moved forward towards the enemy. The solid line of blue soon became fragmented into smaller groups as the Federals attempted to navigate swamps and heavy vegetation. Lee had organized his defensive trenches in such a way that it was easy to enfilade the attacking Yankees with devastating fire. As many as 7,000 Federals were killed or wounded in the first hour of the attack (some said within the first ten to twenty minutes). By noon, Grant suspended the attack having been unable to break the Confederate lines. Two days later (June 5), the Union commander attempted to negotiate a cease fire so that the dead and wounded could be recovered from between the opposing lines. But a war of words ensued between the generals and prevented any white flag being raised until June 7, and that lasted only two hours. By then, very few of the seriously wounded remained alive to be found by comrades. ^[11]

However, there were plenty of dead. Among those was Corporal Ferrin A. Cross. According to family legend related by Alma M. Cross, Ferrin's brother who served with him in the same company, he had attempted to hide the body of his brother during the attack with the intent of returning later to recover and bury him. But when he went back to the place where he thought he had hidden Ferrin's remains, he could not find him. In 1866, back home in Goshen, Vermont, Ferrin's widow, Antoinette and her new husband, Jared L. Jones, held a memorial for him. Next to the Jones' headstone in the Goshen Cemetery can be found two United States flags; one for Ferrin Cross and the other for Jared L. Jones. Ferrin's mortal remains lie somewhere in Cold Harbor, Virginia soil.

Alma Maroni Cross survived Cold Harbor and the war. He and the Regiment continued to see action including the siege of Petersburg and Richmond and the Battle of Fair Oaks. They witnessed the great "Mine Explosion" at Petersburg and were the first Regiment whose colors were brought into the captured Confederate capital. Alma received his discharge, along with other veterans of the Thirteenth, on June 22, 1865. ^[12]

Again a civilian, Alma returned to his wife and family in New Hampshire. He farmed a modest spread in Stewartstown. His family consisted of his wife, Rebecca and four children: Harris (1857); Lamira (1861); Job (1863); and Ferrin (1868). His last child was obviously named after his dead brother, Ferrin A. By 1880, Alma was forty-four, divorced, single and still farming, but in Pittsburg, New Hampshire. In 1884, he remarried. His second wife died by 1900. The sixty-four year old farmer remained single for the rest of his life, dying at seventy-nine of heart disease and old age in Canaan, Vermont on June 25, 1914. ^[13]

Since Ferrin had died in the service of his country, his widow was eligible for a pension. A new Act of Congress passed July 14, 1862, Antoinette specific benefits as the wife of a deceased soldier. She started the process of applying on February 18, 1865. She hired a lawyer from the firm of Nicholson & Ormsbee of Brandon, Vermont to represent her interests. ^[14]

Antoinette had to provide mountains of evidence to support her claim for herself and her four children. She had to get sworn statements from doctors, family, friends and neighbors verifying the births of each of her four children fathered by Ferrin. The Adjutant General's Office itself had to produce proof that Ferrin was in the military. Form after form had to be completed, authenticated and filed in regards to persons, places and circumstances. One affidavit after another was requested by the authorities to support Antoinette's claim for benefits. All these bureaucratic demands created quite a paper trail, which, in turn painted a microscopic history of Antoinette's life without Ferrin.

The Department of The Interior's pension division received Antoinette's claim February 25, 1865. On March 11, 1867, the Rutland pension agency in Vermont finally authorized widow's pension benefits to be paid to Antoinette commencing on June 3, 1864, the date

of Ferrin's death. She was to receive \$8 per month for herself and an additional \$2 per month per child for each of her four children until they reached the age of sixteen. ^[15]

Once all the paper work was filed, submitted and approved, everything went swimmingly for Antoinette and her brood. That is, until Antoinette decided to remarry in 1866. She married one Jared L. Jones, a veteran, resident of Goshen, and former neighbor of Ferrin and Antoinette when they lived in Goshen back in 1853. Antoinette and her children had moved back to Goshen sometime after Ferrin's death in 1864. There she met Jared and married him on October 14, 1866. Antoinette, who now preferred to go by her middle name, Amelia, put a fly in the ointment of the pension payments when she became wife to husband number two. On her new marriage date, her \$8 per month ceased coming because she was no longer a widow. But the children were still entitled to \$2 per month each until they reached sixteen. The problem was to whom were these monthly payments to be made? To Antoinette? She was now the wife of another man. To Jared? He had no legal relationship to the children. To the children. No, they were still minors.

The saga of the Cross-Jones family did continue, but you have to go to the story of Private Jared L. Jones to find it.

NOTES

1. Vermont in the Civil War/Cemeteries/Vermont/Goshen/Goshen Cemetery/Cross, Ferrin A./Vitals.
2. [www.myheritage.com/Family Search Family Tree/Ferrin Abijah Cross; Family Tree/Abijah Ferrin Cross/Richards Sr. Family Tree Site \(23andMe\)](http://www.myheritage.com/Family Search Family Tree/Ferrin Abijah Cross; Family Tree/Abijah Ferrin Cross/Richards Sr. Family Tree Site (23andMe)).
3. Fold3.com, Certificate Of Marriage, image 296461472.
4. Ancestry.com/Family Trees/Ferrin Abijah Cross/Relatives of Ransom Towle; www.fold3.com, Proof Of Birth, image 296461489.
5. www.fold3.com, Proof Of Birth, images 296461481 and 296461491.
6. Ancestry.com, 1860 U.S. Federal Census under Ferrin Cross.
7. www.myheritage.com/research/revise-register-of-the-soldiers-and-sailors-of-new-hampshire/record 70011-693.
8. www.fold3.com, image 296462111.
9. Ibid.

10. <http://civilwarintheeast.com/us/regiments-batterie/new-hampshire/13th-new-hampshire>.
11. www.historynet.com/cold-harbor.
12. Op cit., civilwarintheeast.com/13th-new-hampshire.
13. Ancestry.com, U.S. Federal Census under Alona Cross; 1870 U.S. Federal Census under Almy M. Cross; 1880 U.S. Federal Census under ; and arvhives.com, 1880 U.S. Federal Census under Alma M. Cross; 1900 U.S. Federal Census under Alma M. Cross; 1910 U.S. Federal Census under Alma M. Cross; Marriage Records for Alma M. Cross; Death Records for Alma M. Cross.
14. www.fold3.com, image 296461466.
15. Ibid., images 296461466 and 296461568.