

[Crossett, Ella J. Hawley]

ELLA HAWLEY CROSSETT

On December 2nd at Cambridge, Mass., after an illness of one week, in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Arthur N. Holcombe, there passed into the larger life one of the most loved women Warsaw has ever known, Ella Hawley Crossett.

Mrs. Crossett, the daughter of John Waldo Hawley [a Universalist] and Juliette Thorpe Hawley, was born in Gainesville, N.Y., March 21, 1853. Her girlhood was spent in Warsaw in the home which Mr. Hawley built near the Erie station.

Her mother's health was very poor and, as the eldest daughter, she early assumed many responsibilities in the home. As a young girl she was an expert needlewoman, and after school hours helped to make the rag carpets, quilts and the clothes for the family. Her parents were very particular to make it possible for her to attend school regularly, and she was one of the youngest to receive the Regents' preliminary diploma, at the age of 14 at the Warsaw Academy. She was passionately fond of music and possessed a very sweet voice, which her teachers encouraged her to cultivate, but she felt it was her duty to remain at home and to avoid the expense of a musical education.

Her parents held very liberal views in regard to religion, and the children were brought up without fear of punishment in after life; to live according to the Golden Rule as Mrs. Crossett's whole life exemplified. She was a member of the Universalist church of Perry and later of Dr. Thomas' church in Chicago. In Warsaw she attended the Congregational church.

On October 22nd, 1878 she married John B. Crossett of Orangeville, N.Y. and their two daughters were born in Chicago, where they resided for several years, until the formation of the Hawley Salt Company in Warsaw, and Mrs. Crossett was always devoted to her home, "Hillcrest" where for many years the Crossett family enjoyed entertaining their friends.

Her remarkable executive ability made it possible for her not only to conduct her household affairs in the most orderly manner, but she was able to reach out into the lives of her friends and neighbors. Her sympathies and interests were as broad as the world is wide, and as she repeatedly told her friends, her husband's like sympathies and co-operation made it possible for her to carry on outside work often denied to other women.

Her own parents had been interested in Woman Suffrage, and in 1890 Mrs. Crossett attended a Suffrage meeting held in Rochester and from there she was sent to Washington as a National Delegate. Upon her return from that convention she arranged a Wyoming County meeting to be addressed by Miss Susan B. Anthony and Dr. Anna H. Shaw. Several remarkable

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Wyoming County women, Dr. Cordelia Greene, Mrs. Charlotte Cleveland of Perry, Mrs. Susan Look Avery and her daughter, Mrs. Ward, co-operated with Mrs. Crossett, and at that two days convention was organized the Wyoming County Suffrage Association. A few days later at the home of Mrs. Maude S. Humphrey, the Warsaw Political Equality Club was also started. Mrs. Crossett was made President, which office she held, as either President or Honorary President, until the vote was won for women. As a member of the Executive Board of the State Suffrage Association her abilities were quickly recognized, and as Vice-President of the New York State Association for eight years, she held the esteem, not only of the women of New York State, but of all Suffrage workers who knew of her untiring devotion to the great cause of the enfranchisement of women. Scores of letters from Miss Susan B. Anthony and from Dr. Anna H. Shaw testified to the love and to the confidence in which they held her, and Dr. Shaw once wrote, "I never think of your household, but I feel a glow of love and peace about my heart, and you two friends will always hold a big place in my life."

She not only attended regularly the State Conventions but also about twenty National Conventions held all over the United States. Through the efforts of the Warsaw Political Equality Club, women were put on the School Board in 1893 and Mrs. Crossett herself later served for three years as School Trustee, and from 1887 to 1924 never missed attending the Annual School Meeting. Many Warsaw girls and boys were encouraged by her to go as far as possible in getting an education. She loved the best in nature, in music, in literature, in art, and a year in Europe with her family in 1900 gave her the greatest possible enjoyment. Mrs. Crossett was the first woman to serve on the Board of the Wyoming County Fair and for four years she interested herself in various exhibitions in Floral Hall. At the time of the World War she attended the State Meeting in the interest of the American Red Cross, and later was organizer for the Warsaw Chapter and assisted in the formation of ten of the thirteen branches, and afterward, under the Red Cross she was for ten years Chairman of the Committee which provided a Town Public Nurse. When the Wyoming County Community Hospital was started, Mrs. Crossett was asked to organize the women of the town into a Woman's Auxiliary, and later the Women's Auxiliary of the Wyoming County Community Hospital was formed and she was made Honorary Chairman. After the vote was won she served as a member of the County Republican Committee and she was always intensely interested in local, state and national politics. She was a member of the Buffalo Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and was instrumental in having markers placed upon the graves of Revolutionary soldiers buried in the Warsaw cemetery.

Mrs. Crossett assisted Mrs. Maude S. Humphrey and Mrs. William C. Gouinlock in organizing the Monday Club of Warsaw. She served on the

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Executive Committee for several years and for the club she wrote many papers on different topics. She was a member of the W.C.T.U. and of the Grange, and she showed her interest in Peace by joining the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Boston.

At the homes of her daughters where she had spent many winters, many admiring friends mourn her passing, but only those nearest to her know the utter unselfishness of every act of her life. Her greatest joy was in doing for her children and her love of little folks reached its highest expression in her devotion to her seven grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Crossett left Warsaw on November 23rd, spending a day with Mrs. Mary T. Sanford in Rochester, enroute to Cambridge to celebrate Mrs. Crossett's seventy-fifth birthday. She enjoyed the trip and seemed to be in her usual health until Thanksgiving morning when she suffered a stroke of paralysis. During the days of her illness her mind was very clear as she talked on many subjects and showed her usual solicitude for her husband and daughters. Her courage in facing death was typical of her life and a quotation from a tribute to Dr. Shaw written by Anna C. Cheney seems applicable to Mrs. Crossett.

"Triumphant She Passes!"

And how should there sound any note of our grieving!

Great heart buoyantly passes!

The high task she is leaving accomplished, as up the bright trail,
in Eternity still pioneering.

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