

**American Antiquarian Society  
Manuscript Collections**

---

**NAME OF COLLECTION:**

Crossman Family, Diaries, 1855-1857; 1864; 1867

**LOCATION(S):**

Octavo vols. "C"

---

**SIZE OF COLLECTION:**

five octavo volumes, with eight loose items

---

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:**

For biographies of the Crossmans, see Homer Worthington Brainard, *The Ishams of England and America* (Rutland, Vt., 1938), pp. 438, 538.

---

**SOURCE OF COLLECTION:**

Purchased from Mark Savolis, 1980

---

**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:**

Ferdinand Joseph Fuller Crossman (1834-1864), the son of Martin Luther ( -1855) and Experience Robbins Crossman ( -1834) of Sutton, Mass., settled on a small farm in South Sutton, Mass., worked occasionally in the P. Whitin and Sons cotton mill in Whitinsville, Mass., and performed various jobs for others. During the Civil War he enlisted in the Union Army and was taken prisoner at the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse in May 1864. He died at Andersonville prison in Georgia on 1 August 1864.

Crossman married, in 1855, Adelaide Isham (1837-1892) of Williston, Vt.; they had three children. Adelaide Isham Crossman married Frederick P. Burr (1848- ), c. 1866, and moved eventually to Lawrence, Kan., where she died in 1892.

The diaries were kept primarily by Adelaide, although the greater part of the first volume, 1855, was kept by Ferdinand. The last volume, 1867, was written by Adelaide, but contains several passages written by Frederick.

The diaries contain rather terse daily entries, but they provide information concerning life on a small farm in central Massachusetts during the middle part of the nineteenth century. They also include cash accounts interspersed among the entries and listed at the end of each volume. The 1864 account list includes recipes; the 1856 diary contains a loose receipt with two pencil sketches on the verso; and the volume for 1867 contains seven newsclippings of romantic poems.

The entries refer to the daily household tasks of Adelaide and the farm chores of her husband. Ferdinand was also involved in drawing and selling logs, rolling logs to mill, attending auctions, working on an ice house, in a shop, and at the Whitinsville mill. He wife sewed clothing for profit. She refers to visits, the birth of her first child, and her husband's capture and eventual death in 1864. The volume for 1867 reveals details of a somewhat more prosperous life for Adelaide and Frederick. The onerous household chores and farm work continue but there are references to attending dances, parties, concerts, and sewing circle meetings.

See Contents List.

**American Antiquarian Society  
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT**

CROSSMAN FAMILY, DIARIES, 1855-1857; 1864; 1867  
CONTENTS LIST

Octavo Volume

- 1 Ferdinand J. F. Crossman and Adelaide I. Crossman, Diary, 1855
- 2 Adelaide I. Crossman, Diary, 1856  
--includes one loose item
- 3 Adelaide I. Crossman, Diary, 1857
- 4 Adelaide I. Crossman, Diary, 1864
- 5 Adelaide I. C. Burr and Frederick P. Burr, Diary, 1867  
--includes seven newspaper clippings