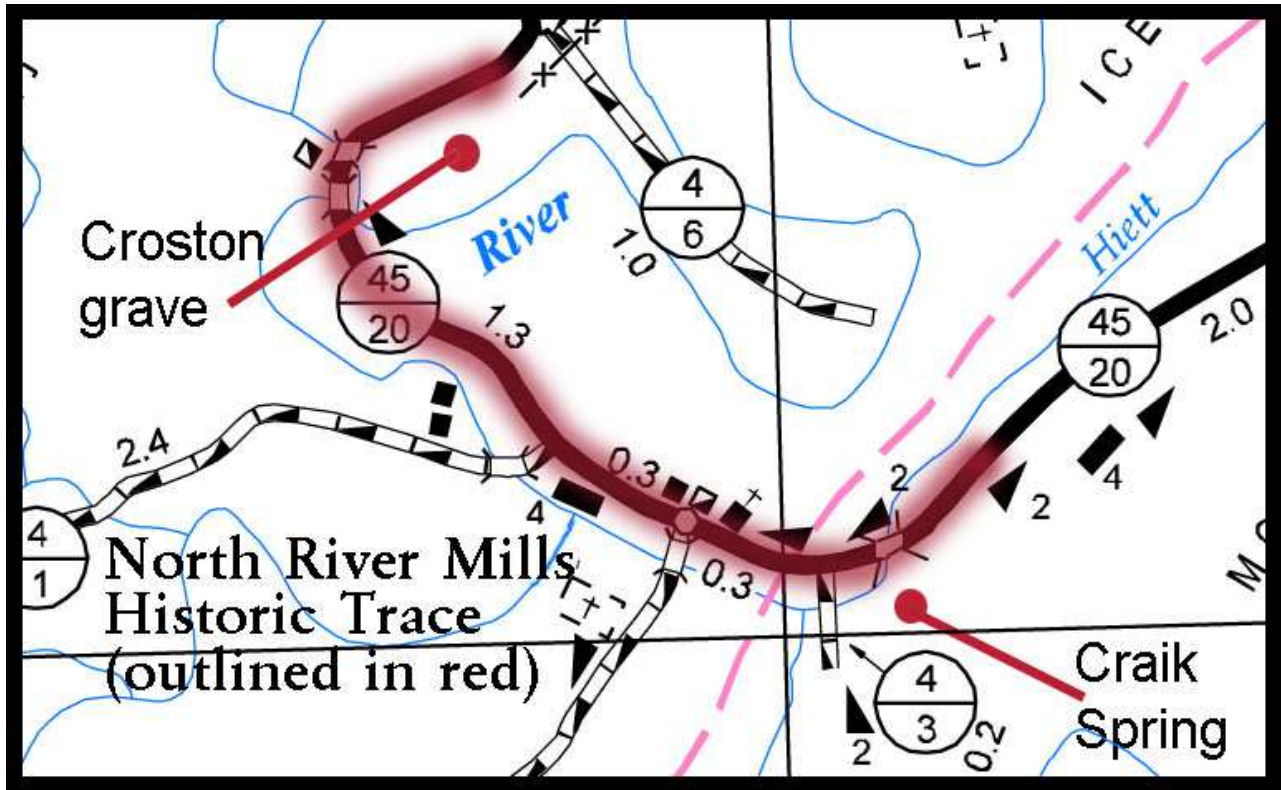


Proposal for Naming a Section  
of Coldstream Road (45/20)

the  
"North River Mills Historic Trace"



Memorializing the Rich History of One of  
Hampshire County's Oldest Communities

Prepared for Delegate Ruth Rowan

by  
HistoricHampshire.org  
January 14, 2015

## The North River Mills Historic Trace

The North River Mills Historic Trace memorializes the rich history of one of Hampshire County's oldest communities which is associated with several noteworthy individuals. These include:

1. George Washington who surveyed land for Thomas Parker beside the proposed Trace and who later traveled along part of the Trace while commanding the forts of the Virginia frontier during the French and Indian War.
2. Dr. James Craik, George Washington's friend and personal physician and surgeon of the Virginia Regiment during the French and Indian War, who was granted the spring tract on both sides of the Great Wagon Road part of which was along the Trace.
3. Ensign Rees Pritchard, descendant of Welsh ancestors who came to America to make a home for themselves and their extended family. Rees at one time owned most of the land along the Trace.
4. Gustavus Croston, a soldier in the American Revolution who served at Valley Forge and after his first enlistment expired signed up "for and during the war" - in other words he committed to serve until the war was won. He is buried very near the Trace which runs through land he owned.

These are but four of the many colonial era men and women who came to this area, settled on land, some of which was surveyed by George Washington, suffered the deprivations of the French and Indian War while Col. Washington's Virginia Regiment tried desperately to protect the settlers, rebuilt their lives after the war and, in some cases, served in the war that won our Independence.

### Dr James Craik

Dr James Craik was born at Orbigland, County Kirkcudbright, Scotland, in 1730; he died at "Vaucluse," Fairfax county, Va., on February 6, 1814. He graduated in medicine from the University of Edinburgh and then emigrated to the West Indies about 1750 and subsequently moved to Virginia.

He entered the Virginia Regiment (formed to fight during the French and Indian War) as surgeon on March 7, 1754 and was made Ensign May 23, 1754. He held the rank of Lieutenant by July 1754 which rank he held until the Regiment disbanded in 1762. Dr. Craik was at the Battle of Fort Mifflin and he accompanied the Braddock campaign. After the war he accompanied George Washington on his trip west in 1770 that brought him back to Hampshire County.

In 1760 Dr. Craik married Marianne, the daughter of Colonel Charles Ewell and his wife, Sarah Conway. George Washington's mother was Sarah Conway's half sister.

Dr. Craik served with Gen. Washington in the Revolutionary War. He was given the position of Chief Physician and Surgeon of the Continental Army. After the Revolution, he settled near Mount Vernon and continued his personal and professional relationship with General Washington. He was one of the attending physicians during Washington's last illness.

Because of his relationship with George Washington, who surveyed many tracts in Hampshire County, and his experience on the frontier during the French and Indian War, Dr. Craik, like Washington, was well aware of the value of western lands. Beginning in 1760 Dr. Craik acquired several parcels of land around North River Mills in Hampshire County. He had secured two plots along the Great Wagon Road from Winchester to Romney not far from the crossing of the North River. One of the parcels lying along Parker's Run (now Hiatt Run) was noted for a good spring that to this day is named for him as first grantee although the name was locally misspelled as "Craig" Spring. A third tract was across the river not far from the Great Wagon Road. This road had been the major western artery in the central colonies during Virginia's battle to stop French encroachments onto British claimed territory and would later serve to take many settlers west as the frontier made its relentless move westward.

Dr. Craik exemplifies the colonial settler who arrived in America with an important skill and

great determination to make a life for himself in this new land. He served in the two wars that determined the fate of North America and established the United States of America. His extensive personal and professional relationships and his broad travels placed him in a position to make a lasting contribution to the building of our great country. It is appropriate that he be remembered along the road that traverses some of the property he once owned.

## **Rees Pritchard**

Rees Pritchard was a descendant of a Welsh family several members of whom had come to Hampshire County from Chester County, Pennsylvania.#1 Rees was born in 1744 the son of Samuel Pritchard who lived on North River.#2 George Washington spent a night with Samuel Pritchard on North River during his journey to inspect western lands in the fall of 1770. The Pritchards were apparently individuals of some means as they became large landowners in Hampshire County.

The family apparently stayed in Hampshire County during the French and Indian War as Samuel entered a claim for damages done during the war. The claim was filed on February 20, 1759.#3

Rees Pritchard entered the Continental Army in February 1776 and on March 12, 1776, was commissioned an Ensign in Capt. Abel Westfall's Company of the 8th Virginia Regiment commanded by Col. Peter Mulenburg. He marched from Romney in Hampshire County to Charleston, South Carolina where he was engaged in the Battle of Sullivans Island, 21-29 June, 1776. #4

Upon his return to Hampshire County he married and had one son. He continued to amass land around the North River at two different locations and between 1786 and 1790 he was authorized by the Virginia Assembly to operate a ferry across the North River. #5 Some of the land had originally been surveyed by George Washington and granted by Lord Fairfax to Thomas Parker.

It is not known exactly what the financial depressions and panics experienced every few years during the formative years of our nation had upon Rees Pritchard's situation, but by 1800 he had sold most of his land. It also seems that his wife died sometime in the early 1800s. In any case, Mr. Pritchard, like many Revolutionary War veterans, filed for a pension on the 21 day of July 1819 and received a certificate of pension #12545. He was dropped under Act May 1, 1820 and then was reinstated April 25, 1822. The application states "that in consequence of old age and the rheumatism he is unable to pursue any profession or occupation in order to produce a support." He died on September 25, 1830 in Morgan County.#6

Rees Pritchard was one of the many early settlers who came to America in community groups and continued to move westward with family members. He served in the Continental Army helping to win America's independence. After his service he became a large landowner, and he engaged in the ferry business allowing his land to be used as a transportation artery helping move people and goods around the growing frontier. Like so many individuals who had given so much to their country, he suffered from the financial problems of the growing, new country, and eventually he had to sell most all of his land to pay debts. He died in relative obscurity in 1830. The establishment of the North River Mills Historic Trace through property once owned by Rees Pritchard will help future generations remember what our forebears went through to build the country we now know.

### Footnotes:

#1 Interview with William Rice Dec. 16, 2014; The name "Rees" has descended through many generations because of the ancestor Rees Pritchard (born 1575) who was educated at Oxford and became Chancellor of St. David's and a poet of some note in Wales.

#2 "War and Heartbreak" and also Hampshire County Deed Book 11, page 428-431

#3 Frederick County, Virginia: Settlement and Some First Families of Back Creek Valley, 1730-1830 p. 67

#4 pension application #S38316

#5 Journal of the House of Delegates by White p.114 ; Shenandoah Valley Pioneers by Cartmell p. 68

## **Gustavus Croston 1757 - 1839**

Gustavus Travis Croston enlisted at Newport, Maryland, to fight for America's Independence. On the 1st of March, 1777, he was recruited into the 1st Virginia State Regiment. That July the Regiment was transferred to the Continental Line and sent north as part of the Philadelphia campaign under General George Washington. Croston spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge in Capt. Thomas Hamilton's Company of Col. George Gibson's Regiment of Muhlenberg's Brigade.

Before Croston's three year term expired the 1st Virginia Regiment was called back to Virginia. When his first enlistment ended, Gustavus Croston reenlisted at Alexandria, Virginia, "for & during the war." This meant that he volunteered to serve until the war ended.

His company was marched south as part of the campaign against Gen. Cornwallis. He served in the Battle of Hobkirk Hill near Camden, South Carolina on 25 April, 1781, and at the siege of Ninety-Six during 22 May - 19 June, 1781. He was taken prisoner at Ninety-Six and remained interned until the defeat of Gen. Cornwallis at Yorktown on 19 October, 1781. Because he was a prisoner of war for the conflict's last months, it appears that he never received pay for that period nor did he receive a proper discharge.

By 1787 Gustavus Croston appears in Hampshire County being listed on that year's census/tax lists. On 17 October, 1796, he received a grant from the Commonwealth for 50 acres of land adjoining Rees Pritchard (another Revolutionary War veteran) near North River Mills. He acquired other land, but there were title difficulties involving one of the area's most prominent landowners.

By 1818 Gustavus applied for a pension. He was granted a pension due to his failing health and inability to work and his financial need.

Gustavus Croston died June 3, 1839. His grave is in the quiet woods on his land near the place where Maple Run empties into the North River just west of North River Mills.

Gustavus Croston should be remembered as a symbol of those individuals without wealth or property who stepped forward to fight for America's Independence and who later built a life for themselves and their families in the newly formed United States of America. It is appropriate that he be memorialized at the location where he settled and built that new life.

## **North River Mills**

The community that developed where the Great Wagon Road crosses the North River did not come to be known as North River Mills until the nineteenth century when mills were constructed at this convenient location. By this time the Northwestern Turnpike had been constructed as part of Virginia's plan to establish a major highway from the tidewater to the Ohio River. The route chosen for this new road did not come through North River Mills, and so the area began to decline in importance.

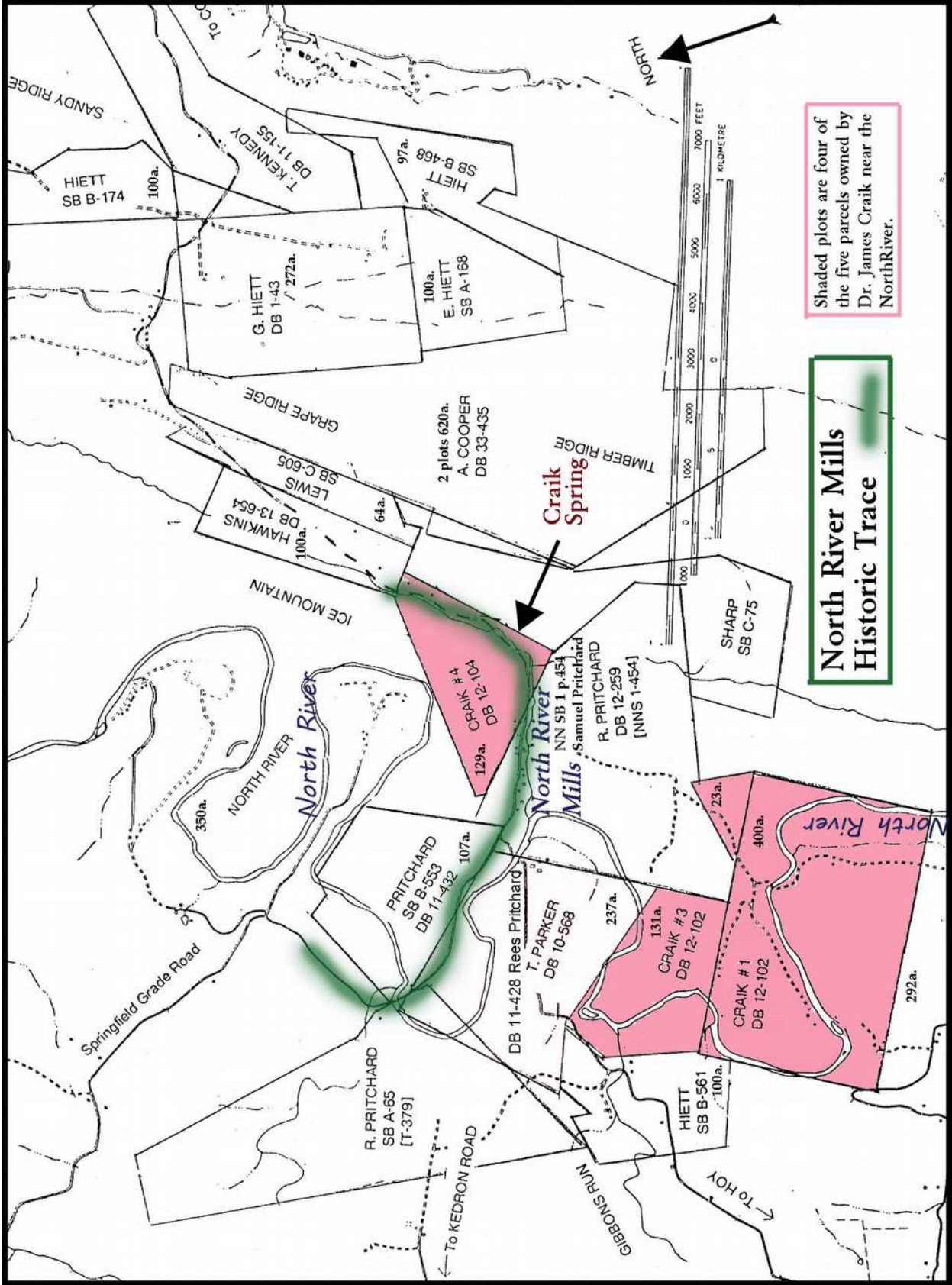
The history of the area has been kept alive by local residents who appreciate the part this little village on the major road west from northern Virginia played in the development of Hampshire County and the entire area. It survived the deprecations of the French and Indian War that opened the way for British/American expansion westward, and it continued through Pontiac's War and our Revolutionary War. Eighty years later it suffered the ravages of the Civil War when families were split and life savings lost.

The establishment of the **North River Mills Historic Trace** will help memorialize this important part of West Virginia history and make it easier for later generations to remember the foundations upon which our freedom and lifestyle are built.

*Statement of Hampshire County, West Virginia.*

NAMES.	Rank.	Annual Allowance.	Sums Received.	Description of Service.	When Placed on Pension Roll.	Commencement of Pension.	Ages.	Laws Under Which Incribed, Increased, and Reduced; and Remarks.
Thomas Athy .....	Private ..	\$ 96 00	\$ 148 64	Virginia line.....	Mar. 6, 1819..	Aug. 18, 1818	74	Suspended under Act May 1, 1820.
Richard Addison.....	do .....	96 00	1,418 32	do .....	Oct. 12, 1821..	May 27, 1818	81	.....
John Bond.....	Serge 'nt	96 00	946 60	Maryland line.....	Nov. 4, 1822..	Oct. 26, 1818	72	.....
Gustavus Croston.....	Private ..	96 00	165 59	Virginia line.....	Oct. 24, 1818..	June 15, 1818	63	Dropped under Act May 1, 1820.
John Dalley.....	do .....	96 00	1,131 38	do .....	July 31, 1820..	May 23, 1818	72	.....
George Eskridge.....	Ensign ..	240 00	3,731 61	do .....	Sept. 15, 1819..	Aug. 18, 1818	78	.....
Stephen Ferryman.....	Private ..	96 00	1,512 49	do .....	Dec. 2, 1818..	June 3, 1818	84	.....
Andrew Gwin.....	do .....	96 00	302 95	do .....	July 15, 1819..	Oct. 26, 1818	61	Died December 21, 1821.
Sampson Henderson.....	do .....	96 00	100 74	do .....	Feb. 18, 1819..	Feb. 16, 1819	61	Dropped under Act May 1, 1820.
John J. Jacob.....	Lieut. ....	240 00	303 30	Maryland line.....	Feb. 11, 1819..	May 31, 1818	63	Suspended under Act May 1, 1820.
William Mail.....	Private ..	96 00	1,514 32	Virginia line.....	Sept. 21, 1818..	May 27, 1818	80	.....
Hugh Malone.....	do .....	96 00	878 18	Maryland line.....	July 21, 1819..	Oct. 19, 1818	72	Died December 11, 1828.
Rees Pritchard.....	Ensign ..	240 00	2,958 24	Virginia line.....	do .....	May 28, 1818	90	Dropped under Act May 1, 1820. Reinstated April 25, 1822. Died Sept. 25, 1830.
George Payne.....	Private ..	96 00	434 57	do .....	Sept. 2, 1829..	Aug. 26, 1829	76	.....
Francis Ravenscroft..	do .....	96 00	436 64	Virginia line.....	Mar. 6, 1819..	Aug. 18, 1818	74	Dropped under Act May 1, 1820. Reinstated July 21, 1821.
John Robinson.....	do .....	96 00	602 86	Pennsylvania line..	May 20, 1819..	May 25, 1818	70	.....
Robert Williams, inv	do .....	96 00	1,357 04	Virginia line.....	.....	Mar. 4, 1789	.....	June 7, 1785.
do .....	do .....	80 00	167 23	do .....	.....	Apr. 24, 1816	.....	April 24, 1816.
do .....	do .....	96 00	1,514 57	do .....	June 22, 1818..	May 26, 1818	92	Died July 22, 1832.
James White.....	do .....	96 00	389 47	do .....	Mar. 5, 1819..	May 25, 1818	86	Dropped under Act May 1, 1820. Restored commencing February 4, 1831.
Isaac Welch.....	do .....	96 00	348 03	do .....	Oct. 9, 1819..	Aug. 21, 1819	80	.....

From: Third Biennial Report of the Department of Archives and History of the State of West Virginia, by Virgil A. Lewis; The News-Mail Company, Charleston, 1911.



Shaded plots are four of the five parcels owned by Dr. James Craik near the NorthRiver.

**North River Mills  
Historic Trace**

HIETT  
SB B-174  
100a.

T. KENNEDY  
DB 11-155

97a.  
HIETT  
SB B-468

G. HIETT  
DB 1-43  
272a.

100a.  
E. HIETT  
SB A-168

GRAPE RIDGE

2 plots 620a.  
A. COOPER  
DB 33-435

LEWIS  
SB C-605

100a.  
HAWKINS  
DB 13-654

ICE MOUNTAIN

**Craik  
Spring**



SHARP  
SB C-75

129a.  
CRAIK # 4  
DB 12-104

North River  
Mills  
NN SB 1 p.454  
Samuel Pritchard

R. PRITCHARD  
DB 12-259  
[NNS 1-454]

350a.  
NORTH RIVER

PRITCHARD  
SB B-553  
DB 11-432 107a.

Springfield Grade Road

23a.

400a.

131a.  
CRAIK # 3  
DB 12-102

237a.

100a.  
HIETT  
SB B-561

292a.

R. PRITCHARD  
SB A-65  
[T-379]

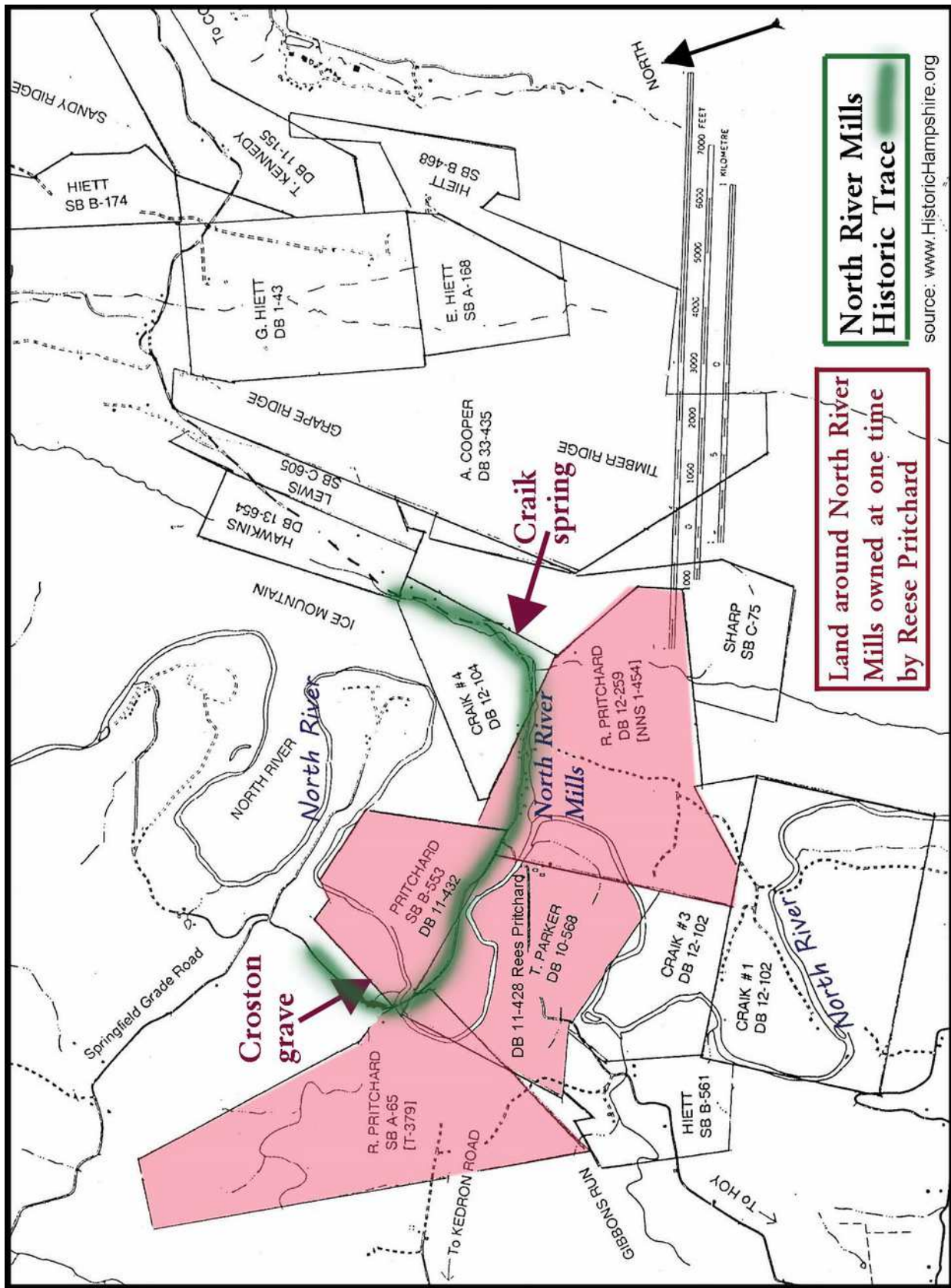
DB 11-428 Rees Pritchard

T. PARKER  
DB 10-568

To KEDRON ROAD

GIKONS RUN

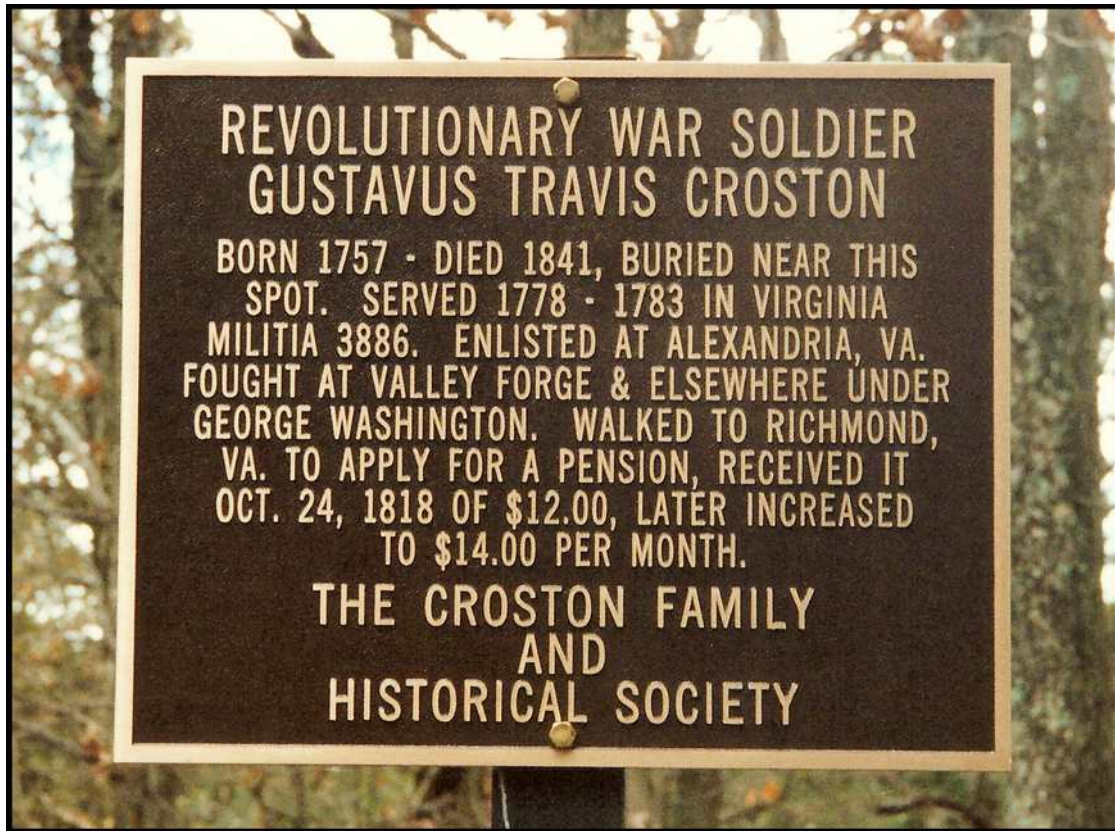
To HOY



**North River Mills  
Historic Trace**

source: [www.HistoricHampshire.org](http://www.HistoricHampshire.org)

**Land around North River  
Mills owned at one time  
by Reese Pritchard**



Descendants and friends gathered for installation of bronze marker for Gustavus's grave.



### References for Dr. James Craik segment:

*Colonial Records of the Upper Potomac, Volume Four, Surveys and Land Claims Before 1757* by William H. Rice; McClain Printing Co., Parsons, W. Va., 2014. ISBN 0-87012-835-4 page 56, 58

*The official records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751-1758.* First printed from the manuscript in the collections of the Virginia Historical Society, by R. A. Brock. Richmond, The Society, 1883-84. New York, AMS Press

*Hampshire County, West Virginia, 1754-2004*, edited by Roberta R. Munske and Wilmer L. Kerns; published by the Hampshire County 250th Anniversary Committee, Romney, West Virginia, 2004.

*The Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series*; ed. by W. W. Abbot; University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 1983. Vol. 1, page 210 contains biographical footnote.

Dr. James Craik article from the Mount Vernon web site:

<http://www.mountvernon.org/research-collections/digital-encyclopedia/article/james-craik/>

### References for Rees Pritchard segment:

*Colonial Records of the Upper Potomac, Volume Four, Surveys and Land Claims Before 1757* by William H. Rice; McClain Printing Co., Parsons, W. Va., 2014. ISBN 0-87012-835-4 page 15, 20, 36, 52, 58, 63

"War and Heartbreak in the North River and Cacapon Valleys," by Wilmer Kerns; *The West Virginia Advocate*, February 15, 1990.

*Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants: A History of Frederick County, Virginia*; by Thomas Kemp Cartmell; published by Cartmell, 1909

*Journal of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth of Virginia*; Begun and Holden in the City of Richmond In the County of Henrico, on Monday, the Sixteenth Day of October, in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty-Six; Thomas A. White, Richmond, 1828.

*Frederick County, Virginia: Settlement and Some First Families of Back Creek Valley, 1730-1830* by Wilmer L. Kerns; Gateway Press, Inc., Baltimore, 1995.

Note: Rees Pritchard is sometimes spelled "Reese."

### References for Gustavus Croston segment:

Pension Application of Gustavus [Travis] Croston (Crosston) S39379 from: <http://revwarapps.org/x39379.pdf>

Valley Forge soldiers list at: <http://valleyforgemusterroll.org/muster.asp>

Research notes of Jane Ailes dated January 4, 2015

*Third Biennial Report of the Department of Archives and History of the State of West Virginia*; by Virgil A. Lewis; Charleston, The News-Mail Company, 1911.

The 1787 Census of Virginia:

*The Personal Property Tax Lists for the Year 1787 for Hampshire County, Virginia [now West Virginia]* by

Netti Schreiner-Yantis and Florene Speakman Love; Genealogical Books in Print, Springfield, Virginia, 1987

1st Virginia Regiment history: <http://www.1va.org/history.html>

Gravesite historical marker.

Note: at some times Gustavus is referred to as Travis Croston; apparently that was his middle name.