

Basis for Research

Sources of information for our Crosser ancestry include:

- * Research was done on Ancestry.com to build a Crosser family tree of 100,000 + people. Ancestry documentation is attached to everyone as applicable. Ancestry is a tremendous source of information.
- * Visited numerous cemeteries where our relatives are buried, particularly in Hardin County, Iowa, Wood, Richland and Columbiana Counties in Ohio, York and Adams Counties in Pennsylvania and Greene County in West Virginia.
- * Find A Grave.com includes information on people buried in various cemeteries across the U.S. It is free and volunteers enter the information. I have entered over 7,000 graves and photos into Find A Grave under the user name "Grasser".
- * DNA was used to match DNA from other individuals in the Ancestry.com DNA database. DNA matches are used to trace back to the common ancestor that created the DNA match.
- * Visited various county genealogy societies in person, connected through e-mail and ordered various ancestry books to provide additional information.
- * Talked with some of our relatives to obtain valuable information outside of available documentation.

I believe the information in this document reasonably represents our family history.

Wendell Crosser
26 Dec 2022

Johan Adam Grasser and wife Maria Magdalena Bard

My 5th Great Grandparents Johan Adam Crosser (1724-1798) and wife Maria Magdalena Bard (1721-1793) both lived in Germany and are the only Crossers that came over to the British Colonies in 1749. The Crosser surname is rare in the U.S. because Johan and Maria were the only Crosser couple that came over. Usually the parents, aunts and uncles, children, and often grandparents came as a large group to support each other in the new land. The larger group results in many more descendants with the same surname.

The German spelling of the Crosser surname is Grasser. As with many immigrants, the English-speaking people in the British Colonies spelled the names as they heard them through the heavy German accents. Grasser changed to Crosser, Klebsattel changed to Clapsaddle, Santy to Santee, etc.

Seven of my Crosser great grandfathers in a row (my 2nd Great Grandfather Adam M Crosser Jr (1843-1921) through my 8th Great Grandfather Hans Adam Crosser (1626-1703)) all went by Adam during their life. Both John and Adam (derived from Johan Adam) are common historical Crosser family names in the U.S., often used by brothers and sisters to name their children. My Crosser grandparents and their parents back through Johan Adam Crosser born in 1724 were all farmers. Johan's ancestors in Germany were also likely farmers as well.

It is unknown why Johan and Maria left Germany in 1749 with their two young children (Jacob 1 yr and Maria 2 yrs). All their parents died before 1749, so they were less attached to Germany? Around 1750, Aglasterhausen, Germany and the lands around it were under the control of a Duke. Based upon the surrounding parish it consisted of about 2000 acres with several hundred inhabitants living in the town. Johan Adam worked for a Duke landlord. A Duke would give his subjects a cottage to live in and some land to grow their own crops, most of which was turned over to the Duke.

It can be assumed with some certainty that Johan George Bard (1686-1769), uncle of Maria Magdalena (Bard) Grasser who already lived in the British Colonies in 1749, encouraged Johan Adam and Maria Magdalena to move to America in the letters sent back to Germany promoting abundant land and freedom of restrictions.

Crosser Family Voyage to the British Colonies in 1749

A ship called PATIENCE with Johan Adam Crosser's family left Rotterdam on 15 July 1749. Rotterdam is a major port city in the Dutch province of South Holland. From Rotterdam the ship stopped at Cowes, England for supplies and then on August 1, 1749, departed for the British Colonies. On board there were 270 "freights" (i.e., people) logged, of which 137 were men.

Johan Adam and Maria had a son named Jacob born 1748 and a daughter Maria Margaretha, christened 31 May 1747. Both were born in Germany before their 1749 departure. The question unanswered is whether the young daughter, Maria Margaretha died before departing for the British Colonies or died at sea? Johan, his wife Maria, and son Jacob arrived in the British Colonies in 1749. Maria Margaretha did not. According to Adam's Will in 1795, Jacob was the oldest living child and Maria Margaretha was not listed.

The voyage was long and difficult. During good weather cooking fires were allowed on deck. Metal boxes called braziers were used to contain the fire on the wood ship. The ship would feed the passengers sea biscuits that were so hard they had to be soaked in beer to prevent breaking one's teeth. Food was often very limited, and some accounts indicate some passengers would buy or catch mice or rats to eat.

Luckily for the passengers it was in the best interest of the captain to deliver them healthy, especially if they owed the shipping company money. When a person died, they were thrown overboard. This method was also used for the children. There were many young ones that did not survive the trip.

Starting in 1727 England required ships with German immigrants to land in the Port of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Males over 16 were required to sign an oath of allegiance to England and the crown. Upon entering the Bay of Delaware, a pilot would board the ship to guide it through the channel. As the ship traveled up the Delaware River toward Philadelphia the new immigrants would spend most of the day on the open deck looking at this new land. Given how large Delaware Bay is, most of the ships would not reach Philadelphia port the first day on the river.

The day the PATIENCE arrived in the British Colonies there were two other ships refused permission to dock due to passenger illness. They were sent back home. After reaching the port the PATIENCE dropped its anchor and shot off the cannons to signify its safe arrival. Captain Steal would not let anyone leave his ship if their passage was not paid in full or an indentured payment wasn't made by others. About half of the German-speaking immigrants could not pay their debts upon arrival and were sold as servants in the British Colonies. Those families owing money could send one family member into Philadelphia (the rest of the family stayed on the boat as collateral) in search of someone willing to pay their debt in return for servitude. The immigrants would be carrying a passport and a letter of recommendation from their pastor when searching for someone to pay their fare.

After settling their debts to the captain, all the men over sixteen were escorted to the courthouse to renounce their previous loyalty to their native land and swear allegiance to King George II, King of England. Their signatures confirmed their pledge. This 'military' type action was

an experience they would never forget. One can only imagine how after riding fifty days on the stormy North Atlantic ocean; Johan Adam and the other men would have had sea legs and wobbled to the courthouse. Nearly 15% of the people leaving Germany died within thirteen years of arriving in the British Colonies.

According to Trinity Lutheran Church records in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Johan Adam was a servant of Johan George Bard (1686-1769) who lived in Lancaster, PA. This would indicate that, Maria's uncle, Johan George Bard sponsored Adam and Maria Magdalena's passage to America. Therefore, it can be assumed someone traveled into Lancaster, Pennsylvania to tell Johan George Bard that Johan Adam Grasser's family was on the ship. George Bard agreed to pay their fare in exchange for 7 years of farming assistance from Johan and Maria. Johan Adam's ultimate destination of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania was so heavily populated with German speaking people that it was essentially a German country within itself.

Crosser Family arrival in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in 1749

After arriving in Philadelphia in 1749, Johan Adam's family traveled 66 miles to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Johan Adam and Maria Magdalena received communion at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on 15 October 1749. Johan George Bard and his family moved to the British Colonies in 1727 and obtained a warrant for 250 acres of land in Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in 1733. Lampeter township is near the city of Lancaster, PA.

Adam Crosser born 1750, my fourth great grandfather, was the first Crosser born in the British Colonies. He and several other children were born in Leacock Twsp, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

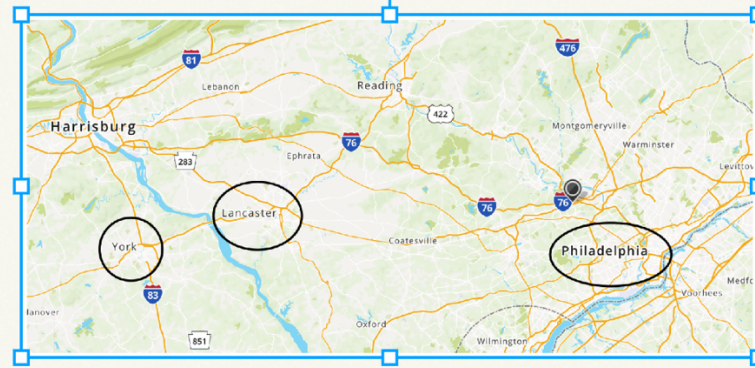
The present-day map below illustrates where Lancaster is relative to Philadelphia, as well as where the city of York is, which is close to Abbottstown where Johan Adam Grasser lived the rest of his life.

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Crosser Family move to York County, PA in 1758

In 1758 Johan Adam's family had moved west from Lancaster across the Susquehanna River into the fertile lands of York County, Pennsylvania. Johan Adam's family in 1758 included Adam, wife Maria Magdalena, Jacob, Adam, Leonhart, Maria Catharina, and Anna. No doubt they crossed the wide Susquehanna River in one of the two flat bottom boats used as ferries to transport the westward migrating families in the 1760's. From the banks of the Susquehanna River, they would have taken the "Great Monocacy Road" which followed an Indian trail and was built in 1736. The road went through the town of York to Hickory town, which is now known as Hanover, Pennsylvania. Johan Adam bought 110 acres of land several miles outside of Hickory town, in Berwick Township, York, Pennsylvania. The farm was just south of Abbottstown in York County. This town is located midway between the town of York and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. No doubt the site was forested with enormous hickory, walnut and oak trees. One of Johan Adam's sources of income on the 110-acre farm was producing honey. Many colonial farmers kept bees as an important livestock. Bee honey had a variety of uses. Most importantly, honey from bees was used as a sweetener and bees provided another important resource-wax.

Johan Adam died in 1798 and it is incredible that we know where he is buried. His gravestone is still there today. He is in the cemetery that is part of St. John's Lutheran Church, 100 E Water St, Abbottstown, Adams County, PA 17301. I have visited the grave and it was a moving experience for me. By the amount of build-up on the gravestone, it is clear that no one has visited Johan's grave in a long time. I cleaned the stone, which is written in German, the best I could, and paid my respects.

Unfortunately, the burial location for his wife Maria Magdalena (Bard) Crosser is not known. Maria may have died around 1793. The cemetery records for the St. John's Lutheran Church do not include any record of her death or being buried in their cemetery.

Per Johan Adam's Will dated 1795, it is safe to say he wasn't a wealthy individual in terms of assets. But think about the legacy Johan and Maria left in America in terms of the opportunity they provided to their hundreds of descendants to live in this great country.

Crosser Family move to Ohio in 1806

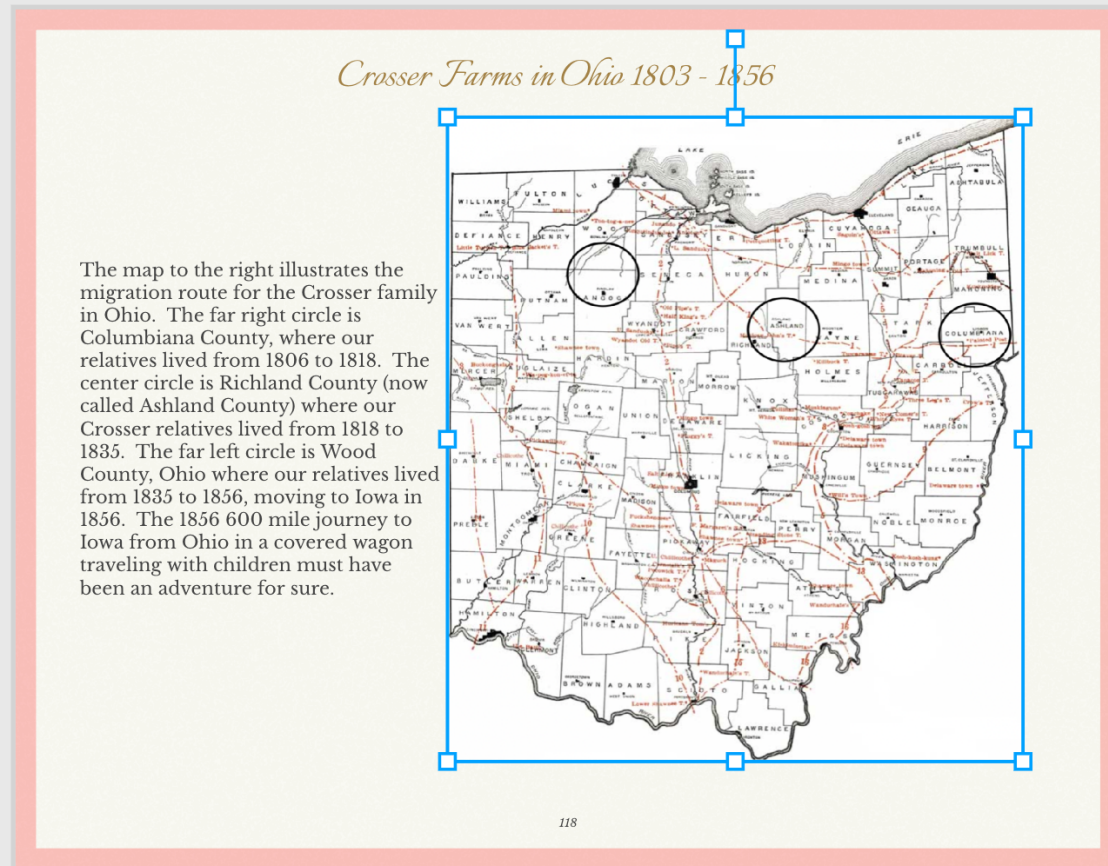
Adam Crosser born 1750 and his brother Jacob born 1748 moved to Columbiana County, Ohio around 1806, about 8 years after the death of their father, Johan Adam born 1724. Ohio became a state in 1803, and the Crossers were truly early pioneers into the new developing region. Columbiana County is located in the northeastern part of Ohio, just over the Pennsylvania border. When they moved about 280 miles to Elkrun Township, Columbiana County, Ohio in 1806, all their children were under age 18 and all moved with them. Agriculture was the principal industry during the early period of Columbiana County. In 1830, this county was second in Ohio in the production of wheat, raised more horses than any county west of the mountains and was second only to Washington County, Pennsylvania in sheep production.

On 7 January 1813, the Ohio government authorized the creation of Richland County. Residents named the county after its rich soil and productive farmland. Richland County is in north central Ohio. The population in Richland County, Ohio was 9,000 in 1820, 24,000 in 1830, and 45,000 in 1840. When Adam Crosser born 1750 traveled the 100 miles to Green Township, Richland County, Ohio around 1818, all their children except for Lewis born 1796 went with them. Lewis remained in Columbiana County, Ohio. It is believed that Adam Crosser born 1750 and his wife Anna Barbara Clapsaddle (my 4th great grandparents) both died in Richland County, Ohio around the 1820s. Their date of death and burial locations are not known.

After the death of their parents in the 1820s, around 1835, three of Adam Crosser's (born 1750) sons (John born 1794, Adam born 1795 and Daniel born 1802) all traveled the 100 miles to Wood County, Ohio. Margery Crosser born 1806 lived in the Richland County, Ohio area for the rest of her life, and as noted above, Lewis born 1796 remained in Columbiana County, Ohio. Wood County was organized on 12 February 1820, when the legislature carved 14 counties from the lands purchased from the Wyandot, Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa tribes as a result of the Lower Maumee Treaty of 28 September, 1817. Early settlers moved into Wood County, Ohio to create farmland out of swamp and since then, Wood County has been mostly agricultural in nature, covered by farms growing mostly soybeans, corn and wheat. Henry Township, Wood County, Ohio, where Adam Crosser's (born 1795) family lived, was established in 1836 and named after Henry Shaw, a county official.

Crosser Farms in Ohio 1803 – 1856

The map below illustrates the migration route for the Crosser family in Ohio. The far-right circle is Columbiana County, where our relatives lived from 1806 to 1818. The center circle is Richland County (now called Ashland County) where our Crosser relatives lived from 1818 to 1835. The far-left circle is Wood County, Ohio where our relatives lived from 1835 to 1856, moving to Iowa in 1856. The 1856 600-mile journey to Iowa from Ohio in a covered wagon traveling with children must have been an adventure for sure.



Crosser Family move to Iowa in 1856

Adam Crosser born 1795 (my 3rd great grandfather) was a true pioneer. He moved several times with his family and other Crosser relatives as new land in America became available. Adam was born in 1795 in Berwick Township, York County, Pennsylvania. Adam (age 11) moved with his family in 1806 to Elkrun Township, Columbiana County, Ohio located in northeast Ohio. In 1818 (age 23) Adam moved with his family to Greene Township, Richland County, Ohio which is in North Central Ohio. He married Margaret Archer in 1824 in Richland County, Ohio. In 1835 (age 40) he moved with his family to Henry Township, Wood County, Ohio which is in northwestern Ohio near the present-day town of North Baltimore. North Baltimore is located on the southern border of Wood County, Ohio, which borders Hancock County to the south. Several Crosser's lived in Hancock County not far from North Baltimore. In 1856 (age 61), Adam traveled 600 miles to Iowa in a covered wagon with most of his children, initially stopping in the Cedar County, Iowa area for a short period, then moving permanently to Pleasant Township, Hardin County, Iowa in 1856.

Adam's wife, Margaret Archer (my 3rd great grandmother) was born in 1804 in Franklin, Greene County, Pennsylvania and is the daughter of Joseph Archer and Margaret Church. It is not known when Margaret (Archer) Crosser died, but she did not end up in Iowa in 1856 with her husband Adam and several of her children. Family legend believes she died in Wood County, Ohio before Adam moved to Iowa. I went to Wood County, Ohio to look for Margaret's grave with no success.

Pleasant Township, Hardin, Iowa is located 5 miles or so southwest of present-day Eldora, Hardin County, Iowa. Many of Adam's children relocated to Iowa with him. His son Lewis did not as he had died before 1854. His daughter Elizabeth Crosser born 1828 did not relocate either. This may have been because of poor health because she died in 1857. Adam born 1795 purchased 80 acres of farmland in Hardin County, Iowa, and by 1875, some of his married children owned farmland near his farm. Adam born 1795 and several of his children's families are buried on Hardin County, Iowa. You can find them on [Find A Grave.com](http://FindAGrave.com).

For many Crosser relatives after 1856, Hardin or other Iowa counties were their home continuing through today. Hardin County over the years has had more Crossers live there than any other county in the United States. My parents, Don and Velma Lois Crosser, lived in Hardin County, IA.

Pleasant Township, Hardin County, Iowa

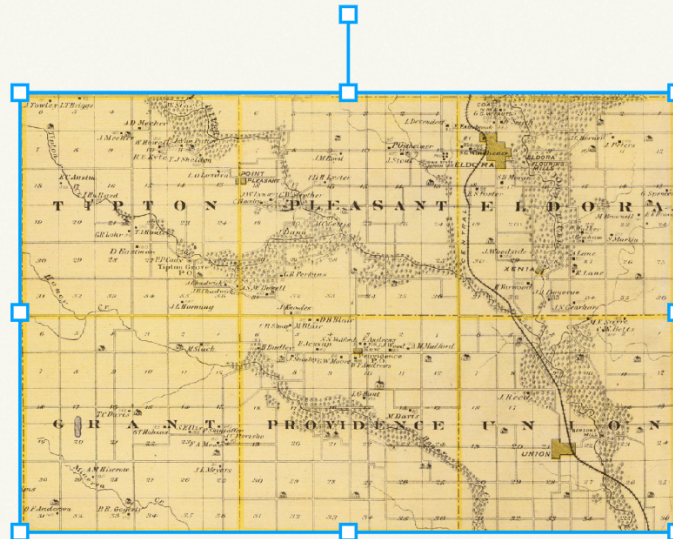
Pleasant is one of the southeastern townships in Hardin County, being bounded on the north by Jackson, on the east by Eldora, on the south by Providence, and on the west by Tipton townships. The South Fork of the Iowa River flows from the northwestern part to the southeastern part of Pleasant Township. See the 1875 map on the right for additional details.

The topographical features include a high and rolling prairie containing considerable fine bottom land, rich and very productive in its composition of soil. The streams are the South Fork, the Beaver Creek, the Little Beaver creek, with numerous smaller streams not named on the maps of the county. At an early day much good timber of various varieties was found growing along the streams of the township.

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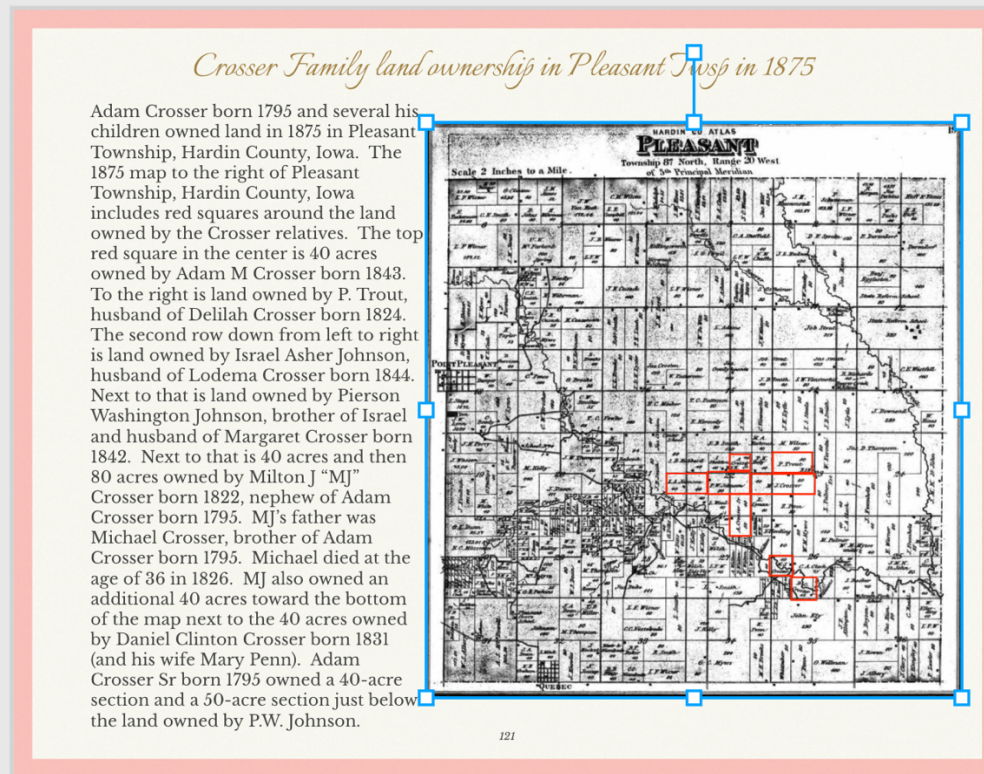
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Crosser Family land ownership in Pleasant Twsp in 1875

Adam Crosser born 1795 and several his children owned land in 1875 in Pleasant Township, Hardin County, Iowa. The 1875 map below of Pleasant Township, Hardin County, Iowa includes red squares around the land owned by the Crosser relatives. The top red square in the center is 40 acres owned by Adam M Crosser born 1843. To the right is land owned by P. Trout, husband of Delilah Crosser born 1824. The second row down from left to right is land owned by Israel Asher Johnson, husband of Lodema Crosser born 1844. Next to that is land owned by Pierson Washington Johnson, brother of Israel and husband of Margaret Crosser born 1842. Next to that is 40 acres and then 80 acres owned by Milton J "MJ" Crosser born 1822, nephew of Adam Crosser born 1795. MJ's father was Michael Crosser, brother of Adam Crosser born 1795. Michael died at the age of 36 in 1826. MJ also owned an additional 40 acres toward the bottom of the map next to the 40 acres owned by Daniel Clinton Crosser born 1831 (and his wife Mary Penn). Adam Crosser Sr born 1795 owned a 40-acre section and a 50-acre section just below the land owned by P.W. Johnson.



Parents of Don and Velma Lois (Holbrock) Crosser

Parents of Don and Velma Lois (Holbrock) Crosser



Wendell Holbrock



Kenneth Crosser



Velma Lois (Holbrock)
and Don Crosser



Caroline Santee



Mildred Farrill

Crosser Family History in Iowa

Adam Crosser b 1795 (my 3rd great grandfather) moved from Wood County, Ohio to Hardin County, Iowa in 1856. Several of Adam's children came with him to Iowa. Daniel (later moved to Nebraska), Silas (later moved to Nebraska and then Oklahoma), Simon (later moved to Farragut, Fremont, Iowa), Margaret, Adam born 1843, and Lodema. The latter three including their father lived in Hardin County, Iowa for the rest of their life. Two of Adam Crosser's (born 1795) nephews made the trip to Iowa with him as well. Adam Crosser born 1795 had a brother, Michael, who died early at 36. This is likely why the two nephews Rowan Crosser 1817-1864 and Milton J "MJ" Crosser 1822-1901 moved to Iowa.

Adam Crosser born 1795 had son Adam Crosser born 1843 (my 2nd great grandfather) who moved to Iowa with his father when he was 13. He married Huldah Sharar in Hardin County, Iowa in 1867. They had 10 children together and they farmed in Iowa for most of their life. Huldah died in 1908 and Adam in 1921. Both are buried in Hardin County, Iowa

Adam Crosser 1843 had a son Jasper Newton "Jess" Crosser (my great grandfather) who was born in 1878 in Hardin County, Iowa. Jasper married Myrtle Louise Jones in Hardin County, Iowa in 1899. They had eight children together. Jasper was a bit of a wanderer like his grandfather Adam Crosser born 1795 as Jasper and his family moved 5 times in their life, often to different states. Jasper was a farmer for most of his life. Myrtle died in 1950 and Jasper in 1960. Both are buried in Eldora, Hardin County, Iowa.

Jasper's son Kenneth Crosser (my grandfather) was born in 1906 in Hardin, Iowa. In 1929 he married Mildred Farrill and they had four children together. Kenneth was a farmer for most of his life. He died in 1957 at the early age of 51 and Mildred died in 1998. Both are buried in Eldora, Hardin, Iowa.

Kenneth's son Donald Crosser (my father) was born in 1930 in Hardin, Iowa. He married Velma Lois Holbrock in 1951 before going off to the Korean war as a medic airman. His enlistment date was 10 Aug 1951 and his release date was 9 May 1953 as a corporal in the U.S. Army. Don and Velma farmed for the first 15 years (first near Iowa Falls, then near Owasa, Hardin, Iowa) after he returned from the war, and then he worked until his retirement at Campbell Supply Company in Iowa Falls. Don and Velma had three sons. Don died in 2003 and Velma Lois in 2019. Both are buried in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa.

Wendell P. Crosser

Family Tree



Donald P. Crosser

b: 6 Jan 1930 in Union Township, Hardin, Iowa
 d: 5 Feb 2003 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 4 Feb, 1951 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa



Kenneth E. Crosser

b: 16 Feb 1906 in Union Township, Hardin, Iowa
 d: 30 Sep 1957 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 7 Apr 1929 in Union Township, Hardin, Iowa



Mildred G. Farrill

b: 11 May 1909 in Stapleton, Chickasaw, Iowa
 d: 17 Aug 1998 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 7 Apr 1929 in Union Township, Hardin, Iowa



Wendell P. Crosser

b: 8 Apr 1959 in Hardin Township, Hardin County, Iowa
 m: 6 Jun 2010 in Table Rock Lake, Branson, Missouri



Wendell W. Holbrock

b: 23 Mar 1903 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 d: 11 Oct 1969 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 6 Jun 1922 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa



Velma L. Holbrock

b: 8 Sep 1931 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 d: 9 Dec 2019 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 4 Feb 1951 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa



Caroline I. Santee

b: 1 Dec 1902 in Exira, Audubon, Iowa
 d: 15 Jun 1982 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa
 m: 6 Jun 1922 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, Iowa



Teresa M. Scharn

b: 13 Dec 1968 in Lytton, Calhoun, Iowa
 m: 6 Jun 2010 in Table Rock Lake, Branson, Missouri

Jasper N. "Jess" Crosser

b: 15 Sep 1878 in Hubbard, Hardin, IA
 d: 25 Jun 1960 in Eldora, Hardin, IA
 m: 2 Apr 1899 in Hardin County, IA

Myrtle L. Jones

b: 13 Mar 1885 in Hubbard, Hardin, IA
 d: 13 Apr 1950 in Eldora, Hardin County, IA
 m: 2 Apr 1899 in Hardin County, IA

James T. Farrill

b: 23 Jun 1882 in Hawkeye, Chickasaw, IA
 d: 1 May 1955 in Waterloo, Black Hawk, IA
 m: 23 Aug 1908 in New Hampton, Chickasaw, IA

Edith M. Swanger

b: 11 Dec 1889 in Manly, Worth, IA
 d: 13 Oct 1963 in Fredericksburg, Chickasaw, IA
 m: 23 Aug 1908 in New Hampton, Chickasaw, IA

William Holbrock

b: 16 Feb 1865 in Palatine, Cook, IL
 d: 20 Apr 1929 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA
 m: 12 Nov 1887 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA

Mary M. Boddy

b: 21 Oct 1871 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA
 d: 16 Apr 1953 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA
 m: 12 Nov 1887 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA

James K. "JK" Santee

b: 29 Mar 1879 in Summit, Muscatine, Iowa
 d: 17 Nov 1964 in Saint Petersburg, FL
 m: 2 Oct 1901 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA

Ina E. Hensley

b: 11 Feb 1884 in Audubon County, IA
 d: 20 Mar 1952 in St. Petersburg, FL
 m: 2 Oct 1901 in Iowa Falls, Hardin, IA

Adam M. Crosser

Adam Crosser

Huldah E. Sharar

Margaret E. Archer
 John Sharar
 Harriet E. Johnson

Albert H. Jones

Emulous "Amuel" S. Jones

Ruth H. Sabin

Charlotte E. Miles
 William M. Sabin
 Nancy J. Wolfe

James T. Farrill

James Farrill
 Mary A. Toay

Margaret A. "Maggie" Turner

Robert Turner
 Elizabeth Armstrong

James O. Swanger

Christian C. Swanger
 Esther "Hetty" Goss

Harriet E. "Hattie" Sisson

Rodman J. "R. J. Sisson
 Anne E. Appleberry

Henry Holbrock

Marten Holbrock
 Muenchhausen

Hannah Roper

Johan "Friedrich" W. Roper
 Caroline M. Holbrock

William Boddy

Robert Boddy
 Mary Newton

Anna E. Meeker

Charles Meeker
 Melissa Spencer

Robert C. Santee

Joseph R. Santee
 Elsie Chalfant

Martha M. Kelley

James Kelley
 Elizabeth Hewitt

Morgan Hensley

John J. Hensley
 Martha J. Popejoy

Caroline E. "Carrie" Slocum

Judson W. Slocum
 Emeranza Wood

Adam Crosser born 1795

Family Tree

