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VERMONT HISTORY

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In This Issue

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Ethan Allen's Irish Friends

Allen's plight drew sympathy and aroused indignation in Ireland, especially among Irish radical politicians, who were always looking for an opportunity to discredit the English administration in its handling of American affairs.

By EUGENE A. COYLE AND JOHN J. DUFFY

In late 1775, winter in the British Isles grew abnormally harsh, second only in that century to the stormy winter of 1737. Newspapers recorded blizzards, high winds, and temperatures as low as −13°C. The Lee River in southern Ireland pushed large ice floes into Cork harbor, while arctic cold froze the Liffey River and thick ice closed Dublin Port on the east central coast. Severe blizzards and high gales shut down road transport across Ireland.[1]

As the foul weather battered the island that December, large military transport ships heading for America formed a convoy at Cobh on the south Irish coast with orders to take on troops barracked at Cork and Waterford for reinforcements to the beleaguered British army facing rebellion in both North Carolina and the northeastern coastal colonies. With the turn of the year, the worst storm of the century "brought old hardy sailors to their prayers,"[2] sinking the troopship *Marquis of Rockingham* with 110 casualties.[3] Thirty troopships eventually reformed at anchor in Cobh during January, waiting for their escorting flagships, HMS *Solebay* and HMS *Thunder Bomb,* and three medium-sized frigates.

Departing from Falmouth, Cornwall, on January 8, 1776, HMS *Solebay* safely sailed through the deadly violent storm, the last ship to join the convoy at Cobh. As news quickly spread throughout Ireland concerning the assembly of a fleet of nearly fifty troopships, hospital ships, frigates, and ships of the line, Irish political interests focused on the *Solebay* and its human cargo: a group of American and Canadian prisoners who had

been captured at Montreal in September 1775, transported to England, and were now headed back to America.[4] The prisoners' fates were unknown; newspapers conjectured they were being shipped back to the colonies either for prisoner exchange or continued incarceration.[5] The most prominent member of the group was Ethan Allen, the notorious Yankee rebel leader from the New Hampshire Grants.

For over two centuries, information about and interpretation of Allen's experience as a prisoner of war has relied almost exclusively on his own account, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity, Containing His Voyages and Travels,* published in 1779, a year after his release and return to what was by then called Vermont. The *Narrative* contains many details of Allen's exploits and tribulations from May 1775 to May 1778. For some passages, Allen was the only witness who left a surviving account, and his bombastic, often self-promoting rhetoric has evoked both admiration and skepticism in his readers down the ages. For a few episodes in this personal drama, we have the words of other witnesses to the events that Allen described. Never before, however, have we seen the brief Irish portion of Allen's captivity through other eyes. Newspaper and personal accounts of Irish observers, recently uncovered and reported in this article, not only corroborate Allen's *Narrative* but show us how another portion of the population of the British empire responded to the revolution in America and used Allen's presence among them as a captive rebel to express their own resentment of England's governance of Ireland.

At dawn on May 10, 1775, Allen and Benedict Arnold led an irregular force of Green Mountain Boys and militia from Connecticut and Massachusetts in the capture of Ticonderoga, the crumbling French-built fortress controlling Lake Champlain and the route from Montreal to New York.[6] On September 25 Allen was himself captured after an ill-conceived and poorly coordinated attack on the walled town of Montreal.[7]

Clamped in manacles, the survivors of Allen's force of Americans and French Canadians taken at Montreal were held on the brig *Gaspé.* Allen was also painfully locked in 40-pound leg irons, an insulting burden for an officer.[8] News of the harsh treatment meted out to Allen and his fellow prisoners by their British captors quickly traveled by dispatch runners from Seth Warner, leading an advance scout of Green Mountain Rangers at La Prairie across the St. Lawrence from Montreal, to Richard Montgomery, the Irish-born commander of American forces besieging St. John, 20 miles to the south.[9] In October Montgomery wrote to Guy Carleton, the British commander at Montreal and also an Irishman, threatening a massacre of the captured British garrison at Chambly if the "shocking indignity" of keeping Ethan Allen and his men in manacles and leg irons did not cease.[10] Carleton ignored Montgomery's threat and in early

December sent Allen and his rebel companions, still shackled, to Quebec to be placed on HMS *Adamant* bound for Cornwall.[11]

Newspapers in Ireland were eager to report word from any source about America, but Allen's captivity appears to have attracted special attention and sympathy. Dublin's *Freeman's Journal,* for example, reproduced from the *Falmouth News* an extract of a letter from a British naval officer who had traveled on the same ship as Allen, arriving on December 28 from Quebec, "to which place I never intended to return nor will I ever go upon such service again to any part of America."[12]

Allen's capture, severe treatment, and transportation from Quebec to Falmouth caught the public's imagination. *Town and Country* magazine in London reported that in January, as the American prisoners sat in the hold of the *Solebay* at Cobh, newspapers in various parts of England and Ireland had printed verses in parody of an air from *The Beggar's Opera,* John Gay's 1732 satire on Georgian manners and the politics of Robert Walpole's administration. Closely mimicking Gay's catchy rhymes and meter, the parody presented Jemmy Twitcher, a villainous highwayman, taking a slash at contemporary politics and the American policies of Lord North, England's first minister:

> Your prisoners, thou' they are prisoners, spare
> And quash this idle strife
> For on the rope that swings then & there
> Hangs many a subject's life.[13]

These lyrics fueled Irish sympathy for the American prisoners and, according to one newspaper, influenced decisions on the fate of Allen and his companions. The *Hibernian Journal* of Cork reported "this merciful decision [not to hang the Americans] was brought about by Twitcher's singing his parody."[14]

Irish political observers were alert to constitutional questions pestering the North administration over how to handle Allen and other American prisoners. Irish newspapers reported that soon after arriving in Falmouth, Allen had engaged an English attorney to challenge the constitutionality and authority of his imprisonment. John Wilkes (1727–1797), mayor of London and a vigorous opponent of the administration's coercive American policy, obtained a writ of habeus corpus for Allen early in his eleven-day imprisonment at Pendennis Castle in Cornwall.[15] With Irish newspaper reports prompting the opposition's questions to the administration, the Crown finally ordered the confinement of Allen and his fellow prisoners.[16] Until then, with no official order determining the status of the Americans, Allen and the other prisoners faced an ambiguous future, possibly including the traitor's fate of "a halter at Tyburn" that General

Richard Prescott promised him after Allen's capture at Montreal.[17] Wilkes's suit and the general effect of English and Irish support had forced an English policy decision defining Allen as a prisoner of war, not a traitor. After Solicitor General Alexander Wedderburn failed to persuade Allen to revive his loyalty to the Crown in exchange for his freedom,[18] Irish newspapers announced in early January that Allen and his companions would be shipped back to America. The *Hibernian Journal* reported that "an acrimonious debate is said to be already had in the [English] Cabinet on the fate of the American prisoners from Canada. . . . It was agreed to let them remain as such prisoners till the fate of the next campaign be known."[19]

As January wore on, rumors about the fate of the prisoners continued to appear in the Irish newspapers. One mistaken story in the Cork newspaper reported that Quebec had fallen to the Americans under Montgomery and that the captured British commander, Carleton, would be exchanged for Allen, thus explaining the haste in returning him to America.[20] But by the middle of the month, editorial comment in the Irish radical press correctly concluded that the English government, rather than trying Allen and his companions as traitors, was sending them back to America as prisoners. *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* implied that the decision to return Allen was taken at the highest level but noted the public's attention to the incident:

> The reason of the Government's intention of sending back Mr. Ethan Allen and his companions must now appear very palpable to the intelligent and dispassionate man. Whatever view malice or prejudice may endeavour to set this intended measure in, it is certainly a VERY POLITICAL ONE of the highest water, as these persons will be exchanged for some of the regulars and at the same time will rather pacify than inflame the minds of many right thinking people who might lead on this Island to oppose other vigorous measures.[21]

Allen's plight drew sympathy and aroused indignation in Ireland, especially among Irish radical politicians, who were always looking for an opportunity to discredit the English administration in its handling of American affairs. By the end of January, public subscriptions were opened at Cork and at the Dublin Exchange Coffee House. On February 2 the *Hibernian Journal* reported that Allen and his companion prisoners "were brought to England to be tried as rebels but now are returned to be exchanged as prisoners-of-war. Their friends in England did not do anything to relieve their miseries but as soon as their arrival was announced on hospitable shores, subscriptions were opened to provide them with the proper necessities both by the Patriotic citizenry of Dublin and of Cork."

Graphic accounts of American prisoners suffering from inadequate

protection against winter on the north Atlantic (details of which would later be confirmed in Allen's own account) elicited Irish generosity:

> These unhappy prisoners, when taken, were destitute of all clothing, saving those then on their backs and in this situation transported to England from Canada where they remained in jail for nearly three months without being brought to trial and now by order of the Administration on board the above man-of-war [*Solebay*] to be conveyed back to America but without any additional clothing in this most inclement season. Humanity shrinks at the distressed conditions of these wretches who have been deprived of their liberty, dragged from their country and friends for upwards of 3000 miles (as now appears) against all statutes and Common Law (otherwise they would have been tried and legally punished), confined in a close dungeon, fettered in irons and without a second shirt or coat to refresh their aching bodies.[22]

In the first few days of February, newspapers in both Dublin and Cork noted that "several Gentlemen of Cork, struck by the wretched conditions of these brave fellows, who are stout and remarkably well looking, have begun a subscription to purchase clothing and other necessities for their voyage and in a few hours have received upwards of 30 guineas."[23]

One of the Cork subscription raisers reported that two men from Cork went on board the *Solebay*

> to enquire about their [Allen's and the other prisoners'] situation and to assure them of the disposition of several gentlemen in this city to alleviate their distresses. . . . A subscription was begun this morning among some friends of the CAUSE and near fifty guineas was collected to buy clothes for his men and necessaries for himself. . . . I have not been refused by a single person on the subscription.[24]

In the *Narrative* of his thirty-two months in captivity, Allen described the friendly Irish reception and generous support he and his fellow prisoners received as the *Solebay* lay in Cobh for nearly a month on its return to America.[25] Allen, however, seems to have had just a glimpse of what became widespread interest and sympathy for the prisoners on the *Solebay.* He recalled that "it was soon rumored in Cork that I was on board the *Solebay,* with a number of prisoners from America; upon which Messrs. Clark and Hay, merchants in company, and a number of other benevolently disposed gentlemen, contributed largely to the relief and support of the prisoners, who were thirty-four in number, and in very needy circumstances."[26]

Clark, Hay, and James Bonwell are the only Irish-named benefactors of the Americans Allen mentioned in his *Narrative.* Bonwell, who according to the *Narrative* gave Allen a beaver hat "richly laced with gold," appears in a Dublin directory as a linen merchant. The only surviving eighteenth-century Cork directory lists two Clarkes and six Hayses as

merchants. A Philip Clarke was "a Clothier Merchant of Batchelor's Walk, Cork City," and Benjamin Hays was an attorney and merchant "in the South Mall, Cork City." If Allen's "Clark" and "Hay" were Catholics, they would not have appeared in any eighteenth-century Irish business directory.[27]

Allen wrote his *Narrative* from memory in spring 1779. Although he recalled the actions of those who appeared briefly on the stage of his captivity drama, he often either forgot or misspelled their names.[28] Allen probably never learned or knew the name Edward Newenham, perhaps his most prominent Irish benefactor at Cobh. Newenham's identity and his role as one of Allen's sympathizers, uncovered only recently, seem to have been unknown as well to Allen's early and recent biographers.

Hoey's Dublin Mercury, a fiery newspaper that supported the government, reported on February 2, 1776, that its favorite opposition target, Sir Edward Newenham, a radical member of the Irish Parliament, had organized a public subscription for the American prisoners at the Dublin Exchange Coffee House. Newenham (1732–1814) sat in the Irish Parliament with the Patriot faction, beside Henry Grattan, Thomas Connolly, and Alexander Montgomery, MP from county Donegal and brother of Richard Montgomery, recently killed while commanding the American forces besieging Quebec in December 1775.[29] Volatile and bombastic—like Allen—Newenham publicly declared his friendship for the American rebel cause: when the news of Richard Montgomery's death in the snow before Quebec reached Dublin in March 1776, Newenham cocked a snook at Lord North's administration by appearing in the Irish House of Commons attired in black mourning clothes.[30]

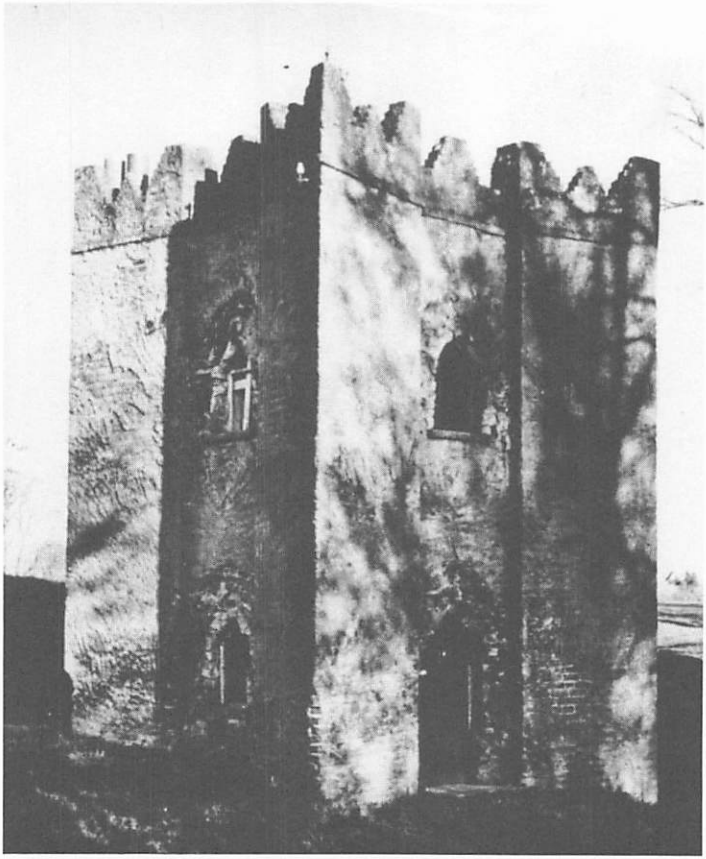
Edward Newenham was the younger son of Thomas Newenham of Coolmore. The Newenhams were county Cork gentry with an active interest in Irish Patriot politics.[31] According to an advertisment in the Cork *Evening Post* (1786), a cadet branch of the Newenham family was headed by George Newenham, "Clothier to the Aristocrats"—and possibly provider of thirty-three suits of clothes given to Allen's fellow prisoners at Cork and the gift to Allen of "super-fine broadcloath, sufficient for two jackets, and two pair of breeches."[32] Richard Newenham, George's father, was Ireland's largest dealer of worsted yarn, spun from Carolina and Georgia cotton, and a Quaker opponent of England's policy toward America, especially the importation embargo on American cotton.[33] Perhaps George Newenham and his father were prompted by their cousin Edward, whose Dublin subscription for the Americans might also have paid for the gift of clothing.

Edward Newenham lived at Belcamp Hall, Coolock, county Dublin, serving as MP from 1776 to 1797. In 1778 Newenham concretely expressed

"Sir Edward Newenham, Kn[igh]t, Representative for the County of Dublin." From the Hibernian, *Dublin, 1778.*

support for the American victories over the English at Lexington and Concord when he constructed on the grounds of his estate a folly he called the Washington Tower, with an exterior plaque commemorating those events.[34] Newenham's tower still stands, the sole monument to Washington erected in Europe during his lifetime and the only monument in Ireland that commemorates him. Newenham often claimed in private as well as in political debate that the fate of the American colonies—civil riot and war—would be the fate of Ireland unless Parliament granted reform and fiscal independence from Westminster.

After the American peace in 1783, Newenham built an oval room at Belcamp Hall, unwittingly prefiguring the Oval Office of the yet-to-be-designed and built American president's official residence. Called the



Washington Memorial Tower. Built 1778 at Belcamp by Sir Edward Newenham in honor of American independence. Courtesy of Eugene A. Coyle.

States, Newenham's room displayed busts and etchings of America's Revolutionary heroes: Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Lafayette, and Benedict Arnold. For his treachery, Arnold's bust was turned to face into its alcove. When Jane Livingston, Montgomery's widow, arrived at Belcamp Hall on her visit to Ireland in 1789, she viewed in the States an elaborate, stuccoed mural depicting the death of her husband in the snow before the walls of Quebec, a macabre memorial still on display.[35]

One of Newenham's enshrined American heroes returned the favor done to Ethan Allen by his Irish benefactor. In 1782 Newenham asked Benjamin Franklin to help him and his family obtain a release from house arrest in Marseilles, where the French government, then at war with Great Britain, had confined them as suspected British spies. Writing to Franklin at Passy during his mission to the court of Versailles, Newenham reminded Franklin that "your worthy and virtuous countrymen have always met with my favour, particularly, Col Allen and those who were associated with him," and he assured him, "my own conduct towards the United States has been such that I am confident your excellency will not think me undeserving of your particular protection."[36] Franklin arranged for the Newenhams to obtain a passport and license to travel to Ostend and then home to Ireland.

The British convoy left Cobh and Allen's Irish benefactors on February 12, 1776. Allen, however, quickly acquired additional Irish friends during these early days of his lengthy captivity. On board the *Solebay* was Master of Arms Gillegin (or perhaps Gilligan), "an Irishman who was a generous and well disposed man, and in a friendly manner, made me a proffer of lying with him in a little birth, which was alloted him between decks, and enclosed with canvas." Allen, "comparatively happy" with Gillegin's "clemency," bunked with him "in friendship" till the frigate anchored in the harbor of Cape Fear, North Carolina.[37]

As the convoy left Cobh for America, however, another furious Atlantic storm drove the British fleet east to the Bay of Biscay. The convoy regrouped and sailed on to the island of Madeira, where Allen "found that Irish generosity was again excited; for a gentleman of this nation sent his clerk on board, to know of me if I would accept a sea store from him (particularly of wine)." But Captain Symonds of the *Solebay* ordered the ship to take the newly risen fair wind, thus leaving Madeira and its wine before Allen's final Irish gift could reach him.[38]

Allen was certainly grateful for the help from his Irish friends. Immediately after receiving their gifts of food, spirits, and clothing in Cobh, he wrote directly to his benefactors: "Gentlemen of Cork, I received your generous present this day with a joyful Heart. Thanks to God, there are still feelings of humanity in the worthy citizens of Cork, towards those

of your own bone and flesh, through misfortune from the present broils in the Empire are now needy prisoners."[39] Allen's brief note of gratitude to the Irish traveled to America almost as quickly as the *Solebay,* to be published in the *Connecticut Courant* in early summer 1776 as Allen and his companions lay at anchor in North Carolina.[40]

In May 1778 Allen finally returned to the New Hampshire Grants, now a "young Vermont," having endured the longest British captivity of an American officer.[41] On the first anniversary of his exchange and freedom, May 3, 1779, Allen hosted a party at a tavern in Arlington to honor the Irish who had assisted and supported him in the early days of his wearisome captivity. No guest list survives from that party, but it is a fair guess that any Irish in the vicinity were warmly welcomed.[42]

Notes

[1] The severe weather conditions in winter 1775–1776 were reported in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal,* 23 January 1776; *Saunders Newletter,* 23 January 1776; and Cork's *Hibernian Journal,* 23 January 1776, among other papers.

[2] Ethan Allen, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity, Containing His Voyages and Travels,* (New York: Fort Ticonderoga Museum, 1930; reprinted Rutland: Vermont Heritage Press, 1988), 48; hereafter cited as *EAN.*

[3] *Finn's Leinster Journal,* 25 December 1775, provided details on the fate of HMS *Marquis of Rockingham.*

[4] "Thirty one effective men, and seven wounded" were taken at Montreal with Allen. The wounded stayed in Canada. The rest, including Allen, his American followers, eleven French Canadians, plus two additional American prisoners, were shipped to Quebec and England. *EAN,* 20, 32. In a letter to the earl of Dartmouth in London, dated 9 November 1775, Lieutenant-Governor H. J. Cramahe of Quebec explained: "We are obliged to send home [to Britain] the Rebel Prisoners, having no proper place to confine them. . . . The Master [of HMS *Adamant*] having insisted upon it as a condition without which he would not take them on board, I have been obliged to write a requisitional letter to any of the officers commanding the King's ships or forts upon the Coast to receive them until further directions could be given." Manuscript SP 44/91/443–4, Public Records Office, London.

[5] *Faulkner's Dublin Journal,* 13 January 1776.

[6] The most recent treatment of Allen's capture of Ticonderoga is found in Michael Bellesiles's *Revolutionary Outlaws: Ethan Allen and the Struggle for Independence on the Early American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 114–118. For Allen's own account, see *EAN,* 6–10.

[7] *EAN,* 14–22; a letter from an unidentified author, Montreal, 25 September 1775, Ethan Allen Papers, Vermont State Archives, Montpelier. "Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Quebeck," 30 September 1775, in Peter Force, ed., *American Archives,* 4th ser., vol. 4 (Washington, D.C., 1841), 798–799. Allen's adventures and his tale might have ended in the swamp before Montreal in 1775 but for another Irishman, a fusilier who thrust his bayonet between Allen and a Mohawk's pointed firelock and "drove away the fiends, swearing by Jasus he would kill them." *EAN,* 27.

[8] *EAN,* 26–28.

[9] Seth Warner to Richard Montgomery, 26 September 1775, Ethan Allen Papers.

[10] Richard Montgomery to Guy Carleton, 22 October 1775, Ethan Allen Papers.

[11] "To the best of my memory, [HMS *Adamant* sailed] the eleventh of November, when a detachment of Gen. Arnold's little army appeared on Point Levy, opposite Quebec." *EAN,* 31.

[12] The extract of the British naval officer's letter recounts his sighting Montgomery's troops marching from Montreal and complements Allen's description of Arnold's "little army": "A few days before I left I saw a fine army of Americans with a large train of artillery marching from Montreal to Quebec which place now & all Canada is in their hands." *Freeman's Journal,* 9 January 1776.

[13] *Town and Country Magazine,* 11 January 1776. Anticipating theater riots, a common part of urban life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Lord Lieutenant Harcourt closed *The Beggar's Opera* in Dublin after a brief run in February, "lest the Irish mobs should apply the character of Jemmy Twitcher." *Freeman's Journal,* 19 March 1776.

[14] *Hibernian Journal,* 11 January 1776.

[15] *EAN*, 48–51. "The American prisoners from Canada," as Allen and his companions were called in Irish newspapers after their transportation to Falmouth, became highly controversial figures in the British debate over how to deal with the rebellious American colonies. See, for example, Olive Anderson, "The Treatment of Prisoners of War in Britain During the American War of Independence," *Bulletin of Historical Research* 28 (1955): 63–83. In a letter dated 19 September 1777, Thomas McKean told John Adams that John Wilkes obtained the writ of habeus corpus for Allen; see Robert J. Taylor, ed., *The Papers of John Adams*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 288.

[16] After the American victory at Yorktown, Parliament finally defined the legal status of American prisoners of war by legislation, in 22 George III 3 (1782), C 10/12. Allen became aware of the debate only "some time after I left England." *EAN*, 37.

[17] Ibid., 24.

[18] House of Lords report, 5 March 1776.

[19] *Hibernian Journal*, 11 January 1776.

[20] Ibid.

[21] *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 25 January 1776.

[22] *Hibernian Journal*, 2 February 1776. "I happened to be taken [at Montreal] in a Canadian dress, viz. a short fawn skin jacket, double-breasted, an under vest and breeches of sagathy, worsted stockings, a decent pair of shoes, two plain shirts, and a red worsted cap; this was all the cloathing I had in which I made my appearance in England." *EAN*, 36.

[23] *Freeman's Journal*, 3 February 1776; also *Saunders Newsletter*, 2 February 1776, and *Hibernian Journal*, 2 February 1776.

[24] Force, *American Archives*, vol. 4, 36.

[25] *EAN*, 48–51.

[26] Ibid., 48.

[27] Bonwell appears in *Wilson's Directory* (Dublin, 1775); R. Lucas, "A Directory of Cork and Cork City for the Year 1787," *Cork Archaeological and Historical Society* 72 (1967): 135–137.

[28] Among thirty passengers on HMS *Adamant* carried from Quebec to Falmouth in November 1775, Allen mentioned a "Col. Closs," that is, Daniel Claus, deputy superintendent of Indian affairs in Quebec. *EAN*, 32. Later, in Halifax jail, he recounted how "a worthy and charitable woman, Mrs. Blacden," who was in fact the Loyalist Sarah Blackden, brought him food and wine. *EAN*, 67. See also Sarah Blackden to Levi Allen, Paris, 21 August 1789, Allen Family Papers, University of Vermont, Burlington.

[29] Rex Cathcart, "The Death of General Montgomery, 25 December 1775," *Irish Sword* 18 (1992): 85–90.

[30] *Hoey's Dublin Mercury*, 27 March 1776.

[31] Eugene A. Coyle, "Sir Edward Newenham, the Eighteenth Century Dublin Radical," *Dublin Historical Record* 64 (1993): 15–30.

[32] *EAN*, 48.

[33] R. Tenison, *Cork Archaeological and Historical Society* 1A (1899): 244.

[34] The plaque on Newenham's Washington Tower reads: "Oh, ill-fated Britain! / the folly of Lexington & Concorde / shall render asunder / Forever! / Disjoin America from thy Empire." Coyle, "Sir Edward Newenham," 26.

[35] John C. Fitzpatrick's *Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799*, vol. 27 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1970), records forty-six letters between Newenham and Washington, one informing Newenham of Jane Livingston's impending visit to Ireland.

[36] Dixon Wecter, "Benjamin Franklin and an Irish Enthusiast," *Huntington Library Quarterly Review* 4 (1940): 204–235. Edward Newenham to Benjamin Franklin, 28 June 1779, in Barbara B. Oberg, ed., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 29 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), 330–331.

[37] *EAN*, 47.

[38] Ibid., 52–53.

[39] Force, *American Archives*, vol. 4, 35.

[40] *Connecticut Courant*, 24 June 1776, 42.

[41] Allen was attached, without commission, to General Philip Schuyler's and then Richard Montgomery's staff in August 1775 after the New Hampshire Grants committees of safety elected Seth Warner, Allen's cousin, to command Congress's newly formed Green Mountain Rangers. Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws*, 124–125. Soon after his return to freedom and Vermont, Allen thanked Washington and Congress for his newly received commission as brevet colonel in the Continental Army in letters to George Washington (28 May 1778, Pell-Thompson Research Center, Fort Ticonderoga Museum) and to the president of the Continental Congress, Henry Laurens (28 May 1778, National Archives).

[42] Charles Jellison, *Ethan Allen, Frontier Rebel* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1969), 221–222.

The Civil War Letters of S. E. and S. M. Pingree, 1862–1864

The Pingrees were articulate, often eloquent correspondents. . . . Both were opinionated commentators on the military milieu into which they had suddenly been thrust.

By KELLY A. NOLIN

Dark, cluttered, mysterious spaces: nearly all academic libraries have them. Into these vacant or unused places are poured the unsolicited gifts, the office contents of long-retired faculty and staff, the institution's archival offspring, and the cataloging backlogs of successively understaffed months or years. Year after year, historic layer upon historic layer, the accumulation grows, an embarrassment of riches to the researcher, a nightmare to the space-conscious library director. Eventually, inevitably, someone is assigned the task of bringing order to the chaos.

It was from just such a dark space within the library at Lyndon State College that I pulled from the furthest reaches of a heavy old filing cabinet a bundle of forty-six letters. They were written on the fields of the Civil War by two brothers, Samuel E. and Stephen M. Pingree of Hartford, Vermont, from January 1862, when the Vermont Brigade was in winter quarters at Camp Griffin in northern Virginia, to June 1864, shortly after the brigade had emerged from the trenches at Cold Harbor. Nearly all are addressed to a cousin, the Honorable Augustus Pingry Hunton of Bethel. Hunton served as Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives from 1860 to 1861, presiding over that body during the special war appropriation session called by Governor Erastus Fairbanks in April 1861. As superintendent of recruiting for Windsor County, Hunton offered a sympathetic ear as his cousins voiced the needs of the Vermont soldier and described the brigade's almost chronic want of men. The letters are not only intimate expressions of soldiers' homely concerns amid the

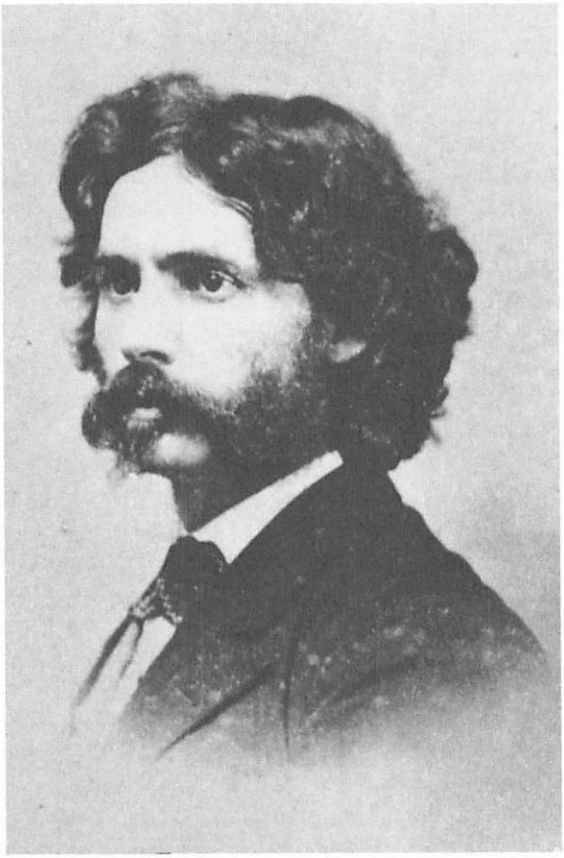
tumult of battle but also a record of the deeds of two men who played a part in the great events that riveted the attention of its own generation and continue to fascinate ours.

Samuel and Stephen Pingree were born in Salisbury, New Hampshire, Samuel in 1832 and Stephen in 1835. The brothers stepped from the halls of Dartmouth College into lifelong careers in law, opening an office in Hartford, Vermont, in 1860. Both rendered good service to that town throughout their lives. Samuel was town clerk for more than sixty years, and Stephen represented the town's citizens in the Vermont legislature from 1872 to 1873. Both married and settled down, and both died as Hartford residents, Stephen in 1892 and Samuel in 1922. With a high reputation as a criminal lawyer but no legislative experience, Samuel was called to the office of lieutenant governor in 1882 and served until 1884, when he became the forty-third governor of Vermont. Of his term as Vermont's chief executive, it has been said that "he executed his duties with conspicuous ability and wisdom, and his administration ranks among the best in a well-governed and highly conservative state."[1] Before they launched their careers in local and state politics, however, the two Pingree brothers endured three hard years of military service.

Both Samuel and Stephen rose through the ranks of the Third and Fourth Vermont regiments, respectively, from first lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. The Pingrees were articulate, often eloquent correspondents, occasionally citing Shakespeare and the Bible and using Latin terms and medieval allusions. Both were outspoken and opinionated commentators on the military milieu into which they had suddenly been thrust. They relayed home news of their regiments within the Vermont Brigade and made observations on the Union army as a whole. Through their eyes we become acquainted with the officers and men of the Old Brigade, the behavior of the various regiments and brigades under fire, and the actions (or inaction) of Confederate and Union leaders. Their legal backgrounds, together with their frequent assignments on courts martial, made the Pingrees reliable and reasonably fair judges of military conduct.

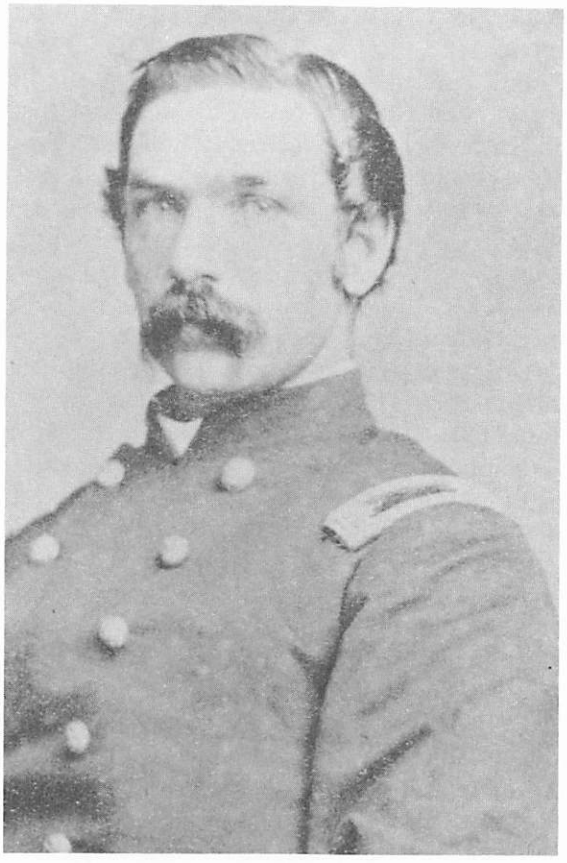
In their letters they also addressed the philosophical questions of slavery and reliance on religious beliefs in "times like these"[2] and the political issues of emancipation and conscription. In August 1863 Stephen Pingree discussed the volatile issue of war policy, formulating a personal credo:

> I once doubted the policy of this war. I never doubted the right to maintain the Union, and no living man ever heard a word that could be so construed from me. Thousands who thought they foresaw a short struggle would have opposed the war as impolitic had they foreseen the half of what has occurred, and some who called me a traitor for doubting its practicability now shudder at the idea of being forced to do what I did



Lieutenant Colonel Samuel E. Pingree, Third Vermont Regiment.

voluntarily—and am still ready and anxious to do to the end, cost what it may. I once doubted the policy of the negro soldier bill and, in fact, of the emancipation policy of the Gov't, but I was honest in both objections; the first on the ground that negroes would be an unprofitable army, and the other on the ground that, if we must emancipate, we could do so as we occupied the country, and not beforehand exasperate the South and cool the ardor of the border states by a course that must prove fruitless until military occupation could enforce it. Today, I believe in not only the justice but the policy of a war to restore the Union. I believe not only in Universal Emancipation, both in the border & rebel states, in the former by purchase of the loyal and by force of all others, and in the latter by force and without compensation, but I have faith in the effectiveness of Negro troops and, having reason to believe they are of use, I have no scruple against using them & protecting them, if need be, by hanging a Rebel for every one of them executed or sold into



Lieutenant Colonel Stephen M. Pingree, Fourth Vermont Regiment.

> slavery. I have aided negroes to escape here and deliver themselves up to the military to be sent north, and I will always do it, because I hate Slavery and believe by destroying it we weaken this Rebellion.
>
> I will not say that I am opposed to peace while there is a vestige of Slavery left. I leave that to the proper authorities to arrange, but I sincerely hope that, come when it may, soon or late, Peace will find a restored Union without a single bondman within its borders, for I fear for the stability of an Union with such an institution, and I almost fear the Vengeance of Heaven upon an enlightened nation that permits Slavery such as this has been, & is, in her borders.[3]

The brothers' letters include much that may seem mundane but was of paramount importance to the Civil War soldier: lengthy marches, drill and picket duty, sporadic receipt of mail and wages, construction of roads and earthworks, and—because so much depended on it—the weather.

There is rejoicing over the availability of fresh produce or the receipt of a box from home, the strain and frustration of ill health, nostalgia at the approach of Thanksgiving and the reality of short rations, and the anguish of heavy regimental losses and the deaths of comrades. The Pingrees discuss strategy and do their utmost to make clear to Hunton their regimental positions as well as the positions of the various Union army divisions and their relation to the Confederate troops. To illustrate the often confusing descriptions of locations, the brothers include three hand-drawn maps, one of which is reproduced here (see p. 91).

The battle of Lee's Mills on April 16, 1862, was the opening assault on the enemy by General George Brinton McClellan in his peninsula campaign and the first engagement of troops in which Vermont regiments sustained heavy casualties. McClellan's objectives were threefold: to stop the Confederates from strengthening their batteries, to silence their fire, and to gain control of Dam Number 1. But there was apparently some disagreement, if not outright confusion, among the various Union commanders regarding the importance of the assault. Indeed, to launch any attack along the Warwick River went against the better judgment of General E. D. Keyes, who asserted, "No part of [the Yorktown-Warwick River] line, so far discovered, can be taken by assault without an enormous waste of life."[4] His warning went unheeded.

McClellan's plan was to send four companies of the Third Vermont Regiment across the Warwick and into the Confederate rifle pits beyond, where they were to await reinforcement before advancing on the formidable array of earthworks in their front. Led by Captain Samuel Pingree, the battalion pushed forward, "shouting, yelling, firing."[5] Seven southern regiments met them with a pounding rain of short-range artillery and musketry fire. The men gained the shallow pits, though they offered the Vermonters scant protection from the enemy barrage. Pingree twice dispatched messengers with urgent requests for support or positive orders to withdraw. There was no reply to either message, and for forty minutes the men held their ground. In the words of Lieutenant Erastus Buck (Company D), "We were bound to die rather than retreat without orders."[6] Ammunition was running low, and the small band of men was almost completely hemmed in by Confederate troops when at last the order to withdraw arrived.

Back on the east bank of the Warwick, regimental officers assessed the terrible damage of the assault. The four Vermont companies together suffered a 45 percent loss; Pingree's own company, Company F, lost a remarkable 52 percent. Samuel Pingree was hit twice, one Confederate musket ball entering his left hip and another taking the thumb from his right hand. He spent ten weeks in a Philadelphia hospital recovering from

his wounds and from subsequent typhoid pneumonia. For courage exhibited in the battle, he received the congressional Medal of Honor.

If Samuel's military career had ended on the banks of the Warwick River, both his honor and his country would have been well served. But this was only the first of his military distinctions. Following his recovery, he rejoined the Vermont Brigade at Harrison's Landing, Virginia, and thereafter he and the troops under his command frequently merited special mention in official dispatches. The battles of Salem Heights and Cold Harbor and the engagement at the Weldon Railroad were but a few cases in which his superior officers commended his actions.

Samuel's final extant letter to his cousin in Bethel speaks to us most dramatically of his service. It is a stunning conclusion to a remarkable collection of letters, a seven-page description of the beginnings of General Ulysses S. Grant's overland campaign of 1864, the campaign that would end at Appomattox Court House with the formal surrender of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

During the first two and a half weeks of the campaign, the Vermont Brigade lost over half its entire fighting force in killed, wounded, and missing, sustaining the heaviest casualties of any brigade in the Union army. Samuel's lengthy and detailed letter covers the start of the campaign in the Wilderness; more than 1,200 Vermonters were shot in two days (May 5 and 6, 1864) of intense fighting. The letter continues with an account of the Vermont troops' participation in Emory Upton's bold charge at Spotsylvania Court House, as Union soldiers nearly breached Lee's lines in a few brief hours on May 10, 1864. Pingree describes the horror of Spotsylvania's "Bloody Angle," where fighting equalled or surpassed the intensity of that in the Wilderness. He concludes with a report of the trench warfare at Cold Harbor, Grant and Lee settling down to a bloody stalemate after Grant had sacrificed some 7,000 men in about thirty minutes during an ill-conceived attack on a well-entrenched position.

In the outer trenches near
Cold Arbor Va. June 10/64

Cousin Hunton,

You have read & heard how busy this army have been since we crossed the Rapidan on the 4th of last month, and on that account you will probably have charity to overlook my long reticence towards you.

If I had the advantages of a reporter at army Hd. Qurs. I should take great pride & pleasure in writing you a truthful history of the operations of this & the rebel army since the opening of the battle of the 5th ult., but as I have attended religiously to my own duties and passed camp rumors lightly by, I can speak knowingly of but a limited portion of these great devellopements.

In our advance on the 5th ult. we ran upon the enemy in a woods

(some ten miles broad by 17 long) called by the natives the Wilderness – The order of battle was prepared & we attacked the enemy at about 2½ P.M. & drove them back, they fighting every rod against us in a most gallant manner.

In this battle the Vt. Brigade were fighting with the 2d Corps and near the left of the army while most of the 6th Corps were on the extreme right. We advanced a half mile or so and held our ground – should have gone further but must wait for the left to advance pari passu [side by side] with us. In this battle I was with my proper regiment. We lost in killed & wounded over 200 officers & men.

Next morning before day I was ordered to take command of the 2d Vt. Reg't. where I have been since. At day break the order was to advance again. The advance was not made till about 6 A.M. We pushed the enemy back over a mile & were ordered to wait as before till the left advanced even with us – we held our ground till about 1 P.M. when the enemy massed against the 2d Div. 2d Corps on our left & forced them back – getting in our left rear, – we retire to our entrenchments and await the advance of our elated enemies.

At 4 P.M. they had shown no [disposition?] to attack us and another general advance is ordered by Gen. Grant to take place at 6 P.M. However, the enemy was intent upon assaulting our works and moved upon us at about 5 P.M. while we were in full preparation to move into the woods upon him again. This was our streak of good luck – for being in readiness to leave our line of works on the road and go out to fight the enemy, how much stronger we must be to meet him behind a line of earth pits which we had been two hours in building the night before.

A. P. Hill's entire Corps massed in deep lines of battle were hurled desperately against our Corps (2d) center and for twenty or thirty minutes the battle raged with intensest fury – not a gun was used – all was musketry – there was but one rolling sound and that lasted till the last enemy was driven out of sight & hearing back into the woods or left dead or wounded under the murderous fire of our men.

Our lines immediately advance & reestablish our morning line.

In this battle the enemy were badly whipped & Gen. Hill's Corps lay down in grief that night beyond question.

Next day it was evident Lee was changing his line to his right, somewhere.

We move towards Spottsylvania C.H. accordingly. Lee's forces are a bit ahead of us and have had time to intrench partially (2 or 3 hours is enough to build fair lines against musketry).

It was Sunday night (the 8th) we attack to get a possition – get it & rest till morning. Enemy entrench for defence – we entrench to make our lines safe if our attack should result unfavorably.

The day (9th May) is consumed in sharp skirmishing, reconnoitering, canonading & entrenching closer upon the enemy. Gen. Sedgwick is shot to day while at the front ordering the position of batteries (by the way we are now out of the Wilderness & batteries are bro't in on both sides which makes a great battle all the more sublime and inspiring).

The 10th battle opens on the right – at 8 A.M. our lines advance & drive the enemy back. Loss great on both sides of course.

Great fighting & rolling of musketry on left—Hancock said to be in luck. 6th Corps to attack at 5½ P.M. and it is bravely done—Below see diagram hereafter explained. Those four lines of battle formed in Pine woods are composed of 12 Reg'ts—3 in each line which are to advance over the open field & take the Rebel line in front. While the 2d Corps whose storming party you see formed in the woods on our left were to take the line in their front moving with us—I had the honor to lead a Reg't. in this charge—We advanced out of the woods at the appointed time with bayonets fixed at a double quick and dashed across the field & without firing a shot took the whole concern in our front capturing some 1500 prisoners & 8 guns. As soon as we got the works the fire of our front line was opened with good effect—too good indeed for every horse was shot at the guns—& we had no means of getting them off.

Now about our left. Gen. Mott commanding the storming column of the 2d Corps was repulsed—Immagin then where we were holding the line marked "A" & the enemy holding the enfilading line marked "B," which Mott should have carried at all hazzards. You see the enemy held us by our left rear. The 2d Vt. Reg't. with many others intermingled held this line under a fire from the flanking work on the left & a direct fire in front (the enemy's second line) until some half an hour after dark—when after repeated requests from staff officers and finally an order from Gen. Write [Horatio G. Wright] (now Corps Commander) coming too positive to be trifled with we fell back to the woods—reformed & marched back to our entrenchments leaving the 8 captured guns again to the enemy (for want of transportation over the line we took & back to the woods).

This I assure you was galling to the pride of brave men—When I got by myself where I would not be ashamed of it I cried like a whipped spanniel—I saw many soldiers cry like girls, and many who took things less to heart, gave vent to their mortification at having lost all they had gained so nobly—by the fault of others, by letting of unnumbered salvos of profanity. I believed while there, & I believe still that the only true way to save us was to send a column to take the enfilading work on our left. It might have cost 500 men that night. I do not think it would have cost a man more. The next day it cost us over ten times that number.

This assault cost us killed & wounded 900 men and some 60 officers—cheap enough if we could have held it. Speaking in the light of military economy, it was doubling of capital anyway, for after we got the line those of the enemy who dared retreat were shot down without stint—those who rushed to our rear fared best. We were under fire direct about 40 seconds I should judge—grape & shell were hurled plentifully at us both from front & flanks. If I should be spared to see you again at your home I should take great pleasure in demonstrating this battle to you—there are so many things even in the diagram which I cannot make lucid here.

Well, the next day came the greatest battle of all—greatest because most general. But you have read it over & over as reported by those who make reporting their business and who know more of the general features than any officer at his post can know.—

However, the Vt. Brigade were in all over again—nearly 15000 men

fought all day and nearly all night to drive the enemy from lines marked B, B^{I}, & B^{II}, and at night our men fought one side of the work and the enemy the other (within ten feet of each other) before morning however the enemy were disgusted with yankee tenacity & withdrew. The loss was immense on both sides. The enemy had massed reserves to hold it the night before & we had to take it.

The enemy were found to be still moving to their right to keep Richmond masked & we move to our left confronting him from point to point—fighting him often (tho' not getting him to a general battle) until we now find ourselves face to face on the left bank of the Chickahominy—about parallel with that stream—our left & the enemy's right resting (I only judge) near Bottoms Bridge. Since we arrived here & found the enemy strongly entrenched we have made (the first day of our arrival) vigorous attacks at all points along the lines to break them thro'—At some points we have carried their first lines, only to find siege lines beyond—at other points the most valorous troops have been driven back. The enemy's position is well chosen & Beauregard has been some weeks in fortifying here under Gen. Lee's direction—his dealings with Gen. Butler behind the strong works of Ft. Darling having been only subsidiary to his labors on the Chickahominy for the use of Lee's army.

The assaults we have made here have undoubtedly been necessary for we can seldom tell what strength opposes until we try it.

We are now advancing per gradum [by degrees] upon the enemy's works—digging a parallel each night a few rods nearer than we held the night before. Before I venture an hypothesis allow me to tell you just how we are situated in my immediate vicinity. You will notice that I have been able to speak knowingly only of what I have seen et mina pars fui [and it was but a small part of the whole]. Let me say again that an officer on duty with his Reg't. knows little of the great machine of the army.

This army is now so strongly concentrated (if I may judge of the whole from what I know of this Corps) that such an attack as Jackson made on Porter (then the extreme right of McClellan's Army) can never make an impression on us now. The Vt. Brigade consisting of 8 Reg'ts. (the 11th being divided into 3 provisional Reg'ts tho' on paper only one) occupies a front of only one Reg't. in length (or a company or two more) and are massed from front to rear.

Each Reg't. holds the front line 24 hours & the line next the front (the 2d line being of equal danger & importance) also 24 hours—then is relieved for 48 hours and goes about a half mile to the rear to straighten up, wash up, sleep up & clean up arms. Col. Seaver with 4 Reg'ts. is now in the 1st Division—So you see the brigade are not together.

It is my turn today to hold the front line. Last night we finished the line we hold today—tonight the Reg't. that relieves me will begin another line a few rods nigher the enemy. The line I am in now with my Reg't, 2d Vt, is within 250 yds of the enemy's first line—they are behind works like this. Our Sharpshooters trenches are in our front & within 100 yds. of those of the enemy. These holes are dug in the night—men put in them who remain till next night and are then relieved by other Sharpshooters—If one of them gets wounded we dig a sap to him &

bring him in—this don't pay unless he is wounded in fore noon for it takes half a day to dig to them generally & if afternoon we let him lay till dark then get him in.

You will observe that we have to lay low behind our intrenchments in the day time for the lines of battle are at easy range of each other and the moment a head is shown above the parapet a sharp shooter's ball is directed to it. In this way we loose two or three careless men from each regiment every day, and the enemy do the like.

It is estimated that each army loose 1500 per day in this way. It is just about "nip & tuck."

You may feel to inquire how long this dripping state of things is to last?

I think we shall soon bull dog the enemy out of their works—if we do not we shall soon be so close upon them we can carry them by assault without having a long way to go under fire. If this is not deemed practicable we shall move to the left on to James River near Bermuda Hundreds or Ft. Darling—That is where many think we will soon turn up—our right resting below Ft. Darling & our left above Richmond Hill—both flanks resting on the James—then we can work up Lee's communications southward & prevent his escape, for what is Richmond worth in our hands and Lee with his army well organized falling back into the mountain fastnesses of western North Carolina or the central regions of Georgia?

He should be fought if possible from the south side and the James could furnish us with communications & surplies from Washington.

How does this look to you? It is discussed here by those who have nothing to say about it. We know nothing of the plans in esse [in actual fact].

While I have written this we have been under constant tho' not vigorous shelling & I have lain among the soldiers close under the works—they shell the batterries about 2 rods to our right & left which can reply only occasionally as the enemy's sharp shooters keep the gunners shy.

Give Reg'ds. to Mrs. H. & the children & to Aunt H, Mr. & Mrs. Parker. I wish you would let Mr. Parker & family read this as I know not when I shall have time to write so full a letter again. Stephen is sick & in Div. Hosp but getting better. I have a bad Diarrhea but am not off duty & think I won't be.

Your Cousin
Saml E. Pingree

To conclude—We are getting along well and the Rebellion must soon crumble[?]—we pray for another draft—for 200000 more men—now is the time for every resource to be opened—[7]

Although we know far less about Stephen Morse Pingree, the author of the bulk of these letters, his service was no less distinguished, his story no less worth telling.

It is from Stephen Pingree that we hear of the ubiquitous Confederate lieutenant colonel John Singleton Mosby's raids on the rear of the Union army's Sixth Corps and of the extortion the people of Pennsylvania (and

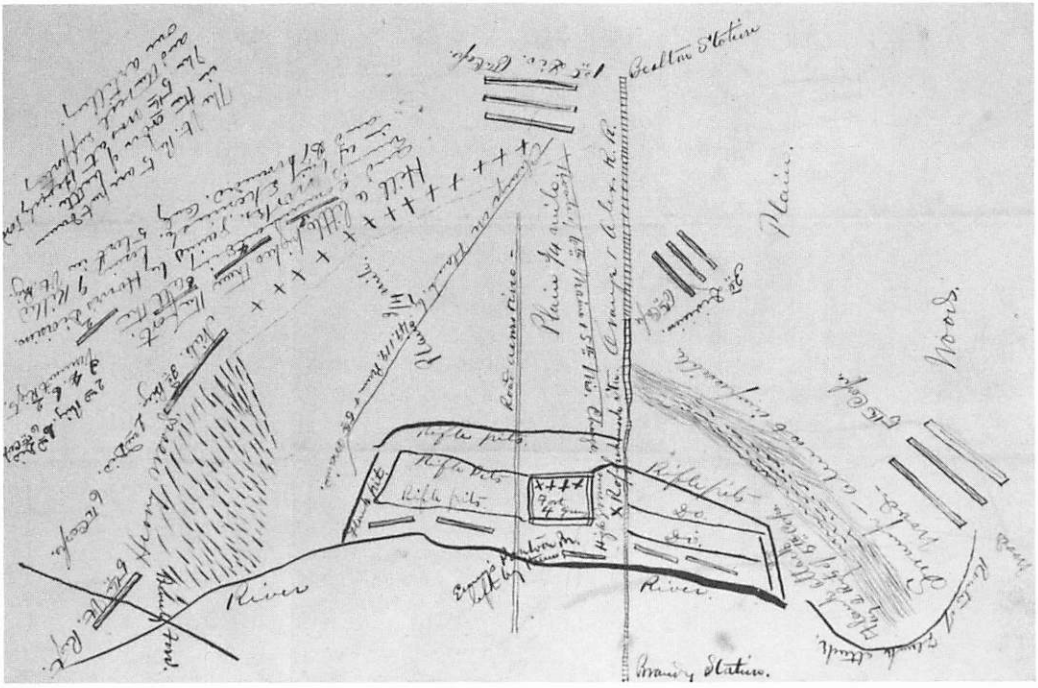
of Gettysburg in particular) practiced upon the Union troops who had made great sacrifices to keep its border towns and the Union territory north of them safe.[8] In fact, Stephen Pingree's regiment, eastern Vermont's youthful Fourth, included the only troops of the Old Vermont Brigade engaged on the battlefield at Gettysburg, albeit late in the third day of that momentous clash.[9] Later, at the Battle of the Wilderness, Stephen's regiment suffered the greatest loss of officers of any regiment in the brigade: over two-thirds of those present, 40 percent of its fighting force in all.

And it is Stephen Pingree who asserts strong opinions on the payment of town bounties to new recruits and even stronger views on how New York should handle conscription riots:

> I hope stern measures will be taken with the traitors north who are inciting or aiding in the work of opposing the execution of the laws. If the Army is needed, it should be used—and used with terrible effect, too. I would see N.Y. deluged in blood rather than see this spirit of treasonable violence either succeed there or spread elsewhere.
>
> I hope hundreds & thousands will be shot down in the streets if necessary to quel this mob. . . . Canister should always be used upon a mob of the proportions this one assumes, before blank cartridges. Blank cartridges are good to 'taper off' with. If there was any excuse or palliation for this mob, mild measures might be proper—but the lesson of blood will be most effective on them as a punishment & on others as a warning.[10]

Stephen's letters inform us of the discouragement within the Army of the Potomac by November 1863, the troops demoralized by the bad weather, lack of food, poor water supply, overwork, and frequent change of command. Stephen also drew two detailed maps that remain a focal point of the collection. The first map accompanies his letter of October 8, 1863, and depicts the position of the Sixth Corps on the Rapidan River in an attempt to help Hunton "see by it, the position of our men & the enemy's front line and also, the isolated position we occupy."[11] The second map, enclosed in a letter dated November 11, 1863, accompanies his description of the evening battle of Rappahannock Station (November 7, 1863):

> We left camp near Warrenton on the morning of the 7th, very early, and took dinner 1½ miles from Rappahannock Station, in sight of, but unmolested by, the Rebels. They had a strong fort of four faces on the north side of the river, and but a few rods from it, on a commanding piece of ground west of the R.R. and east of the turnpike to the River. It was flanked by very strong rifle pits, and had one strong pit in front running west from the R.R. What their force was before, we do not know, but they soon got a force of 9 Regts. to this side, with 4 cannon, and prepared to give us a warm reception. I enclose a diagram (a very rude one) of the situation as it was when our Division had driven their first line from the hill in their front and gained an eminence[?] for our Artillery.



Plan of the battle of Rappahannock Station, November 7, 1863. From a letter by Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus Hunton, November 11, 1863.

Neil's & one Brigade carried the first hill about 1 mile from their works, with very trifling loss. We had one man killed by a shell. The 1st Division under Bartlett was at our left and the 3d under Terry still further. We were the right, and our Brig., as you will see, in line a little in rear of Neil and behind our artillery. The 5th Corps were covered by the woods at the extreme left.

It was now about 4 o'clock, and our artillery opened on the enemy's works. This continued for over an hour, with very slight skirmishing of infantry. The enemy's artillery firing was excellent. After an hour or more of Artillery firing, it was time for action.

It was now a little after sunset, and we had to wait for this as the sun was in our faces and at their backs, when the gallant 6th Maine, under Col. Harris, charged the enemy's works and, breaking their 1st line of battle in the heavy rifle pit in front of the fort, west of the R.R., pushed on and gained the redoubt and, scaling ditch & wall, were soon at work with the bayonet, with their fire tried colors on the north face and the secession battle rags of two larger Regts. on the opposite. They were 251 muskets when they started and went for over half a mile under a terrible fire of canister and musketry, and now they had cornered themselves in a pen with near 600 desperate rebels from Louisiana. It could

not last. They were forced back in less than 2 minutes, and the treasonable rag of the rebels was again on the north face of the fort. . . .

As quick as thought, Harris gets his men behind the rifle pit from which he had just forced the enemy and, though on the wrong side, it covered his men and they held it. In ten minutes, the 5th Wisconsin, always by the side of the 6th Maine in more than two years of service, was with them and over they go together and plant the colors of Wisconsin & the Pine Tree State, East & West, side by side, and keep them there.

Probably there has never been such a use of the bayonet and gun stock before in this war as the next 15 minutes witnessed. Hardly a gun was fired in the fort, but 29 dead Americans and 18 dead rebels, besides more than 100 of both wounded, lay in this little fort. Nearly every one was hit with the bayonet or struck with the stock.

It was dark and the enemy had the advantage of numbers & of a knowledge of the ground. Meantime, the 49 and 119 Pa. Regts. and 5th Maine made a detour to the enemy's left, and two Regts. from the 5th Corps came behind them on the right, and the work was done. Many escaped by swimming, getting under the river bank in the darkness, but the trophies of the battle were 4 cannon, 4 caissons with ammunition and horses (some killed), 1623 prisoners of whom 123 were commissioned officers, over 2000 rifles and sets of equipments, 8 battle flags (Regimental), one Brigade flag, and the enemy's pontoon bridge!![12]

The Pingree brothers also penned two of the more unusual documents we have from the Civil War. In a letter to Hunton's children, Mary and Albert, dated April 9, 1863, Samuel recounts a review of troops by President Lincoln and his family:

Dear Cousins–

It is a beautiful day and tho very busy in the forenoon I find myself quite idle and ill-at-ease just now, so I propose to make myself happy by writing a few words to you–

Yesterday was a "Great Training" day with the army here–I was engaged at home the most of the day but in the after noon went to the Review.

There were four Corps reviewed by the President and Major Gen. Hooker–the 6th, 2d, 5th & 3rd comprising in all just about sixty thousand troops–

Mrs. Lincoln and one of her sons–a lad about your size and age, Albert–formed a part of the reviewing party, besides whom there were a great many ladies and gentlemen from Washington before whom our troops showed off their finest military airs.

The President is not considered a handsome man by good judges tho he appeared to enjoy himself quite as well as the more graceful beholders.

My Regt. was not out, being on a three days tour of Grand Guard duty.

The Review was near the river and in good range of the enemies batteries and in full view of their camps.

He goes on to include a surprising account of one of the officers in his division: "There is a Corporal in a Regt. of our Division who was promoted from the ranks at Antietam on account of marked bravery. The

Corporal had never lost a day's duty since in service (2 years), until taken very sick with Typhoid Fever a few days ago, when, expecting to die sent for tent mate and made know[n] to the Surgeon that she (the Corporal) was the wife of the soldier. If she recovers I am told she will be commissioned and honorably discharged." Samuel ends with a personal appeal for mail from his young cousins: "I hope you will make up a letter for me soon. A letter does us more than ordinary pleasure now-a-days. It is a soldier's blessing at all times."[13]

Two weeks later Stephen Pingree wrote a letter to nine-year-old Albert describing in terms touchingly sensitive to a child's understanding both the magnificence and sadness of battle:

> I wish you could see a Review of one or two hundred Regts of Infantry with 35 or 40 Batteries of Artillery and the usual number of Cavalry Squadrons. It is a great sight—and one, I hope for which there will be no occasion in this country when you are a man. A battle looks very nicely—if you are far enough off to not hear the groans, and for 20 minutes of the commencement[?] of the Battle of Fredriksburgh, I was where I could see firing—but after that, I was in the front and had no time to look beyond my own duty and attend to my men.
>
> I saw 18000 men engaged as I was going across the field to the front with a single company—of 41 men, and I never saw so magnificent a sight before, but it was sad, nevertheless. A volley of from 12 to 20 rifle shots were fired at my Co. as it came in sight, in passing the opposite end of a little ravine, and, as they fell a little under the work—and I was some 5 or 6 yards in front of my Co. they fell pretty thick, around & "among" my boots, but without any other injury to me or any more than to "scare" me a bit, which I forgot as soon as I advanced some 15 rods to where we could fire too. A battle is very unpleasant.[14]

Samuel E. Pingree was mustered out of the Union army in July 1864, his brother Stephen two months later. Like many other veterans of the war, they picked up the threads of their lives and resumed the careers for which they had prepared themselves before the dramatic interruption of warfare. But their experiences on the battlefield continued to stimulate their imaginations and gifts for narrative. Even before he received his Medal of Honor, Samuel achieved local fame and popularity by holding the children of Hartford spellbound with fascinating accounts of his exploits—made all the more real for his audience by the sight of his mangled hand. These stories might have been lost to future generations had the cache of their letters to relatives remained hidden. Now, however, we have again in their own words descriptions of their individual experiences of the Civil War. With their quiet, stern soldier's eloquence, the Pingree brothers convey through their letters the personal impact of the cataclysmic war that was, in the words of Samuel Pingree, "so big with the fate of free institutions."[15]

Notes

I have prepared a descriptive calendar and complete transcription of the S. E. and S. M. Pingree Civil War Letters available to researchers at both the Samuel Read Hall Library of Lyndon State College and the Vermont Historical Society in Montpelier. The original manuscripts are held at the Vermont Historical Society (MSA 135).

Very special thanks are due to my patient and tolerant co-workers at Lyndon State College, the staffs of the Vermont Historical Society and the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Howard Coffin, Rebecca J. Wallace, and my family, all of whom supported me in my attempt to make known, indeed to sing the praises of, the remarkable, ribbon-tied bundle of letters that emerged from the shadows one winter's day.

[1] William Richard Cutter, *New England Families* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1914), 1943.

[2] Lyndon State College Collection of Pingree-Hunton-Stickney Family Papers, Civil War Letters (hereafter cited as Civil War Letters), Vermont Historical Society, Letter no. 35, Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 11 November 1863, beyond Brandy Station, Virginia. I have slightly altered the punctuation in the transcription of the letters for clarity.

[3] Ibid., no. 28, Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 2 August 1863, Waterloo Bridge, Rappahannock (North Fork), Virginia.

[4] General E. D. Keyes quoted in Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative, Fort Sumpter to Perryville* (New York: Vintage, 1986), 407.

[5] Corporal George French, quoted in Howard Coffin, *Full Duty: Vermonters in the Civil War* (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1993), 94.

[6] John E. Balzer, ed., *Buck's Book: A View of the 3rd Vermont Infantry Regiment* (Bolingbrook, Ill.: Balzer & Associates, 1993), 30.

[7] Civil War Letters, no. 45, Samuel E. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 10 June 1864, near Cold Harbor, Virginia.

[8] Ibid., no. 26, Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 18 July 1863, Berlin (now Brunswick), Maryland; and no. 27, Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 22 July 1863, near Uniontown, Virginia.

[9] George Grenville Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War: A History of the Part Taken by the Vermont Soldiers and Sailors in the War for the Union, 1861–5*, vol. 1 (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Association, 1886), 166.

[10] Civil War Letters, no. 26.

[11] Ibid., no. 33, Stephen M. Pingree to Augustus P. Hunton, 8 October 1863, on the Rapidan, Virginia.

[12] Ibid., no. 35.

[13] Ibid., no. 21, Samuel E. Pingree to Albert and Mary Hunton, 9 April 1863, near Belle Plain, Virginia.

[14] Ibid., no. 22, Stephen M. Pingree to Albert Hunton, 23 April 1863, Camp Fair View, Virginia.

[15] Samuel E. Pingree, *An Oration Before the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers in the Representatives' Hall, Montpelier, Vt., Nov. 7, 1872* (Montpelier, Vt.: Polands' Stream Printing Establishment, 1872), 15.

In Their Words

Manuscripts in the Vermont Historical Society

This occasional section draws attention to the outstanding manuscript holdings of the Vermont Historical Society by presenting transcribed letters, diary entries, memoirs, and other documents. Editing has been kept to a minimum, but punctuation, capital letters, and paragraphing have been added for clarity. Following the manuscript material is information about its physical dimensions, location in the library, and provenance.

Remembering World War II

On June 30, 1992, the Vermont Historical Society opened an exhibit to mark the fiftieth anniversary of World War II. "Winning the War at Home: Vermont During World War II" remained on display for eighteen months. As its title indicates, the exhibit focused on the Vermont homefront. Although we acknowledged the state's military contributions, we thought it was important to tell the less-repeated stories of Vermonters' responses to the economic and social challenges that were the side effects of a war fought far from American shores. Our exhibit showed how Vermonters adapted to changes in their lives and work—how the food they ate, newspapers they read, radio programs they listened to, and posters they saw conditioned them to think and act differently between 1941 and 1945.

When visitors reached the end of our exhibit, we offered them an opportunity to record some of their own wartime experiences. People from

throughout Vermont, the United States, and abroad eventually filled two binders with their personal recollections. We found in many of these short narratives examples of what we had illustrated in the exhibit; others presented very different perspectives on the war from people who had been in the fighting or had relatives engaged in combat, those who grew up during the war years, and even some who lived through the war as civilians in Europe.

After the exhibit came down, we added the contents of the notebooks of World War II memories to the VHS manuscript collection. We reproduce several of the accounts here. So that we could obtain permission to publish the recollections, we chose only signed comments. We also selected mostly Vermont-based stories, consistent with our purpose of telling about Vermonters' lives during the era. A few dates and names have been inserted in brackets and endnotes added to provide some background material to several stories. The research and exhibit labels of Jackie Calder, curator of the Vermont Historical Society museum, helped fill in some of the notes.

Life on the Vermont homefront was much like that in other states during World War II. Vermonters came to know rationing, blackouts, scrap drives, victory gardens, and war bond drives; they volunteered to help others in need at home and overseas; they watched relatives and friends go off to war and welcomed them back—or mourned their loss. As historians' interest has increasingly turned to social issues, this aspect of the story of World War II has received close attention and revealed a pattern of activity that helps us better understand how war affects the lives of all citizens, whether they are on the battlefront or the homefront. In some ways, however, the experiences of Vermonters during the war reflected the situation particular to the state. The shortage of sugar was difficult for a child to accept, but at least there was maple sugar; the largely rural population of the state could more easily resort to victory gardens to supplement their diet; many Vermont children gathered milkweed pods in addition to the metals and paper that children in urban areas collected for scrap drives.

The memories of people who lived through World War II are a valuable addition to what we know about the period. We thank the more than 200 individuals who contributed to our notebooks their stories and observations about life on the battlefield, in the war zone, and on the homefront.

PHIL BEAULIEU, SOUTH HERO

My mother used to take me to visit her sister on Sundays. One Sunday as we boarded the North End Loop bus at the corner of Intervale and Archibald streets in Burlington, a man came on and announced that the Japs had attacked our base at Pearl Harbor. Later as I played on the floor

of my aunt's house the radio broadcast was interrupted with an official announcement of the attack. I was only 3½ years old but I remember the excitement.

Later in the war the paratroopers came to town and Burlington was really jumping (they missed their drop zone one day and landed all over the North End). They were the famous 1st Special Service Division, the forerunners of the Green Berets.

ATHALIE SMITH BLACKBURN, PLAINFIELD

Working in Washington, D.C., for the War Dept. (Inspector General) because of lack of employment possibilities in Vt. prior to Pearl Harbor was exciting. My Dad, Alex. Smith, [was] a member of the Vt. Natl. Guard and because of my position, I was able to learn of his transfers, promotions and to hear firsthand accounts of him through inspecting officers as he left with the Guard from Camp Blanding, Fla., for Miss. and onto the ship for the Pacific.

Nylons, hard to come by, were a welcome gift from a soldier. V.J. Day

Athalie Smith (Blackburn) amid Japanese cherry trees at the Tidal Basin, Washington, D.C., spring 1943. Courtesy of Athalie Smith Blackburn.

[August 15, 1945] was bedlam in D.C. with lots of hugs, kisses . . . from servicemen for the govt. gals.

Perhaps the biggest thrill was standing curbside on Constitution Ave. when govt. offices were closed so that employees could greet General Eisenhower. Never will I forget those blue, blue eyes as he looked directly at me.

We had to observe shaded windows, a long workweek and the Montrealer trip from Washington to Mtplr., where curtains were lowered at night. . . . On one trip the train was so crowded that soldiers, officers and civilians alike stood all night.

It was an unforgettable experience to have worked in our nation's capital during those years and on Capitol Hill during the "reconstruction" and Marshall years afterward.

BETTY S. BLAKE, LYNDONVILLE

I was in high school during [the] war. Living in Lyndonville, Vt. Every Wednesday afternoon some of us girls from Lyndon Institute would go down to the church and make 4 × 4 bandages. We felt we were doing something for the war effort. I remember standing in line at the grocery store; word would get around that the First National store had soap powder, butter, or sometimes tuna fish. We would wait it didn't matter how long for these products. I was working in the telephone office in St. Johnsbury the day the war ended. You can imagine what a busy day we had that day. The switchboard was flooded with lights. We just couldn't imagine that the *boys* would finally be coming home. . . .

STANLEY L. BURNS, BURLINGTON

I was in high school in Rutland until 1943. Some of my classmates couldn't wait, dropped out, and enlisted before we graduated. One (I think maybe 2) had been killed before we graduated in June 1943. I enlisted as soon as I turned 18 and was discharged in late 1945. While in high school I can remember how everyone scoured the daily papers, radio broadcasts, etc. for details of military successes. I don't think we realized how much (favorable) propaganda we were being fed. I don't think, as teenagers, that we were very aware of shortages, except perhaps for gas rationing for the family car. No doubt our mothers were far more aware of food rationing than we were. Of course, we were "depression" kids, so I don't think we noticed the difference in what was on the table.

I remember where I was on Pearl Harbor Day—in the woods at the base of Killington, supposed to be tracing in the route of logging roads on topographical maps—I guess for some "defense" effort at the state level. When we came out of the woods and hitched a ride back to Rutland,

the driver had the radio on. It kept fading in and out—saying something about the Japs bombing Pearl Harbor. We had no idea where that was, and wrote it off as another Orson Welles "scare program."[1]

I remember being in the Vt. State Home guard,[2] drilling in the Rutland Armory. WWII was different. Young men couldn't wait to get involved.

THOMAS C. DAVIS, COLCHESTER

I heard the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor while listening to the Brooklyn Dodger *football* game.[3] At first when it came over the radio my parents didn't believe me. That night, as always, I was supposed to go to the henhouse & collect eggs. At age 10, I was convinced the Japanese or Germans would be waiting for me, to do me in! Living as we did on East Hill, Barre, I would pick up the [Brooklyn] Dodger baseball games. When they were rained out, the announcers were not allowed to mention the weather for fear the enemy would be given advantage.

EVERETT W. DEMERETT, NORTH WOLCOTT

This [victory garden certificate] had very great meaning to my mother, and was earned with extreme hard work.[4] We were living in the absolute northeast corner of the town of Hyde Park at this time. Being about 5½ yrs old, my brother 3½ and my sister a little over 2 yrs. old, we did what we could in the garden, which was in reality very little. We didn't even own a wheelbarrow at this time. The manure for fertilizer for this garden was actually carried nearly 100 yds to the garden site in an old dish pan.

The Demerett family—parents Harry and Gladys; children Doreen, Cedric, and Everett—on their farm, Hyde Park, Vermont, 1942. Courtesy of Everett Demerett.

Mother canned nearly 500 qts of this food and meat this season of 1942. We were on a small farm, had 9–10 head of cattle, chickens enough for our eggs and a good team of horses. Dad logged winters.

We did have running water into the sink. But the water had to be heated on the stove and in the side-mounted reservoirs. The stove was an Empire State wood stove. The bathroom . . . was an outhouse. There was no electricity or telephone nearer than No. Wolcott. The winter of '42–'43 we had 7 boarders, working in the woods. I think Ma got $1.00 per day per man.

The war was an extremely sad time for everyone. Most all the young men in this area were drafted. We had battery-powered radio and were able to keep [up] with the news.

WINNIFRED HARRINGTON, MONTPELIER

During World War II, I was a young girl living in West Townshend, Vt. I remember when the old iron West River Railroad bridge over Route 30 was taken down for scrap.[5] My parents were very conscientious about ration stamps, and tried to conserve in every way. My older sister left UVM to work in a defense plant in Springfield.

THELMA KROPPER HEWITT, SOUTH WOODSTOCK

As schoolchildren, we too collected the milkweed pods and the bacon and other animal fats.[6] My brother and I pulled our wagon around the neighborhood from house to house, dumping the fat into a larger container on our wagon. Between houses I sometimes bounced my prized possession—a rubber ball![7] But one day, my ball landed in the big vat of fat soft from the warm temperature that day. The ball disappeared into the bottom of the messy stuff—and I was without a ball!

COLEMAN W. HOYT, WOODSTOCK

I was a member of the navy V-12 unit at Middlebury College, from 1 July 1943 to March 1944.[8] Only a few boys from Vermont, and I was one of them.

The secretary of the navy reviewed our regiment of 500 men and told us we were the first U.S. Navy presence in Vt. since the War of 1812.

ANN MAXHAM MUNCH, SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE

I remember listening to the evening news, just before supper, with my grandfather and grandmother each day during the Battle of Britain. My grandmother was from Nova Scotia and was very attached to things English and the royal family. As I was born in 1934 and was young—and because adults didn't always tell children everything—I was mixed up about just

One of the companies in the Middlebury College V-12 Unit, 1943 (?). Coleman W. Hoyt is in the front row, far left. Courtesy of Coleman W. Hoyt.

where this battle was taking place, and got it in my head it was in Nova Scotia. Eventually my grandfather saw some of my questions didn't make sense and found out how I was muddled. He got out the atlas and explained where the war was, and where we were. Later I thought it was selfish of me, but I was relieved.

Ann Maxham (Munch) and her grandmother, Eva Maxham, in Windsor, Vermont, circa 1941. Courtesy of Ann Maxham Munch.

H. David O'Brien Jr., Newport

In the summers of '42–'45, my father, Harry D. O'Brien, brought 30 to 50 high school boys from Staten Island, N.Y. (Curtis H.S., etc.), to work on farms in Orleans Co. for $1 a day & meals & board. He and I would visit them once a week while my mother & 2 sisters were plane-spotting in Newport & Irasburg.

Jeanette Ranney, Fair Haven

Although I was quite young, I remember the fear on my parents' faces when the U.S. entered the war in Europe and correspondence was halted between their families in Italy to America. Years passed before they could resume letter writing to learn what had happened to parents, brothers & sisters. We were so happy when Italy was conquered. I remember the rationing, but we had a large garden, chickens and two cows so we fared well. No one was afraid of hard work. There were seven of us children, and we all kept busy. The war taught us many good things—sharing & frugality among them. I remember the terror I felt in my heart when I heard German U-boats were sighted off the coast of NY. I was so sure Germans would be in Vermont within hours burning and bombing! . . .

Philip Ranney, Fair Haven

I was an elementary school boy during the war. We lived on a farm in Fair Haven, Vt. The town happened to be under the path of a flyway used by military aircraft headed for Europe. Each summer, working in the hayfield, we saw these planes go over almost daily. They were in large groups, small groups, singly and of great variety: P-51, P-38, B-24, B-25, B-17, B-29 and many other types. It was such a common occurrence for so long that we came to think little of it eventually.

Leslie Relation, Montpelier

I was flying the night the B24 crashed on Camel's Hump.[9] I was also in a B24 out of Westover Field. The # of the crashed plane was 1068 and ours was 1070. We flew over all of Vt. I flew 20 missions in [a] B24 in Italy, 15 Air Force. I was a radio operator & gunner.

Tyler Resch, North Bennington

I remember these things about World War II:

. . . Large neighborhood scrap collection boxes for paper, metal, and rubber. They were painted red, white, and blue; one was near us on Brookside Drive, and we contributed to it often.

Dyno, a powdery artificial sugar substitute. . . .

Crew of IY3 bomber group, October 1944. Leslie Relation is standing, second from left. Courtesy of Leslie A. Relation.

Cars with the top half of their headlights covered with black tape—so the Nazis couldn't see roads and highways from the air.

"Civilian Defense" block wardens. One of them knocked on our door late one night and warned my father that he could see light leaking from a bedroom window.

The "A" sticker on the upper corner of our car's rear window. It was a green 1941 Dodge with wasteful fluid drive.

My mother's contempt for a neighbor who had a "C" sticker and didn't deserve it—so she said.

A Japanese family who lived down the street, and the rumors and suspicions that surrounded them. (It never once occurred to me that our German surname might have prompted similar suspicions.)

Ration books for gas, meat, sugar. Recently I came across my own book of ration stamps; I had not remembered that children were issued their own.

Buying "victory stamps" in fourth and fifth grade at Murray Avenue

School. . . . The stamps were pasted into a book and turned in for a war bond when it reached $18 in value; and you looked forward to getting $25 upon maturity.

How plane spotter information found its way onto so many cereal boxes; I pretended, but never quite learned, how to tell one fuselage silhouette from another, though I was a whiz at telling '39 cars from '40s or '41s.

How the phrase "for the duration" applied to so many situations.

GEORGE E. ROWLEY, WASHINGTON, VERMONT

On October 8, 1941, my boat, the submarine USS *Tautog* (SS-199) left our home port of Pearl Harbor in company of USS *Thresher* (SS-200) for Midway Island. We were on patrol in that area for 41 days, returning to Pearl on Dec. 5, 1941. After a quick physical on board the tender *Pelias,* we went ashore to Honolulu or Pearl City to let off some steam. I returned to my boat about 1:00 A.M. on Sunday, Dec. 7th. At 7:55 we were awakened by the general alarm and went topside to see what was happening; there were Japanese planes all over the sky, dropping their bombs on the big ships, battleships, cruisers and anything else they could bomb.

A torpedoman in the crew, Pat Mignone of New Haven, Ct., ran below and brought [up] a 50-caliber machine gun which he mounted on the periscope shears; another man brought a supply of ammo. When a torpedo plane crossed our stern, Mignone let him have it, shooting him down about a hundred yards off our stern; he and our boat got credit for shooting down the first Japanese airplane of WWII. After much-needed repairs were made and stores & torpedoes brought aboard, we left Pearl Harbor on Dec. 22 for a reconnaissance mission to Truk in the Caroline Islands, to gather information on Japanese naval forces and troop strength in that area; we accomplished our mission, bringing back valuable information, for which the entire crew was commended by Commander, Submarines, Pacific Fleet.

We were ordered to San Francisco for a badly needed six-week overhaul; upon returning to Pearl, we sailed off Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands, where we sank two Japanese submarines and two merchant ships; we were depth charged many times, ending up in Fremantle, western Australia, sinking six ships on our first patrol out of Fremantle. The patrols were long and hard but the boat and [its] officers and men did their job so well it was nicknamed the "Terrible T." After three more patrol runs out of Fremantle, I was transferred to the relief crew on *Pelias.*

In December 1944, I was ordered back to the U.S., and after almost six years, I went home on 30 days' leave.

I commissioned USS *Tench* (SS-417) in Portsmouth, N.H., naval shipyard and made two more patrols as the war ended.

USS *Tautog* is credited with sinking 28 Japanese ships, but there were many more that we could not identify, since it was done at night. . . .

There has never been a good war, but WWII was a "good" war in one respect: it united the whole country who pulled together for a common good. Too bad we aren't that way now.

CHARLOTTE H. STOCEK, TUCSON, ARIZONA

I lived in Danville, Vt., and my oldest brother, John, was in the Coast Guard and in the South Pacific. We had a felt banner with a star on it hanging in our living room window. This showed that we had someone in our family in the war. I remember the copied letters we got from him with pieces blacked (or cut) out. Sometimes he would come home in the night and he would sit up with my mother talking, then he would be gone when we got up in the morning.

We all had ration books and my mother and older sister knitted socks and things to send the soldiers.

A woman in Danville, Mrs. Mayham, lost her only son, Don, in the war. He was missing in action in France. I remember the story she told me about listening to the radio at night in NYC when names of the missing (or found?) soldiers were read. She said the radio faded when the list was being read and she became hysterical to think she missed his name. She had a large oil painting of him in her house. It was painted from photographs.

ALEXANDRA THAYER, PLAINFIELD

During the war my dad worked on the "Manhattan Project," to build bombs, as a chemist. He tells the story of how his approval to work on this team was held up for some time because he had been to Germany several years earlier and had picked up a Nazi flag as a souvenir. When the FBI came to do a security check on him, they saw the Nazi flag and felt they had to do considerably more checking before approving him.

My parents were separated during much of the war as my mother went off to work in a factory several states away for the war effort.

URSULA WHITE, WILLISTON

I was on the other side of this war. In Germany remembering air raids, bombshelters, a whole town on fire, horns, animals running around wild. People pulling together, saving their leftover bricks to start a new house. I also remember coming out of the shelter and the U.S. tanks going through town and U.S. soldiers throwing me my first banana and chewing gum.

The war was over and people were people, regardless who they were fighting.

ANNE WILSON, CRAFTSBURY

I remember the air raid drills during elementary school and how frightened they made me! My dad used to take my sugar ration, for he had a sweet tooth, and I had to use maple syrup and maple sugar instead – how I disliked it! I much preferred the white sugar. We collected milkweed pods for life jackets, saved tin foil, fat, and tin cans. We bought stamps for our bond books.

All my male cousins went directly from high school into the army and navy and I thought they were *very* handsome in their uniforms. Fortunately they all came home from the South Pacific.

Three young men from New Jersey came to visit my family, all having served in the armed forces, and having been wounded, been discharged. They arrived in midwinter, with heavy army-issue khaki parkas. They weren't well known in town, and one elderly lady who saw them walk by her house several times reported that there were three German spies in our community. How we (and our visitors) laughed when we found out we were all under surveillance!

MANUSCRIPT

Remembering World War II. The collection consists of over 200 pages, mostly handwritten. Many entries are signed. The collection is stored in one archival box and is arranged alphabetically by museum visitor's name.

Location
MSA 126.

Provenance
Entries made at the Vermont Historical Society, June 1992–December 1993; some typed entries added during and after that period.

Related manuscript collections
Vermont Council of Safety Papers, MS 117. Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier. The Council of Safety was the state coordinating organization for military, government, and civilian affairs during World War II.

War History Commission Papers, MSC 118, 128, 129, 130, 131, XMSC 8. Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier. Papers and narratives collected and compiled after the war from various organizations and people.

Wills, William H. Gubernatorial Papers, 1941–1945. Vermont State Archives, Montpelier.

———. Gubernatorial Papers, 1941–1945. Wilbur Collection of Vermontiana, Special Collections Department, Bailey/Howe Libary, University of Vermont.

NOTES

[1] On October 30, 1938, actor and director Orson Welles produced a radio dramatization for the Mercury Theatre on the Air of H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. The story about a martian invasion of earth was presented so convincingly that despite assurances that it was a work of fiction, millions of listeners panicked at descriptions of rampaging monsters and burning cities.

[2] The Vermont State Guard, also called the Home Guard, was organized to replace the Vermont militia, which had been called into federal service. The guard was made up of volunteers who were too old, too young, or classified as unfit for regular military duty. These men received extensive military training. Cooperating with federal troops, they protected factories, roads, railroads, bridges, dams, hydroelectric plants, and other facilities necessary for national defense. They were first called into service after the attack on Pearl Harbor to guard factories in Springfield and Rutland, all of Vermont's armories, and airports. Over 1,350 Vermont men served in the guard during the war.

[3] The Brooklyn Dodgers were a National Football League team that played for fourteen seasons, from 1930 to 1944.

[4] Because many foods were rationed during the war in order to supply troops abroad, the government devised programs and incentives to stimulate home food production. Victory gardens were very popular and important ways for families to supplement food supplies. In July 1942 the Vermont Department of Agriculture estimated that there were 17,300 victory gardens in the state. Half of these growers applied for a certificate of recognition from Governor Bill Wills. In order to earn the certificate, the family had to can or store two-thirds of the fruits and vegetables needed for the winter. This required each family member to have 20–25 quarts of canned tomatoes, 55–60 pounds of leafy green vegetables, 50–60 pounds of red or yellow vegetables, 80–90 pounds of other vegetables, and 135–140 pounds of fruit.

[5] The Salmon Hole bridge in West Townshend was built by the West River Railroad in 1928. It was one of two bridges on the abandoned railroad line that the state sold in October 1942 to Vermont Metal and Steel Company of Brattleboro for the sum of $300. The bridge was shortly thereafter dismantled for scrap. See Victor Morse, *Thirty-six Miles of Trouble: The Story of the West River Railroad* (Brattleboro, Vt.: The Book Cellar, 1959), 40. Records of the sale are at the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation; Office of Rail, Air, and Public Transportation; Montpelier.

[6] The VHS exhibit included a section on scrap drives, organized at the state and local level and coordinated by the federal government. The purpose of the drives was to build up supplies of raw materials, including metals, paper, and animal fats and grease, for recycling into supplies needed for the war. Schoolchildren collected milkweed pods that were used to make stuffing for life jackets.

[7] Rubber was one of the most carefully rationed raw materials. Japanese conquests of the Dutch East Indies deprived the United States of 90 percent of its supply of raw rubber. See Richard Polenberg, *War and Society: The United States, 1941–1945* (New York: Lippincott, 1972), 14–18.

[8] Navy V-12 was a U.S. Navy and Marine Corps officer-training program conducted on campuses of 131 colleges and universities across the country. Middlebury was the only Vermont college to participate. The military reimbursed institutions for instructional, equipment and dormitory costs, which helped many schools survive the war years, when enrollments were low. The program admitted many young men who might not otherwise have received college educations. The sixteen-month program emphasized education in math, sciences, and engineering, with some courses in naval history and strategy. See James G. Schneider, *The Navy V-12 Program: Leadership for a Lifetime* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1987).

[9] On October 16, 1944, a U.S. Army Air Force B-24 Liberator bomber crashed 100 feet below the summit of Camel's Hump, killing nine of the ten crew members. The lone survivor, PFC James W. Wilson, was rescued forty-three hours after the crash.

MICHAEL SHERMAN

Michael Sherman is director of the Vermont Historical Society and editor of Vermont History.

BOOK REVIEWS

Green Mountain Rails: Vermont's Colorful Trains

By Robert Willoughby Jones (Los Angeles: Pine Tree Press, 1994, pp. 176, $64.95).

The glimmer of the headlight was first. Then came the faint sound of a whistle—a steam whistle—drifting through the chilly December air. I could hardly contain my excitement at our great fortune: we'd be riding behind a steam engine as far as White River Junction. The distant smudge of smoke on the horizon grew steadily larger, and the whistle sounded again, much louder now, as the train approached the grade crossings just north of the station at Essex Junction. A few moments later I stepped back from the edge of the platform as the surprisingly huge locomotive entered the far end of the old covered train shed. The ground shook, and a cloud of steam swirled around me as the engine, a mechanical symphony of drive wheels, side rods, and pistons, rumbled by, smelling of coal smoke and hot oil. The Central Vermont's *Ambassador* ground to a halt with a prolonged squealing of brakes. Words fail to convey what it is to experience a full-sized steam locomotive in action up close; it's something you never forget. My childhood encounter with steam in Essex Junction remains firmly fixed in my mind.

Green Mountain Rails: Vermont's Colorful Trains by Robert Willoughby Jones of Los Angeles (not to be confused with the prolific Vermont railroad author, Robert C. Jones) comes about as close as a book can to recreating the images of Vermont railroading during the twilight of steam and into the diesel era. And what images! The book simply overflows

with 270 color photographs taken after World War II by thirty-four of the region's best photographers.

Jones, the acclaimed author of *Boston & Maine—Three Colorful Decades of New England Railroading,* depicts the excitement of railroading in the Northeast Kingdom, along the Connecticut River, through the heart of the Green Mountains to the shores of Lake Champlain and beyond to the Champlain islands in all four seasons. Many of the fall foliage and winter scenes are simply breathtaking. The frontispiece, showing a double-header climbing Roxbury Hill near Montpelier Junction on a "wicked cold day" in December 1956, is a case in point. Although the focus of the book is the 1950s, when steam was still active but in retreat, there are also a large number of striking views of diesels in more recent years.

Included are the state's two largest systems, the Rutland and the Central Vermont, as well as seven smaller lines: St. Johnsbury & Lake Champlain, Montpelier & Wells River, Barre & Chelsea, Montpelier & Barre, Clarendon & Pittsford, Hoosac Tunnel & Wilmington, and Springfield Terminal. In addition, Jones covers six major systems with operations in Vermont: Boston & Maine, Canadian Pacific, Delaware & Hudson, Grand Trunk, Maine Central, and Amtrak.

This visually appealing volume is not without its shortcomings. The histories of the various lines, especially those of the Rutland and the Central Vermont, are almost too brief. But this is not primarily a written history anyway; numerous other books cover that aspect of most of the state's railroads in much greater detail, and many of them are listed in the bibliography for those who hunger for more information. Some proofreading oversights—a partially missing photo credit (p. 30); a stray hyphen here and there; a missing ticket illustration (p. 27); the misspelling of *Danville* on the endpaper map; and the mention that one of the Central Vermont's "Smiths," instead of the Grand Trunk's Charles M. Hays, went down with the *Titanic*—are minor distractions in an otherwise well-crafted work. (And why the sleepy little hamlet of Hartford on the endpaper map is given the same prominence as Montpelier, Bellows Falls, and Rutland is beyond me.)

The author's "arbitrary" inclusion of numerous out-of-state photos, particularly of the Central Vermont in Massachusetts and Connecticut, simply because "so much excellent photography was available," could be questioned in a book subtitled *Vermont's Colorful Trains.* But they *are* nice. I always wondered what the CV's terminus in New London looked like; now I know. Although several photos are a little blurred, in many instances the subjects were in motion—some quite rapidly—so a certain fuzziness is understandable, especially for the earlier shots.

Nevertheless, the overall impact of *Green Mountain Rails* is quite pleas-

ing. There are so many wonderful images on virtually every page that bring back memories: the pastoral view of the graceful covered bridge at Shoreham on the Addison branch, which is still there today (unfortunately, without the tracks); the Rutland depot at Proctor, which is no longer with us; and CV 4-8-2 No. 602 taking on water just south of the old covered train shed at Essex Junction—just as I remembered it from over thirty-five years ago.

The book also contains a foreword by the well-known railroad author and photographer Jim Shaughnessy; photos of a wide assortment of tickets; RPO indicia; timetables; and a large, color endpaper map by John Signor depicting all the lines covered in the text. This is not an inexpensive book, but if you love railroads, and gorgeous Vermont scenery, you'll probably want to add it to your collection.

GREG PAHL

Greg Pahl, who lives in Middlebury, is a member of the staff at Middlebury College. His article "Four Miles to the Falls: A History of the Beldens Falls Branch Railroad" appeared in the fall 1993 issue of Vermont History.

Ethan Allen: A Life of Adventure

By Michael T. Hahn (Shelburne, Vt.: New England Press, 1994, pp. 106, $10.95).

In fewer than 100 pages, *Ethan Allen: A Life of Adventure* paints a clear, concise picture of the thoughts, deeds, and contradictions of the man who molded and was molded by the frontier land that became Vermont. The book is more than an account of Allen's heroic moments, although it covers them all. In language simple enough for middle school students, Hahn tells the complex story of how a conflict over land and settlement rights in an area of large egos and indeterminate boundaries gave Allen the opportunity and scope for leadership.

Hahn depicts the ruggedness of Allen's life, balancing tales of his strength, ambition, and philosophical bent with examples of the intemperate behavior that got him expelled from two towns and made him seek a new start in the sparsely settled frontier country of the New Hampshire Grants. Although perhaps buying too much into Allen's characterization of the struggle with New York as between "poor honest men of the land and princes of privilege," Hahn points a clear path through the tangles of political, social, and economic differences that underlay the dispute

over the Grants, explaining their complexities and showing how, through political as well as military leadership, Allen forged an identity and unity of purpose among the settlers and led them to independence and the threshold of statehood.

Allen's story is to a large extent Vermont's, and both are incomprehensible without an understanding of the regional, national, and international events of the day. Hahn describes how New York's indecisiveness, England's lack of clear direction, and the growing tension among the colonies and between the colonists and Great Britain influenced and were influenced by activities in this remote but politically and strategically important area. In addition to increasing young readers' knowledge of colonial affairs, Hahn's portrait of a Continental Congress divided by conflicting loyalties and priorities even as it struggled to wage a war of independence should convince them that legislative bickering and gridlock are not of recent invention. Hahn persuasively argues that Vermont's own declaration of independence was the only possible response to the refusal of the Continental Congress to recognize it as a state and that Allen's negotiations with the British were a shrewd way of buying time until the outcome of the war was more certain. "There is little doubt," he writes, "that the Vermont leaders were guilty of treason against both the Continental Congress and the King of England." But it is also "understandable—perhaps even commendable—that the Green Mountain Boys were loyal to Vermont alone" (p. 78).

If there is a flaw in his approach, it is that Hahn tends to portray Allen as too heroic and too much the lone leader, ignoring not only his business partners but, more important, the roles of those such as his brother Ira and Thomas Chittenden in determining (and often moderating) the course of events. And Hahn dwells too much on Allen's "wolf hunts" and cruelties to allow us to credit his assertion that "Ethan preferred to make his point by threatening violence rather than by actually using it" (p. 27).

The book contains a useful chronology, an index, and an extensive bibliography, although a list of suggested readings might have been more valuable to his audience. And while it is well illustrated, the book would have benefited from a better map of Vermont.

These caveats aside, in depicting the birth of a state through the biography of this singular man "perfectly suited to the extraordinary events of his lifetime" (p. 95), *Ethan Allen: A Life of Adventure* also provides a wonderful introduction to a critical era in American history.

ANN E. COOPER

Ann E. Cooper is a writer and the editor of Historic Roots, *a magazine of Vermont history for adult new readers. She was formerly editor of the* New-York Historical Society Quarterly.

American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis

By James Roger Sharp (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993, pp. 377, $30.00).

In early 1799, farmers went on a rampage in eastern Pennsylvania to protest what they considered a hostile intrusion into their lives by the federal government in Philadelphia. What caused Fries's rebellion was a new act of Congress that created a tax on land, houses, and slaves. To facilitate collection, each state was divided into districts where federally appointed assessors reported the sizes of houses, numbers and dimensions of windows, and types of building materials used. Farmers, who made up nine-tenths of the population at the time, were especially outraged at the measure. A federalized army had already suppressed an earlier tax revolt in western Pennsylvania when a federal excise tax was imposed on whiskey, the main cash crop. But now the Pennsylvania Germans banded together under John Fries to block enforcement of the house tax.

As Syracuse University historian James Roger Sharp points out in this important new book, there was widespread unrest throughout the United States in the 1790s, long portrayed as a period of calm and prosperity in American history as federal power rapidly expanded. Farmers were also protesting the recent alien and sedition laws (under which twenty-five newspaper editors critical of the government had been arrested) as well as the Constitution, Congress, President John Adams, and anyone they perceived as friends of the government. As insurgents mobbed federal tax assessors, the War Department called up regular troops, who met no resistance when they marched into Dutch country and arrested Fries and two other protestors on charges of treason.

Virginians were arming themselves as well, expecting an attack by Alexander Hamilton's New Army to force them to accept federal laws they considered odious violations of states' rights. In Virginia the word *secession* was being used in private correspondence.

From his home at Mount Vernon, George Washington—the man who had held the new nation together through a tempestuous quarter century—watched "with an anxious and painful eye." He worried that the United States was "moving by hasty strides to some awful crisis" (p. 2).

In his study of one of the least-understood periods of American history, Sharp terms the years between the ratification of the Constitution in 1789 and the swearing-in of the third president, Thomas Jefferson,

"a critical period in American history equivalent to the Civil War" (p. 1). As part of this bold claim, Sharp asserts that the election of 1800 was a "critical turning point" marking "the first time that political power in the country was transferred from one political group to another" (p. 273) without resort to war.

Sharp thus brings forward by ten years the dates of the "critical period," as Justin Winsor a century ago denominated the 1780s. Sharp argues that it was one thing to grant power—the purpose of the 1787 Constitution—and quite another to exercise it. The resulting book should fuel interest in much-needed further study of a decade that decided the fate of the Constitution as well as the new republic. Until recently, the enduring myth has been that once the Constitution was ratified, it became what James Russell Lowell called "a machine that would go of itself." Sharp marshals evidence to show that nothing could be farther from the historical truth: that the 1790s and the resultant electoral stalemate of 1800 were, in Jefferson's words, "as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form" (p. 276).

Despite his turgid writing style, Sharp's book bulges with lively characters and confrontations that make the reader wonder why the Civil War was so long in coming. Sharp begins by dusting off Frederick Jackson Turner's more than sixty-year-old thesis that the Civil War was caused by sectional strife long before there was any objection to slavery—and pushes back the origins of that conflict to the 1790s. Perhaps his greatest contribution here is to quote accurately a letter written by Jefferson talking of a "Southern party" opposed to the eastern party, the Federalists. For years historians have used a bowdlerized version of the document that has the word *southern* scratched out and the word *republican* scrawled over it.

For many years saying anything favorable about great men such as the Founding Fathers has been taboo among academic historians. The great men have recently been reappearing, but they are often shackled to historians who abhor them. In detailing the actions of the Founding Fathers in the 1790s, Sharp makes it clear that he doesn't like very many people very much. He is especially fond of berating Jefferson. He "flirted" with the "destructive fragmentation of the Union" (p. 44). He lacked "detachment" (p. 49). Retirement from public life was "a promise he found . . . difficult to keep" (p. 50). Jefferson also "had a tendency to engage in hyperbole," was naive, and showed a "certain coy reluctance" (p. 73) to behave like a gentleman in politics. Adams and James Madison come off little better. Sharp takes Madison to task every time his political actions contradict the rhetoric of his Federalist Papers; Adams is irresolute, bellicose, unable to follow up his bold decisions with workable policies. Sharp even

gives Washington short shrift as president, portraying him as increasingly unpopular and averse to the slightest criticism.

Only Hamilton comes off as a hero. This should be no surprise: Sharp has spent virtually his entire academic career writing about Hamilton and his Federalists. He approves of Hamilton, the North, and the Federalists and goes far out of his way to link the politics of Virginians Jefferson and Madison with the South, slavery, and immorality. Sharp thus commits the fallacy of "presentism," as Jefferson scholar Douglas Wilson calls it when present-day historians use today's mores to sit in judgment on past behavior.

The result is a strangely schizophrenic view of history. Although Sharp condemns aristocracy and the politics of deference in the South, he sides with Wall Street speculators, monarchists, and elitists. In taking the part of the North in the growing sectional quarrel that he amply demonstrates, Sharp denies that real political parties, northern or southern, developed until at least the 1840s.

In the end Sharp's thesis comes down to this: the victory of Jefferson and Madison's Democratic-Republicans in 1800 was not due to party formation, something no Founding Father had wanted, but to sectional rivalry, as both sides sought to restore the harmony among the Revolutionary War political elite, who in turn would determine the fate of "the people"—whoever they were.

There was intense partisanship, Sharp avers, but no parties, even though both sides thought the country divided into honest men and rogues. Each faction wished to destroy the other. Each group saw itself as trying to eliminate unpatriotic rivals in the name of patriotism. Neither side recognized the virulence of its own partisanship or where it could lead.

But doesn't that describe political parties trying to perpetuate themselves in power in any age? In Sharp's book Hamilton and his Federalists come across as willing to go to any length to defeat the opposition of Jefferson and his allies. When Jefferson came to power, he ruthlessly stripped the Federalists of all positions, even those with only potential influence, thereby creating the spoils system and a winner-take-all American political process that did not allow for a loyal and acknowledged opposition party as in Britain's parliamentary system.

Historians aren't supposed to admit it, but maybe Jefferson, who was there, had it right when he pointed out that there were already political parties ready to deprive each other of the spoils of office and any forum for organized criticism. He had started his career in federal office high-mindedly saying that if he "could not go to heaven but with a party" (p. 9), he would rather not go there at all. By the time he had survived the bruising partisan warfare of the 1790s, which culminated in his elec-

tion as president after thirty-seven ballots in the House of Representatives, he was convinced that a two-party system was the only alternative.

As long as there was only one orthodox political credo, there would be, as there had been in the 1790s, "political intolerance as despotic, as wicked and as capable of bitter and bloody persecutions" (p. 277) as there had ever been under the intolerant state religions that American politics was supposed to replace.

WILLARD STERNE RANDALL

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Pillars of Salt, Monuments of Grace: New England Crime Literature and the Origins of American Popular Culture, 1674–1860

By Daniel A. Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 368, $39.95).

Americans worried about the apparently high level of criminal violence today or disgusted with the success of tabloid journalists, both print and visual, in exploiting the public's fascination with sensational instances of murder, rape, and thuggery might take some small comfort from the information that Daniel A. Cohen presents in his well-researched study of New England crime literature prior to the Civil War. To judge from Cohen's account, not only was criminal misconduct commonplace in New England between 1674 and 1860, but New Englanders exhibited extraordinary interest in the violent crimes of their times. Whether seventeenth-century Puritans or their early-nineteenth-century Yankee successors, New Englanders turned out in droves to watch public executions and then eagerly purchased the related literature that the era's enterprising authors and printers made available. Though this might seem a case of *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,* that is not Cohen's point. On the contrary, his main concern is with changes, with the different forms crime literature took over time and with the cultural contexts in which these distinctive literary genres were produced.

Cohen divides his narrative into four parts. Part 1 treats the earliest form of crime literature, the execution sermon, a genre that appeared in the 1670s and reflected the cultural preeminence of Puritan ministers, who used sermons on the occasion of a public hanging to advance their theological view that both the condemned person and the community in which the crime had been committed were in need of reformation. Such hastily printed execution broadsides were still popular in the 1730s, but by that time subtle changes were evident. Broadsides of the 1730s included more biographical material about the condemned, suggesting that an old genre was being transformed by the printers' desire to sell more copies and the public's hunger for details about the human side of the story. This shift was indirect evidence that the hegemony of the New England ministerial elite was gradually being undermined by the rise of a more socially and religiously heterogeneous society. Even the type of people being executed, Cohen adds, was changing. In the 1670s most criminals were members of the Puritan town culture; by the 1730s an increasing number of the condemned were outsiders, recent immigrants, or even pirates.

In Part 2 Cohen describes how explanations of crime and justifications for capital punishment changed between 1674 and 1825. The form of the execution sermon remained superficially stable, but the content changed. Early execution sermons had adopted the standard Calvinist explanation that crime was a product of human depravity and offered biblical justifications for executing criminals. By the Revolutionary era, however, concerns of a more secular sort—for example, with the safety of the community and its right to protect itself against disruptive individuals—had crept in. Then, in the early national period, something that might be called nationalistic pride took over, and those who defended the state's right to punish and even execute criminals based their case on the fairness of the new republic's laws and on the enlightened way those laws were administered.

Part 3 of Cohen's book traces the appearance of a new criminal type in New England between 1730 and 1800. Neither the wayward insiders of the 1670s nor the malicious outsiders of the 1700–1730 period, these late-eighteenth-century criminals were "undersiders," participants in a growing criminal underclass or subculture composed mainly of young male drifters. Cohen suggests that the presence of this new criminal type, combined with the increasingly heterogeneous and secular nature of New England society, gave rise to a literature of social insurgency in which both the validity of orthodox Protestant theology and the fairness of some criminal trials were challenged. At the same time even more biographical information on criminals was made available through the vehicle of

crime pamphlets, a new literary genre that appeared in the 1780s and grew in popularity in the 1800s.

After 1800, as Cohen shows in Part 4, the decline of the execution sermon accelerated and a variety of newer literary genres—the crime pamphlet, newspaper accounts, and even novels—flourished. Moreover, during the first half of the nineteenth century, a dramatic shift took place in literary style. Influenced by the rise of romanticism, crime literature of all types took on a more sensational and sentimental tone, emphasizing such emotional elements as the tragedy of the victim's fate and the possible innocence of some of the accused.

Cohen offers many valuable contextual and interpretative points. His treatment of the Puritan execution sermon is made all the more useful by his introduction of comparative data on seventeenth-century English crime literature. He highlights the important role that entrepreneurial and market imperatives played in the development of crime literature. Finally, he makes a good case (although it is one that will be challenged) that sentimental novels had a wider readership in New England during the early national period than some scholars, including Robert A. Gross and Jack Larkin, have suggested.

GERALD MCFARLAND

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A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England

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By Karen V. Hansen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, pp. 277, $30.00).

The book jacket of Karen Hansen's *Very Social Time* reveals her subject at a glance: there we encounter an 1850 painting by Jerome B. Thompson—*A Pic Nick, Camden, Maine*—portraying people of all ages joined in an outdoor celebration, complete with music, food, drink, and flirtation. A young woman holds a glass aloft in a toast; a man watches over children. Nowhere in evidence are the rigid gender divisions often associated with antebellum American society. Instead we see a fully in-

tegrated social world, an entire community at play. Inside the book, Hansen has shaped her own portrait of that integrated social world, based on the letters and diaries of New England working people.

Every student of American cultural history is familiar with the notion of gendered "separate spheres" as an organizing principle of nineteenth-century American life. Ministers and other cultural authorities in the volatile years of the early nineteenth century preached a vision of men and women as fundamentally opposite in nature—embodiments of the culture's radically disjointed sense of "public" and "private." Scholars in the 1970s, led by the pioneering work of Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Nancy Cott, discovered a discrete women's sphere of "love and ritual" in the pages of middle-class women's diaries and letters—a world that existed alongside the more formal, distant world of relations between men and women separated by their own version of the "gender gap."

A Very Social Time is part of an ongoing effort to revise that vision of a culture deeply divided along the gender line. As have authors of several other recent works (including most notably Nancy Grey Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York*), Hansen has marshaled an impressive array of evidence that the ideology of separate spheres left much of ordinary people's lives untouched. Hansen's sources are the letters and diaries of people she categorizes simply as "working people": New Englanders, whether rural or urban, who faced the challenges of survival in a rapidly industrializing world without much in the way of resources or education. They were not part of an urban proletariat, though many worked in the new mills; nor were they "middle class," on a par with the banker, the merchant, or even the prosperous farmer next door. They expected to work all their lives—both men and women—at a variety of grueling tasks ranging from mill work to farm work, from domestic service to teaching. Although Hansen notes that her study is confined to New England simply because the region industrialized early and rapidly and because of the region's extensive documentary collection, I suspect this rich social world may have had a distinctly regional flavor—a product of the highly mobile, highly literate working population of New England in these years.

The discovery of the records of these working people is in itself a cause for gratitude. As Hansen points out, the voices she has resurrected here are fresh, vibrant, and original, with their own unique perspectives on class, culture, and gender. For these working people, the separation of men and women into "private" and "public" spheres was far from complete. To begin with, of course, women habitually worked for wages outside the family circle. Need often drove men to share gendered household tasks like laundry, childcare, and nursing. Moreover, working women

did not always buy into the ideal of middle-class gender separatism. (Indeed, one of Hansen's most intriguing diarists, Martha Barrett, scornfully rejected the ideal, recording this dismissive summary of the lecture of a well-known speaker: "He lauded woman highly but she must be in her sphere, and all that" [p. 146].) Hansen's analysis, along with the work of Mary Blewett and others, suggests that a variety of gender ideologies competed in the early nineteenth century, ranging from clerical insistence on woman's special (and restricted) calling to Lowell mill workers' assertion of the "womanliness" of wage-earning independence.

Rather than simply rejecting such gendered categories, however, Hansen suggests an important modification in the way historians think about "public" and "private" in general. Her evidence points toward a *third* sphere, mediating between that which belonged clearly and only to men—the voting booth and the ministry—and that which belonged especially to women—childbearing and family relations. Between the "public" and the "private" was the "social," a world where men and women habitually met and shared work, friendship, and ideas. In that world, according to Hansen, men and women met on terms more or less equal, working together to forge the bonds of community that sustained them. In a series of engaging and provocative chapters, Hansen reveals the workings of that "social" sphere. By analyzing the social function of visiting, gossip, friendship, and religion, she unravels the threads that wove communities together across the gender divide.

DONA BROWN

Dona Brown is assistant professor of history at the University of Vermont and author of Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century.

The Bob Mitchell Years: An Anthology of a Half Century of Editorial Writing by the Publisher of the Rutland Herald

Selected and edited by Tyler Resch. *Foreword by* Tom Wicker (Rutland: Rutland Herald, 1994, pp. 533, $24.00).

The Rutland *Herald,* established in 1794, refers to itself on the front page as "the oldest family-owned newspaper in the United States." The *Herald* chose to celebrate its bicentennial with a number of public

and community projects, among them the publication of *The Bob Mitchell Years,* a compendium of 300 editorials written by the newspaper's longtime editor and publisher, Robert W. Mitchell. Mitchell became editor of the *Herald* in 1942 and purchased the paper in 1948. In the fifty years from the beginning of his editorship until the time of his last piece, published on Christmas Eve 1992, just a few months before his death, Mitchell wrote more than 10,000 editorials. Tyler Resch (who served as managing editor of the Bennington *Banner* and has written, edited, or produced a dozen books of regional historical interest) has made a judicious selection from Mitchell's work, organized the editorials into topical chapters, and provided useful introductions to each chapter that place the writings into their historical, political, and social context.

Bob Mitchell's *Herald* was a vital force in the political and economic life of both the Rutland region and Vermont as a whole. Mitchell took pride in the extent of coverage of state politics provided by the *Herald* and the other newspaper that Mitchell owned, the Barre-Montpelier *Times Argus.* As many of the state's other media reduced their political coverage, especially following the demise of the well-respected United Press International Montpelier bureau in the 1980s, the *Herald* became essential reading for anyone who wanted to keep up with state political developments, both at Montpelier during the legislative session and on the campaign trail every other fall. As publisher, Mitchell made sure that the newsroom had sufficient resources to make the *Herald* the best news-gathering organization in the state. As editor, he complemented the extensive news coverage with editorial essays that interpreted the day's political events in light of his half-century-long career of observing Vermont politics.

Mitchell's commentary reminds us that two-party politics did not suddenly come to Vermont with the election of Democrat Philip H. Hoff as governor in 1962. Mitchell presents Hoff's victory as the culmination of a process of political change that began in 1946, with the defeat of Governor Mortimer R. Proctor (the fourth Proctor to serve as governor) by Ernest W. Gibson Jr. in the 1946 Republican primary. This election established the Aiken-Gibson wing of the GOP as a counterweight to the traditional Republican organization represented by the Proctors. After President Truman appointed Gibson to the federal bench in 1950, the Aiken-Gibson wing was not able to come up with a progressive gubernatorial candidate to succeed Gibson, so, in Mitchell's interpretation, those dissatisfied with the traditional Republican organization began to move into the Democratic Party in the 1950s. In 1954 Democrat E. Frank Branon received 47 percent of the gubernatorial vote against Joseph B. Johnson, and in 1958 Robert T. Stafford was elected governor by only

a 719-vote margin over Democrat Bernard J. Leddy. William H. Meyer, elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1958, was the first Democrat to win a statewide office in Vermont. Although Meyer was defeated for reelection by Stafford in 1960, Mitchell argues that Gibson, Branon, Leddy, and Meyer all paved the way for Hoff. Mitchell's editorials on politics from the 1940s through the 1960s are essential reading for anyone interested in how Vermont became a state with real political competition between the parties.

Not all of the editorials in *The Bob Mitchell Years*, by any means, are on politics. The other emphasis of Mitchell's work was on economic development and the need to balance economic and environmental considerations in Vermont. The *Herald*'s editorial page played a considerable role in the conversion of the economy of the Rutland region from one dominated by the Rutland Railroad and the marble and slate industries to one having a mixture of manufacturing, service industries, and the Killington and Pico ski areas as major employers. Mitchell was a strong supporter of Governor Deane C. Davis's legislative proposals that became Act 250, and he continued to support that act through the early 1990s against the attempts of business and developers to weaken environmental regulation. At the same time Mitchell was skeptical of some environmentalist positions. For example, he could never understand why the black bear of Parker's Gore needed to be protected against Killington expansions.

The Bob Mitchell Years also contains selected editorials on topics such as McCarthyism (Mitchell consistently and forthrightly opposed the Wisconsin senator and defended Vermonters who were victims of the red scares of the early 1950s), Richard M. Nixon and Watergate (Mitchell initially backed Nixon in the 1968 campaign but then, in a rare move for an editorialist, rescinded the endorsement shortly before the election), and New Hampshire–Vermont and *Herald–Burlington Free Press* comparisons (Mitchell could not resist gentle tweakings of both the Granite State and his newspaper rivals to the north).

In his work and his writing, Mitchell showed himself to be, in the words of Article 18 of the Vermont Bill of Rights, printed daily on the *Herald*'s editorial page, a "firm adheren[t] to justice, moderation, temperance, industry, and frugality." This volume is a fitting tribute to the man who was one of the most important journalists in twentieth-century Vermont.

ERIC L. DAVIS

Eric L. Davis is professor of political science at Middlebury College, where he also serves as dean for academic planning. He is the author of several articles and papers on Vermont politics.

Shelburne: Pieces of History

By Truman M. Webster (Shelburne, Vt.: Shelburne Historic Sites Committee, 1994, pp. 133, paper, $8.00).

Cornwall People and Their Times

By Mary Peet Green (New Haven, Vt.: Antioch Press, 1993, pp. 282, paper, $12.95).

Lake Champlain as Centuries Pass

By Allen Penfield Beach (Basin Harbor, Vt.: Basin Harbor Club and Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, 1994, 2d ed., pp. 115, paper, $9.95).

Last summer I was reading a history of a rural Vermont church when a yellowed newspaper clipping fell out of the book and onto the floor. The clipping read: "Tarnished gold jewelry can be brightened by rubbing lightly with a toothbrush dipped in ammonia and then baking soda." This is a perfect description of the work of the local historian. You find something that captures your imagination, something old, small, and tarnished. You rub it lightly, and it comes alive. It's bright and fascinating, and you never look at it again in the same way—by rubbing it, you change, too: You come alive with the experience of discovering something wonderful, and you want to share it with others.

Vermont has a burgeoning cottage industry in local history. Local historians overcome the awesome impediments of self-doubt, the limitations of research, even the lack of money to publish. A town history is printed, often privately, and then sold, usually at a loss, mostly in general stores and from the author or publisher directly. The writers do it out of love for their communities and a genuine urge to keep memories alive.

Three new histories have recently made it through the gauntlet. Each is a contribution deserving attention, although they are very different from one another. Truman Webster wrote a series of short sketches on Shelburne for the *Shelburne News* in 1979–1980; the Shelburne Historic Sites Committee encouraged him to turn them into a book that has just been published. Mary Peet Green's roots in Cornwall go back five generations. Her compilation of memories and stories of the people of her town represents years of collecting, organizing, and retelling. A. P. Beach grew up in Ferrisburgh and built the Basin Harbor Club into a successful resort. In 1959 he wrote a short history of Lake Champlain, and this year

his grandchildren, Bob and Pennie Beach, have come out with a new edition.

Green's anecdotes are wonderful, a constant joy, full of gentle humor and small-town reminiscence. No one could have written this memoir of life in Cornwall as well as she. She remembers everything, every homely little detail. There is the story of a daughter who closed down her father's illicit liquor business during prohibition after the sheriff warned her there would be a raid. There is the story of the young pregnant mother who wouldn't see a doctor; just before her time, the doctor, out of concern for the family, visited without being called, only to find her riding on the two-horse cultivator. There is the story of Cornwall's recovery from the hurricane of 1950 and how the people helped one another restore power lines to their homes. Mary Peet Green's world is kind and caring. When you read her book, you can feel the warmth of a cookstove and hear the table being set for a farm breakfast.

Webster is more pragmatic, reporting the facts and introducing us to the people, homes, and businesses of Shelburne over the years, re-creating Shelburne through pictures and text. His is more of a town history than Green's, recording when a house was built, who lived in it over the years, who lives there now, and whether the owners are happy with the house. With a caring eye and ear for what has happened in the past and a concern for what happens next, he tells us about the cemeteries, the schoolhouses, and the common.

Beach takes a wider view, relating Ferrisburgh's history from the end of the Ice Age to the present and delivering familiar stories of early Vermont with the relish of a seasoned storyteller. You can imagine how often some of these tales have been told to visitors at Basin Harbor. At that site this industrious, curious man worked hard to create a successful resort but apparently never had trouble finding the time to learn the history of what had happened beyond the shoreline.

Each of these books is a good companion and a valuable resource. Anyone living in Shelburne, Cornwall, or Ferrisburgh should have a copy—everyone should know the history of the places where they live and work. But more than that, every town library ought to have a collection of Vermont town histories and every Vermonter ought to dip into these treasures now and again. In a way, the story of one town is really the story of every other town, and the sum of these stories is the real history of Vermont.

PAUL S. GILLIES

Paul S. Gillies edited A Place to Pass Through: Berlin, Vermont, 1820–1991 *(1993).*

Hunting the Whole Way Home

By Sydney Lea (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1994, pp. 210, $19.95).

Sydney Lea's passion for life and writing is emblazoned upon every page of his memoir, *Hunting the Whole Way Home.* Lea's musings from a lifetime in the outdoors are lucid, at times a lament, and often celebratory. His poetry and essays bespeak his talent for vivid description; they also give the reader a way to understand the deeply personal process of the artist's introspection and what past experiences have come to symbolize for him. As a near apologia in his foreword, Lea suggests his essays "reveal an enduring set of private obsessions" (p. x). Lea, the astute observer, teacher, literary editor, father, husband, hunter/naturalist, and seasoned poet also brings to his writing the gaze of the philosopher. Lea's meditations are tactile, sensuous, and at times obsessively contemplative. He composes beautifully simple and brilliant sequences, as from his prefatory poem: "Early / fall now, now again / the wanderers— the winter / planets, memory, restless birds— / begin to shift" (p. v).

In his writing and his hunting, Lea walks far from the trail of convention and protection into the tangle of wilder and more revealing landscapes that most of us experience only vicariously. Appreciating how important proximity to this world has been for his psyche and his writing, Lea remembers that "from an astonishingly young age, I'd vowed to find a region—some beautiful and intriguing country, home to fleet, wild things—and marry it" (p. 104). Because he understands how intertwined our memory is with our senses—visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile—Lea's images reveal subtleties that too often go unnoticed: woodsmoke hugging the land like a whipped dog, the cool aroma of a cedar bog, the smell of sizzling bacon, the color of native brook trout deep in the Maine woods far from the nearest tote road, the mauve anatomy of a November landscape, summer night sounds from the forest far below a granite cliff, or the musty smell of decaying leaves on a beech and maple ridge as the October sun rakes across the forest's damp understory.

Like Robert Frost, who hovered around the Connecticut River valley, integrating work and life, Lea finds his muse in the outdoors and nature. Not overtly criticizing the person of letters, Lea considers his mentors the headwaters of the Connecticut rather than the academic powers downstream. He draws inspiration from the loggers, trappers, big-woods hunters, and hardscrabble farmers—rural people whose life was physically and spiritually interconnected with and dependent upon the natural world.

He looks back on a time when conservation was practiced out of necessity, not political correctness. And now Lea laments that much of that more primal world can return only through his personal landscape of memory. For instance, Lea offers his recollections of Henry, the hunter and trapper who represented a generation of New Englanders whose way of life was eclipsed, at least spiritually, in the 1950s. Henry was one of those gritty individuals who lived off the land, before the advent of television, thruways, paved roads, and union schools. He lived long enough to feel the decline of the village as a community and watch the replacement of the general store by a supermarket in a neighboring town. Henry lived to see the rapacious nature of the downhill ski industry followed by the move from natural products to artificial alternatives for advertised warmth and protection. One wonders if the predator of mythological proportions that Henry pursued in his last hunting days was in fact a symbol of the uncontrollable and not easily identifiable cause for the demise of his world.

Hunting, whether for grouse or deer, has been a window of learning for Lea since his youth. His mentors—both human and in nature—set high standards for enriching one's life: hard work, caring, patience, candor, introspection, respect for the land and animals, and passing along one's knowledge. Throughout the book are Lea's admissions of passion, love, and empathy and accounts of living life intensely. As we read about his return to his spirit places in the fall, breaking the monotony of routine, or his approach to writing, we discover from this collection not only how an individual has learned to survive but what one needs to thrive.

JOHN M. MILLER

John M. Miller is a documentary photographer and writer. His book Deer Camp: Last Light in the Northeast Kingdom *was published in 1992.*

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Recent Additions to the Vermont Historical Society Library

BOOKS

Anderson, Jack, *Plymouth Notch Teacher Packet.* Montpelier, Vt.: Division for Historic Preservation, 1994. 69p. Source: Plymouth Notch Historic District, P.O. Box 247, Plymouth, VT 05056. List: unknown (looseleaf).

Baker, Abbey Pen, *In the Dead of Winter.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 247p. List: $19.95. Mystery set in Brattleboro.

Brown, Cindy Kilgore, *Vermont Wildlife Viewing Guide.* Helena, Mont.: Falcon, 1994. 64p. List: $8.95 (paper).

Brown, Flip, *The Vermont Outdoor Adventure Guide.* Williston, Vt.: Northern Cartographic, 1994. 218p. List: $14.95 (paper).

*Carnahan, Paul A., comp., *A Guide to Vermontiana Collections at Academic, Special and Selected Public Libraries.* Burlington: Center for Research on Vermont, 1994. 60p. List: $6.00 (paper).

Charles, Sheila, *Rediscovering the Montpelier Common: An Archaeological Investigation of the East Lawn of the Vermont State House.* Rutland, Vt.: The author, 1993. 71p. Source: Department of State Buildings, 2 Governor Aiken Ave., Drawer 33, Montpelier, VT 05633-5802. List: Unknown (photocopy).

Degree, Kenneth A., *Vergennes in 1870: A Vermont City in the Victorian Age.* No imprint, 1994. 45p. Source: The author, 3 Icehouse Court, Vergennes, VT 05491. List: $3.00 (paper).

Greenberg, Keith Elliot, *Ben & Jerry: Ice Cream for Everyone!* Woodbridge, Conn.: Blackbirch Press, 1994. 48p. List: $6.95 (paper). For young adults.

*Kilgo, Dolores A., *Likeness and Landscape: Thomas M. Easterly and the Art of the Daguerreotype.* St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1994. 234p. List: $29.95 (paper). (Hardcover available from publisher.) Photographer who started in Vermont.

*MacArthur, Margaret, *The Vermont Heritage Songbook.* Middlebury: Vermont Folklife Center, 1994. 108p. List: $11.95 (paper).

Marks, Andrew R., *The Rabbi and the Poet: Victor Reichert and Robert Frost.* Alton, N.H.: Andover Green Book Publishers, 1994. 48p. Source: The publisher, RR 1, Box 53, Alton, NH 03809. List: $13.50 (paper).

Mayor, Archer, *Fruits of the Poisonous Tree.* New York: Mysterious Press/ Warner Books, 1994. 295p. List: $19.95. Mystery set in Brattleboro.

Morris, Ann, *How Teddy Bears Are Made.* New York: Scholastic, 1994. Unpaginated. List: $10.95. For children; about Vermont Teddy Bear Company in Shelburne.

*Mosher, Howard Frank, *Northern Borders.* New York: Doubleday, 1994. 291p. List: $22.95. Novel set in Northeast Kingdom.

Nimke, R. W., *The St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad Plans.* Westmoreland, N.H.: The author, 1994. Various paginations. Source: The author, 36 Old Route 12 North, Westmoreland, NH 03467-4703. List: $6.00 (paper).

*Ovecka, Janice, *Captive of Pittsford Ridge.* Shelburne, Vt.: New England Press, 1994. 89p. List: $10.95 (paper). Fiction for children.

Recollections and Stories of Plymouth, Vermont. Plymouth, Vt.: Five Corners Publications, 1992. 104p. Source: The publisher, HCR 70, Box 2, Plymouth, VT 05056. List: Unknown (paper).

Walters, Kerry S., *Rational Infidels: The American Deists.* Durango, Colo.: Longwood Academic, 1992. 308p. List: $37.50. Includes Ethan Allen.

ARTICLES

Saillant, John, "Lemuel Haynes's Black Republicanism and the American Republican Tradition, 1775–1820," *Journal of the Early Republic* 14, 3 (1994): 293–324.

Whitebook, Susan, "The Name of DeRose: Translation of French Family Names into English," *Onomastica Canadiana* 76 (1994): 13–28.

GENEALOGY

Alger, Charles Ralph, *Alger Family Lines.* Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1994. 322p. Source: The publisher, 1540-E Pointer Ridge Place, Bowie, MD 20716. List: $23.00 (paper). Includes Algers of Strafford.

Fay, John William, *Landlord Fay's Catamount Tavern.* Sedona, Ariz.: Creative & Print, 1992. 149p. Source: The author, 251 Navajo Trail, Sedona, AZ 86336. List: $15.00 (paper). Fay family genealogy.

*Gassette, Veronique, *French-Canadian Names: Vermont Variants.* Montpelier, Vt.: Vermont Historical Society, 1994. 25p. List: $3.95 (paper).

Gilpin, John Wallace, *Charles Gilpin of North Troy, Vermont, 1797–1881.* 13p. and attachments. Source: Phoebe B. Gilpin, 1275 San Raymundo Rd., Hillsborough, CA 94010. List: Unknown (photocopy).

Goss, Donald Carpenter, *Goss, a Genealogy: The Lower Waterford and St. Johnsbury, Vermont Branches.* Hanover, N.H.: Goss Consultants, 1994. 700p. Source: The author, 65 East Wheelock St., Hanover, NH 03755. List: Unknown.

Heywood, Donald Lee, *Heywood Family of Connecticut and Vermont.* Chapel Hill, N.C.: The author, 1994. 196p. Source: The author, 104 Bridle Run, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. List: Unknown (paper).

Langevin, Frederick Louis, *The Ascending Genealogy of Stephen Louis Langevin and Catherine Marie Langevin.* No imprint, 1993. 103p. Source: The author, 8 Dudley Drive, Concord, NH 03301. List: Unknown (photocopy). Includes Croft and Langevin families of Franklin County and Hamel/Amell family of Caledonia County.

Morris, Gordon Alan, and Thomas J. and Dixie Prittie, comps., *The Descendants of William Sabin of Rehoboth, Massachusetts.* Kemah, Tex.: Philip S. Hibbard, 1994. 1163p. Source: The publisher, 108 Bayou Lane, Kemah, TX 77565. List: $79.95. Includes Vermonters.

Stevens, Ken, *A Complete Listing of Gravestone Inscriptions in Putney, Vermont.* Sykesville, Md.: Margaret R. Jenks, 1994. 111p. Source: The publisher, 901 W. Liberty Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. List: $14.00 (paper).

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