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VERMONT HISTORY

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About The Contributors

Deborah P. Clifford, a historian and biographer, lives in New Haven, Vermont. Her most recent book, *Crusader for Freedom: A Life of Lydia Maria Child,* was published by Beacon Press in 1992. She has contributed numerous articles and book reviews to *Vermont History* and is currently working on a biography of Abby Maria Hemenway.

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Paul A. Carnahan is librarian for the Vermont Historical Society. He recently compiled *A Guide to Vermontiana Collections at Academic, Special, and Selected Public Libraries,* which was published by the University of Vermont's Center for Research on Vermont.

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Eileen O'Brien, project archivist for the Vermont Historical Society under a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, is recataloging some of the library's most important and extensive collections.

Abby Hemenway's Road to Rome

By her own account it was in the course of her work as editor of the Vermont Historical Gazetteer *that other influences . . . began leading Hemenway away from the Baptist church and toward Rome.*

By DEBORAH P. CLIFFORD

On Thursday, April 28, 1864, William Henry Hoyt, a former rector of the Episcopal church in St. Albans, by then a convert to Roman Catholicism living in Burlington, made the following entry in his diary:

> Miss Hemenway here today & dined with us & at tea & to pass the night— At 6 o'clock we went up to St. Joseph's School & convent buildings, near the French Church, in the chapel of which Miss Hemenway made a profession of the Catholic Church and the Bishop gave her a conditional baptism. Anne & self standing as sponsors.[1]

Abby Maria Hemenway, the editor of the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer,* was then thirty-five and unmarried. As she tells it, the journey carrying her to this day had been a long one, dating back almost to her childhood in Ludlow. In a poem written less than a year after her Catholic baptism, Hemenway describes how as a young girl she had felt drawn to the story of the Virgin Mary as told in the Gospels and, following the

lead of "Mary-Mother," had eventually found her way into the Catholic church. What this poem does not say is that Hemenway's interest in the Virgin Mary—by no means a usual one for a member of a Baptist church—had inspired her to learn more about Jesus' mother and to write about her. *The Mystical Rose,* a book of fervent religious poetry recounting the life of the Virgin Mary, was published in 1865. In her introduction Hemenway calls it "the work of her untried pen," suggesting that it was an early literary effort, if not the earliest. There is little question that it was well under way long before she became a Catholic.[2]

As Hemenway recalls in the introduction to *The Mystical Rose,* the reading she did for the poem as well as the writing of it gradually but steadily overpowered her Protestant religious sensibility:

> In the quiet of Sabbaths it grew, in the calm before the ringing of bells, in the hush of holy eves. It was hopefully, enjoyedly written; till, threading at length the catacombs of tradition, lost in a labyrinth of beauty, pious allegory, ancient and mystic, luminous legend, lovingly warm with words that burn, shedding odors as incense from a censer, we were overwhelmed.[3]

When Hemenway began writing *The Mystical Rose,* she had supposed herself "almost alone upon the ground," drawn, as she put it, by "the charm of a subject untouched." The Virgin Mary was hardly a popular object of devotion among New England Protestants, who regarded her as symbolic of the idolatrous excesses of the Roman church. Thus the only references to Jesus' mother that Hemenway was likely to have run across as a child in Ludlow were confined to the Bible, specifically, the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke, together with a few passing mentions elsewhere in the New Testament. Yet these brief glimpses of the Virgin were apparently enough to cast their spell.

At first she wrote from the heart, using the gospel stories as her foundation. But later, when she had access to a wider range of books, she read everything she could lay her hands on, from Middle Eastern history and mythology to poetry and the writings of the early church fathers. Somehow she managed to appropriate "every coveted relic or tradition handed down by historian, Christian or pagan, from the archives of Latin Church, Hebrew or Greek." For most of her young adulthood, the writing of *The Mystical Rose* constituted Hemenway's chief literary labor, and this labor would lead her, as she later expressed it, "into the one Sovereign Fold."[4]

Born on a farm in Ludlow in 1828, Abby Hemenway from an early age had shown a literary bent. At fourteen, when she finished district school, she began teaching, with the apparent motive of earning enough money to pay the tuition at Ludlow's Black River Academy. By 1847 she

Abby Maria Hemenway, date unknown. Photograph courtesy of David Hemenway.

was enrolled there, studying principally in the classical department and dreaming of a future literary career. Hemenway remained at Black River until the spring of 1852.

With her formal education completed, Hemenway determined to try her fortune in the West. But several unhappy years of teaching in the newly settled town of St. Clair, Michigan, sent her back to Vermont filled with a heightened esteem for the traditions and culture of her native state. At home in Ludlow she was soon hard at work putting together an anthology of verse by Vermonters past and present for what became her first book, *The Poets and Poetry of Vermont.* Published in 1858, this volume proved a commercial and critical success, inspiring Hemenway to undertake another literary project that might further illuminate the character of her native state.

In the fall of 1859, Hemenway embarked on what was to become her life's work: compiling, editing, and publishing the history of every town in Vermont. By 1863 six volumes of the *Vermont Quarterly Gazetteer* had been published, comprising the histories of Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, and Chittenden Counties. Although several other volumes were ready for the printer, in August 1863 the exigencies of the Civil War called a temporary halt to further publication. It was during this hiatus in her editorial work that Hemenway made her decision to enter the Catholic church.[5]

Apart from her devotion to the Virgin Mary, little is known of Abby Hemenway's early religious life. Her father, Daniel Sheffield Hemenway, was a Methodist, while her mother, Abigail Dana Hemenway, was a Baptist. Hemenway, who enjoyed a particularly close relationship with her mother, had followed her into the Ludlow church, where she was baptized in the spring of 1843. She was fourteen at the time, had finished district school, and would begin teaching later that year. Family tradition tells us that Hemenway remained an active member of the Baptist church until her conversion to Catholicism in 1864.[6]

As a child, Hemenway would have had few opportunities to meet any Catholics. None were recorded living in Ludlow until the building of the railroad in the late 1840s. Nearby Plymouth, however, did contain an Irish settlement, including 122 Catholics, clustered near the local iron foundry.[7] The arrival in February 1848 of workmen, most of them immigrant Irish, to begin constructing the Ludlow branch of the Central Vermont Railroad probably marked Hemenway's first exposure to any significant number of Catholics. She was then a student at Black River Academy and would have noticed the small shantytown that had been built to house the families of the laborers, including a large number of children.[8]

Even if Hemenway was curious about these Irish families, as a committed Baptist she would have been discouraged from befriending them. Nor could she have learned much about their alien faith even if she had wanted to. There was as yet no Catholic church in Ludlow, and mass was said only on the rare occasions when a priest passed through town.

Ludlow was by no means the only town in Vermont to experience an influx of Roman Catholics in those years. Since the 1830s the number of Irish and French Canadian Catholics entering the state had risen markedly. At the time of Hemenway's birth in 1828, there had been somewhat more than 2,000 Catholics in Vermont (most of them concentrated in and north of Burlington); by 1850 the number had risen to 20,000. Elsewhere in New England the growth of the Catholic population had been even more dramatic. In Boston alone the number of immigrants (mostly Irish) pouring onto the city's docks was so great that by mid-century foreign-born residents outnumbered the natives. And in the nation as a whole, Roman Catholics, concentrated mainly in the Northeast, made up the single largest denomination.[9]

Protestant Vermonters, like other native-born New Englanders, felt increasingly threatened by the number of Irish and French Canadians moving into the state. Because more than half were illiterate and most were desperately poor, many of these newcomers were forced into laboring and service jobs, with little chance of bettering themselves. Looking down on these immigrants, with their strange customs and traditions, Vermonters were particularly suspicious of their loyalty to a foreign church that since colonial days had inspired distrust if not outright hostility. Indeed for many Americans, Catholicism was *the* unmitigated evil. As the historian Ralph Gabriel has phrased it, "What the capitalist was to Lenin in 1917 and the Jew to Hitler in 1935, the Catholic was to the American democrat in the middle of the nineteenth century."[10]

Yet while immigration from northern Europe and French Canada had been chiefly responsible for the country's burgeoning Catholic population, the antebellum years had also seen a wave of native-born American converts. According to one estimate, between 1815 and 1866 more than 100,000 Protestant Americans came into the Catholic church. Most of these converts, like Abby Hemenway, could trace their ancestry back to the days of early settlement. Most, too, were solidly middle class, coming from families where the women as well as the men had been well educated. These erstwhile Protestants brought to what was a largely immigrant church an infusion of educated, articulate, native-born Catholics, whose significance was reflected in the number who became priests, nuns, and even bishops. By the end of the nineteenth century, a good many

notable New England families, with names like Ripley, Dana, Hawthorne, and Bancroft, could show at least one Catholic member.[11]

Hemenway had much in common with these converts. If her family was not particularly notable, both parents could at least claim a solid phalanx of Puritan New England forebears. Her own education had been superior for a Vermont woman of her day. At Black River Academy she had studied Latin, Greek, and French, which she later put to use in her work as a poet and historian.

By her own account it was in the course of her work as editor of the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* that other influences besides the writing of *The Mystical Rose* began leading Hemenway away from the Baptist church and toward Rome. When the first volume of the *Gazetteer* (comprising the town histories of five Vermont counties) was published in 1867, she inscribed a copy to Vermont's Catholic bishop, Louis de Goesbriand, telling him that it was "in prosecution of this work" that she "became acquainted with the Catholics and their faith."[12] Hemenway did not specify what particular aspect of her work as editor of these histories had brought her a greater knowledge of the Catholic faith, but one likely influence was her research on Ethan Allen's daughter, Fanny, an early Vermont convert to Catholicism who later became a nun.

The sketch that appears in the *Gazetteer* is based on an interview Hemenway conducted in the early 1860s with a woman who claimed her mother had visited Fanny Allen in her French Canadian convent. Although Hemenway does not name her source, the woman was almost certainly Julia Smalley, a prominent Catholic convert whom Hemenway later described as her good friend and "the most gifted lady writer in northern Vermont." Smalley was the author of a popular book entitled *The Young Converts*, which tells the story of the three Barlow sisters of Claremont, New Hampshire, all of whom became Catholics in the 1850s. It may well have been Smalley who introduced Hemenway to the close circle of Vermont Catholic converts in Burlington, including William Henry Hoyt.[13]

Whether or not Smalley influenced Hemenway's decision to enter the Catholic church, the life of Fanny Allen was unquestionably crucial, providing as it did a heroic model for her to follow. Ethan Allen's youngest daughter had inherited his rebellious spirit. Not only had she defied the wishes of her mother and stepfather (her mother had remarried following Ethan's death) by joining the Catholic church, but she had gone one step further and entered the Hôtel Dieu, a French convent just outside Montreal. Intrigued by the idea that Ethan Allen's daughter had gone over to Rome and become a nun, Fanny's friends and acquaintances journeyed north to visit her; when she took her final vows, there was standing room only in the church. In the few short years before her death in

Fanny Allen, from a portrait representing her in the habit of a religious hospitaler. Artist and date unknown. From Tenth Biennial Report of the Fanny Allen Hospital, Hôtel Dieu of St. Joseph (1911-1913).

1808, she is said to have been responsible for encouraging a more sympathetic understanding of Catholicism, not only among her Vermont friends but also among the English-speaking patients at the Hôtel Dieu hospital, where she occasionally worked as a nurse.[14]

Some years after her own conversion to Catholicism, Hemenway wrote a play about Fanny Allen that drew on French sources as well as oral tradition. *Fanny Allen, the First American Nun,* was not published until 1878, but a careful reading of this pious drama in five acts opens a window onto Hemenway's own experience as a convert and suggests some of the reasons she left the Baptist for the Catholic church. The play begins with Fanny trying to persuade her mother and stepfather to allow her to attend

a convent school in Montreal. She tells them she wants to learn French, but her real reason for going is to find out if Catholics are indeed as bad as the book she has been reading says they are. Her mother and stepfather agree to let her go on one condition: that she be baptized an Episcopalian. When Fanny objects, insisting that she is no Christian, her mother responds, "You do not know yet what you are." Fanny's next words could well have been spoken by Hemenway herself: "True, true," she readily agrees, "Who does know what they are? I do not know a man or woman whom I think does. I never met a person who appeared to know exactly what they believed. If you find them thinking one way to-day by to-morrow they will have taken another tack."[15] Later in the play, when one of Fanny's fellow pupils in the Montreal convent school suggests that she is "getting to relish Catholicism," Fanny replies: "This much I will say for Catholics: watch them close as you may, you will never detect vacillation or insincerity in their faith." Then with a note of her father's revolutionary fervor, she adds, "I can't say as much for the Yorkers."[16]

That Hemenway herself was impatient with the state of Protestant Christianity in Vermont can also be gleaned from an essay she tucked away in the *Gazetteer* chapter on St. Albans. In it she recalls a visit she made to the cemeteries sited on a hill above the town. Remarking that the names on the gravestones were more familiar and of more interest to her than those on the doorplates of the houses below, she reflects that "the men who dwell in our grave-yards seem not like the present generation." She then proceeds to extol that "noble class of old Congregational fathers of the earlier day in the State: men who did cordially hate the intrusion of the Baptists and the Methodists in the towns where they had planted their churches." To her mind this first generation of Congregational ministers "had a more honest belief in their Calvinism than the men of to-day, and a grand large-heartedness, withal to act out the part of an 'elected' child. . . . They read their own divines, kept the Sabbath-day up to the high Puritan mark—believed implicitly, or almost, the sermons preached from their tall, narrow, box-like pulpits. . . . They stood up grandly and sturdily in their moral worth, and in their patriotism."[17]

Hemenway had seen something of the current condition of the Protestant churches in Vermont on her travels around the state and in her editing of the town histories that crossed her desk in Ludlow. In her own county of Windsor, she had watched membership in the Baptist and other evangelical churches fall and Calvinist beliefs and disciplinary practices erode.[18] She had also spoken to dozens of clergymen throughout the state. No single group proved such staunch supporters of her historical efforts as the clergy. Not only had they readily provided hospitality when she

visited their towns, but as the acknowledged men of learning in many Vermont communities, they also figured prominently among the ranks of her historians.

Some of these clerical historians shared Hemenway's concern about the current condition of Protestant Christianity in Vermont. The Reverend J. H. Woodward, for one, went to considerable lengths to explain why his Congregational church in Westford, like so many others, was "wasting away." He began by describing the years from 1815 to 1832 as "a season of unusual religious interest" in Vermont, crediting a powerful succession of revivals with increasing the number and authority of the churches. Then, according to Woodward, in the mid-1830s a reaction, a period of "unhappy excitements," set in. Prominent among these excitements was the new wave of revivals that swept across Vermont and New York, employing soul-shaking conversion techniques and stressing the individual's ability to take control of his or her spiritual destiny. Then there were such issues as anti-Masonry, abolitionism, gold fever in the West, and, finally, the building of the railroads, all of which, Woodward claimed, had focused people's attention on worldly matters leading to "an absence and dearth of spirit." Writing on the eve of the Civil War, Woodward concluded that "the whole course of events for the last twenty-five years in New England, has been adverse to a state of religious prosperity."[19]

Woodward and Hemenway were not alone in their distress over the spiritual decline they saw around them. Plenty of other New Englanders lamented in particular the growing emphasis evangelical Protestants placed on the value of a felt, subjective religious experience that relied on private judgment with only the Bible for guidance. This had had the effect of freeing parishioners from ministerial authority and led to the chaos of multiplying sects. In her play about Fanny Allen, Hemenway, speaking through her heroine, rather ungrammatically articulates the dilemma facing those bewildered nineteenth-century Americans in search of a true church: "My father believed in God without a bible, when a God with a bible and no additional revelation, is not sufficient to decide amid a multitude of sects, who is right?"[20]

Some New Englanders had welcomed this movement away from dogmatic and theological conformity, declaring that churches and creeds, even the Bible, were obstacles to an intuitive knowledge of God and to those fundamental spiritual laws unbounded by time, space, or circumstance. Whereas orthodox Christians celebrated God's intervention in human history, these liberals sanctioned a redemption whereby individuals were freed from the shackles of history to achieve, as the Boston Unitarian minister Theodore Parker put it, a "clear conscience unsullied by the past."[21]

Other New Englanders, however, deplored the erosion of traditional Protestant orthodoxy and sought instead an alternative that retained traditional Christian theology and continuity with the past and endorsed an organic relationship among men and women in place of divisive individualism. Some found a satisfactory resting place in the high church branch of Episcopalianism. Influenced by the Oxford movement in England, whose leaders sought to link the Anglican church more closely to Catholic tradition, these high church Episcopalians stressed the importance of a visible church with historical continuity and called for a renewed sense of Christian discipline, worship, and holiness.[22] Other dissatisfied Christians had moved directly to the Roman Catholic church, and still others, like William Henry Hoyt, Hemenway's godfather, had passed through the Episcopal church on their way to the Roman.

Hoyt was the son of a wealthy New Hampshire banker and state legislator. Following his graduation from Dartmouth, he entered Andover Seminary in Massachusetts to train for the Congregational ministry. Dissatisfied with the Calvinism he found there, Hoyt joined the Episcopal church and continued his studies for the ministry at General Seminary in New York. Following his ordination in 1836, Hoyt came to Vermont, serving first in Burlington and Middlebury before assuming the rectorship of the Episcopal church in St. Albans.

Although the St. Albans parish flourished under Hoyt's ministry, he was never entirely comfortable with Episcopalianism. An omnivorous reader, he studied the early church fathers, the lives of the saints, and the writings of Oxford movement leaders like John Henry Newman, and thus was drawn ever closer to Catholicism. When Hoyt began introducing Catholic liturgical practices and Gregorian chant into his church services, the Episcopal bishop of Burlington, John Henry Hopkins, became genuinely alarmed. He admonished the St. Albans pastor both privately and in print, all to no avail. On July 24, 1846, Hoyt wrote the bishop resigning his rectorship; that evening he boarded a boat to Montreal, where on the following day he made his profession of the Catholic faith. A month later Hoyt's wife, Anne, also joined the church.[23]

The Hoyts continued to live in St. Albans for another ten years. During this time a number of former parishioners followed them into the church. An attendant at mass one June Sunday in 1854 noted that the communion rail "was filled with Americans, who had been converted to the Catholic faith within the last few years."[24] What influence Hoyt had on Hemenway's decision to join the Catholic church is not known, but that she chose him as her godfather shows that she shared the respect of many other Catholic Vermonters for this man, who is credited with leading a Catholic revival in the state.

The most renowned New England convert to Catholicism was the native Vermonter Orestes Brownson. Born in poverty on a farm in Stockbridge, a village in the northeast corner of Hemenway's own county, Brownson had spent the early part of his adult life moving restlessly from one church and creed to another. Highly gifted intellectually and a voracious reader, even though self-educated he could rival Theodore Parker in his mastery of European theology and philosophy. In the 1830s and early 1840s, Brownson was a recognized spokesman for the transcendentalist movement. Then in 1842 he was converted to Catholicism and quickly became one of its leading apologists. Perhaps Brownson's greatest contribution to the church in the United States was convincing his fellow believers that they could be both good Catholics and good citizens. Many letters to Brownson from other converts tell of the influence his writings had on their decision to enter the church.[25]

There is no way of knowing whether Hemenway had been influenced by Brownson in her decision to become a Catholic, but her later correspondence with him does reveal a long-standing familiarity with his writings.[26] Perhaps she had read this passage from his memoirs written in 1857, which describes so eloquently the enormous gulf that divided Protestants from Catholics:

> To pass from one Protestant sect to another is a small affair, and is little more than going from one apartment to another in the same house. We remain still in the same world, in the same general order of thought, and in the midst of the same friends and associates. We do not go from the known to the unknown; we are still within soundings, and may either return, if we choose, to the sect we have left, or press on to another, without serious loss of reputation, or any gross disturbance of our domestic and social relations. But to pass from Protestantism to Catholicity is a very different thing. We break with the whole world in which we have hitherto lived; we enter into what is to us an untried region, and we fear the discoveries we may make there, when it is too late to draw back. To the Protestant mind this old Catholic Church is veiled in mystery. . . . We enter it, and leave no bridge over which we may return. It is a committal for life, for eternity.[27]

In a poem describing her own conversion, Hemenway echoes Brownson's sentiments. "Our First Annunciation Day" pinpoints the moment she made the final break with her past as a Protestant and crossed over into a new and unfamiliar world. In Hemenway's case this moment came, appropriately enough, on the feast day commemorating the angel Gabriel's announcement to the Virgin Mary that she was to become the mother of God. The date was March 25, 1864, and the place, quite naturally, was a Catholic church, probably one of the two then in Burlington.

The poem depicts Hemenway's struggle in reaching her final decision

to become a Catholic, dwelling particularly on the powerful temptation she endured to resist the forces pulling her into the church. In what she saw as a battle for her soul between the Virgin Mary and the devil, she describes her inability to cross the threshold into the church:

> Fain would enter, fain would lose the soul's pollution;
> Could not enter! Could not enter!
> Dare not venture!

Then on the Feast of the Annunciation, "the wiles of sense," as Hemenway calls them, prevail; "the world the flesh and Satan" lose their grip on her. "The Virgin's arm is stronger," she explains, particularly on this, her feast day. Mary beats back the devil, and Hemenway falls on her knees; the struggle is behind her.[28]

Where poetic imagery leaves off in this recounting of Hemenway's conversion to Catholicism matters little. The real struggle had likely been going on in her mind and heart for some time. For most American converts, the process was both lengthy and private, marked by extensive self-examination and often painful deliberation over certain articles of faith. Furthermore, as seems likely in Hemenway's case, the decision to become a Catholic was frequently made without consulting with other church members. Often converts did not even seek out a priest until after they had made the decision to enter the church.[29]

It is not hard to understand the appeal of Catholicism for a woman like Hemenway. It satisfied her longing for moral certitude, rooting her in an authoritative church whose history she could trace back to Jesus himself, a church grounded on a firm doctrinal and theological base. The Catholic church also offered what one historian has described as "a sanctified deviance" from nineteenth-century American Protestant culture, giving Hemenway an excuse to turn her back on her Baptist heritage and embrace Catholicism, whose churches, cluttered as they were with statues, holy pictures, and stained-glass windows, seemed to her true places of worship. Their liturgies, too, contained an ancient and mysterious richness. The medieval chants, the colorful vestments, the incense, the Latin mass, and above all the sense of history and tradition all spoke to Hemenway's ardent and romantic nature.[30]

In Catholicism, with its call for submission to a nurturing mother church, Hemenway had found not only an authoritative alternative to the uncertainty and confusion of mid-nineteenth-century Protestantism but also a replacement for her own earthly mother. Abigail Dana Hemenway, by that time frail and sickly, would live for only a few more years (she died in 1866). For her eldest daughter, the church as "Holy Mother" may have been this beloved maternal figure in more enduring form.[31]

There was a very different reason as well for her attraction to Catholicism. Well-educated and ambitious, Hemenway was one of a growing number of American women who had chosen not to marry but to pursue instead "a noble work in a good cause." These single women believed they were following a sanctified path, comparing themselves to celibate nuns in a Catholic convent. Elizabeth Blackwell, for one, had spoken of "tak[ing] the veil" when she began her career in medicine. Some Protestants were even heard to speak enviously of the Catholic church for the support it gave to such women. As Hemenway had learned from Fanny Allen and other Catholic women, Catholicism also offered her a wider range of identities than the domestic feminine ideal lauded from most Protestant pulpits. Hemenway could model herself after ardent female mystics whose devotion to God came before their devotion to men. She could eschew marriage with impunity since the Catholic church regarded celibacy as a higher calling than matrimony and praised virginity as superior to maternity.[32]

That Hemenway herself shared such a reverence for the celibate life can be seen in her religious poetry. For example, in *The Mystical Rose,* she compares the chaste love between Mary and Joseph to that which the angels have for one another, "a love more deep than the love of the flesh."[33] The poem makes clear that Mary, in taking a vow of celibacy and renouncing sex, has chosen a higher calling. Whether Hemenway herself ever took such a vow is not known. Yet by embracing the single life so prized by the Catholic church, she, like other ambitious women of her day, found a justification for renouncing marriage. There was important work to be done that would be difficult to do unless she remained single.

Still, even for an independent woman like Hemenway, choosing to join the Catholic church was fraught with grave consequences. One St. Albans convert to Catholicism described being "harassed to death by people talking against the Church and against me." She claimed the whole town had given her up "as one *blinded* by *errors*" and described the Baptists in particular as harboring a bitter hatred of Catholics and "*very* strange ideas concerning them."[34]

A similar reaction in Ludlow probably greeted the news that Hemenway had defected to the Catholic church. Hemenway's friends and neighbors were unlikely to have had more than a superficial knowledge of Catholicism, and that gleaned mostly from local newspapers. Curiosity at best and at worst hostility were the predictable responses. A deacon of the Baptist church of which Hemenway had been a member for most of her life is said to have told her mother that he would rather lose his best yoke of oxen than her daughter from the fold, as she was "so full of zeal and

helpfulness."[35] When Hemenway's official ties with the Baptist church were severed on September 2, 1865, the church record book reported that a conversation Deacon Howe and Deacon Batchelder held with "Sister Abby Hemenway" gave "abundant evidence that she has withdrawn from the church by joining the Roman Catholic Church." Hemenway was then "excluded" from the Ludlow church. Had she joined another Protestant sect, she would simply have been dismissed.[36]

According to one source, Hemenway shrank from wounding her family by even mentioning her desire to become a Catholic, but finally she had "sought her mother's advice and permission, and the latter, seeing how deeply sincere she was, reluctantly consented." This account also describes the rest of the family as politely resigned to Hemenway's defection from Protestantism, claiming that no rift of any sort occurred. By contrast, another source of family lore speaks of Hemenway's reputation as a "black sheep," tracing this to her decision to become a Catholic and her failure to marry.[37]

Perhaps each version of the Hemenway family's response contains a piece of the truth. Given Abigail Dana Hemenway's intimacy with her eldest daughter, she was the most likely member of the household to plead for tolerance and acceptance of Hemenway's newfound religion. However much the other Hemenways may have disapproved, as long as Abby Hemenway's mother was alive that kindly woman would have done her best to keep the peace. The timing of Hemenway's decision to enter the Roman Catholic church may also have played a part in muting the initial reaction of family and friends. In the spring of 1864 most Vermonters were too absorbed by the horrors taking place on distant battlefields and too harassed by the exigencies of life on the homefront to have either thought or concern for much else.

Having obtained her mother's permission to join the Catholic church, Hemenway would then have sought out a member of the Catholic clergy to instruct her in church doctrine. Whether Bishop de Goesbriand himself or another priest took on this task is not known, but these instructions almost certainly took place in Burlington. By the mid-1860s Hemenway considered that town her second home, her fondness having developed while she was working there on the Burlington chapter of the *Gazetteer*.[38]

So it was that Abby Hemenway was baptized in late April 1864, taking the baptismal name of Marie Josephine. She received the sacrament in St. Joseph's Chapel, a tiny structure adjacent to St. Joseph's French church on North Prospect Street, one of two Catholic parishes in the city of Burlington. Measuring only 20 feet by 10, the chapel contained three minuscule altars as well as a profusion of statues and holy pictures. In this

same cozy sanctuary, so different from the stark meetinghouses of her childhood, Hemenway on the following morning attended her first mass and received her first Holy Communion. This was followed by a celebratory breakfast at the home of her sponsors, William and Anne Hoyt.[39]

Despite this radical change in Abby Hemenway's life, her conversion to Catholicism had remarkably little effect on her editing of the *Gazetteer.* She continued to publish town histories by Protestant historians, many of whom were clergymen. When in 1874 Orestes Brownson chided her for making her history "a channel for Protestant churches," she reminded him that Catholics, too, have the privilege of free speech. She simply printed "what they [her historians] say of themselves, [this] being allowed in our Gaz[etteer] as the Constitution of our Country allows free scope for all religions—or for the history of all."[40]

Abby Hemenway never regretted her decision to enter the Roman Catholic church. She remained a devout and loyal member until her death in 1890, her piety and devotion strengthening with the years. It seems likely that only a deep commitment to her work as editor of the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* precluded her entering a religious order. But from the day of her baptism onwards she wore nunlike attire: an austere dark dress, in the folds of which could be glimpsed a string of rosary beads.[41]

Notes

The author would like to thank David Hemenway for the photo of Abby Hemenway, Tom Bassett for sharing his expertise on Vermont religion, the Ludlow Baptist Church for permission to quote from their records, and the University of Notre Dame Archives for permission to quote from the Orestes Brownson papers.

[1] Diary of William Henry Hoyt, 28 April 1864, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

[2] In "Our First Annunciation Day," Hemenway recalls that her devotion to Mary went back "almost to her very childhood." See *Ave Maria: A Catholic Journal* 1, 1 (1 May 1865): 4. Marion Hemenway says Abby began work on *The Mystical Rose* in the early 1850s. See Marion Hemenway, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 10, manuscript collection, Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier. Sections of the poem were published in the second edition of Abby Hemenway, *Poets and Poetry of Vermont* (Boston: Brown, Taggard & Chase, 1860), 452–458.

[3] Abby Hemenway, *The Mystical Rose: or, Mary of Nazareth* (New York: D. Appleton, 1865), vii–viii.

[4] Ibid.; Abby Hemenway, *Rosa Immaculata, or the Tower of Ivory in the House of Anna and Joachim* (New York: P. O'Shea, 1867), viii. In the preface to *Mystical Rose,* Hemenway also referred to some "olden pictures" that influenced her. A likely source for this is the first edition of the *Vermont Bible* published in Windsor in 1812. It contained seven engravings by the Vermont artist Isaac Eddy showing the Holy Family, the apostles, and disciples. See Margaret T. Smalley, "Notes on Early Vermont Artists," *Vermont History* 11 (September 1943): 146.

[5] Sources for the life of Abby Hemenway include Frances H. Babb, "Abby Maria Hemenway: Anthologist and Poet" (master's thesis, University of Maine, 1939), and Wilbur K. Jordan, "Abby Maria Hemenway," in *Notable American Women,* vol. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 178–179.

[6] Abby Hemenway was baptized April 2, 1843. She is listed as Abigail, not Abby Maria. See book 1 of the records of the Ludlow Baptist Church. These records also show that she officially withdrew, as Abby Maria, from the Ludlow Baptist Church on September 2, 1865. According to the historian Lee Chambers-Schiller, men and women were expected to undergo a conversion experience before leaving home for the last time. See Lee Chambers-Schiller, *Liberty a Better Husband: Single Women in America: The Generations of 1780–1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 87. For

Hemenway's reputation as an active member of the Baptist church, see Marion Hemenway, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 11.

[7] "Statement of the [Catholic] Mission in the southern part of Vermont & of a part of New Hampshire under the Care of Reverend John B. Daly," in Bishop Benedict Fenwick's Journal, 17 December 1840, Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, 240. No Catholics are listed for Ludlow in this statement.

[8] Joseph Harris, in his *History of Ludlow* (Charlestown, N.H., 1849), 118, notes that "a great many men were employed in building the railroad" and that most of them were "Irish direct from the old country." It can be presumed that most of these were Catholic. See Tyler Adbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 7.

[9] Jay Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830–1900* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 5. According to Dolan, there were no Catholic churches in Vermont in 1830. Tom Bassett has informed me that the first missionary priest arrived that year.

[10] Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 273–275; Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (New York: Ronald Press, 1940), 52.

[11] Christine M. Bochen, *The Journey to Rome: Conversion Literature by Nineteenth-Century American Catholics* (New York: Garland, 1988), 58. Bochen tells us that the largest number of these converts came from high church Episcopalianism. According to Eleanor Simpson, "probably every Catholic parish in the rural areas could speak of non-Catholics, one or more, who had come into the Church." See Eleanor Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy: Yankees and the Reaction in Favor of Roman Catholics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1974), 12–13.

[12] See Abby Hemenway's inscription in Bishop Louis de Goesbriand's copy of the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, vol. 1, in his personal library in the Vermont Diocesan Archives in Burlington.

[13] Babb, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 42; *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, vol. 1, 567; Julia C. Smalley, *The Young Converts* (Claremont, N.H., 1868).

[14] Laurita Gibson, *Some Anglo-American Converts to Catholicism Prior to 1829* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1943), 185–186. Fanny was only five years old when her father died. Her mother, Ethan's second wife, then married Dr. Jabez Penniman. Some accounts of Fanny Allen credit her with bringing numerous converts into the church, including American patients at the Hôtel Dieu. Daniel Barber, the Episcopal minister who baptized her before she went off to school in Montreal, came into the church in 1816 through Fanny Allen's influence. He was followed by his wife, two children, his sister, and all her family. See Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy," 104.

[15] Abby Hemenway, *Fanny Allen, the First American Nun* (Boston: Thomas B. Noonan, [1878]) 1.2: 6. Hemenway's French source for the play was *Mémoires particuliers pour servir à l'histoire de l'église de l'Amérique du nord*, vol. 3, pt. 2 (Paris, 1854), 294–303. Hemenway refers her readers to this account in a note accompanying the sketch of Allen in the *Gazetteer*. She also tells the story of Fanny Allen in a column she wrote for the Catholic magazine *Ave Maria* for a few months in 1865 and 1866. This account, intended for Catholic children, dwells more on a vision of St. Joseph that Fanny had as a child but also describes her conversion. See *Ave Maria* 2, 19 (12 May 1866): 303–304; 2, 26 (30 June 1866): 415–416; 2, 27 (7 July 1866): 429–430; 2, 28 (14 July 1866): 445–447.

[16] Hemenway, *Fanny Allen* 2.1: 12. Fanny's quip about Yorkers refers to the land and jurisdictional claims of New York in what is now Vermont.

[17] Abby Hemenway, "An Hour in the St. Albans Cemeteries," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, vol. 2, 365.

[18] Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 279.

[19] *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, vol. 1, 895–896. For other references in the *Gazetteer* to division and dissension in the Protestant churches, see "Joseph Hoag's Vision," vol. 1, 740; the history of Stowe by M. N. Wilkins, vol. 2, 713–714; the history of Fletcher by Ben[jamin] A. Kinsley, vol. 2, 208–211.

[20] Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy," 25; Hemenway, *Fanny Allen*, 14.

[21] Quoted in Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy," 27.

[22] Ibid., 49; Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 622.

[23] Louis de Goesbriand, *Catholic Memories of Vermont and New Hampshire* (Burlington: Louis de Goesbriand, 1886); Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy," 75; diary of William Henry Hoyt, University of Vermont.

[24] Smalley, *Young Converts*, 38–39; de Goesbriand, *Catholic Memories*, 131–133; Simpson, "The Conservative Heresy," 76.

[25] Hugh Marshall, *Orestes Brownson and the American Republic* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1971), 290–291.

[26] A half dozen letters from Hemenway to Orestes Brownson dating from the mid-1870s survive. In one of these she admits to having been critical of his "former writings," which sought "to compromise or Americanize" the Catholic church. Abby Maria Hemenway to Orestes A. Brownson, 23 December 1874, Orestes A. Brownson Papers (CBRO), University of Notre Dame Archives.

[27] Quoted from Brownson's *Convert* in Jenny Franchot, *Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 337–338.

[28] Hemenway, "The First Annunciation Day."

[29] Bochen, *Journey to Rome*, 66–68. For descriptions of the conversion process, see also Franchot, *Roads to Rome*.

[30] Franchot, *Roads to Rome*, 280; for a discussion of Catholicism's romantic appeal for nineteenth-century Americans, see in particular chapter 10. Smalley's *Young Converts* describes the appeal of Catholicism for a Vermont contemporary of Hemenway's: "When I glance at the Protestant world I cannot find one thing to make their religion beautiful. They have parted with those pure and lovely doctrines which the Catholic holds most sacred: those forms which render the services of our Holy Religion so sublime, so tenderly beautiful, and have taken in their stead the cold formalities of a *protesting* creed" (p. 52).

[31] For the image of the Catholic church as "Holy Mother," see T. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 197.

[32] Chambers-Schiller, *Liberty a Better Husband*, 21, 24. In *The Young Converts*, Debby Barlow describes her entry into the church as an act of defiant independence that puts the law of God above the law of parents. See Smalley, *Young Converts*, 14.

[33] Hemenway, *Mystical Rose*, 51.

[34] Smalley, *Young Converts*, 41, 45.

[35] Marion Hemenway, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 10–11.

[36] Book 1 of the records of the Ludlow Baptist Church.

[37] Babb, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 43. David Hemenway, a descendant of Hemenway's brother Charles, is the source for the family's assessment of Abby as a "black sheep."

[38] In one of her columns written for the Catholic periodical *Ave Maria* 2, 7 (17 February 1866): 111, Abby calls Burlington, "that dearest old lake town . . . my other home."

[39] Diary of William Henry Hoyt, 29 April 1864. No record survives indicating why Hemenway chose to be baptized in a French church. Was she perhaps following in Fanny Allen's footsteps? For a description of the chapel, see Hemenway's column in *Ave Maria* 2, 12 (24 March 1866): 191.

[40] Abby Maria Hemenway to Orestes A. Brownson, 15 May 1874, Orestes A. Brownson Papers (CBRO), University of Notre Dame Archives.

[41] Babb, "Abby Maria Hemenway," 44.

VERMONT ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS

This occasional section alerts researchers to the rich resources acquired regularly by Vermont's historical repositories. News of accessions and openings of processed collections, as well as longer evaluative descriptions of research collections, will be welcome. Please send submissions to the Editor, Vermont History.

New Collections

Vermont Historical Society Library, Montpelier

The Vermont Historical Society (VHS) is one of the largest repositories of manuscripts in the state.[1] In keeping with its commitment to preserve historic documents and make them available to researchers, the staff and volunteers of the VHS process new manuscript collections on an ongoing basis, organizing the materials so that researchers can find the documentary evidence they need. The VHS is also responsible for providing access to collections that have long been in its care; as part of that responsibility the VHS is currently reprocessing some of its larger, more important manuscript collections to make them easier to use and more widely known in the research community. In September 1994 the VHS hired Eileen O'Brien, its first full-time, professional archivist, to bring the arrangement, description, and cataloging of some of its long-held collections up to contemporary standards and to assist in processing incoming collections. Her work is being funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.[2]

In the sixteen-month period from January 1994 through June 1995, the VHS library staff and volunteers have processed twenty-seven collections (almost 100 linear feet). This article briefly describes each of the collections. Cataloging records for these collections are available in the ARCCAT database on the Vermont Automated Library System (VALS); through OCLC, an international bibliographic utility; and in the VHS library. Full finding aids and inventories are available in the VHS library.

Personal and Family Papers

Seth Shaler Arnold (1788–1871) Journals, 1809–1850: minister of Westminster; typescript of diaries; transcribed by Dorothy C. Walter in 1940 and published in VHS *Proceedings* 8 (June 1940): 107–193; 1 linear foot (Doc 387).

Coolidge Family Papers, 1802–1932: John Coolidge (1845–1926); his father, Calvin Galusha (1815–1878); and son, Calvin (1872–1933); personal correspondence, photographs; business and financial papers; papers of the town of Plymouth; 10 linear feet (Doc 215).

Edwin C. Hall (1845–1913) Papers, 1862–1881: Civil War soldier from Brookfield; served with Tenth and Fifteenth Regiments; letters; writings on the Civil War; selections published in *Vermont History* 57 (fall 1989): 197–225; .66 linear foot (MSA 130.5).

Joseph Hamilton (1839–1933) Papers, 1865–1932: Methodist minister in many central and northern Vermont towns, 1865–1930; chaplain for the Vermont Senate, 1919–1922; autobiography; diaries; record book; manuscript on Methodism in Woodstock; .5 linear foot (MSA 101).

Leverett N. Harrington Diaries, 1871–1929: Shaftsbury farmer; 1 linear foot (MSA 106).

Phil S. Howes (1875–1941) Diaries, 1896–1939: Norwich University student; Montpelier resident; longtime secretary of Vermont Historical Society; employee of National Life Insurance Company; diaries; 2.5 linear feet (MSA 132).

William Jarvis (1770–1859) Papers, 1793–1845: U.S. consul to Portugal, 1802–1811; trade merchant; farmer in Weathersfield; correspondence about international trade conditions and relations; accounts; papers concerning the introduction and development of merino sheep and the promotion of agriculture in the United States; 2 linear feet (Doc 62).

Leverett Putnam Lovell (1924–1956) Letters, 1944–1957: from Rockingham, served in the navy during World War II and Korean War; letters to parents; .25 linear foot (MSA 100).

Lyndon State College Collection: Pingree (Pingry)/Hunton/Stickney Family Papers, 1832–1962: three interrelated families from Hyde Park, Rutland, and Bethel; Civil War correspondence; travel scrapbooks;

legal papers; newspaper clippings; selections published in *Vermont History* 63 (spring 1995): 80–94; 5 linear feet (Doc 382).

Denton Moore Robinson (1877–1953) Papers, 1941–1969: artist and laborer of Newfane, New York City, and San Diego; correspondence; original commercial art; photographs of paintings; estate records; .8 linear foot (MSA 124).

Mary Gaylord (Snyder) Spencer (1864–?) Papers, 1826–1939: family papers and genealogical research on Scott and Snyder families; correspondence; Sons of Temperance resolution; astrology and astronomy notes; .5 linear foot (MSA 98).

Stafford Family Papers, 1832–1989: Dwight B., Guy L., and Ralph E.; dairy farmers from South Wallingford; active in politics, Grange, Masons, Eastern Star, and Odd Fellows; diaries; account books; farm records; records of the Union Diving Park Society; 4 linear feet (Doc 347).

Henry Stevens (1791–1867) Family Correspondence, 1844–1862: antiquarian and cofounder of Vermont Historical Society from Barnet; correspondence with wife, Candace; sons Henry (1819–1886) and Benjamin Franklin (1833–1902), book collectors and dealers; Enos (1816–1877), teacher; George (1821–1846), West Point graduate; Simon (1825–1894), businessman; and daughter, Sophia, (1827–1892), teacher and artist; 2 linear feet (Doc 30).

Dwight Stafford with Harriet and John, ca. 1921. From the Stafford Family Papers.

Daguerreotype of Mary Palmer Tyler, no date. From the Royall Tyler Collection.

Nathan Stone (d. 1795) Papers, ca. 1750–1918: early settler and land agent of Windsor; land records and survey maps; medical records and papers of the Windsor Bank kept by Dr. Isaac Green (1759–1842); 9 linear feet (Doc 43).

Royall Tyler (1757–1826) Collection, 1753–1935: from Brattleboro; chief justice of Vermont Supreme Court and author of poetry and dramas; correspondence; legal and business papers; literary manuscripts; diary and correspondence of wife, Mary Palmer Tyler (1775–1866); genealogy and biographical research notes of great-granddaughter Helen Tyler Brown (1864–1935); diary of John Adams (1735–1826); 10 linear feet (Doc 45).

Dorothy Charlotte Walter (1889–1967) Papers, 1898–1941: researcher and editor of Lyndon; field worker for the Vermont Commission on Country Life; associate of Vermont literary figures John Walter Coates and Nellie Richardson; scrapbooks; notes; reports; story for children; 1.5 linear feet (Doc 386).

White Family Papers, 1794–1936: residents of Shelburne and captains of Lake Champlain steamers; letters; estate inventories; photographs; account books; clippings; 1 linear foot (MSA 109).

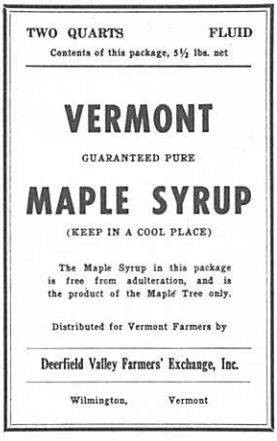
"Flash light picture of sitting room at R. J. White's," October 1890. From the White Family Papers.

Other Collections

Browns of Vermont and Allied Families: genealogical data compiled by Robert E. Marsh from Vermont Vital Records on people with the last name Brown; 15 linear feet (Doc 366).

Thomas S. Conlon (1934–1990) Pavilion Hotel Papers, 1967–1971: chairman, Friends of the Pavilion; fight to save old hotel in Montpelier; correspondence; clippings; reports; 1 linear foot (Doc 151).

Charles Edward Crane (1884–1960) "Made in Vermont" Columns, 1952–1958: Middlebury newspaper editor; publicity director for National Life Insurance Company; typescripts of articles about Vermont industry; .25 linear foot (MSA 128).



D. W. Edson Company Records, 1913–1982: printers in Montpelier; job folders with samples of work; 7.5 linear feet (Doc 338).

Monkton, Vermont, Papers, ca. 1740–ca. 1968: early town records; genealogies of prominent Monkton families; personal, business, and legal papers; photographs; collected by Ruth Hathaway and other town clerks; 1.25 linear feet (Doc 381).

Royce Stanley "Tim" Pitkin (1901–1986) Papers, 1912–1983: founding president of Goddard College in Plainfield; office files; material related to other educational institutions, community organizations, labor arbitration, and the Unitarian church; 15.25 linear feet (Doc 351).

Above: Two advertising broadsides from the D. W. Edson Company records. Left: Royce Stanley "Tim" Pitkin, no date. From the Pitkin Papers.

Representative Peter Smith (center) touring Casella Waste Management recycling plant, ca. 1989. From the Peter P. Smith Congressional Papers.

Remembering World War II, 1992–1993: memories collected during VHS exhibition; selections published in *Vermont History* 63 (spring 1995): 95–107; .5 linear foot (MSA 126).

Peter P. Smith (1945–) Congressional Papers, 1988–1991: Vermont's representative to the 101st U.S. Congress; legislative subject files; newspaper clippings; photographs; audio- and videotapes; small amount of correspondence; 4.75 linear feet (MSA 113).

E. Harold Tillotson (1897–1984) Genealogy Notebooks; Tillotson, Ballou, Town, and Worthen families; .66 linear foot (MSA 96).

Two-Penny Circus Records, 1978–1982: clown, mime, and mask theater from Montpelier; bookings sheets; contracts; correspondence; promotional materials; 1 linear foot (MSA 129).

NOTES

[1] Paul A. Carnahan, "Vermont Archives and Manuscripts," *Vermont History* 62 (spring 1994): 101–107, includes a brief overview of the Society's collections and describes twenty-six collections processed from July 1992 through December 1993.

[2] *Vermont History News* 45 (May–June 1994): 36.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844

By John L. Brooke (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 430, $34.95).

Awarded the prestigious Bancroft Prize in April 1995, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844,* by John L. Brooke of Tufts University offers a wealth of detail concerning the occult beliefs and practices of the colonial era and the early republic. Brooke argues that Mormonism derived not from New England Puritanism (as some have believed) but from alchemy, hermeticism, and the perfectionism of the radical Reformation, transmitted to Joseph Smith through the extended families of his parents. *The Refiner's Fire* has two virtues that recommend it as productive reading for those interested in New England or in American religion.

The first virtue is Brooke's superb storytelling. For example, in a few pages (pp. 30–33) he weaves together the economic situation, the divining, and the religious faith of some of the hundreds of treasure hunters of the 1780s. In the post-Revolutionary depression, many Americans yearned for treasure chests buried by Spaniards or pirates. Magic circles and spells could cause the chests to "bloom" to the surface, but a taboo word or movement on the part of the digger, as well as the machinations of gnomes or "mine spirits," could cause treasures to plunge back into the bowels of the earth. Not only did the New Israelites of Rutland County, Vermont, in the 1790s claim to have an inspired power to find buried

treasure, but, Brooke says, a synthesis of the occult and Christianity led believers to see in the ascent of the soul to heaven a parallel to the transmutation of base metals into higher. For instance, alchemy helped Universalists understand and legitimize an ancient heresy with "their strikingly material conception of the universal perfectibility of humanity." Out of the hard times, confidence games, occultism, and Christian orthodoxy and heresy of post-Revolutionary Vermont stepped Joseph Smith (1805–1844), to "articulate the deepest purposes of hermetic divinization in a theology framed in Ohio in the 1830s and announced in 1843–44 at Nauvoo, Illinois." After Smith's lynching in Carthage, Illinois, a Vermonter who had become one of the twelve Mormon apostles, Brigham Young, led the faithful to the West.

The second virtue is Brooke's integration of the occult into Vermont history. The present has been, and should continue to be, a productive time for studies in Vermont history, and Brooke's analysis is essential for such studies. A common theme in recent writings by Michael A. Bellesiles, P. Jeffrey Potash, Randolph A. Roth, and the present reviewer is that some of the central developments of the early republic were worked out by ordinary Vermonters.[1] Post-Revolutionary Vermont has a broad importance insofar as its inhabitants searched for what Roth describes as a "response to the central dilemma of democratic life: how to reconcile their desire for security, moral and spiritual unity, and political harmony with their revolutionary commitment to competition, toleration, and democracy."[2] When occult beliefs and practices are examined in the lives of Vermonters facing this dilemma, a new and probably truer picture emerges. For instance, in arguing that on the Vermont frontier the Universalist theologian Hosea Ballou forged a modern Christianity (with a God who blesses individual enterprise and a democratic epistemology that defines truth as developing piecemeal in the population), I relied on denominational histories and the writings of Ballou's family and followers, which presented Vermonters' Universalism as a raw faith, a doctrinal tabula rasa, awaiting Ballou's codification in his 1805 *Treatise*.[3] In this, I echoed modern scholars like Roth and Sydney E. Ahlstrom, but Brooke's work suggests that Ballou's rationalization of universal salvation was in part a movement from alchemical influences at work in Vermont to a rational and scientific style of Christianity acceptable to a wider audience.[4] Ballou, of course, represented his achievement as a rationalization of Calvinism, but we are now prepared to say that he was also rationalizing traces of the occult.

Many a writer will be stimulated by Brooke's details: the sexual experimentation associated with the occult, the social usefulness of counterfeiters in a cash-poor economy, the identification of Rhode Island as the

best eighteenth-century locale for the cunning folk, and other facets of the landscape of colonial America and the early republic. In mapping early American religion in *The Refiner's Fire,* however, Brooke misdraws some of the flow lines and fault lines. Brooke presupposes a sharp divide between "magisterial" Puritanism on the one hand and the radical Reformation and occult beliefs and practices on the other. The utility of this divide is Smith's establishment as an heir of the radical Reformation and European occultism, not of the Puritans. Yet Brooke's examples of radicals (Samuel Gorton, Anne Hutchinson, and Roger Williams) and of those interested in the occult (members of the Bradstreet and Winthrop families) suggest that the boundary between orthodoxy and heresy, as well as that between religion and the occult, was flexible and permeable. An example of Brooke's mismapping is his statement that "paradoxically, it was the complex fusion of the lore of wonders, the denial of sanctioned magic, and a popular fear of magic that combined to shape the devastating Salem witch trials of 1692" (p. 36). Yet paradox was absent from the trials. Puritans and other believers thought both God and the devil could work wonders in nature and in individuals and believed saints served God while witches served the devil. The reservations many had about the evidence presented in the trials (spectral apparitions and the fits of the afflicted) were not inconsistent with belief in witchcraft and the punishment of witches but were merely cautious and circumspect. Actually, an ambiguity resulting from the permeability of the border between religion and the occult first encouraged occult beliefs and practices to persist barely hidden and then allowed accused women and their associates to become scapegoats for stresses caused by changes in families and economic circumstances. Ambiguity, not paradox, was present at the trials.

If we do not accept Brooke's wide gap between "magisterial" Puritanism and other varieties of early American religion and magic, then what should we make of his claim that Mormonism not only had shallow roots, if any, in Puritanism but also violated Puritan orthodoxy in Smith's doctrine that Mormons should strive to be "hermetic perfectionists, to be coparticipants in divinity and to play a direct role in the supernatural cosmos of the invisible world" (p. xiv)? One answer to this question is that Mormon *cosmology* did not derive from the Bible, even if it did interest Christians and lead Smith to assume the title of "Seer, a Translator, a Prophet, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Elder of the Church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ."[5] Another answer is that any claim other than Jesus' to be a human coparticipant in divinity must be heretical to Christians, Puritan or not. Yet the answer becomes less easy if we frame our question not in terms of origins and cosmology, orthodoxy and heresy, but in terms of a characteristically Puritan encounter

with a new society in the "New World." One way to characterize the American Puritans is to recall the epithets used against them in England before the Great Migration—they were called "precisianists" and, as the faithful came to relish, "puritans"—and to note that the New England commonwealths were meant to be communities in which the authorities enforced true doctrine, precisely delineated and aimed at purifying self, church, and society. The important point is that the Puritan divines and Smith shared in the effort to make "precisianism" do the work of uniting and purifying a new society that seemed always more and more fissiparous and commercialized, whereas nineteenth-century evangelicalism took a much different approach to America. As the sacred canopy of American religion came to cover more and more forms of Protestantism and to sanctify a commercial republic, few were willing to echo the words of another Vermonter: "However doctrinal preaching may be discarded by many, and such words as *metaphysical, abstruse,* etc., are often made use of to obstruct free and candid inquiry; yet it is evident that one great end of the gospel ministry is to disseminate right sentiments; hence it is that Paul so often exhorts Timothy to take heed to his *doctrine.* Sound doctrine, as well as good practice, is necessary to constitute the Christian character: 'Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the *doctrine* of Christ, hath not God.'—2 John, 9."[6] Moreover, Smith's desire to be "coparticipant in divinity" was articulated in a Christian context, not a vacuum, as he himself well knew. Like those who confessed in 1692 to having made compact with the devil, Smith required Christianity in order to make sense. It was not that the confessed witches were merely deluded but that they were possessed by a Christian delusion. Smith needed a standard against which to react, so his relationship with New England religion cannot be summarized by noting that he did not derive a cosmology from it.

Notes

[1] Michael A. Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws: Ethan Allen and the Struggle for Independence on the Early American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); P. Jeffrey Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District: Patterns of Community Development and Religious Activity, 1761–1850* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1991); Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); John Saillant, "'A Doctrinal Controversy Between the Hopkintonian and the Universalist': Religion, Race, and Ideology in Postrevolutionary Vermont," *Vermont History* 61 (Fall 1993): 197–216.

[2] Roth, *Democratic Dilemma,* p. 14.

[3] Hosea Ballou, *A Treatise on Atonement, In Which The Finite Nature of Sin Is Argued, Its Cause and Consequences As Such; The Necessity and Nature of Atonement; And Its Glorious Consequences, In The Final Reconciliation Of All Men To Holiness and Happiness* (Randolph, Vt.: Sereno Wright, 1805); Maturin M. Ballou, *Biography of Rev. Hosea Ballou* (Boston: Abel Tompkins, 1852); Richard Eddy, *Universalism in America: A History* (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1886).

[4] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2d ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1975).

[5] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 609.

[6] Lemuel Haynes, *The Important Concerns of Ministers and the People of Their Charge at the Day of Judgment* (1798), in Richard Newman, ed., *Black Preacher to White America: The Collected Writings of Lemuel Haynes, 1774–1833* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1990), p. 57.

JOHN SAILLANT

John Saillant is an associate of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University. His research and writing concern race, religion, and political thought in Revolutionary America and the early republic.

Aunt Sarah: Woman of the Dawnland

By Trudy Ann Parker (Lancaster, N.H.: Dawnland Publications, 1994, pp. 287, paper, $35.00).

Until roughly two decades ago, the St. Francis Abenaki were the invisible Indians of Vermont. Although mentioned in history books as savage raiders who swept down on peaceful settlements, they were not acknowledged as original or present-day inhabitants of the Green Mountain State. Their role, as in Kenneth Roberts's historical novel *Northwest Passage,* was to be wiped out by civilization. Even that fictional extirpation took place in Canada, for (the early histories assured us) there were never any Indians living in Vermont.

The growth of modern-day Abenaki nationalism has led to a new vision of the existence and continuance of Native peoples in present-day Vermont and New Hampshire, the area the Western Abenaki called Ndakinna, "Our Land." Rather than as the only and original center of Abenaki existence, the village of St. Francis in the province of Quebec is today recognized as one place of refuge for Native New Englanders who sought to escape the increasingly bitter warfare precipitated by the British and French.

Although recent histories such as *The Original Vermonters* by (William Haviland and Marjory Power) more accurately reflect what occurred, the Abenaki story remains largely untold from the viewpoints of those who experienced it as personal reality. Family histories validate the generations of a family, making their stories available for further generations. A family without a historian (usually self-appointed) is a family that will probably not be remembered. Because a central tenet of Western Abenaki culture is that every person has a story to tell, such family

histories are of special importance to the Abenaki people. For these reasons, the publication of *Aunt Sarah* is particularly welcome. It is a fascinating, detailed Abenaki family story told by a direct descendant of the protagonist.

Trudy Ann Parker relates with great enthusiasm and love for her main characters a story that begins in 1831 with her great-great-grandfather Chief Taxos. Haunted by the nightmare of a roaring, one-eyed whirlwind that would be his death, he is the leader of nine Abenaki families settled on the Tarritine Ledge above the Connecticut River. Following the old ways has become almost impossible for him and his people; they must begin to live more like their European American neighbors. But (and this is a central theme of the book) though they may dress and live like whites, they remain Abenaki.

Known as Peter Jackson to his white neighbors, Chief Taxos takes the advice of his sister Nelemano, foster mother to his four children, and moves his family to a wooden house. One of those children, Sara Jackson, is drawn to the medicine ways of her wise aunt, and it is Sarah's often heroic saga that we follow throughout the book. Because Aunt Sarah lived 108 years, until February 1931, when she died in a nursing home in Lunenburg, Vermont, the story spans many generations.

Trudy Ann Parker chooses to novelize this family history, introducing imagined dialogue and adding detail to events. It is a good choice. Through this device Parker is able to bring in a wealth of information on everyday Abenaki life in the nineteenth century, including Abenaki folk stories, recipes for healing, and descriptions of basket making and canoe building. Fiction makes it possible for us to listen in on Sarah's internal dialogue as she thinks about the possible loss of her Native language:

> Reflection upon a forgotten name always caused Sarah sadness, for it was the death of a language, and ironically that forgotten language had been used to name most of the rivers, streams, and mountains in the northeastern United States, until the White men came and changed the names to English words that seldom told anything about what was named. . . .
>
> A robin sat perched on a tree limb near her and began singing, and this brought a smile to Sarah's face. She spoke out loud to the robin, "Hey, brother 'kwihkweska,' I know your name and recognize your song. . . ."
>
> As the next farm loomed up ahead of her the robin flew away, and Sarah watched it go and vowed that she would someday teach her own children the dialect and words of the old ones. She would teach them the words even if they also had no one to speak these words to. They would know, for she would tell them. (p. 206)

I highly recommend *Aunt Sarah* to anyone interested in the real stories

of the Native peoples of the northeast. However, this is a book with many flaws. One problem is the novel's structure. Although much of the narrative builds to Sarah's wedding to the love of her life, this occurs near the end of the novel. The book effectively closes when Sarah is in her thirties, the events of her remaining seven decades compressed into fewer than ten pages, as if the author ran out of energy. Parker also presents alcoholism, a problem many Native Americans face and a central issue in the final years of Chief Taxos, in almost glib terms.

Aunt Sarah appears to have been rushed into print, without the benefit of either truly professional editorial advice or careful proofreading. There are hundreds of errors of spelling, capitalization, word choice, grammar, and punctuation. On one page, for example, at least five commas are missing. On other pages we find such unfortunate errors as *visa versa* for *vice versa, wobbled* for *warbled, knight* for *night,* and *dying* for *dyeing.* The author also has a tendency to write extremely long sentences, often combining the dialogue of two different speakers into a single, paragraph-long sentence. All these errors—on virtually every page—impede the flow of an interesting narrative and could easily have been avoided. I sincerely hope that there will be a revised edition in the future. Both Aunt Sarah and her readers deserve the effort.

JOSEPH BRUCHAC

Joseph Bruchac is a registered member of the Abenaki Nation of Vermont. A poet and storyteller, he has recently written two novels, Dawn Land *and* Long River, *and a collection of short stories for children,* Dog People.

Families of Cavendish: The Early Settlers of the Black River Valley in Windsor County, Vermont

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Compiled by Linda Margaret Farr Welch. Vol. 1 (Cavendish, Vt.: Cavendish Historical Society, 1995, pp. 346, paper, $30.00).

The introductory pages to this volume, the first in a series the Cavendish Historical Society plans to publish, present an overview of early proprietors, their successors, and the hardships they suffered as they settled Cavendish. Linda Farr Welch traces detailed lineages for the families of Adams, Baldwin, Coffeen, Dutton, Fletcher, Gilbert, Grout, Lovell, Proctor (including Redfield Proctor, governor of Vermont from 1870 to 1880), Russell, Spafford, and Wheelock, going back to the immigrant ancestor where the information is known.

The strongest feature of this volume, which sets it apart from other town genealogies, is Welch's use of stories and quotations from diaries, letters, ledger accounts, and newspapers that describe the life and times of the writers, members of the Cavendish families. They reminisce about clearing land and building cabins, disease, floods and drought, and hard winters, recalling childhood memories and their later years. When it was time to make a will, many began, "being in a very infirm state of health and certain too of my liableness to sudden death," as did Dan Grout in 1856 (p. 207).

Women detailed the multitude of tasks involved in raising and nurturing their families. Augusta Grout's diary is filled with entries about preparations for holiday celebrations, funerals and sickbed duties. Weather is almost a daily notation. "It rained like guns, got wet to the hide doing chores," writes Augusta Spaulding Grant (1839–1869) in 1865. That year's entries are especially interesting. On April 4 she writes, "Heard Richmond was taken by our troops last Sunday"; on April 15, "Heard news that Abe Lincoln was shot yesterday and died today"; and on April 23, "Wirt and I went to meeting and heard Abe Lincoln's funeral sermon preached" (p. 217). Interspersed among these are more mundane entries: "Got the oxen to work in the roads"; "Very good wheeling today"; "Moved the bed out of the parlor" as winter ended.

Welch consulted estate papers from several of the families she studied; aside from naming heirs, the papers include occasional inventories with valuations of possessions and real estate, indicating the financial condition of the testators. Welch also discovered lengthy biographical data about Cavendish residents who emigrated to distant states. Pension records and letters to families from faraway military posts enlighten the reader about wartime service, particularly well detailed in the Civil War correspondence of Jesse Adams.

The social historian as well as the genealogist will find this volume a model resource for the types of background needed to flesh out the usual names, dates, and places for the events typical of a standard genealogy. *Families of Cavendish* contains a wealth of insights into the lives of town residents as well as kin living in other states. Welch uses photographs liberally and has documented each family segment with the names of those who hold the personal and genealogical records. I look forward to further volumes in this series.

PATRICIA L. HASLAM

Patricia L. Haslam, a certified genealogical record specialist since 1973, is a trustee of the Vermont Historical Society and of the Stowe and Greensboro Historical Societies. She has written several local history articles and the genealogical portion of Greensboro, Vermont: The First 200 Years.

Traction in Franklin County, Vermont: St. Albans Street Railway, St. Albans & Swanton Traction Company

By James R. McFarlane (Polo, Ill.: Transportation Trails, 1994, pp. 48, paper, $16.50).

The trolley, when it came to Vermont, was greeted by financial backers, prospective passengers, and entrepreneurs with the same enthusiasm that had hailed the coming of turnpikes, canals, and railroads and would later greet automobiles, hard-surfaced roads, and air transportation. The boosts to local economies, however, were much shorter lived for the traction lines than for other forms of mass transportation.

Like other entrepreneurs, those involved in developing trolley lines modernized, expanded, and tried any way possible to make their investment turn a profit. Such activities in St. Albans included participating in the annual ice harvest, summer recreation, theater, and baseball and serving as the northernmost stop for ships of the Lake Champlain Transportation Company. The trolley also carried the U.S. mail and freight. But none of these activities was enough to sustain more than twenty years of operation. With the automobile, truck, and bus came the demise of the trolley.

James McFarlane's work on the trolley in St. Albans was a labor of love, and readers owe him their gratitude for having the foresight and interest to interview the street railway employees thirty-five years ago. The maps by Deb Barron are clear and uncluttered. The attractive and informative photographs are carefully reproduced and captioned. Younger readers may be surprised to see the open and closed (summer and winter) cars and combination and freight cars and should enjoy the reproductions of badges, tickets, and pictures from the author's collection. Information about financial organization and development, together with details on operations, adds depth to this study, as does the roster of rolling stock, which includes information on size, decoration, and original as well as modified equipment. McFarlane's treatment of workers and how they did their jobs is important for understanding how the trolley service worked on a day-to-day basis.

The author tells a detailed and technical tale. Missing are stories of how the trolley affected the lives of the people of St. Albans. Using more rider and observer accounts, he might have elaborated on the romance of the trolley era; the pride of workers in their uniforms; the excitement

of the rider; the anticipation of shoppers, summer visitors, Sunday ballplayers and spectators, picnickers, and homeward-bound commuting workers. Franklin County residents and street railway enthusiasts will long cherish the detail, pictures, and insights McFarlane has brought together. But it is not too late to add other memories and dimensions to the story.

HOLMAN D. JORDAN JR.

Holman D. Jordan Jr. is professor of history at Castleton State College, where he teaches Vermont and U.S. history. He is editor of the forthcoming Beautiful Lake Bomoseen: From Farm to Resort, 1850–1950.

Partnership for Excellence: The History of EHV-Weidmann Industries

By Jason Mills and Adrian A. Paradis (West Kennebunk, Maine: Phoenix Publishing, 1994, pp. 98, paper, $30.00).

Partnership for Excellence is about the *realities* of beginning and building EHV-Weidmann Industries in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, a maker of large insulation boards for high-voltage electric transformers. There are no simplistic single prescriptions here for what it takes to succeed. Instead, Jason Mills and Adrian A. Paradis paint a complete picture of the company's first twenty-five years. They describe the protracted and persistent efforts to come up with initial financing and reveal the sometimes frustrating contacts with government and community officials in other New England states to find a workable plant location. There is a clear, nontechnical explanation of the new insulation requirements for large, high-voltage transformers that emerged in the early 1960s as a result of the nation's rapidly growing demand for electric energy. The authors' assessment of the factors affecting the start-up of EHV-Weidmann includes how other established suppliers failed to respond to the changing needs of their transformer manufacturer customers and how Westinghouse, one of the biggest manufacturers, gave EHV, then an unknown and untried business, a major contract for large insulation boards. These conditions were among the barriers and opportunities that initially shaped EHV.

The history of EHV-Weidmann Industries is primarily about people who made extraordinary commitments to see ideas and plans through to implementation. For example, the authors recall the enthusiasm as

well as the worries of Robert Fueher, Gordon Mills, and Kenneth Curran as they worked, often around the clock, to transform their vision into a going business. In 1969 the building blocks for the new enterprise were put together. Forward-looking leaders in the St. Johnsbury business community and in Vermont state government played key roles in finding a plant location and in guaranteeing the bond offering that raised $2.8 million to finance the venture. A pulp and paper brokerage firm provided $250,000 worth of pulp, a major raw material in the manufacture of transformer insulation boards, interest free, to be paid for out of proceeds from future sales. The Vermont secretary of state kept the State House open after hours so that articles of incorporation could be filed. One of the first employees demonstrated remarkable new-business generalist skills: in the early days, when EHV was operating out of a trailer next to the site where the plant was being built, she used different names and voices to give telephone callers the impression that they were talking to different people in different departments of a much larger, established company.

Partnership for Excellence continues beyond the 1969 start-up to describe the survival and growth of EHV during its first twenty-five years. With financing in place, the attention of the management team shifted immediately to starting up production. The first production run was made in November 1970. By April 1971 the first truckload of finished boards was delivered to Westinghouse. The Swiss firm H. Weidmann A.G., a leading manufacturer of transformer insulation material, purchased a one-third interest in EHV in late 1970. The result, EHV-Weidmann Industries, had a significantly improved financial position, stronger technical and manufacturing know-how, and an innovative marketing philosophy based on providing solutions to customers' design and manufacturing problems, in contrast to making typical sales calls on customers' purchasing agents. As it evolved and matured, the business responded to changing customer needs. A "system sales" program was established, enabling customers to place orders and get fast delivery of parts and services they previously could obtain only from many different suppliers. The fabricated parts segment of the product line was expanded to complement sales of insulation board. A customer technical service group was organized in the mid-1980s to help customers deal with a variety of technical planning and cost reduction requirements.

The authors give a balanced portrayal of problems as well as successes, including how the business dealt with very serious profitability issues in the 1970s and how it kept its credibility with its largest customer by means of fast replacement of a shipment of defective product. A core theme throughout the book is expressed in the authors' views on Mills's

and Fueher's leadership: "Mills was the dreamer and the salesman who could sell his dream. Fueher was the administrator and the people-person who enjoyed the human relations aspect of his job"; "Mills still looks ahead trying to anticipate business trends and responding with bold moves which help ensure EHV-Weidmann's position of continuing leadership. Fueher, on the other hand, oversees the implementation of the dreams and plans and keeps his finger on the manufacturing pulse" (pp. 67–68). This readable history of EHV-Weidmann Industries demonstrates how a significant and sustainable vision for a business, one that is responsive to its customers and responsible to its employees and community, must be implemented one step at a time.

RICHARD G. BRANDENBURG

Richard Brandenburg is professor at the School of Business Administration, University of Vermont.

Yankee Preserver

By Edward Brown Lee Jr. (N.p.: Privately printed, 1994, pp. 208, paper, $6.00).

We Dared to Live Different

By Lillian Hatch Marcotte (N.p.: Privately printed, 1994, pp. 254, paper, $15.00).

In 1956 Edward Lee Jr. inherited a farm in Waterford, Vermont. Then a resident of a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, suburb, Lee tells us that when he took ownership of the farm, he began to appreciate his Yankee heritage. His father rarely went to the family farm before 1946, and he himself had never been in Vermont before his honeymoon, although he was "brought up with the duty of being self-reliant, thrifty, and imbued with the Christian ideals of love of the land, the Lord, and the neighbor" (p. 26).

Yankee Preserver purports to be a "life summary" (p. i). By keeping the Waterford farm in the family, Lee serves as a preserver. But the book deals less with the farm than might be expected: Lee devotes nineteen pages to the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Oakland district of Pittsburgh, and his Penn Hills home, thirty pages to his Vermont inheritance. The remaining 150 pages are a hodgepodge of personal philosophy, recollections, verses, and letters. Considered together, they lack unity other than

an ever-present and self-conscious voice of the "Yankee preserver." We learn, for example, about stamp collecting; how Lee introduced some members of the East St. Johnsbury Third Congregational Church to the teaching of Emanuel Swedenborg; and how his membership in the Western Colony of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in Pennsylvania "represents the satisfaction of using my education and my talents to help stabilize our country, under God, to be an American New Jerusalem, rather than an ethnic and minority driven Sodom and Gomorrah" (p. 72), a phrase he uses again later in the book to critique the mission of Harvard University (p. 164).

Lee reflects on tax returns, a trek through Victory Bog, his great-grandfather (who died in the battle at Cedar Creek, Virginia), his mother-in-law, and the qualities that make a good church treasurer. He inserts sketches about the military experience of General Alfred Anderson—Lee does his tax returns—and various salutes to aunts, cousins, and grandchildren. Many of these reflections are cloaked in sentimentalism and moralizing didacticism. The introduction warns that the book "might appeal to my family, friends and to Yankees generally" (p. i). The first two groups may be interested, but the book has little for anyone else.

In contrast, Lillian Hatch Marcotte's *We Dared to Live Different* offers a great deal to anyone interested in contemporary life in rural Vermont. Marcotte's book is neither a romantic depiction of life in the country nor a sentimental reflection on it. It is a simply written, straightforward, realistic picture.

Marcotte recounts in considerable detail her life from shortly before her marriage in 1940 to the death of her husband, Wendell, in 1988—forty-eight years of living on the land as a proud caretaker and preserver of a traditional way of life integral to Vermont. *We Dared to Live Different* primarily offers splendid insights into domestic life. Despite her parents' disapproval, Lillian Hatch secretly married Wendell Marcotte. Immediately after the wedding, the couple changed from their dress clothes into their working clothes and began the laborious task of shaping a life for themselves. The rest of the book chronicles their struggle. Included in its pages are accounts of building a home, gardening, learning to harvest wild crops, sugaring, and raising chickens and a family. This assortment of very human concerns makes *We Dared to Live Different* a valuable anthology of rural life experiences.

Throughout the book, Marcotte adds some simple but effective descriptions of her natural surroundings. She has an eye for the subtle moods of nature and an ear that captures the cadences of unaffected speech. Her voice is strong and compelling whether she is speaking candidly about uncontrollable emotional problems that touched Marcotte's life for years

or providing examples of local speech. Marcotte can laugh about her own mistakes; those of others she presents with deep compassion and understanding.

Lillian Marcotte's story is being lived by thousands of rural Vermonters. This makes the book all the more important as a document in which the virtues of industry, thrift, pride, and perseverance are not just worn on the sleeve but are lived. The experiences of Lillian Marcotte tell more, firsthand, about contemporary Vermont rural life with its problems, little victories, and fundamental values than most recent books.

RICHARD SWETERLITSCH

Richard Sweterlitsch is an associate professor of folklore and English at the University of Vermont.

Remembering Grandma Moses

By Beth Moses Hickock (Bennington, Vt.: Beech Seal Press, 1994, pp. 64, paper, $12.95).

An unsigned introduction to *Remembering Grandma Moses* explains that the major portion of this book about the famed primitive painter comes from a manuscript titled "Ten Days with Grandma Moses." Written in 1962 as a correspondence school assignment, these are the recollections of Beth Moses, who as a young woman thirty years earlier, visited the home of a Bennington widower who had asked her to marry him. The household was presided over by the widower's mother-in-law, the energetic and somewhat daunting Hoosick, New York, farm woman Anna Mary Robertson Moses. Then in her seventies, she had not yet embarked on the painting career that was later to make her known around the world as "Grandma" Moses.

The book describes Grandma as she appeared in the 1930s, relates anecdotes of her earlier life, and sketches a general picture of a small but imposing woman well past middle age who had a mind of her own, still devoted an incredible amount of time and energy to household chores, and never did any task halfway.

Who knew then that this whirlwind of domestic energy would be revealed to the world as a creative genius once she gave up canning and cooking and had the time to take up a paintbrush? Information about her potential creativity is hinted at in photographs and descriptions of dolls

Grandma made for her granddaughters. No further light is shed on the prolific art career yet to come.

A small oval wool embroidery of a Scottish cottage scene is reproduced on the cover. A product of Grandma Moses's handiwork during this period, it appears to be a standard example of the kind of embroidery worked on commercially produced, prestamped canvas. The yarn picture has little connection to the exuberant countryside panoramas for which she later became famous. One wonders exactly when Grandma threw off the restraints of someone else's designs and decided to express her own vision of the rural world she so vividly remembered.

Part of the charm and attraction of primitive painting is that it is a distillation and expression of the creative impulse unhampered by formal artistic conventions. In 1938 the delightfully energetic work of Grandma Moses burst on an art scene newly aware of the value of art created here at home. She captured the imagination of the sophisticated art world with her vigorous and content-laden visions of country life of an earlier time.

Remembering Grandma Moses offers insight into the life of the strong-willed and ingenious woman who created these paintings. However, because the reminiscence ends in 1934, before she began her artistic endeavors, it offers little information pertinent to the important questions about her life: how and why she suddenly started to paint and what she felt toward her work when she did. Illustrations include two portraits of Grandma, some family snapshots of the Moses family of Bennington, and an uncaptioned selection of photographs taken near Hoosick Falls.

CONSTANCE HENDREN FITZ

Connie Fitz is a retired film librarian and former curator of education at the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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Recent Additions to the Vermont Historical Society Library

Books

Bohjalian, Christopher A., *Water Witches.* Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1995. 340p. List: $24.95. Novel set in Vermont.

*Booraem, Hendrik, *The Provincial: Calvin Coolidge and His World, 1885–1895.* Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press; Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1994. 271p. List: $39.50.

*Cooper, Ann E., ed., *Historic Roots: A Magazine of Vermont History.* Middlebury, Vt.: Historic Roots, 1995. 29p. Free.

Dobbs, David, and Richard Ober, *The Northern Forest.* White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green, 1995. 356p. List: $23.00.

*Fisher, Harriet Fletcher, *Hometown Album.* Lyndon, Vt.: Lyndon Historical Society, 1995. 154p. List: $12.50 (paper).

Gilman, W. Sidney, *The Thornes of Strawberry Hill: The Saga of 130 Years on a Vermont Hill Farm.* Chelsea, Vt.: The author, 1995. 60p. Source: The author, P.O. Box 206, Chelsea, VT 05038. List: $11.50 (paper).

Jaspersohn, William, *Native Angels.* New York: Bantam Books, 1995. 290p. Mystery set in Vermont. List: $4.99 (paper).

*Maguire, J. Robert, ed., *The Tour of the Northern Lakes of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson: May–June 1791.* Ticonderoga, N.Y.: Fort Ticonderoga, 1995. 40p. List: $9.95 (paper).

McCullough, Robert, *The Landscape of Community: A History of Communal Forests in New England.* Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1995. 403p. List: $55.00.

McFarlane, James R., *Traction in Franklin County, Vermont.* Polo, Ill.: Transportation Trails, 1994. 48p. Source: The publisher, 9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, IL 61064. List: $16.50 (paper).

Mraz, Charles, *Health and the Honeybee.* Burlington: Queen City, 1995. 92p. Source: The publisher, P.O. Box 4326, Burlington, VT 05406-4326. List: $12.95 (paper). Vermonter who advocates use of bee venom therapy.

*Resch, Tyler, *The* Rutland Herald *History: A Bicentennial Chronicle.* Rutland, Vt.: Rutland Herald, 1995. 139p. List: $18.00 (paper).

Richmond, Vermont, 1994: Our Bicentennial Year. Richmond, Vt.: Bicentennial Committee, 1995. 128p. Source: Gary Bressor, P.O. Box 10, Richmond, VT 05477. List: Unknown.

Scavelli, Ramon, *Vermont: A Summer View.* Shelburne, Vt.: New England Press, 1995. 56p. List: $12.95 (paper). Features many color photographs.

*Sherman, Michael, ed., *The Political Legacy of George D. Aiken, Wise Old Owl of the U.S. Senate.* Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society; Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1995. 189p. List: $16.00 (paper).

*Thompson, Daniel Pierce, *History of the Town of Montpelier, Vermont.* Montpelier: E. P. Walton, 1860 (reprint 1995). 324p. List: $23.00 (paper). Includes new name index.

Werner, Kimberly, *Addison County's Finest Vermont Recipes.* Burlington: Palatine Books, in association with Addison County Chamber of Commerce, 1995. 191p. Source: Addison County Chamber of Commerce, 2 Court St., Middlebury, VT 05753. List: $12.95 (paper).

*Zogry, Kenneth Joel, *The Best the Country Affords: Vermont Furniture, 1765–1850.* Bennington, Vt.: Bennington Museum, 1995. 172p. List: $55.00.

ARTICLES

Alcock, Donald G., "The Best Defence Is . . . Smuggling? Vermont During the War of 1812," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 25 (winter 1995): 73–91.

McCorison, Marcus A., "Thomas Green Fessenden, 1771–1837: Not in BAL," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 89 (March 1995): 4–59.

THESES

Schulte, Janet E., "Summer Homes: A History of Family Summer Vacation Communities in Northern New England, 1880–1940." Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1994. 419p. Source: University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Schwartz, Amy D., "New Anxieties: Vermont Farmers and the Industrial Revolution, 1830–1860." Master's thesis, University of Kansas, 1995. 152p.

GENEALOGY

Fisher, John Richard, *Desany Family History.* Burlington: The author, 1990. Unpaginated. Source: The author, 1595 North Ave., Burlington, VT 05401-2433. List: Unknown (spiral bound).

Geary, Patricia Little, *Some of the Descendants of Solomon Phillips, a Revolutionary War Soldier, 1760–1839.* Harrisonburg, Va.: The author, 1995. 66p. Source: The author, 1183 Nelson Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-3538. List: Unknown (spiral bound).

Rodgers, Robert H., *The Family of Cyrus Leach and Mary Burritt (Hawley) Leach of Fairfield and Fairfax, Vermont.* New Haven, Vt.: The author, 1994. 100p. Source: The author, RR 1, Box 201, New Haven, VT 05472. List: Unknown (paper).

Welch, Linda Margaret Farr, *Families of Cavendish: The Early Settlers of the Black River Valley in Windsor County, Vermont, a Social and Genealogical History.* Cavendish, Vt.: Cavendish Historical Society, 1995. Vol. 1: 346p. Source: Cavendish Historical Society, P.O. Box 472, Cavendish, VT 05142. List: $30.00 (paper).

*indicates books available through the Vermont Historical Society bookshop.

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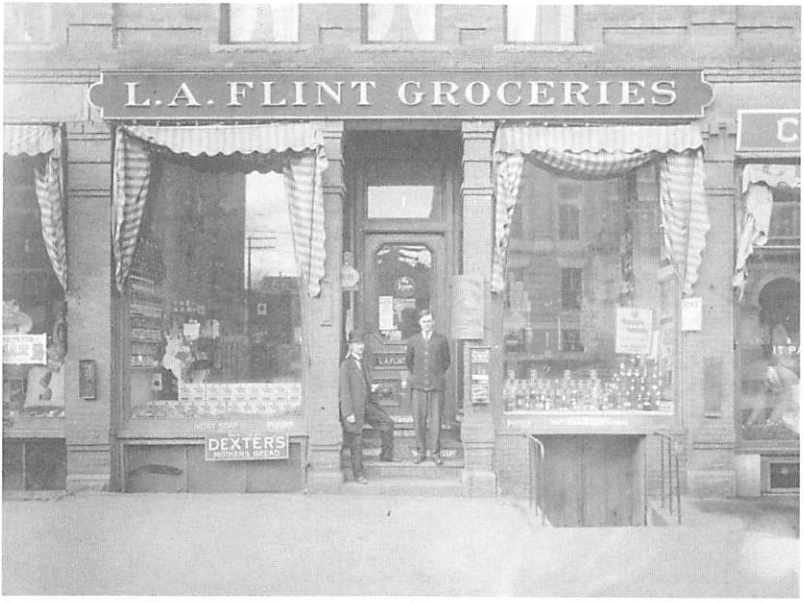

Montpelier, 1913.

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Prepared by Reidun Dahle Nuquist

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