# VERMONT HISTORY

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## IN THIS ISSUE

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# About The Contributors

**John C. DeBoer** has written several books on organization development. He holds a B.S. in aeronautical engineering from the University of Michigan and graduate degrees in theology from New Brunswick Theological Seminary and Drew University. From 1959 to 1965 he served as associate conference minister of the Congregational churches in Vermont. Before retirement he was the executive director of an international interreligious agency based in New York City.

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**Clara Merritt DeBoer** is the author of *Be Jubilant My Feet* (1994) and *His Truth Is Marching On* (1995), two books delineating the contributions of African Americans to the work of the nation's largest abolition society during the Civil War and Reconstruction. She holds a B.A. and an M.A. in history from Rutgers University, where she also taught American History.

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**Donald Wickman** is a historian and educator who lives in Rutland, Vermont. Considered the regional authority on Mount Independence, he has also done extensive research on the Civil War. He is a member of the University of Vermont's Center for Research on Vermont.

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**T. D. Seymour Bassett** has written *The Growing Edge: Vermont Villages, 1840–1880* and *Outsiders Inside Vermont: Three Centuries of Visitors' Viewpoints on the Green Mountain State,* among other works. He is retired curator of Vermontiana at the University of Vermont.

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**Collamer M. Abbott** is a native of Wilder, Vermont. He has written extensively on Vermont's copper mining industry of the late nineteenth century.

# The Formation of Town Churches: Church, Town, and State in Early Vermont

*It was perfectly legal in Vermont for the state government to legislate ecclesiastical matters and for town governments to support organized religion.*

*By* JOHN C. DEBOER AND CLARA MERRITT DEBOER

Twentieth-century Vermonters who take for granted the constitutional principle of the separation of church and state should perhaps be reminded that for a brief period in Vermont's early history clergy were "hired" by vote of citizens at town meetings, and funds for erecting church buildings were customarily raised by taxes voted at town meetings. The taxes were authorized by the colonial legislature of New Hampshire for the few churches established prior to the Revolutionary War[1] and were consistent with the constitution of Vermont for post-Revolution churches. For fifteen years (until 1806), the state of Vermont decreed that even nonchurchgoers had to pay taxes to support the town church. Unlike England and the early New England colonies, however, Vermont did not decree a particular denomination as the established state church; each town, by majority vote, could determine the denomination of its choice.[2]

Nowadays "church fights" (for example, about whether to hire or fire a minister) involve only church members and are generally confined within the walls of church buildings. In the years before and just after Vermont joined the Union, these fights took place at duly warned town meetings and involved all the voters of the town. In these early years the terms *town* and *parish* were interchangeable. An act regarding support of churches, passed by the Vermont legislature October 17, 1783, never mentions one term without the other; it is always "town or parish." And sec-

tion 6, chapter 51 of the *Laws* of 1793 states that "the terms TOWN and PARISH used in this act shall . . . be understood to comprehend districts, cities, or other incorporated places with town privileges."[3]

In this article we look at the religious environment in colonial New England that influenced church formation in early Vermont (particularly in Bennington, Newbury, and Rockingham) and at the way Vermont laws (both before and after statehood) governed the formation of churches in Rutland, West Rutland, Charlotte, Westford, and Milton. Finally, we examine the way in which the link between town and church was broken—earlier in Vermont than in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

## State Constitutions Before the Federal Constitution

Vermont was established as a state only three years after the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and the same year the Bill of Rights became part of the Constitution. The First Amendment forbade the establishment of religion by *Congress* and was intended as a brake on the new nation's central government. Although Supreme Court decisions in the twentieth century apply this amendment to the states, when it was adopted it applied only to the federal government. This is understandable when we recall that state constitutions for the first thirteen states preceded the federal Constitution by more than a decade in most cases. On May 10, 1776, the Continental Congress, assembled in Philadelphia, advised the colonies "to form new governments 'such as shall best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents.'"[4] Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and South Carolina had already adopted provisional state constitutions. Connecticut and Rhode Island remained under their royal charters until 1818 and 1843, respectively, making needed changes by act of their legislatures. The remaining eight original states adopted constitutions between June 29, 1776, and April 20, 1777.

At a convocation in Windsor in July 1777, Vermonters declared their independence, created a state, and drafted a constitution that was ratified by legislatures in 1779 and 1782. Because the thirteen original states were without a federal constitution until 1787, when the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia, the relationships between church and state were first defined in various ways by the several states. Historian Anson Phelps Stokes reminds us "that these [state] constitutions were the first written constitutions of large bodies politic in history formed by duly chosen representatives of the citizens with power to act."[5]

It is instructive to note how Vermont's constitution differed from those of the other original states. Some, such as New Jersey's, prohibited citizens from being taxed for the purpose of building churches or supporting ministers. Other states, particularly in New England, made taxation

for these purposes the norm. Thus in 1780 Massachusetts adopted a constitution stating that "the legislature shall, from time to time, authorize and require, the several towns, parishes, precincts, and other bodies politic, or religious societies, to make suitable provision, at their own expense, for the institutions of the public worship of GOD, and for the support and maintenance of public Protestant teachers of piety, religion, and morality."[6] New Hampshire's constitution of 1783 incorporated this same provision almost word for word.[7] All prescribed that legislators taking office make religious oaths or affirmations, some designed to exclude all but Protestants.

In his study of religion and the social order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont during the early federal period, Randolph A. Roth asserts that Vermont reflected the religious environment of its neighboring states by "a commitment to a standing order, to a government that would supervise public morals, require regular worship in each community, and demand that citizens respect both civil and ecclesiastical authority." The Reverend Gershom Lyman, a traditional Old Light Congregational minister from Marlboro, preached an election sermon to the Vermont General Assembly in 1782, praying that this body might pass laws that would promote "the interest of religion."[8]

Not surprisingly, therefore, the Vermont Constitution of 1777, reaffirmed in 1782 by the legislators to whom Lyman preached, contains this article 3 in its first chapter, "A Declaration of the Rights of the Inhabitants of the State of Vermont":

> That all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship ALMIGHTY GOD, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding, regulated by the word of GOD; and that no man ought, or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister, contrary to the dictates of his conscience; nor can any man who professes the protestant religion, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right, as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiment, or peculiar mode of religious worship, and that no authority can, or ought to be vested in, or assumed by, any power whatsoever, that shall, in any case, interfere with, or in any manner controul, the rights of conscience, in the free exercise of religious worship: nevertheless, every sect or denomination of people ought to observe the Sabbath, or the Lord's day, and keep up, and support, some sort of religious worship, which to them shall seem most agreeable to the revealed will of GOD.

This clause is almost identical to one in the Pennsylvania Constitution, adopted in 1776. But whereas the Pennsylvania document reads, "Nor can any man, who acknowledges the being of God," the Vermont Constitution reads, "nor can any man who professes the protestant religion."

And whereas the Pennsylvania document ends with the words "free exercise of religious worship," the Vermont Constitution goes on to add that "nevertheless" each denomination should "keep up, and support" public worship. The Vermont constitutional revision of 1793, after Vermont joined the Union, imposed the necessity of observing Sunday not on "every sect or denomination of people" (as in 1777) but only on "every sect or denomination of Christians."[9]

Thus it was perfectly legal in Vermont for the state government to legislate ecclesiastical matters and for town governments to support organized religion—just as religion had been supported in England. Even under the rule of King George II and King George III, owners of Vermont land from New Hampshire Grants could establish any church they pleased—although town land had to be set aside for the Church of England.[10]

## The Church Tax

On October 17, 1783, the Vermont General Assembly, meeting at Westminster, passed a law "to enable towns and parishes to erect proper houses for public worship and support ministers of the gospel." Any seven freeholders could request the town clerk to warn a public meeting on twelve days' notice for these purposes. The law provided for the citizens "to vote a tax or taxes sufficient to defray the expence of such Building or Buildings; and also to hire, or otherwise agree with, a Minister or Ministers to preach in such Town or Parish." Following this law, citizens in Milton voted to "hire a minister"; in Westford they voted "to agree with" a minister.

Unlike the British law, however, Vermont law did not prescribe a *particular* form of religious denomination: "two thirds of the Inhabitants of such Town or Parish, who shall meet agreeable to such Warrant, being legal Voters, and of similar Sentiments with respect to the mode of Worship, shall be hereby authorized to appoint a Place or Places for the public Worship of God"[11] and make arrangements to build a meetinghouse, employ a minister, and vote taxes to pay for all this. If (as was usually the case) two-thirds happened to be Congregationalists, a Congregational church would result. But if two-thirds were Baptists, as happened in Westford, the town would have a Baptist church. This might be called town-by-town church establishment.

What about citizens who were of a different religious persuasion from the majority and thus would not want to pay taxes to support the church of the majority? What about those nonchurchgoers who would not want to pay taxes to support the churchgoing majority? Vermont law in the

eighteenth century was tolerant of the former and intolerant of the latter. The 1783 law makes this clear:

> Whereas, there are in many Towns and Parishes within this State Men of different Sentiments in religious Duties, which lead peaceable and moral Lives, the rights of whose Conscience this Act is not to controul; and likewise some, perhaps, who pretend to differ from the Majority with a Design only to escape Taxation. Therefore, . . . Be it enacted . . . that every person or persons, being of adult Age, shall be considered as being of Opinion with the major part of the Inhabitants within such Town or Parish where he she or they shall dwell, until he she or they shall bring a Certificate, signed by some Minister of the Gospel, Deacon, or Elder, or the Moderator in the Church or Congregation to which he, she or they pretend to belong, being of a different Persuasion; which Certificate shall set forth the Party to be of their Persuasion: And until such Certificate shall be shewn to the Clerk of such Town or Parish (who shall record the same) such party shall be subject to pay all such Charges with the major part, as by Law shall be assessed on his, her or their Polls or rateable Estate.

A citizen could, then, avoid taxes by going to a *different* church, but not by refusing to belong to *any* church. In 1798 a resident of Milton, John Gerrard, took advantage of this law to excuse himself from paying the church tax because he preferred Methodism, and a circuit-riding Methodist preacher named Abner Wood provided the town clerk with the required certificate.[12] It was not until 1806 that Vermont law was changed so that church members alone were responsible for paying church bills, and atheists as well as Methodists could escape the church tax.

In 1797, after Vermont had become one of the United States, the legislature "revised and passed" laws similar to the 1783 law regarding town churches. Chapter 51, "An ACT for the support of the gospel," provided that when any number of residents "exceeding twenty-five" wanted to start a church, they could request the clerk to warn a town meeting and form a church "society." Thereafter, by law, the society and its own officers, not the town at public meetings, conducted the affairs of the church: selecting the site for the meetinghouse and voting "such tax or taxes, from time to time, as shall be sufficient to defray the expence of building and completing such house or houses; and also vote to hire or otherwise agree with a minister to officiate in such town or parish . . . and to raise the same by a tax or taxes, from time to time, which tax or taxes shall be assessed on the polls and rateable estates of the inhabitants composing such society by such assessors."[13]

Although the law was passed in 1797, many towns did not get around to creating church societies until considerably later. For some years, therefore, people with strong religious convictions continued to express their

sincere disagreements with one another in town meetings rather than church society meetings.

## Congregationalism in Colonial New England

The denominational name *Congregational* is used in Vermont's 1797 law,[14] reflecting the origins of Vermont's settlers: most came from the Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut Colonies, where Congregationalists were the overwhelming majority. After the "old French War," the few French settlements in the territory of Vermont were supplanted by American colonists, and "so predominantly was this immigration of Connecticut origin that a Vermont convention in 1777 contemplated the bestowal of the name of 'New Connecticut' on the region."[15] (That name was not chosen because there already was a New Connecticut in the area that was to become Ohio.[16])

To understand what was going on in the category of organized religion in early Vermont towns, then, we must understand the nature of Congregationalism and its relationship to town government in the history of Connecticut and other New England colonies. Congregationalists in early Vermont were the spiritual descendants of the Pilgrims of the Plymouth Colony and the Puritans who had settled at Massachusetts Bay. The former wanted to separate themselves entirely from the Church of England and the rule of its bishops, whereas the latter wanted to reform the Church of England while remaining a part of it. In the century and a half that had elapsed between the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1620 and the Revolutionary War, Congregationalism (completely detached from the Church of England) had become the predominant form of Christianity in most of New England—as Anglicanism was in Virginia.[17]

Following the precedent of early Congregationalists in England and aboard the *Mayflower*, Christians could covenant with God and one another to be a church congregation in their locality. In colonial times these local churches were not usually called "Congregational"; they were called by such generic Christian names as "Church of Christ" or "parish church." For example, in 1788 the Reverend Lemuel Haynes, the first African American to be ordained in this country, served as pastor of the white congregation in Torrington, Connecticut, when he was called to serve a congregation called the Parish Church in West Rutland as a missionary from Connecticut. The Connecticut Congregationalists thought of Vermonters at the time as "proper heathen" in a "moral desert."[18]

Gaius Atkins and Frederick Fagley describe the interconnection between town and church in the colonial period: "In colonial days the church was a part of the town organization and its field of service was the town. . . . In many of the early towns the title to church property rested with the town and the voters determined its financial policy." Because a congre-

gation was legally a "body religious," not a "body corporate," it could not hold title to property. Therefore, a "society," made up of both church members and nonmembers, was formed for this purpose. Later, when nineteenth-century laws permitted churches to incorporate, most societies were dissolved.[19] Sometimes the society lingered on; it was not until 1960 that the church and society of College Street Congregational Church in Burlington were merged.[20]

In Massachusetts in the late seventeenth century, a law on the books allowed a church to choose its own minister but required the town residents—church members and nonmembers alike—to give their assent. If the town approved by majority vote, they were required to pay the minister out of town taxes.[21] Williston Walker indicates how churches of the Congregational Way were established in the eighteenth century: "New settlements in Connecticut, and parish districts of older settlements in which churches were not yet formed, usually selected a minister and contracted for his salary before, in some instances a number of years before, a church was organized."[22]

New settlements in Vermont followed this pattern. The ministers who were "hired" prior to the official organization of the church, however, frequently were not the first "settled" ministers. The names of the former have often been lost to historical records, whereas the names of the settled ministers are those that appear in ecclesiastical records.[23]

### Organization of Vermont Churches Before the Revolution

Although Roman Catholicism was the first form of Christianity introduced to Vermont, it had little impact on church organization until the middle of the nineteenth century. During the French era Jesuit priests were present, and mass was said as early as 1664 or 1666 at Fort St. Anne in Isle La Motte.[24] But these were not town churches and are beyond the scope of this study.

Before 1760 Vermont was dangerous territory for English white settlers from southern New England. Supported by their French allies in the wars against the English, the Western Abenakis kept most of Vermont clear of these "invaders."[25] Indeed the first Protestant religious service in the state was conducted by the Reverend John Williams, a Congregational pastor, in March 1704, in what was later to be the town of Rockingham. He preached to the remnants of his former congregation, all of them captives of the Abenaki after the raid on Deerfield, Massachusetts, on their long march to Canada.[26] By 1760, however, "the western Abenakis found themselves treated as a defeated people, the troublesome but impotent allies of a vanquished [French] foe."[27]

New Vermont settlements with their churches soon followed. Thirteen

churches were established prior to the Revolution, most of them Congregational: Bennington, 1762; Newbury (with Haverhill, New Hampshire), 1764; Westminster, 1767; Windsor (with Cornish, New Hampshire), 1768; Guilford, 1767 or 1768; Brattleboro, 1770; Norwich, 1770; Hartford (Presbyterian), 1771; Thetford, 1773; West Rutland, 1773; Rockingham and Chester, 1773 (divided into two separate churches in 1778); Newfane, 1774; and Weathersfield, 1775.[28]

Although the Old First Church of Bennington did not follow an organizing process typical of later churches, it nevertheless illustrates the town-by-town church establishment characteristic of Vermont. Residents of Hardwick, Massachusetts, became acquainted with the area while serving in the militia during the wars against the French. They liked the land conveyed by New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth's first grant of 1749, bought it from the original proprietors, and moved there with their families and neighbors. The migration had a strong religious impetus, the new settlers having been inspired by the Great Awakening in New England churches brought on by preachers like Jonathan Edwards and the English revivalist George Whitefield. They became disenchanted with their Old Light Congregational churches and were motivated to establish a New Light, revivalist church with like-minded neighbors in Vermont.[29]

*Old Meeting House, Bennington, ca. 1766, by E. J. Meeker. From Walter Hill Crockett,* Vermont: The Green Mountain State, *vol. 1 (New York: Century History Company, 1921), facing p. 500.*

At their very first meeting at the end of 1762, the new proprietors voted to set aside land for a meetinghouse, and the new church came into being. "It was constituted by a formal union of churches in Hardwick and Sunderland, Mass., whose members had emigrated in a body, joined presently by a church in Westfield, Mass., whose pastor became pastor of the Bennington church, and by part of a church at Newent . . . , Conn."[30] Following the example of the Pilgrims in their Mayflower Compact, on December 3, 1762, the Bennington settlers covenanted with God and with one another to be a church; that covenant is still part of the covenant of the present-day church in Old Bennington.[31] In this colonial period, as later in Vermont, taxes were used to build churches. The colonial legislature of New Hampshire gave permission to levy a tax of $6 upon each landowner to build the Bennington meetinghouse; it was completed in 1765 at a cost of $384.[32]

The second church of this era in Vermont was in Newbury. Following the surrender of Montreal in 1760, the conquering British army was disbanded. Among the soldiers who returned home through the Connecticut River Valley were Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Bayley of Newbury, Massachusetts, and Captain John Hazen of neighboring Haverhill. They remained for several days in the area that was to become Newbury, Vermont, and Haverhill, New Hampshire, and decided it would be a good place to settle. They and their friends began to move there in the summer of 1761 and applied for a charter, which Governor Wentworth granted on May 18, 1763.[33]

On June 14, 1763, in Plaistow, New Hampshire, the proprietors of Newbury organized the town and elected town officers. At a later meeting (September 26, adjourned to October 1, 1763) the proprietors voted among other things "to pay a preacher, with the proprietors of Haverhill to preach at s$^{d}$ town, two or three months this fall or winter." On the same day and at the same place the proprietors of Haverhill voted "to join with Newbury one or two months this fall in paying for preaching."[34] In 1763 Silas Moody, a graduate of Harvard, was engaged to preach for several weeks in both towns.[35] The towns were unable to persuade Moody to become their permanent minister, so they "addressed themselves" to the Reverend Peter Powers, who had been the settled minister in Newent, Connecticut (the former home of settlers to Bennington). "He came in June [1764] to look the ground over, preached acceptably in both towns, and a mutual liking between him and the people led to his acceptance of a call made by the proprietors of the towns. The Congregational church was organized . . . in September of that year, and a log meeting-house was built."[36]

These two towns on either side of the Connecticut River originally

had one church congregation with one minister. The log meetinghouse soon became too small to accommodate worshipers, and the towns had to decide which side of the river would be the site for "a more suitable house of worship." The people could not agree, but money had power: "It would appear that Newbury people paid the largest share of Mr. Powers' settlement money for the privilege of having the minister live on this side of the river and having the first meeting-house built here instead of in Haverhill."[37]

As with Newbury and Haverhill, so Rockingham and Chester originally had a single church with one minister. Although the congregation was not officially organized until after the Bennington and Newbury churches, the meeting of proprietors to set aside land for church purposes took place much earlier. On March 28, 1753, the proprietors reserved 6 acres "for a Meeting house place." At their second meeting in May 1754, they designated land for the first settled town minister—a total of 349 acres for support of the town church when it was built. In 1761 the proprietors set aside lots for support of the Church of England, should an Anglican church be established in the town. To this day the income from these lots goes to the Episcopal diocese of Vermont, even though no such church was built and the subsequent Revolutionary War severed any obligation to the established Church of England.[38]

The church of Rockingham and Chester was "gathered" by covenant, with Samuel Whiting as pastor, on October 27, 1773.[39] Turmoil caused by the Revolutionary War delayed the construction of a permanent building. The present historic meetinghouse was built in 1787–1788; town taxes were used to pay for its construction and support of the clergy. Churches in the two towns were separated in 1778. The Chester church remains active; the Rockingham church became "extinct" in 1813 after the population removed to Bellows Falls.

### The Parishes of East Rutland and West Rutland

The formation of parish churches in East and West Rutland spans the colonial and federal periods and illustrates Vermont's town-by-town church establishment. The New Hampshire grant for Rutland was issued September 7, 1761, but the first settlement was not made until 1769, when James Mead (born in Massachusetts) bought 7,000 acres from one of the original proprietors for $333 and moved into a log house with his large family.[40] Mead also built a gristmill and a sawmill. By 1773 there were thirty families in town. That year, "by official votes at town meetings, committees were appointed for the express purpose of providing a 'Preacher of the Gospel.'"[41] Accordingly, the First Congregational Church of Rutland was organized in October 1773 with fourteen members. In those

days several times that number would be adherents and supporters of the church, but covenant membership was only for those who had had a specific, momentous religious experience.

In 1780, members and adherents of the church who lived in East Rutland withdrew and worshiped by themselves, and in 1784 they constructed their own meetinghouse. A historic marker the church placed on Route 7 in 1988 indicates the "site of the first Meeting House erected 1784 by inhabitants of East Parish" on property deeded to the church by Major William Barr. A petition to the Vermont legislature dated January 25, 1787, and signed by eighty-four residents of Rutland, some of whom were not covenant members of any church, made the case for the division of the town into two religious societies and precisely laid out the geographic boundaries of each parish. The legislature acted favorably on the petition, and it became law October 22, 1787. The First Congregational Church, by then in West Rutland, became known as the West Parish Church, and the Congregational Church in Rutland City became known as the East Parish Church (now Grace Congregational Church). It was only after this, on October 5, 1788, that the East Parish organized itself as a church (the "body religious"), thirty-seven members covenanting with God and with one another. In this case, then, not only the residents of the town but also the Vermont General Assembly had a part in establishing churches in two parishes that later became parts of two towns.

### Charlotte Congregational Church

The town of Charlotte was established under a New Hampshire grant of June 24, 1762. The last article in the warning for the town meeting of March 3, 1789, was: "To see if the town will build a meeting house or otherwise provide a place of public worship. Also to see if the town will agree to hire a minister to preach in said town all or part of the ensuing year." At this meeting a committee of six was appointed to stake out the site of the proposed meetinghouse. Because the six could not agree on a site, a committee of nine was given the task the following year. This committee could not decide on a site either. The Vermont law of 1783 provided that

> if the Inhabitants of any Town or Parish shall agree to build a Meetinghouse or houses . . . but shall not agree on the Place or Places to build the same; in that case it shall be the Duty of the County Court . . . to appoint an indifferent Committee . . . to find out the most convenient Place or Places for such House or Houses, and there set up a Stake or Stakes, and acquaint the Clerk of such Town or Parish therewith, who shall make a record thereof.

In 1792 the town asked the county court for such help. A court-appointed committee of three selected a site and drove in a stake to mark the place, but this did not end the controversy. The stake was moved three times (we do not know by whom) before the church's present site, on the old Route 7 (very near the geographic center of town), was chosen. Town records show that throughout this dispute, church services were held in schoolhouses.[42]

At a town meeting on July 3, 1791, Charlotte residents voted "to settle Rev. Daniel O. Gillet at 90 pounds a year, to be paid in beef, wheat, and pork, and payment to be made Christmas Day." The minister (who was to be ordained in 1792) arrived in due course, and on January 3, 1792, the four charter members of the Charlotte Congregational Church met at the home of one member to organize as a church and to adopt articles of faith. In March 1796, still without a church building, the town voted to hold church services on alternate Sundays in the two schoolhouses.[43]

The first meetinghouse was finally erected about 1798. Built of wood, it had a gallery on three sides and a high pulpit reached by a winding flight of stairs.[44] Ministerial support, though voted at a town meeting, was by volunteer subscription. But in 1798 the town clerk, Asabel Strong, called a town meeting "on application made by a sufficient number of the inhabitants as required by law" to see if the town would vote a tax to pay Gillet his salary for the year. The following year, on committee recommendation, Gillet was dismissed by vote at a town meeting because of "gross antiministerial and unchristian conduct . . . and shortly after [was] formally silenced by a regular ecclesiastical council"[45] of ministers serving other Congregational churches in Vermont. The records do not specify what his "gross antiministerial conduct" was, but it is significant that he was first fired by vote of the town and then censured by his fellow ministers.

### Westford Baptist Church

Although the predominance of immigrants of Congregational background led for the most part to establishment of Congregational churches in Vermont towns, it is instructive to look at early ecclesiastical history in Westford to demonstrate that Vermont laws were indeed evenhanded in enabling the establishment of other denominations. As already mentioned, the 1797 law provided that if at least twenty-six citizens in a town wanted a church, they could require the town clerk to warn a town meeting for this purpose, and if a majority at the meeting concurred, a church could be launched to agree with the religious persuasion of the majority.

Westford was chartered under a New Hampshire grant in 1763. By 1795 a group of Baptists were meeting in a house about 2 miles north of what

is today the village green and a group of Congregationalists were meeting in the Stewart schoolhouse about 5 miles to the south.[46] On December 23, 1798, the Baptists formally organized themselves as a church, the first in town.[47] At a town meeting on January 6, 1800, it was voted to choose a committee "to agree with Elder Thomas Brown of Fairfax" to preach on probation on nine Sabbaths in rotation at the homes of three town citizens, and a tax of $30 was levied to compensate the preacher. Brown had been ordained an elder in January 1798 to serve the Swanton Baptist Church.[48] There was, however, no regular preaching in Westford until about 1801, when Brown moved into town. He served the church as pastor for about three years thereafter.[49]

Meanwhile, on August 7, 1801 (some six years after they first began to meet), the Congregationalists were formally organized as a church with thirteen members. The Reverend Jedediah Bushnell of the Connecticut Missionary Society in Hartford officiated at this service, and the Reverend Jeremiah Hallock, pastor of the Congregational Church in West Simsbury, Connecticut, also came to help the Westford Congregationalists establish their church. Both men stayed through part of the autumn as missionaries, and with their assistance the church added twenty-one members. This was the fifth Congregational church organized in the county, after Hinesburg, Jericho, Essex, and Charlotte.[50]

Methodists later formed their own church. But most incoming settlers were Congregationalists, and at some point they became the dominant religious group. The meetinghouse built for church and town use in 1809 was known as the Congregational church. Town meetings were held from 1811 to 1841 in this "old white meeting house,"[51] which was later destroyed by fire.

### The Congregational Church in Milton

Over the hill from Westford, the town of Milton was chartered the same day as Westford to sixty-two grantees, but Milton was not settled until 1788. The charter set aside the customary lots for use by the first settled (resident) minister in Milton, for "the spreading of the gospel in foreign lands," for schools, and for the Church of England.[52] A town history states that by 1795 "about three hundred settlers had arrived in town making it difficult to hold town meetings or religious meetings in private homes" and that before 1805 the legislature transferred the Church of England lots to the schools.[53]

In his study of life on the Vermont frontier during this period, Michael Bellesiles points out that a "lack of religious consensus" could "disrupt a town's peace," especially when it came to hiring a settled minister—and paying taxes to support him. If a town had residents with differing re-

ligious backgrounds, it would be hard for them to agree on any single minister.[54]

Twentieth-century historians should beware ascribing religious motives to all seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England pioneers, the religious convictions of the earlier settlers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island notwithstanding. Elizabeth Currier Nordbeck's research on the religious culture of Maine and New Hampshire following the arrival of the *Mayflower* reminds us of this danger. She retells Cotton Mather's story of the minister who went from the Massachusetts Bay Colony to preach in the "northern plantations" up the coast. He was interrupted by a well-known citizen who "cry'd out, Sir, You are mistaken. You think you are Preaching to the People at the [Massachusetts] Bay; our main End was to catch Fish."[55]

The ecclesiastical history of Milton illustrates many of these tensions and the revolt of nonchurchgoing citizens against the establishment of religion. For many years, the commonly accepted—but innacurate—account of the religious history of Milton was that the "first form of organized Christianity known to the new settlers" in town was Methodist, established by the itinerant preacher Lorenzo Dow.[56] Town records in fact show that a parish church began to be organized in town meetings in typical New England fashion in 1794.[57] These records reveal that on February 15, 1794, a warrant for a town meeting to be held March 3 was written and posted, its purpose in part "to Choose all Town officers as the Law Directs on Said Day—and to see if the Town will agree to hire a Minister to preach the Gospel the present year and to do any other business that shall be thought Proper."[58] The minutes of that meeting are missing, but (as may be inferred from a vote at the next town meeting) a committee was chosen to select a site for a meetinghouse for the town and church. Thus began the process of church organization in Milton, a process studded by a succession of church fights.

The next town meeting, held on March 10, 1795, and adjourned to April 6 for unfinished business "Voted and Excepted [i.e., accepted] the Report of the Committee and where the Stakes should be set for the spot for the house or where the house should stand for to meet in for publick Bisness or publick Worship." The town decided to build this house, then reconsidered in favor of renting a house from Amos Mansfield for five years for the same purpose.

At the same meeting the citizens agreed "to higher [hire] a Minster or a Preacher three months" and to appoint Edward Brigham and Luther Mallory to what today we would call the town's first pastoral search committee. The committee apparently needed assurance that town funds, not their own private funds, would be used to pay the preacher: at a town

meeting on October 12, 1795, the citizens passed a measure to pay Milton's first preacher—out of the town's coffers—each Sunday.

Warnings for subsequent town meetings continued to include the religious agenda item (e.g., the warning dated February 19, 1798: "To see if the town will agree to hire a preacher the Ensuing year"). On March 5, 1798, residents "Voted that the town will soport the Gospil as they will Afterwards agree" and appointed a committee of three to do the hiring.

Church fights heated up when Milton citizens became involved in paying taxes for church expenses. Despite the appointment of a committee to take care of ecclesiastical matters, someone had second thoughts about what was going on. A warning posted March 30, 1798, for a meeting of April 11 listed the agenda items "to see if the town will agree to continue to hire the Candidate which is now in town to Preach the gospill the summer Ensuing . . . to see if they will agree to Raise money to pay the minister and to Defray other Expenses . . . to see if the town will agree to Build A town or meeting house for the use of said town and appoint a committee to supervise said Business."

Minutes of the designated meeting show "that the town will not Raise money to pay the minister that has Bin highered" and would "dismiss the committee that was appointed to higher a minister." The town was obviously split. Many citizens wanted services to take place, but a majority voted against taxes to pay for a preacher. In the end a minister or ministers did conduct worship services, paid privately by town citizens who in October petitioned the town to reimburse them. Evidently, those who had an interest in paying the minister were persuasive, because at the next town meeting it was voted "to Raise a sum of thirty dollars by a tax in wheat at four shillings and six pence per bushel and Corn at three Shillings per bushel said grain to be paid by the first Day of January next." The church fight continued March 4, 1799, the town deciding "not [to] pay An account exhibited by Samuel Holgate to pay for John Liscom preaching." Despite the rebuff, Holgate did not give up, and he was at last reimbursed on March 7, 1801.

At the April 25, 1803, town meeting, townspeople agreed to "set a meeting house as near the center of the Town as the situation of the Land would admit" and to raise $4,000 for this purpose. They reconsidered, however, and the very next vote was "that they will not Raise this sum."

In 1797, as already discussed, the state legislature passed laws encouraging towns to elect church societies to carry on the temporal duties of church business, such as hiring ministers and supervising the construction of church buildings. The archives of Milton's First Congregational Church contain a handwritten copy of the action taken by the town August 31, 1801, to create such a church society.[59]

Several years later, Noah Smith made a donation sufficient to pay for the church's first building. A distinguished Vermont attorney and one of three commissioners the General Assembly sent to the U.S. Congress to negotiate Vermont's admission as a state, Smith no doubt wanted to be sure the church could legally receive his gift. Whether at the prompting of Smith or another Milton resident, the legality of the society's 1801 formation was later called into question, perhaps because no entry for the 1801 town meeting appears in the town records. A town meeting was therefore called for April 13, 1807, and the society was established, the vote this time properly recorded. The society continued to function until the church and society were merged and incorporated July 10, 1920.[60]

Why is there no record of the 1801 meeting in the town clerk's record book? The answer may be that the town clerk, Gideon Hoxie, was among those in town who objected to paying taxes to support the church. As town clerk, he could use his power to include or omit selected town meeting decisions in the official record books. Scrutiny of one such book discloses that Hoxie sometimes entered the minutes of a town meeting long after the meeting was held—for example, the record of "a legal meeting" of April 13, 1802. Hoxie was one of forty-eight persons who, on April 13, 1807, signed a statement that "we do not agree in Religious opinion with a majority of the Inhabitants of this town"; the signers were thereby sure of being exempted from paying taxes for the support of the town church.

Whatever the reasons for the omission from the town records of minutes of the society's earlier formation, these records do contain the meticulously worded language of the society's establishment in 1807, including a motion to "form themselves into a society by the name of 'the first Congregational Society in Milton' and thereupon the votes being taken, there being more than twenty five legal votes in the affirmative and also a majority in the affirmative, the society was formed by the name aforesaid agreeable to the true intent and meaning of the statute aforesaid."

## Disestablishment

As noted above, Vermont's legislature passed a set of laws in 1797 based upon revisions in the state constitution proposed by the Council of Censors in 1792 and adopted in 1793. Chapter 51 of the 1797 code of laws is entitled "An ACT for the support of the gospel." There are seven sections in the act. The first recognizes the validity of taxes to be raised to support religious associations. The seventh repeals all former acts, excluding anything affecting the "settlement" of a minister under former acts. Sections 2 through 6 prescribe how a citizen could be excused from the church tax by producing a certificate proving regular worship else-

where, how the location for a meetinghouse should be determined, when newcomers to a town became liable for the church tax, and so on.[61]

In 1797 the Council of Censors had some misgivings about whether these laws were constitutional. They quoted the second clause of article 3 of the constitution: "No man ought to, or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister contrary to the dictates of his conscience." They then argued that certain sections of the 1797 law should be repealed because they "expressly bind the citizens of this state, indiscriminately, to erect and support places of public worship, and to maintain ministers, contrary to this clearly defined right, provided they are so unfortunate as to be in the minority of any town."[62]

The council communicated its recommendations, in the form of a resolution, to the state legislature meeting in Middlebury on October 16, 1806. The resolution called for repeal of all sections of chapter 51 except sections 1 and 7. The legislature adopted the resolution—ending Vermont's town-by-town church establishment. Thereafter only the members of a church society had to pay for their ministers and buildings.

In this regard the legislature was considerably ahead of two states to the south. Connecticut maintained the "standing order" until the early nineteenth century. The Reverend Timothy Dwight, president of Yale from 1795 to 1817, was commonly called "the Connecticut pope." Congregationalists controlled the upper house of the legislature, and "as the Congregational ministers controlled the schools and their teaching, preached all the election day sermons before the legislature, and had enormous social prestige, it was hard to bring about any reform against their will."[63]

Nevertheless, reform occurred. In 1816 the Connecticut assembly passed a law repealing the penalty for not attending church, and in 1818 it adopted a constitutional amendment with two sections about religion. The first section stated that no person should be required to attend or support any particular church and that any tax for such support would be only upon the members of the church. The second stated that those who wished to leave a church could do so simply with a written note, thereby absolving themselves of any future expenses of the church.[64] It was not until 1831 that the legislature of Massachusetts voted to disestablish the church (Congregational), and in 1833 the constitutional amendment was ratified overwhelmingly by popular vote.[65]

The interconnection between town and church could not last much beyond the dawn of the nineteenth century. The town-church relationship was never a marriage; at best it was an uneasy bundling of diverse religious and secular views. It became increasingly clear that sincere differences of opinion among people of strong religious conviction might not

occur as often if like-minded religious people banded together in separate churches. And it became clear that if such differences had to be aired, they had best be aired in church meetings, not town meetings.

Already in the eighteenth century, Congregationalists found themselves in two factions: the New Lights and the Old Lights. The New Lights, inspired by the revivalism of the Great Awakening, criticized the theological compromises of the Old Lights, but both remained in the same denomination.[66] In 1825 the American Unitarian Association was formed, and 125 Congregational churches immediately affiliated with it. Nor were Baptists exempt from fissiparous tendencies, spawning new denominations with such adjectives in their names as *primitive, free will,* and *seventh-day.* The Methodist Protestant church separated from the Methodist Episcopal church in 1830 in a revolt against bishops; they were not reunited until 1939. Presbyterians divided into New School and Old School in 1837 and remained separate until 1869. American Quakerism divided into the Hicksite and Orthodox groups in 1827 (and into a number of other groups later), never to be completely reunited.[67] And all this is to say nothing of the immigration of Roman Catholics into the United States in large numbers in the nineteenth century or the many other controversies in the nation's religious history.

Bennington, Vermont, was affected by this broadening of religious preferences. At the close of the eighteenth century, Bennington's population was approaching 3,000, and the only structure available for public worship was still the small meetinghouse erected in 1765. In 1804 lumber for a new and larger church building in Old Bennington was cut and brought to the village green. But many of Bennington's citizens were not New Light Congregationalists like the early settlers. They did not want their taxes to pay for the structure that graces Old Bennington today.[68] In the end, although a church tax was legal, only one-fourth of the cost for the new building came from public funds; the rest came in the form of pew rents from those who worshiped there.

New England could find no logical stopping place in its religious revolt against Old England until it had completely severed the nexus between state and church. In the first half of the nineteenth century, New England states and towns withdrew from involvement in church affairs. The separatism of the Plymouth Pilgrims had to go full circle, and church—in Vermont and elsewhere in America—became fully separate from state.

## Notes

[1] See, for example, Lenore Hill, *The Old First Church (Congregational) of Bennington* (Bennington, Vt.: Old First Church, n.d.), 2.

[2] Allen Soule, ed., *Laws of Vermont: State Papers of Vermont,* vol. 12 (Montpelier, Vt.: Secretary

of State, 1964), 189. This law was entitled "An act for the purpose of impowering the inhabitants of the respective towns in this state to tax themselves on certain occasions," passed at Westminster, March 14, 1780. See also a similar act passed at Westminster, October 17, 1783, enabling "towns and parishes to erect proper houses for public worship and support ministers of the gospel" through taxations. *State Papers of Vermont*, vol. 13 (Montpelier, Vt.: Secretary of State, 1965), 195.

[3] *Laws of the State of Vermont* (Rutland: State of Vermont and Josiah Jay, 1798), 479. The authors express their appreciation to Vermont state archivist D. Gregory Sanford for photocopies of the original pages of this book.

[4] Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper, 1950), 428.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 424.

[7] Ibid., 429.

[8] Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 32.

[9] Stokes, *Church and State*, 441.

[10] Esther Munroe Swift, *Vermont Place-names: Footprints of History* (Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1977), 488. Governor Benning Wentworth, in making the New Hampshire Grants in Vermont, specified that one section would be reserved for himself and another lot reserved for the Church of England. Thus, in the town of Guilford, Governor's Mountain is the name for the section reserved for Wentworth, and Pulpit Mountain refers to the Church of England section.

[11] *State Papers of Vermont*, vol. 13, 195.

[12] A notation of this certificate appears in the town record book; the original document is in the archives of First Congregational Church, Milton. Throughout this article, quotations from the Milton town records are from transcripts or photocopies of the original town record books.

[13] Ch. 51, sec. 2.

[14] Ch. 51, sec. 4.

[15] Williston Walker, *American Church History*, vol. 3 (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1894), 309.

[16] Esther Munroe Swift, "Place Names as Footprints of History," in Michael Sherman and Jennie Versteeg, eds., *We Vermonters* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1992), 74.

[17] Stokes, *Church and State*, 163–164.

[18] Nathan Perkins, *A Narrative of a Tour Through the State of Vermont from April 27 to June 12, 1789* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1964), 32. The title page gives the author's name as "The Rev[d] Nathan Perkins of Hartford [Connecticut]." Perkins dismissed the residents of Colchester and Burlington as "deists & proper heathen." As for the state as a whole, he said, "About 1/2 would be glad to have ye Gospel & to support public worship & ye gospel Ministry. The rest would chuse to have no Sabbath no ministers—no religion—no heaven—no hell—no morality." See also Timothy Mather Cooley, *Sketches of the Life and Character of Lemuel Haynes* (New York: Harper, 1837), 77–78, 147.

[19] Gaius Glenn Atkins and Frederick L. Fagley, *History of American Congregationalism* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1942), 296–297.

[20] James Dailey, "Beginnings of College Street Church," *Chittenden County Historical Society Bulletin* 2, 5 (August 1967).

[21] Walker, *American Church History*, vol. 3, 221.

[22] Ibid., 222.

[23] John M. Comstock, *The Congregational Churches of Vermont and Their Ministry, 1762–1942* (St. Johnsbury, Vt.: Cowles Press, 1942), 91. Comstock lists Joseph Cheney as the first minister of the Congregational church in Milton, beginning in 1807. Archival records of this church, however, show that James Davis, a graduate of Dartmouth College, was the pastor when the church was organized in 1804, and town records indicate that the town hired ministers on a part-time basis for the as yet unorganized congregation at least as early as 1795. See also the section on the town church in Milton in this article.

[24] Comstock, *Congregational Churches*, 7.

[25] Colin G. Calloway, *The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600–1800* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 160ff.

[26] Comstock, *Congregational Churches*, 7.

[27] Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 160.

[28] Comstock, *Congregational Churches*, 8–9.

[29] Hill, *Old First Church*, 2. See also William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America* (New York: Harper, 1939), 185–194. Sweet notes that because the Half-Way Covenant permitted unawakened persons to become "half-way" church members, second- and third-generation Puritans in New England did not have the religious fervor of their grandparents. Edwards's preaching in Northampton, Massachusetts, beginning in 1727 and Whitefield's visit to New England in 1740 caused a

revival that drew 25,000 to 50,000 new members to New England churches (out of a total population of 300,000) between 1740 and 1742.

[30] Comstock, *Congregational Churches*, 7–8.

[31] Hill, *Old First Church*, 3.

[32] Ibid., 2.

[33] Frederic P. Wells, *History of Newbury, Vermont, from the Discovery of the Coös County to Present Time* (St. Johnsbury, Vt.: Caledonia Company, 1902), 15–16.

[34] Ibid., 28.

[35] Ibid., 32.

[36] Ibid., 33.

[37] Frederic Wells, part of an untitled manuscript, one copy in possession of Isabel Whitney, Newbury, and the other in the Newbury library, n.d., ch. 2, 1.

[38] Lyman S. Hayes and William D. Hayes, *The Old Rockingham Meeting House Erected 1787 and the First Church in Rockingham, Vermont, 1773–1840* (Bellows Falls, Vt.: P. H. Gobir Press, 1915), 15.

[39] Comstock, *Congregational Churches*, 110.

[40] Swift, *Vermont Place-names*, 417.

[41] Marvel True (Guyette) Swan, *This Far by Faith—A History of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, 1788–1988* (Rutland, Vt.: Grace Church, 1988), 1.

[42] Lyn Perrin and David Perrin, *200th Anniversary of Charlotte's Congregational Church, 1992* (Charlotte, Vt.: Lyn and David Perrin, 1992), 31.

[43] Ibid., 84.

[44] Ibid., 43.

[45] Ibid., 84.

[46] *Historical Addresses Delivered at Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Congregational Church at Westford, Vermont, August 8, 1876* (Westford, Vt.: Congregational Church, 1876), 7.

[47] Henry Crocker, *History of the Baptists in Vermont* (Bellows Falls: Vermont Baptist State Convention, 1913), 364.

[48] Ibid., 362. Baptists used the term *elder* instead of *reverend*.

[49] Ibid., 365.

[50] *Historical Addresses*, 7.

[51] Irene Allen, "Book of the Records of Westford," written "in the 1970s" (typescript in the Westford town clerk's office), pp. iv and 5–6. The authors also express their appreciation to Caroline Brown of the Westford Historical Society, who went out of her way to be helpful.

[52] *Milton's Story* (Milton, Vt.: Milton Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 4.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Michael A. Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws: Ethan Allen and the Struggle for Independence on the Early American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 64.

[55] Elizabeth Currier Nordbeck, "The New England Diaspora: A Study of the Religious Culture of Maine and New Hampshire, 1613–1763" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1978), 1.

[56] W. Rann, *History of Chittenden County* (Syracuse, N.Y.: D. Mason, 1886), 654.

[57] Clara Merritt DeBoer and John C. DeBoer, "Early Ecclesiastical History of Milton, 1794–1807: Where Rann Was Wrong" (paper presented to Chittenden County Historical Society, September 25, 1994).

[58] As noted above, citations of Milton town records are from transcripts or photocopies of the town record books made by the authors.

[59] "Aug. 31, 1801 at a Publick Meeting convened for that Purpose the Hon. John Jackson was chosen Moderator. A Constitution & bylaws was formed signed by a number of the men in town. I append the names of the members so having signed sd. Constitution."

[60] Ethel W. Wright, "Milton Congregational Church," in *Congregational Vermont and Missionary Herald* 52, 8 (October 1940): 2. Wright copied for this article a document handwritten by a "Mrs. Fuller (Hardy)" that is now in the archives of the First Congregational Church, Milton. Fuller certified that this undated document was a "verbatim" copy of the proceedings of 1801. The names of those who signed the constitution are not appended to the document.

[61] *Laws of the State of Vermont*, 474–479.

[62] Paul Gillies and Gregory Sanford, *Records of the Council of Censors* (Montpelier, Vt.: Secretary of State, 1991), 158, 180.

[63] Stokes, *Church and State*, 409.

[64] Ibid., 417.

[65] Ibid., 426.

[66] Atkins and Fagley, *American Congregationalism*, 125.

[67] E. Digby Baltzer, *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia* (New York: Free Press, 1979), 434–435.

[68] Hill, *Old First Church*, 4.

# A Most Unsettled Time on Lake Champlain: The October 1776 Journal of Jahiel Stewart

*Stewart's journal provides a common soldier's perception of the American Revolution in the north. More important, his is one of the very few first-person American accounts of the Battle of Valcour Island.*

*Edited by* DONALD WICKMAN

*More than 200 years after the American Revolution ended in 1783, primary documents from that war continue to surface. These newly discovered sources often provide a wealth of details to further enhance our understanding of this country's beginning as a nation. The National Archives in Washington, D.C., contain many such treasures in the form of pension records of soldiers of the Revolution. Originally collected after passage of the federal pension acts of 1818 and 1832, these records were used to document a soldier's service. They include sworn affidavits, letters, and journals covering the time of enlistment. All would have provided suitable proof of service to allow an aged veteran, widow, or dependent children to receive a small government stipend for life.*

*Rachel Williams Stewart, the seventy-eight-year-old widow of Jahiel Stewart, applied for a widow's pension in Sullivan County, New York, on May 17, 1837. Jahiel had died on March 18, 1813. Part of the documentation Rachel presented to prove her deceased husband's service was a journal he kept in 1775 and 1776 as a militiaman from Massachusetts. Rachel Stewart received her widow's pension, and the journal she presented to support her claim still lies among the pension records. It provides a common soldier's view of a critical time in the American cause.*

*Jahiel Stewart first served in Captain John Ferguson's company of Col-*

*onel Timothy Danielson's regiment during part of the first year of the war, then reentered the service with Captain Ferguson to be in Colonel Samuel Brewer's Massachusetts regiment. This regiment received orders to proceed to Ticonderoga and Lake Champlain to assist in averting the threat of the expected British advance from Canada.*

*Below is a portion of the diary that covers over a month—thirty-five hectic days, from October 1 to November 3, 1776—for the American Northern Army on Lake Champlain. Stewart was selected to be a member of a scouting party and sailed north aboard one of the newly completed row gallies racing to join Benedict Arnold's fleet anchored in Valcour Bay. Stewart was drafted into the midst of the Battle of Valcour Island on October 11, 1776. Aboard the hospital sloop* Enterprise, *he watched bodies and amputated limbs being pitched overboard and took part in the stealthy American retreat past the British ships. After receiving orders to proceed toward the safe haven at Ticonderoga, the men on the* Enterprise *witnessed the slow decimation of the American fleet. Stewart survived to rejoin his regiment in the new fortifications atop Mount Hope, west of Ticonderoga, where troops were preparing for a British attack.*

*Until the end of October, the American garrisons at Mount Hope, Ticonderoga, and Mount Independence awaited the British, but contrary winds halted the advance for ten days. When British ships sailed into view of the American fortifications on October 27, the ranking enemy officers were startled at the visible strength of the American works. Faced by the growing threat of winter and aware that his men were outnumbered nearly two to one, British general Guy Carleton elected to retreat to Canada and wait until 1777 for another attempt to capture the Lake Champlain forts.*

*Stewart's journal provides a common soldier's perception of the American Revolution in the north. More important, his is one of the very few first-person American accounts of the Battle of Valcour Island. On the American side General Benedict Arnold, General David Waterbury, and Colonel Edward Wigglesworth recorded their accounts, but they do not represent the nearly 800 officers and men of the fleet. Lieutenant Bayze Wells and Pascal De Angelis[1] left the only other known accounts written by members of the fleet. Stewart's diary supplements the primary documentation by providing new details of the battle and subsequent retreat. He identified the fleet's hospital vessel as the* Enterprise; *described the retreat during the dark night of October 11; portrayed Arnold's concern about protecting the fleet's wounded by sending the* Enterprise *ahead; and told how the* Enterprise *captain tried to gain extra speed by placing three men on each oar originally designed for one rower. Upon his safe return to Ticonderoga, Stewart continued his adventures from Mount Hope,*

*a post not well documented in primary sources. Stewart's journal is therefore an important discovery for the historians of Lake Champlain in the American Revolution.*

*Like many journals of the period, Stewart's account is written continuously, without punctuation, and features phonetic spellings. I have left spaces between sentences within each entry and for certain terms have added letters or modern spellings within brackets.*

October 1 This morning we went on the alarm post and after we Com of[f] we had prayers

Octo 2 This Day Capt Ferguson[2] went aboard of one of the Rogallies[3] with 11 white men and about 40 Indens[4] to go Down to the fleet then to go a Shore in order to Skout Capt Ferguson had the Command of the Skout and the most of [illegible] any [illegible] about 4 o Clock and killed Sail put out all the oars and thay fired all the guns aboard[5] [illegible] Some Days allowece [allowance] flower in Stad of bread and we was sent to make Some the Boys to Boile them with Some meet and we east [eat] about Sun Down and our Rogalley Run A ground and we had Bad work to git of[f] and after we got of[f] we went Down aganst Crown point[6] but we Com by the other Rogallies a ground we Com to Crown point about twelve o Clock and Capt ankr [anchor]

Octo 3 This morning we Sent a boat to see what Com of the other Rogallies and they got of[f] and Came down to us Just before Sun Set and we Draw no Bread yet Sargent Cambel was put under gard for Refuson to take flower but he got free in a boat an hour & we are forst [forced] to boile Do Boys as yet and Drink lake warter[7] we Draw Salt pork and pees to Day

Octo 4 This Day we are forst to lie at anker for we have head wind and we lie a bout 5 or Six miles below Crownpoint and the other Rogallows is behind us out of Site

Octo 5 This Day we lay at anker for we had head wind & this Day some of our officers went a Shoare & bought a pig

Octo 6 This morning about fore a Clock thay histed [hoisted] Sail and we had a fine goind [going] and about two a Clock we got to the fleet and when we came in we fired a Round and the admiral[8] fired a round we went a Shoare on a Island[9] all the Skouting party and we made us some Birch huts and Camped Down that night

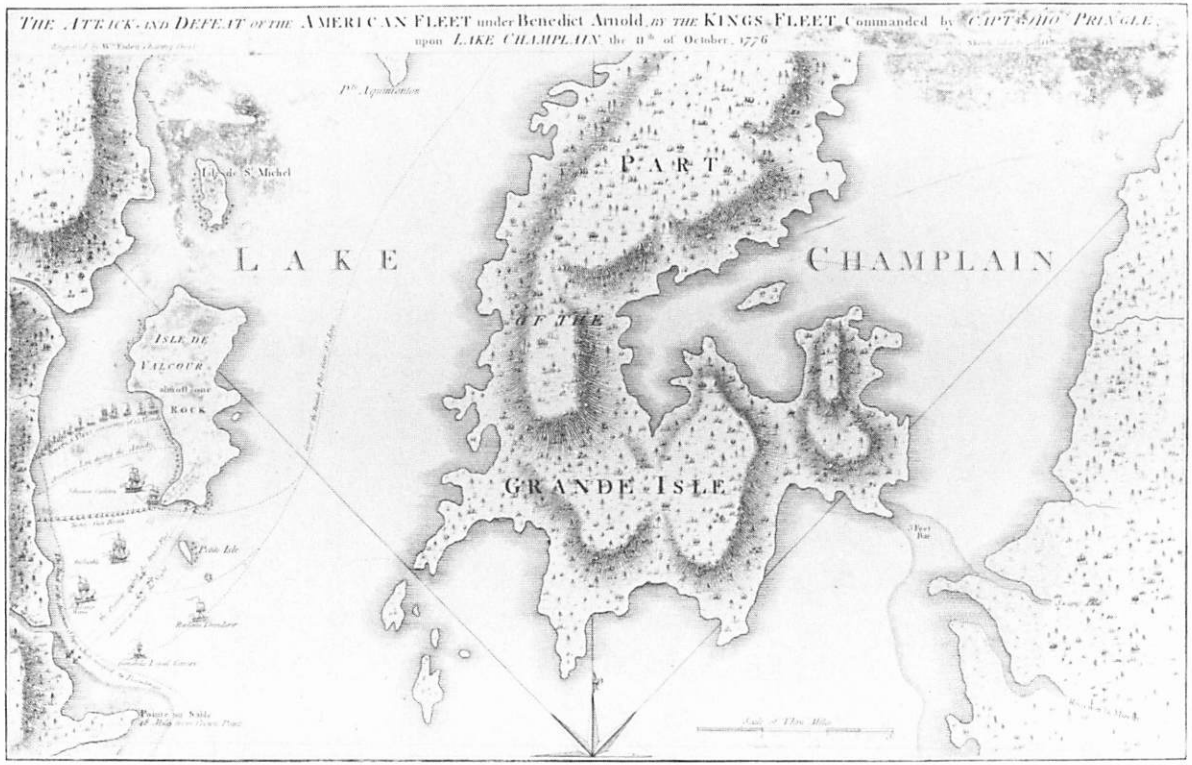
Octo 7 This Day we went a Board and drew two Days alowence of provishens and Rum but we have no deuty to do as yet all we do is to Draw meet and flower and bake and eat

Octo 8 Last night we had a verrey wet night nothing strange to Day we Dont know what we shall be Called for yet

Octo 9 This Day we went abord the fleet and Drew one barrel of pork and a barrel of flower and Six bushels of portatos and this Day we had orders to make a paddle to evry man

Octo 10 This Day we had orders to make a paddle to a man Last night I and about 17 more went of[f] to git a barch bark Cono [canoe] that an Inden left up a River[10] and we went to the River which was about Six miles and we went up the River about the mile and we got be night for we went of about Sun two hours high which was a verrey Short time to go So far and we got in betwixt nine & ten a Clock at night

Octo 11 This Day about Seven a Clock the morning we had alarm that the Regular fleet was Coming on us and the Skouting group was Sent to the loer part of the Island[11] to See which way the fleet was a going and we Retreated to our fleet when we went abored of the fleet wheare [where] we was Stachned [stationed] on the quarter Decks when about tenn A Clock the firen began and the saveg Schooner[12] Run a ground and our men jumped over Bored and Swom a Shoar and the Regulars boarded her and fire from her to our fleet & the battle was verrey hot on both Sides & one of the Regular Skooners[13] Came up verrey bold and the battel was verrey hot we Cut her Rigen [rigging] most all away & bored her threw and threw & She was forst [forced] to tos[s] of[f] us the Cannon balls & grape Shot flew verrey thick & I believe we had a great many Cilld [killed] and I was abord of the hospitele Sloop[14] and they brought the wounded abord of us the Dockters Cut of[f] great many legs and arm and See Seven men threw overbord that died with their wounds while I was abord and about Sun Down the firen Cesed and we had orders to Set Sail when it was Dark and try to get thre [through] the Regulars fleet for they was betwick us and home so we histed [hoisted] Sails & put out our oars & maid all the Speed we could and they did not give us one gun nor we Did not fier one at them and their maney Did not Recive any Dammage to our Sloop nor men So we got threw the fleet verrey Safe but we Run aground but got of[f] without much Diffelculte and we Sailed all night and Roade [rowed] so we thought we was Safe




*Map of the Battle of Valcour Island, October 11, 1776 (London: William Faden, 1776). Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.*

Octo 12 This morning we find a Stronge head wind but we Sailed all Day but maid but little head this morning we was got in the wide Lake Some our fleet lay at anker[15]

Octo 13 This morning about Sun an hour high we See the Regular fleet in site of us following us so we manned all our oars with three men to an oar and the generals boat Came up and ordered us to make all the Speed we could to ty [Ticonderoga] & all the other Ships to stop which they did and about nine oClock the Regulars begin a fier on some of our fleet and the battle begun verry hot and some of our fleet was forst to Run aground and Jump overboard and blow up the Ship and general worterbury[16] was taken and general arnel [Arnold] Run aground and three more & blow up their ships[17] and Came by land and we Came by Crownpoint and Set it on fier and left it and so our [illegible] got into ty about 3 o Clock the afternoon their was fourteen of the Skouting party Came with [illegible]

Octo 14 our Capton [captain] is not got in but the men Come in Skatron [scattered] their is but four of the fleet Cam [came] out of Sixteen[18]

Octo 15 Nothing verrey Strange this Day on this night we was ordered on the Alarm post And we Stayd about an hour & half then we was ordered to go to hour [our] barracks and be Redy at a moments warnen [warning] but we Keeped a part of our Company their for a gard all night[19]

Octo 16 Our men not yet back from the battel at the Bay of malcour [Valcour] yet all the Indens is got in but Six

Octo 17 This morning their was orders that all turned out to pray as Shante have a Dram [dream?] our Capt is not yet in but we live in hope he will git today but we Dont know this Day about four o Clock two of the Skout Come in and they say thay went a Shoar with him and thay got parted with him in the night and that say Thay was on an Island & these that Came home got an old boat and Came of[f] and thay say he intended to Keep away from the lake and thay Dont Dispute but he will Come home

Octo 18 This Day is a weet [wet] Day and this morning their was a party sent of[f] to Cut Down all the Bridges between Ty and Crown point So the Enimis may not git along their artillery by land[20] & this night I went on picket gard & a weet night we had of it

Octo 19 This morning Some of the main gard got undergard for being blame for taking Some flower out of the Stoors [stores] and this morning their was a man whipd thirty Stripes for Disartion and this night we had orders to fier all the guns that Could not not be drew and all the men on the hill was Drew up in a line and fired at the word of Command and one man Split his gun and another had his gun go of[f] when he was Drawing his Charg and blew his hand all to peeces and all the men fire at ty and mt Indepdent[21] that Could not Draw their Charges and then fired the Cannon and Cleard all out to be in good order for we expect the Enemis in a few Days for they are at Crown point and two more of the Skouts Com in & thay Say thay parted with Capt Ferguson Yesterday & he went towards St Johns with about 17 for he Saw that was the Rite way home for he was lost for it was Cloudy and foggy

Octo 20 Nothing Strange this morning only fine weather for the Season we all go on fetege [fatigue][22] every Day we are giten in pork and flower and warter [water] in to our fort

Octo 21 This Day I went on feteg [fatigue] over the lake on the mountain[23] Cutin Capt tongues and Ox trees[24] and the night Capt Ferguson & Timothy and Asa Blair & adam Blair and Sergent John Blair Archebel Black and Joseph Grisel and Corporal Thomas Smith and John Lucoar got in from the Skout and all hearty only they Left James Moors at Orter [Otter] Creek

Octo 22 Nothing Strange this morning this night it is Reported that the Indens Cilled one man & took two prison betwixt ty mill[25] & Lake Jorge Landen [Lake George Landing] thay Say he was found with a tommahawk tiken [sticking] in his head[26]

Octo 23 Deuty is very hard at the present[27] we have to go on Deuty every other day and this night went on the picket gard & this night Stephen Bolton [illegible] was [illegible] to the Bill that two men agoing to take from a negro man

Octo 24 This I Came of[f] picket and our officers took all the Company that could turn out Down to the grog Shop and toste [toast] the men what pleasant Drink and this night Sun an half hour high Some fifers from Ty Came to our inCampment & Shot three guns & Cornel [Samuel] Brewer Sent out a party of men to take them & thay got their names and let them go

Octo 25 Nothing Strange to Day as yet this Day [illegible] able that was fit for Deuty and this night Capt Ferguson [illegible] to his Charge had out of the Company the two Sickest

Octo 26 This morning Abner Cochrin was [illegible] Discharged and the night the picket was warned on the Sun and hour high on we Drew Some more Buck shot and this night their was a Skout Went out and thay went out about 12 o Clock and got on about 8 and Discovered a party of Indens the Skout went out and in threw [through] the picket

Octo 27 This morning we had an a larm and the Drums beet to arms and thay would not let the picket Com of[f] So we had to Say [stay] till eight a Clock and this morning Capt Ferguson went out with a nother Skout & made a Discovery Some Indens & he got in about two a Clock

Octo 28 This morning we had orders to go on the alarm post verrey arley [early] and about twelve a Clock we a larmed to our larm posts and then Som had orders to retreat from the hill mount hope to ty and their was an 160 Sent of[f] for a Axmen party and we hav tenn out of Capt Fergusons Company I was one of the 10 and we marchd into the woods & I was one of the Small party to Stand as a part to the main part we Stood till after Sun set then we had orders to go to the main body & then we Soon had orders to go to mount hope again by Some of our party See 7 Indens & one Cannadin [Canadian] So we Returned to our barrick[28]

Octo 29 This morning we Send out Skout party was to be Redy at a Short notes [notice] this Day I went out to unloading the boat of provishens that are loading at the landen [landing] to Carry to ty in the Carry[29] and they think we had orders to one half to keep for us & the other half to Stop

Octo 30 Nothing Strange this morning as yet the milishes [militia] is Coming verrey fast their is four or five Regments got into mount Independent

Octo 31 It is weet and fogey morning but dont Rain much as yet about ten o Clock the Sun Shine out and this Day their was a Cort martial held at Capt Ferguson barrik and Capt Ferguson was the president of the Cort martial this Day we had orders for every man to Cleene the place before his barrick

Nov 1 This Day I and whorfield and E Spalmon and Jorge Black Set out to go a hunting and just as we [came] out of the Breast work we met Some men that was out giting wood and Said thay See 3 or 4 fox on about 50 Rods from the Breast work and we hunted till about three a Clock but See no game and this night I was warned on the quarter guard to Reinforce it but I Did not go on for after that I was warned on the liens [lines] [illegible] So no more for the Day

Nov 2 This morning the snowe was verrey heard [hard] it has not been so heard for the Season this Day I went on the teem gard [illegible] thay was Drawing logs for the Sawing of bords[30] this night Capt Ferguson off at a Skout for three Day thay Set out about tenne a Clock

Nov 3 Sunday this morning we Receivd [illegible] pay this morning Capt haney Came to camp [illegible] he brought me letter that Came from Salimon Stuart this morning Isac Chapman Died who belonged to our Company we hear that the Regulas has left Crown point [illegible] by Some of the Skout that has Come in thay Say the Snow is over Shoes at Crown point it is good weather for the Season

Nov 4 Monday fine weather only Some [illegible] but verrey pleasant for the Season this morning Capt Ferguson an all the Skout comin [come in] that went to Crown point thay say the Kings troops has left that place

## Notes

[1] "Journal of Bayze Wells," *Connecticut Historical Society Collections* 7 (1899): 240–296 and "With Benedict Arnold at Valcour Island: The Diary of Pascal De Angelis," *Vermont History* 42 (summer 1974): 195–200.

[2] Captain John Ferguson, Brewer's Massachusetts regiment.

[3] This had to be either the *Congress* or the *Washington*.

[4] Stewart is referring to an independent company of Stockbridge Indians from Massachusetts who were part of the Ticonderoga garrison. To avoid mistaking the Stockbridge Indians for those allied with the British forces, general orders required them to wear red and blue caps.

[5] This probably was the only cannon training the crews on the row galleys had before the engagement with the British fleet.

[6] Here stood the remains of the large British fort constructed in 1759 and burned in 1773. The Sixth Pennsylvania Battalion manned an outpost here for Ticonderoga and Mount Independence.

[7] Many documents from 1776 describe the near stagnant conditions of Lake Champlain south of Crown Point and the poor water quality. If soldiers had the opportunity, they would have selected well water over lake water.

[8] Brigadier General Benedict Arnold.

[9] Valcour Island. The American fleet lay at anchor in the protected bay between Valcour Island and the New York shoreline.

[10] Ausable River.

[11] Because Lake Champlain flows toward Canada, this would have been the northern part of the island. The British fleet had anchored overnight in Fleury Bay, just south of Isle la Motte, 15 miles from the American position.

[12] The *Royal Savage* was later set afire and burned throughout the night.

[13] The British schooner *Carleton*.

[14] The sloop was the *Enterprise.*

[15] This anchorage lay near Schuyler's Island.

[16] The cutter *Lee* ran aground and was taken into British service. General David Waterbury of Connecticut commanded the row galley *Washington,* which later became a part of the British fleet.

[17] This is now known as Arnold's Bay, where Arnold burned his flagship, the *Congress,* and four gunboats.

[18] The survivors were the *Trumbull, Enterprise, Revenge,* and *New York.* The *Liberty,* in transit between Ticonderoga and the fleet ferrying supplies and dispatches, was absent from the engagement.

[19] Brewer's regiment was stationed at Mount Hope, located on a hill west of Ticonderoga.

[20] This order is confirmed in general orders of October 17, 1776, issued at Ticonderoga.

[21] Mount Independence is located directly across from Ticonderoga. The combination of the two forts effectively blocked the quarter-mile lake channel. The fort earned its name when word of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence reached the Champlain Valley. It is currently owned by the state of Vermont and the Fort Ticonderoga Association and is open to the public.

[22] Fatigue duty consisted of manual labor.

[23] Stewart is probably referring to Mount Defiance.

[24] Tongues were the harnessing poles attached to the front axle of a horse- or ox-drawn wagon. Stewart could be misinterpreting the term *trees.* He either means a yoke, single tree, or double tree. A yoke is the crossbar used to connect a pair of oxen. The single tree is a bar used with a two-horse team to connect the harnesses to the double tree, which is a crosspiece located on the wagon tongue forward of the front axle.

[25] The mill was located at the lower falls on Ticonderoga Creek, where a town park now stands.

[26] All three men were from Asa Whitcomb's Sixth Continental Regiment.

[27] Mention of rigorous duty appears in many other contemporaneous journals and letters. The garrison was well aware of the importance of maintaining control of the fortifications.

[28] On this day the British landed forces at Three Mile Point and approached with their fleet to reconnoiter the fortifications. The combination of strong earthworks, well-placed batteries, a display of American regimental colors, and a well-aimed cannon shot discouraged the British from making further advance.

[29] The portage between the lower falls on Ticonderoga Creek and Lake George, which Mount Hope protected.

[30] These logs would have been taken to the sawmill on Ticonderoga Creek.

# Vermont's Second State House: A Temple of Republican Democracy Imagined Through Its Inventories, 1836–1856

*Architect's drawings and daguerreotypes show what the Second State House looked like, but the partial inventories help us imagine how it functioned.*

*By* T. D. SEYMOUR BASSETT

No lawnmowers appear on any list of supplies and property in the Second Vermont State House, 1841–1856, and no restaurant equipment, but there were as many as 222 spit boxes, six ballot boxes, and the wherewithal to serve drinks. Articles and icons found or not found on the annual inventories of the sergeant at arms and surveyor of public buildings, recently received at the State Archives from Madeline Farnham of Shelburne, tell a good deal about the conditions under which state officials, legislators, and their patrons operated in early Victorian Vermont. The volume came down from Mrs. Stanley Farnham's mother-in-law, born Lenora Rachel Stevens, descendant of Clark Stevens, Montpelier's first town clerk, Quaker minister, and father of Stephen Foster Stevens, sergeant at arms when the State House burned in 1857.

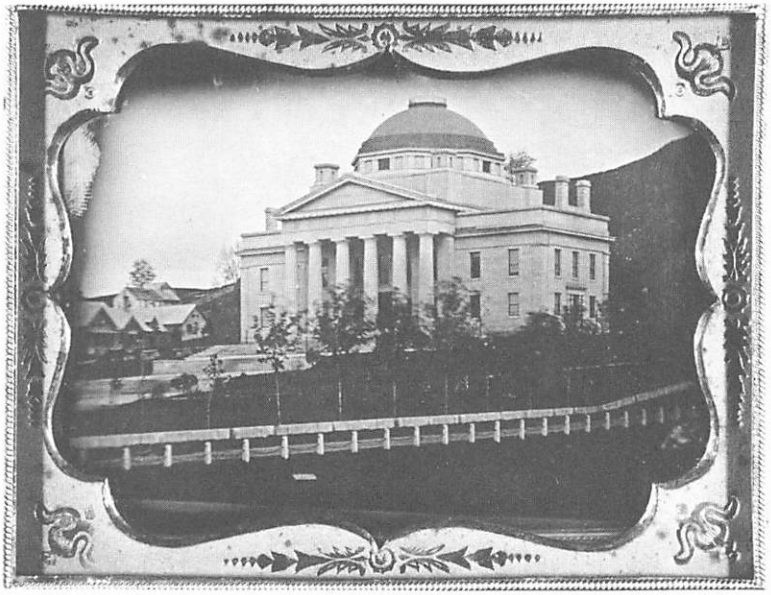
Architect's drawings and daguerreotypes show what the Second State House looked like,[1] but the partial inventories help us imagine how it functioned. Although an annual list was required, the sergeants at arms sometimes shirked the tedious job of including everything. For example, Cyrus Ware, the first sergeant at arms of the new building, 1836–1839,[2] never got around to entering any notes in the inventory, nor did his successor in 1840. Sometimes instead of a complete inventory, the lister simply wrote "same as last year" and "all that ever were there."

The men who kept this record had friends or relatives in high places whose influence got them their jobs. Most had clerical or mercantile skills. Edward H. Prentiss (1840) went on to become clerk of a U.S. district court. Sidney P. Redfield (1854–1856), local druggist and senior warden of Christ Church Episcopal, was Supreme Court judge Isaac F. Redfield's younger brother. William T. Burnham (1842–1847), Luther Cross (1848–1852), and David W. Keith (1853) were local storekeepers. Was Erastus T. Camp (1841) related to David M. Camp, lieutenant governor, 1836–1840?

Vermonters have tended to name all their buildings "houses," whatever their use, and so the term *capitol,* reminiscent of the Roman temple of Jupiter, has never won popular usage in Vermont. The conduct of state business for three to six weeks every fall had the same requirements in lighting, heating, storage, circulation of air and people, and space to work and to wash as did most other "houses," especially meetinghouses, which likewise had part-time use. Hence the inventories reflect mainly mundane indoor activities. The State House, however, was most importantly an outdoor advertisement of what Vermonters of every persuasion held sacred: a society dedicated to justice based on the law of classical Christian civilization, independence, curiosity, asceticism, and solid conservatism. Viewed from the opposite hill or from the road below and across the 325-foot depth of "yard," it combined the dignified elements of a Greek temple façade with a Roman dome to express plain integrity and pride in sovereign statehood.

Making the most of Montpelier's valley site, architect Ammi B. Young required blasting into the hill to extend the vista and maximize the majesty of the approach. Loyal Vermonters and curious tourists looked up to the compact pile without realizing the care with which the architect had calculated the proportions. Nonetheless, they felt from the result what Zadock Thompson described as simple, neat, pure, appropriate (i.e., functional), and built for the ages.[3] The copper-covered dome and roofs, oxidized to a green patina after a few seasons, blended into the pasture above it as its wooden base, painted and stippled a leaden gray, blended with the granite walls below.[4] Once inside the yard, which was enclosed by an iron fence like those framing most antebellum state capitol grounds,[5] a visitor walked up the path and the series of steps, feeling the building's classical vocabulary declare that godlike heroes dwelt within.

The inventory of the wood house, the capitol's only outbuilding, reveals the workaday aspect of the capitol grounds. Shovels for snow or dirt, a snow scraper and a roller, wooden and iron rakes, old hoes, pickaxes, a harrow and teeth, and a wheelbarrow suggest leftovers from con-



*The Second Vermont State House, before 1857. Daguerreotype. This is one of three known photographic images of the building taken before it burned in January 1857.*

struction as much as equipment for seasonal use. The sergeant at arms contracted out the hay cutting on the campus.[6]

Entering ceremonially through the imposing Doric columns of the portico or informally from either end or the rear, people used foot scrapers, umbrella stands and pans, and clotheshorses to hang up their coats. The design of the interior symbolized the importance of each element of state government. The basic form of a Greek cross suggested the marriage of classical and Christian culture. There was only one padlock on the 1841 inventory (no more ever again listed). Which room did it protect: the governor's? With only two clocks, one in each chamber, assemblymen depended on their pocket watches or their friends. A letter box in the Senate chamber, listed from 1843 to 1848, was a "convenience box" to accumulate solons' mail for transfer to the post office.[7] I suspect the first-termers in the back rows may have complained of cold drafts, so the sergeant at arms supplied the House chamber with the only State House thermometer. The secretary of state and the state treasurer had fireproof safes for their most precious documents.

This was the people's center—and still is, although modern conditions require security and locks. Anyone could walk in at any time, pick up a copy of the "State House laws" in the rotunda or vestibule, and behave according to its rules. It was probably an unoccupied shell most of the year because every state officer, from the governor down, did most of his work at home, except during the session.

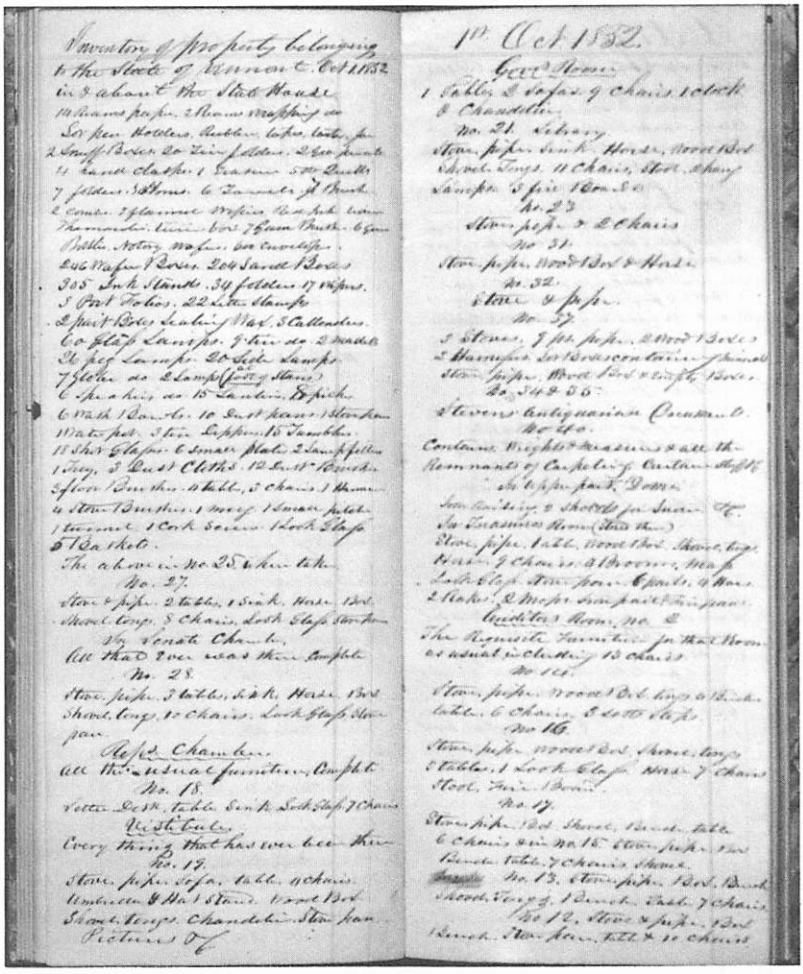
The dignity of the state called for special interior elegance in some cases, such as mahogany or black walnut furniture for the legislators, the governor, and the secretary of state, but it was simple and relied more on proportion than filigree. The flag did not become a necessary symbol of state and national unity until the Civil War. One flag on three inventories, identified as a state flag in 1855, was stored, not on display. The rooms of the secretary of state, treasurer, governor's secretary, and the library had wall maps.

For lighting through the dark days of late fall, we find listed the paraphernalia of lamps and lanterns: reflectors, stands, shades, wrenches for lamps, wicking, chandeliers for the two chambers and the governor's office,[8] an oil can and 18 gallons of whale oil in a barrel dangerously stored in the furnace room (candles not mentioned). Hanging globe and astral lamps lighted the library and the spaces where many congregated—the vestibule, rotunda, and legislative chambers—until gas lights came in 1855. One wag remarked that they could dispense with the gas company and light one match in the assembly room.[9]

Furnaces provided heat for the halls, legislative chambers, and important offices, and twenty-six wood stoves warmed the smaller rooms. Sessions in the fall, when there was less work to do at home and the roads were in better shape, used up less wood than winter sessions would have.

Washroom facilities consisted of a few looking glasses and movable washbowls, pitchers, mugs, tumblers, towels, and tin and copper dippers, although the treasurer's office had a "wash sink" in 1842. By 1851 even a few bars of soap show up on the list. Because the occupants had no "necessary" to relieve themselves, they probably used the woodshed or went to Mahlon Cottrill's Pavilion Hotel next door when they recessed for dinner.[10] As colonial houses of worship had "nooning houses" to which churchgoers resorted between morning and afternoon services, Cottrill's was the chief nooning house for people at the capitol.

Everyone working in the State House was literate and supplied with writing materials: inkstand; "best Opake quills"; desk knife for sharpening quills; sandbox for sand to blot the ink (replaced later by blotting paper); brushes to remove the sand; wax wafers—heat-softened and stamped—to seal letters; rules; rubbers (erasers); compasses; a variety of paper, including wrapping and ballot paper (but no toilet paper) and



*"Inventory of property belonging to the State of Vermont, Oct. 1, 1852, in & about the State House." From a manuscript inventory of the State House, 1841–1856. Courtesy of the Vermont State Archives. The notation "Stevens' antiquarian documents, Nr. 40" designates the original collections of the Vermont Historical Society.*

"1 Ream paper Broken good"; letter folders; bill folders; ivory folders; bone folders. Almost everyone wrote with quill pens, but the 1842 list also included "10 Steel Pens" and "2 Doz Led Pencils" (by 1855 there were fifty-seven).

The state library, exalted by its location on the upper floor with the

House and Senate chambers and the governor's suite, represented a potential for satisfying the needs of Vermonters, first those in state government and eventually all. The state librarian's reports appear in the inventories for 1841–1842 and 1844–1849. They show steady growth from 2,628 bound volumes to over 4,600, not counting unbound materials and notwithstanding the beginnings of international exchange of documents, which Vermont began by giving more than it received. Architect Young had designed an 18-by-36-foot space for 10,000 volumes.

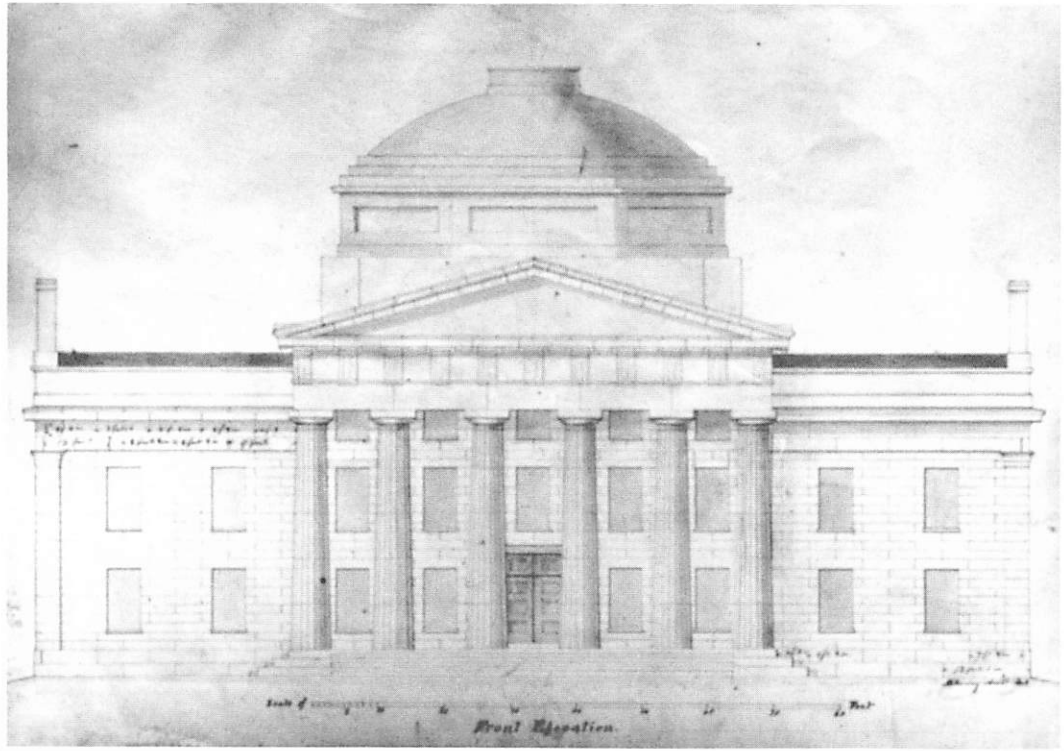
The library was also an embryo museum, with specimens of Vermont wool, copper, money (both "Continental" paper and unspecified Vermont coppers or paper notes of the 1780s), and a medal. In 1841 the dome contained "some mineralogical specimens." Governor Silas Jenison favored a geological survey in 1837, but the legislature did not approve one until 1844. Professor George W. Benedict of Burlington supported the survey and may have given the rocks.[11]

For the curious antiquarian, there are enigmas yet to be solved. What were tin, ivory, and bone folders? *Sticks* of tape? Why did the librarian need "1 Bottle Gum Water," listed in 1845? How did stove boards work? Why does paper need to be "broken good"? Did the contents of the two fireproof safes survive the 1857 fire?

Most of the manuscripts laboriously assembled by Henry Stevens to document Vermont's Revolutionary past did not survive that holocaust. At the beginning of the 1850 session, Luther Cross described the contents of two rooms: "occupied by Mr. Stevens' collection of everything; no admittance. Furniture I suppose same as last year." The end-of-session list represents, perhaps, new friction with the collector: "Nos. 34 & 35 occupied by H. Stevens for his host of cholera. who keeps the keys for fear the disorder will spread. . . . In No. 36 there are boxes filld with Stevens' trash, don't know what. . . . In No. 28 is another lot of Stevens' trash." By 1851 Cross had reformed: he mentioned "Stevens' collections of old documents" in rooms 34 and 35.

Henry Stevens arranged to have two brass cannons—captured from German soldiers at the Battle of Bennington—refurbished, mounted, and given to the state of Vermont. He paraded them at Bennington's celebration of the battle on August 16, 1848. That fall they were in the vestibule; by October 1851 they had been dumped in the basement. No one yet felt the need to aim them symbolically south from the portico, against the slave power.

Icons inside consisted of three reminders of the War of Independence and two images of Vermonters. Not until late in the century did the Vermont Historical Society give some portraits of governors to hang in the State House. A copy of Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington, behind the speaker's desk, was the first thing people thought of saving




*Ammi B. Young's working drawing for the front elevation of the Second Vermont State House, 1831.*

in the 1857 fire. The state library had three copies of the Declaration of Independence, one probably framed and hung, and one copy of Washington's farewell address.[12]

A portrait of Charles K. Williams and a bust of Elijah Paine graced the Senate chamber. Perhaps Paine's son Charles, who was governor from 1841 to 1843, gave the bust after his father's death in 1842. The Rutland County Bar Association commissioned Woodstock-born Benjamin Franklin Mason to paint the elegant full-length portrait of Chief Justice Williams on his retirement from the Supreme Court in 1846 and presented it to the state.[13] In the popular mind both these men were free from partisan politics and epitomized probity and justice. Both had links to early Vermont. Samuel Williams, the judge's father, an immigrant of the 1780s, was Rutland pastor, publisher, and first historian of Vermont. Paine's was the typical success story of a man with advantages who made good on the Vermont frontier. He speculated in Vermont lands in the 1780s, built a turnpike, invested in a broadcloth mill, and won appointment to the U.S. district court in 1801. The Williams portrait is now in the executive chamber, the Paine bust in the Supreme Court chamber.

The picture of the sergeant at arms we imagine from these inventories is of the idle occupant of a political sinecure who resents the job of inventorying. Except for this chore, continued through 1914, his only work is to tell his assistant to feed the furnaces and grudgingly interrupt his story or card game to tell visitors where the Senate is sitting. Incumbents came to realize that the State House could be the state's show window. Since 1987 David Schütz as curator of state buildings has kept an inventory of significant artifacts. Thus the role of janitor evolved into the roles of the modern receptionist, supervisor of the building, and curator, who keep the capitol looking spruce and welcome with pride those who work or visit there.

## Notes

[1] The pictorial evidence is limited to the plans and images reproduced in Daniel Robbins, "Ammi Young's State House," *The Vermont State House: A History and Guide* (Montpelier: Vermont State House Preservation Committee, 1980), 18–27, and to a daguerreotype of about 1850 in the Vermont Historical Society's collections, reproduced here on p. 101.

[2] For a biographical sketch of Ware, whom he called an "old war horse," see Daniel P. Thompson, *History of the Town of Montpelier* (Montpelier, Vt.: E. P. Walton, 1860), 221–224.

[3] Zadock Thompson, "Vermont State House," *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil, and Statistical* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842), pt. 2, 130–132, based on consultation with the architect.

[4] Henry R. Hitchcock and William Seale, *Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the USA* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 106, assume that both dome and base were painted gray, but Thompson, *History of Vermont*, pt. 2, 130, reported the building committee's decision that "the roof and dome were to be covered with copper." The "Box Old Copper" listed in the dome in 1841 must have been left over from the sheathing.

[5] Hitchcock and Seale, *Temples of Democracy,* passim. A quarter ton of surplus fencing, listed in 1842, was stored in the dome. The wooden fence enclosed the green between the Pavilion Hotel and a north-south street east of the State House. See the copy of the daguerreotype, about 1850, and "Vermont's Second State House: A Letter from Ammi B. Young," introduction and notes by Lilian Baker Carlisle, *Vermont History News* 46, 1 (1995): 8.

[6] See T. D. Seymour Bassett, *The Growing Edge: Vermont Villages, 1840–1880* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1992), 110.

[7] Donald B. Johnstone of Burlington, postal historian, explained this service to me.

[8] One wonders if the unique chandelier of the First State House, recalled perhaps by former congressman E. P. Walton and cited in Mary Greene Nye, *Vermont's State House* (Montpelier, Vt.: Department of Conservation and Development, Publicity Service, 1936), 2, was installed in one of the legislative chambers.

[9] Bassett, *The Growing Edge,* 83.

[10] According to David Schütz, curator of state buildings, the first water closets were installed in 1888 in the State House with the construction of the annex, now the Supreme Court building. I am indebted to him for my references to the sergeants at arms after the Civil War.

[11] T. D. Seymour Bassett, *A History of the Vermont Geological Surveys and State Geologists* (Burlington: Vermont Geological Survey, 1976), 1–2. Other possible donors are Samuel R. Hall of Craftsbury or Zadock Thompson of Burlington.

[12] The notation is merely "1 Washington's address."

[13] Nye, *Vermont's State House,* 60; Robbins, *The Vermont State House,* 96–97. Both likenesses first appear in the 1847 inventory, although the lists for 1844–1846 do not even include Gassner's copy of Gilbert Stuart's Washington, which is listed in 1843, when the other two were not.

# Sight Unseen: Tracking the Unexpected

*I copied . . . personal records in strange places and under strange conditions. . . . It was one of the biggest rewards of my years of pedaling up to homes where I was just some eccentric claiming to be researching the obscure, largely forgotten copper mines of Orange County.*

*By* COLLAMER M. ABBOTT

To someone who is fascinated by history, the search for documents and artifacts is sometimes the most interesting—and frustrating—part of the experience. When I started researching the copper mines of Vermont as an amateur historian, I was merely curious and started tracking material with no rational plan, only the desire to find answers to my questions and to solve some mysteries.

Not long into my journey, I found mention of an 1859 report on the Ely mine in Vershire by a German engineer, W. Herman Rittler. This was only six years after the Cornish superintendent Thomas Pollard started to exploit the mine economically. Such an early study seemed basic. There were references to it in material preserved by the descendants of Roswell Farnham of Bradford, who had been governor of Vermont and lawyer for the Vermont Copper Mining Company, which ran the Ely mine from 1853 to 1883. But a copy of the report was nowhere to be found. Many years later, when I was exploring a cache of maps, geological reports, laboratory analyses, and other documents of the Elizabeth mine at South Strafford, which had closed in 1958, I came upon Rittler's report loose in a file cabinet of maps, somewhat dog-eared, but whole and with Farnham's familiar signature on the cover. By what devious routes had it traveled from Ely in 1859 to South Strafford in the 1940s?

Other material came to me in equally roundabout ways. After many

years of searching, shunpiking, strokes of good luck, and other people's generosity, I learned, for example, that Isaac Tyson, a pioneer at South Strafford in the 1830s, had kept a journal. That was fairly easy. The family had given it to the Vermont Historical Society in Montpelier, so I eventually obtained it on microfilm. But Tyson had also kept a memo book, which was in the possession of a descendant, Rosa Tyson in Strafford, who understandably did not want to let it out of her sight. How to get that?

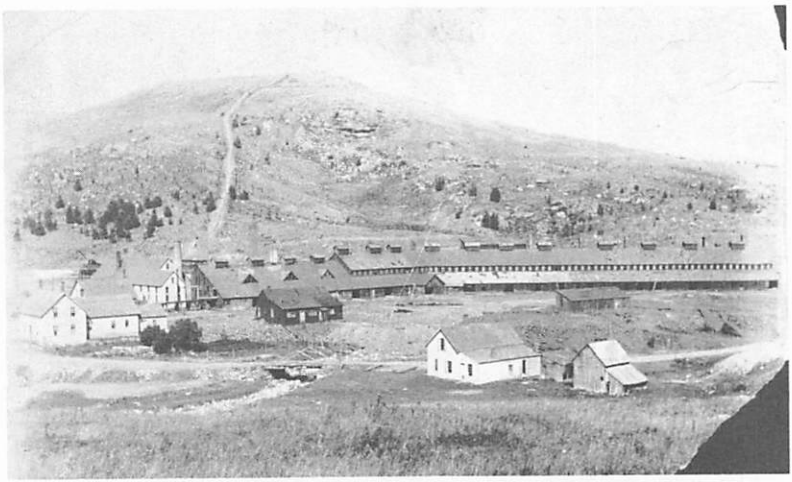
At this time I was traveling by bicycle from White River Junction to all my sources in Vershire, Strafford, Corinth, Thetford, Bradford, and points between. I had a Rolleiflex camera that did yeoman service copying pictures and documents. Rosa Tyson, who ran the family home as a guest house near the Elizabeth Mine, offered to put me up in an attic room at a ridiculously low price and allowed me to copy the memo book if I could. I planned a three-day trip, which would include a foray into Vershire, and loaded my vehicle.

The little attic room was snug and comfortable, with a table and two windows that gave me even lighting if I propped the memo book up and used my jackknife to hold the pages open. Early one morning, with just the right light, I set up my equipment and copied Isaac Tyson's 1835–1852 memo book—all 268 pages of it—with priceless information scribbled in his own hand about minerals and mines around the world: copper in Cuba, lead in Spain, chromite in Maryland and Turkey, and copper and iron in Vermont.

I copied other personal records in strange places and under strange conditions. I tracked down a diary of a man who worked in the Ely Mine in the very early days. When I rode into the descendant's dooryard on my bicycle, he didn't know me from Adam, but he unquestioningly let me take the diary away to copy. This happened to me more than once. Such generosity and trust always amazed me. It was one of the biggest rewards of my years of pedaling up to homes where I was just some eccentric claiming to be researching the obscure, largely forgotten copper mines of Orange County.

I met a man in Corinth whose father had worked at Pike Hill and who gave me a miner's oil lamp, an object that looked like a one-cup teapot with an elongated spout. Although at this time I had resolved not to collect artifacts because I could not afford to buy them and could not transport heavy objects on my bicycle, I accepted the gift of this rare lamp. The desire, later necessity, to know what hand tools and other equipment of the trade looked like led to other acquisitions and other adventures.

Of course I wasn't always lucky collecting artifacts. In West Fairlee lived Fred Perkins, who had been a "bellboy" at the Ely Mine in 1900–1905, when George Westinghouse engaged in his million-dollar experiments



*Mining and refining complex, Ely, Vermont, no date.*

with processing and smelting the low-grade ores. Later Fred had worked at the Elizabeth mine in South Strafford, so he himself was a mine of information, and I visited him often, at intervals, so as not to tire him and to let him reflect and collect his memories of the past. One day he brought out an ingot of copper, which he claimed was a product of the Westinghouse experiments at Ely. I gasped: genuine copper from the Ely mine! But I refrained from expressing any desire to own the gem. It was several years later before I casually mentioned it. "Oh, yeah," said Fred. "Feller came along and offered me a dollar for it, so I let him have it." I have been kicking myself ever since.

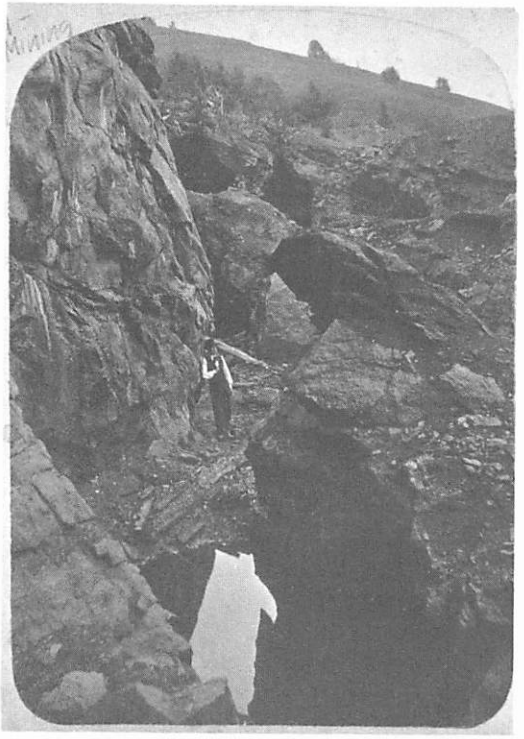
One day I trekked up Blood Brook in West Fairlee to Sheldon Miller's home, a big, square farmhouse full of heirlooms and artifacts, including some stereopticon pictures I had never seen before and have never seen anywhere else. He generously allowed me to copy them on the granite steps at his back door. Some years later I heard that Miller's treasure-filled home had burned. When I could, I went to visit him. There he was with his hired man, in a trailer home on the lot, saddened but still able to take pride in the registered cattle he raised. I had never seen a house and contents so completely burned. Everything had collapsed into the cellar in ashes and twisted metal—including those precious pictures of which I had copies.

I cultivated a friendship with a woman who knew everybody, not only her contemporaries, because she worked in a local store and as substitute

postmistress, but also their families and ancestors and her own and her husband's mining families. One of her ancestors, Samuel Woolcock, had been a ringleader in the Ely war, the miners' riot of July 1883. She encouraged my acquisitiveness and desire to know the tools of the trade by finding a beautifully preserved oil lamp and two candle holders, one handmade, I'm sure, the other manufactured.

One day when I arrived for a visit, a sandwich, and more tales of the miners, she presented me with a small leather-bound book about 4 by 5 inches. It was the journal of Otto K. Krause, the German dry-goods tycoon who had sunk hundreds of thousands into the Ely mine between 1888 and 1893 at the urging of Francis Michael Frederic Cazin, the German-trained engineer who had temporarily conned the old officers of the Vermont Copper Mining Company out of their property in 1882.

Two other brief stories are of interest for what they reveal about historical research – the frustrations, the uncertainties, the dangers, and the rewards – and the circuitous routes researchers take. From an old engineer who had worked the Elizabeth mine in the 1920s and lived on Long



*"Strafford [Vt.] Copperas Mines, Looking In." From a stereopticon photograph by R. M. McIntosh, Northfield, Vermont, no date.*

Island in a magnificent mansion on the waterfront in the 1960s, I learned during a three-day visit that the American Metal Company had financed the work and had made maps and other studies of the site. Soon after, with no real expectations, I sent a query to the giant American Metal Company headquarters in New York City. Back came a reply from some executive: "Yes, we have material, but it is stored deep in another building here in Manhattan. But I will have it looked up." A package came. I opened it and began unfolding brittle old blueprint maps. Then the worst happened: they cracked on the folds. My heart sank. Never had I lost or failed to return pictures I had carried away on my bicycle; now I had ruined priceless records of the American Metal Company! I went ahead and copied the documents, then returned them with an abject apology. An answer came back from that unknown executive in one of the world's biggest mining companies: "It's okay. This happens to old blueprints that are stored in cellars and remote buildings. Don't worry. Glad you found something interesting."

In Chelsea I met, with the help of a relative, a woman whose late husband had had much to do with the mining properties as a lawyer. She offered me some material that might help me, and she did so because she had known my great-grandfather, the first Collamer in my family, when he lived on a farm outside the village in 1912. Now, half a century later, I arranged a trip to the woman's house and took into my hands a box of old pictures and other unique documents. I promised to return everything as soon as possible. "Oh," she said, "You don't need to return these things. You can have them." I thanked her profusely, went away more amazed than ever at what the name *Collamer* could do, and later wrote her a letter to express for the ages my profound appreciation.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## *Lake Champlain: Key to Liberty*

*By* Ralph Nading Hill (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1995, pp. 320, paper, $24.00).

The twentieth-anniversary edition of Ralph Nading Hill's *Lake Champlain: Key to Liberty* not only commemorates an excellent book but recognizes Hill's dedication to spreading an understanding of the vibrant history of Lake Champlain. An icon of the Champlain Valley, Hill authored *The Winooski, Contrary Country, Sidewheeler Saga, Yankee Kingdom, Vermont: A Special World, Vermont Album,* as well as many other books and articles. Working with Electra and Watson Webb, Hill, as president of the Shelburne Steamboat Company, operated the steamboat *Ticonderoga* for its final three seasons in the early 1950s. Shortly thereafter he persuaded the Webbs to transport the 892-ton steamboat 2 miles overland for permanent display on the Shelburne Museum grounds. This remarkable feat is detailed in six pages of the book. With equal zeal, Hill later spearheaded the restoration of the Ethan Allen homestead near Burlington.

Hill's book begins with the geological formation of the lake and the early occupation of the region by Native Americans. He vividly recounts Samuel de Champlain's epic voyage, the struggle for empire between

England and France, the American Revolution, tales of early settlers, the War of 1812, and the commercial era on the lake, convincingly sustaining his contention that "Lake Champlain is the most historic body of water in the western hemisphere" (p. 4).

Although Hill is selective in his historic coverage, he relates fascinating stories in a superb manner. He also delights in repeating many famous legends, such as Duncan Campbell's ghost story (pp. 61–63) and Benedict Arnold's deathbed request for his "old American uniform" (p. 128). (In reality, Arnold died "without a groan," according to his wife.) While most of the book is accurate and clear, some passages may leave regional history enthusiasts slightly disappointed. According to Hill, for example, Ephraim Williams "fought bravely" (p. 45) in the 1746 siege of Fort Massachusetts. Williams was not actually at the fort during the siege. Hill describes General Jeffery Amherst's 1759 Lake Champlain fleet as simply an armed brigantine, three square-rigged scows, and bateaux (p. 66); the names and descriptions of Amherst's vessels, readily available from earlier books (such as Harrison Bird's 1962 work), included the brig *Duke of Cumberland,* sloop *Boscawen,* radeau *Ligonier,* two small radeaux, several row galleys, and bateaux. The final campaign in the Champlain Valley during the French and Indian War involved a vast armada of British vessels sailing with troops from Crown Point in 1760 to seize the French fort at Isle-aux-Noix on the Richelieu River. Yet only one sentence of Hill's book is devoted to the expedition (p. 71). Minor lapses in sections on the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 do not interfere with the story line. Hill, however, places the schooner *Ticonderoga* in Shelburne Harbor during the winter of 1812–1813 (p. 172), although in fact the vessel was not acquired by the U.S. Navy until 1814. Most readers, nonetheless, will find the narration rich and engrossing.

*Lake Champlain: Key to Liberty* is an admirable success in what it was intended to be—a popular history, unencumbered by endnotes. It is a fine book for a general audience, introducing readers to the multifaceted history of the Champlain Valley. It is also a richly illustrated volume with beautiful color plates. Hill shines with his articulate narrative and interesting details of the individuals who played a role in the history of the region. He is at his best in describing the steamboat days on Lake Champlain—a saga filled with disasters, rivalries, deal-making, boat races, and bold entrepreneurs.

The end of the book is considerably enhanced by an absorbing epilogue, new to this edition, by Arthur Cohn, director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. Cohn recounts the early work of the Champlain Maritime Society and the founding of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum by Cohn and Bob Beach Jr. The museum, under Cohn's tutelage, has had

an impressive rate of growth and today is a living testament to the extensive maritime heritage of the Champlain Valley. The museum's exhibits, replicas of vessels, nautical archaeology center, and educational programs have made the lake's history come alive for thousands of visitors. Working with Kevin Crisman of Texas A & M's Institute of Nautical Archaeology, the museum has carefully documented a score of important submerged cultural resources, including the 1759 sloop *Boscawen* and the Revolutionary War–era Great Bridge between Mount Independence and Fort Ticonderoga. As Cohn points out in his epilogue, significant progress has been made in the preservation of the history of the Champlain Valley in the past two decades, not only by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum with its replica of Benedict Arnold's gunboat *Philadelphia*, but also through Vermont's Underwater Historic Preserves, the upgrading of the visitors' center at Crown Point, the Chimney Point State Historic Site, Fort Ticonderoga's Thompson-Pell Research Center, the forthcoming visitors' center at Mount Independence, and the endowment fund for the restoration of the steamboat *Ticonderoga* at the Shelburne Museum.

Ralph Nading Hill's legacy, as Cohn notes, "helped trigger profound changes in the public's perception of historic Lake Champlain. We who currently labor to study, document, and share this legacy with the public are grateful that we can build on the efforts of Ralph Nading Hill and others" (p. 298).

The handsome new edition of Hill's book is a worthy tribute to the region's distinguished history and a credit to a first-rate regional publisher, Countryman Press of Woodstock, Vermont.

RUSSELL P. BELLICO

*Russell P. Bellico is a professor of economic history at Westfield State College and the author of* Sails and Steam in the Mountains: A Maritime and Military History of Lake George and Lake Champlain *and a second book entitled* Chronicles of Lake George: Journeys in War and Peace.

## *Into the Mountains: Stories of New England's Most Celebrated Peaks*

*By* Maggie Stier and Ron McAdow (Boston: Appalachian Mountain Club Books, 1995, pp. 368, paper, $14.95).

*Into the Mountains* describes fifteen of New England's most striking pinnacles. They are not necessarily the highest peaks, but rather those that have appealed to our imaginations as artists, climbers, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, and scientists. Many are stand-alone landmarks, like Grand Monadnock in New Hampshire and Cadillac Mountain on Mount Desert Island.

Four New England states are included. For Vermont, the chosen mountains are Mount Equinox, Camel's Hump, Mount Mansfield, and Mount Ascutney. (Another candidate might be Jay Peak, which can be seen from miles away.) There are no entries for the two southernmost states. Connecticut's highest point is Mount Frissell (2,380 feet) and Rhode Island's Jerimoth Hill (812 feet), not altitudes to induce awe. But the omissions may disappoint peak-baggers who climb the tallest summit in every state.

The idea for *Into the Mountains* was Maggie Stier's. She is the former curator of Fruitlands Museum, Bronson Alcott's short-lived utopian community, and a specialist in "interpreting the historical landscape for modern audiences." The publisher encouraged her and coauthor Ron McAdow to make the book more au courant by discussing recent events, development pressures, and conservation efforts.

Still, there is much for regional historians. Each mountain's chapter includes sections on history as well as art and artists, geography, geology, and recreation. Other sections vary depending on the peak's past. The chapter on Camel's Hump, for example, includes a section on the 1944 bomber crash, a disaster the hump, incidentally, had in common with Mount Tom in Massachusetts, the site of another fatal crash that year of a plane from Westover Air Force Base.

The stories of our own mountains will likely interest *Vermont History* readers most. Each of the four peaks gets about twenty pages, average length for the book. For those familiar with the peaks' histories, there are probably no surprises. The authors have relied on standard sources, such as Robert L. Hagerman's *Mansfield;* William C. Lipke and Philip N. Grime's *Vermont Landscape Images, 1776–1976;* Green Mountain Club publications; and articles from *Vermont History.* These are not, as the back cover suggests, "scattered hard-to-find accounts."

There are many references to Vermont beyond the state's borders. Alden Partridge turns up repeatedly on strenuous marches with his Norwich University cadets, on Monadnock and Moosilauke (1817) and Lafayette (1822). The authors justly call him our first "power hiker." The famous Crawford family of Crawford Notch in the White Mountains were originally Vermonters, leaving Guildhall in 1791.

Some common threads become apparent in a reading of *Into the Mountains.* Native Americans respected their mountains and left them undisturbed; their presence lingers only in place-names (Wachusett, Monadnock) and legend (Chocorua). European settlers felt a need to tame and improve the wilderness, even the barren peaks. The first mountaintop structure in the United States was erected on Mount Holyoke as early as 1821; in 1851 the summit could be reached by cable railway. During the second half of the 1880s, carriage roads, halfway houses, and summit hotels were built everywhere. The Appalachian Mountain Club's first hut opened in 1888.

The development of mountains continues unabated. Today Wachusett has a paved summit road and a 100-car parking lot, and Mount Tom advertises an alpine slide and mechanized wave pool. There is endless business pressure for more ski lifts, base lodges, lit trails for night skiing, and condominiums. During summer, hikers love their mountains to death. Monadnock, the most climbed summit in the country, sees 1,000 hikers on a summer weekend. Each year 40,000 hikers visit Mansfield, the third most popular peak in New England.

Among the least-developed mountains are Kathadin, because of its remoteness and ruggedness, and Camel's Hump. Although accessible, Camel's Hump is protected by Joseph Battell's original 1911 gift of 1,000 acres to the state, part of what is now a state park.

I have one reservation about the book. I found the illustrations disappointing: the photographs are mostly murky, the reproduced antiquarian maps are impossible to read, and the new maps do not show numerous trails and structures referred to in the text. Nevertheless, armchair hikers will find these mountain portraits complex and informative. The book is not a trail guide but will provide active readers with useful background reading for new ascents.

REIDUN DAHLE NUQUIST

*Reidun Dahle Nuquist is a reference librarian at the University of Vermont and former librarian of the Vermont Historical Society. She is an active hiker and maintainer of Vermont's Long Trail.*

## *Early American Technology: Making and Doing Things from the Colonial Era to 1850*

*Edited by* Judith A. McGaw (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994, pp. 492, $49.95, paper $19.95).

A Vermont centenarian recently remarked that he had lived through virtually all the ages of humankind. He had started life on a small farm and grew up with tools and methods appropriate to the Middle Ages, yet he had lived to see the birth of the automobile, the computer, nuclear power plants, aircraft, plastics, home electrification, space travel, radio and television, miracle drugs, and more. "I think they've already invented everything we need," the old man said. "Why don't they just quit?"

But quitting is not in the lexicon of a vigorous and prosperous nation that has seen the wonders wrought by technology. When faced with needs or problems, even in the earliest days, our response has been to demand—and find—technological solutions, says Judith McGaw in *Early American Technology.*

The first European settlers in America brought their Old World technologies with them. Crude as they were, those skills were their starting point. Soon, however, the early Americans realized their chosen land offered life on a scale they had not anticipated. That meant they had to develop networks of canals, railroads, and highways to move raw materials and finished goods, and it also called for larger, more sophisticated machinery with the power and capacities needed for the work they had to do. Many of the immigrants brought especially valuable skills—metal-, wood-, and leather-working, for instance—and a genius that enabled them to design or invent tools and machines suited to solving problems they encountered.

*Early American Technology* presents a fascinating collection of essays by experts in ten various fields, giving us insights into a broad sampling of human concerns of the time—issues as disparate as birth control, brewing, domestic food preservation, coal mining, and turnpike development—and how technological evolution came into play in each.

The great surge in mechanical technology began in the early 1800s and probably reached its peak about 1875, roughly coincident with the Centennial Exposition. Wonder after wonder flowed from barns, lofts, and shops across the busy nation. It seemed there was no need or problem that could not be resolved by the application of new machinery or methods.

As McGaw notes, the majority of technological advances made in the period she has defined focused on basic issues of survival, well-being, efficient production, and utility. As basic needs were met, new technologies arose, some of them bordering on the frivolous. Who has not seen the patent for a mechanical device to be placed inside a bowler to allow a gentleman to tip his hat in greeting without removing his hands from his pockets? And who could have dreamed 100 years ago that we might one day be buying electric toasters, recreational vehicles, or air conditioning?

One of the many valuable features of the book is its recognition of the societal impact of technological change. Freeing women from the tyranny of nearly continuous pregnancy, for instance, paved the way for numerous advances in women's rights. And preserving food provided a means for families to settle where they chose, unconstrained by the need to stay close to more densely settled areas. Without that, there could have been no *Little House on the Prairie;* the westward movement would very likely have taken much longer.

Not all the by-products of technology were welcomed, of course. Mechanization of labor-intensive manufacture led to greater efficiency and lower costs, but that led to spotty unemployment. Contamination of air and water became serious problems in urban settlements, giving rise to the hunt for new technologies to deal with these threats.

In the early days there was little concern for patent and protection rights; someone who developed a better seed-planter or an improved pit saw was likely to share the idea with others so that they could enjoy the benefits. In time, however, competition and marketing practices changed, creating the era of the middle class. Patenting led to a primitive form of industrial espionage.

A thoughtful addition to *Early American Technology* is the inclusion of extensive listings of relevant sources for readers who wish to pursue specific subjects in more detail. My only disappointment with the book is that my name was listed incorrectly among those guides. Still, I count it as an honor to have been included in that illustrious company of historians.

JOHN W. MAXSON

*John W. Maxson is a writer and lecturer who lives in Westmoreland, New Hampshire.*

## *In Good Hands: The Keeping of a Family Farm*

*By* Charles Fish (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995, pp. 240, $21.00).

"I was slow to realize that all human orders are transient, that stability is an artful imposition of uncertain duration. . . . I came to see that the farm, where peaceful people could live and work, was a remarkable achievement of wisdom and will, an island in the ebb and flow of history" (p. 166). As a reviewer I approached this book expecting a memoir of life on a Vermont farm in the remembered past. It is certainly that, but it is much more as well. In this provocative book Charles Fish pushes beyond surface appearances to examine the ways in which we apprehend the world and construct meaning in our lives. He describes this work as both the celebration and interrogation of a tradition; in the process he has written a vivid portrait of life on a Vermont farm in the middle decades of the twentieth century—exploring what it was and what it has ceased to be.

Fish approaches farming as a cultural system, a constructed rather than a naturally occurring phenomenon, asserting the dictum of the ethnographer that nothing is more difficult to see clearly than the familiar. He is well positioned to rise to this challenge since he is both of the tradition and outside it. His great-great-grandfather Henry Lester established a farm in Rutland in 1836. His mother was raised there and Fish visited often, spending the summer he was seven, in 1944, on the farm with his grandmother and his uncles. Fish's life has taken him far from the bounded world of the farm—he describes himself as "apostate"—but this book brings him close again, to examine at middle age what he finds most compelling about these memories and his farm heritage.

Deeply held convictions about the nature of human experience—theory, if you will—shape our commonplace assumptions about everyday life. And on the Lester farm it was Fish's grandmother Pauline Lester Williams who embodied and interpreted the values, both moral and spiritual, that animated the farm as economic enterprise: "The household was to the entire farm as the heart to the body, sending the blood of moral purpose and correct action to all the parts and receiving in turn physical and economic means of support. One law or principle animated the whole and found in the household its clearest expression and in Grandmother its most devoted servant" (p. 27).

The farm fostered balance and moderation, and those who farmed strove to achieve a "steady state." It was a world that offered opportunities for

individual expression and fulfillment in work, but with a cost: a measure of personal freedom. It is this particular tension—"between the self-definition of community and the explorations of a roving mind" (p. 56)—that fascinates Fish as he wonders aloud "what seeds of reflection may have sprouted and died" (p. 61) in the minds of family members who chose to stay on the farm.

Life on the farm in the 1940s offers sharp contrast to the condition of life in the present, and Fish's reflections on this change are the real substance of the book. The farm raised up future citizens in its image, but in time that image became an anachronism. As Fish observes, the farms that survived were those that remained profitable, and the changes that allowed a farm to prosper were steps away from the traditional way of life: "While the economic and technological order, of which the farm as a business was a part, grew more complex and denser, the spiritual order, of which the farm as a way of life was a part, grew weaker and thinner" (p. 155).

The Lester farm of his grandmother's era embodies for Fish an ideal of community that serves as a counterpoint for his critique of contemporary society, a society dedicated to the fulfillment of the individual without regard for a "suprapersonal entity . . . whose interests might outweigh our own" (p. 152). Fish suggests that having lost the experience of community, we crave its security even as we are unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve it. Implicit in Fish's critique is the question, Are things getting better or are they getting worse? I find myself wondering: If we have indeed experienced loss, can we take direction from that loss and act upon it? Or is Fish's sense of loss simply a symptom of generational change?

And what of the farm today? Although Fish describes the circumstances of the Lester, now Williams, farm in its present incarnation, his description lacks the power and clarity of the portrait he draws of the farm in memory; the tradition he interrogates is located firmly in the past. I would suggest that this tradition persists into the present—changed, certainly, but nevertheless unbroken. Change may, in fact, be of its very essence. Even in this era farming remains a way of life, and there's much we can learn about ourselves and our society from its close examination.

*In Good Hands: The Keeping of a Family Farm* is enjoyable reading for anyone who is interested in Vermont and the culture of rural life.

GREGORY SHARROW

*Gregory Sharrow is folklorist and director of education at the Vermont Folklife Center. He was executive producer of the award-winning public radio series "Never Done: Farm Life in Vermont" and recently edited* Families on the Land: Profiles of Vermont Farm Families.

## *The Political Legacy of George D. Aiken: Wise Old Owl of the U.S. Senate*

*Edited by* Michael Sherman (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press and the Vermont Historical Society, 1995, pp. 189, paper, $16.00).

There is no full-length biography of George D. Aiken, the revered former governor, U.S. senator, and "quintessential Vermonter" (p. 131), but this collection of essays should prove helpful to the person who eventually writes it, as well as to the general reader who wants an introduction to Aiken. Michael Sherman has done a fine job of adapting into chapters the original oral presentations delivered at the University of Vermont's annual Aiken Lecture Series in 1991. Though brief, the essays, including both personal reminiscences and scholarly analyses, are highly readable and contain many useful facts and insights. The focus, as the title and subtitle indicate, is the legacy of Aiken's senatorial career. Only one chapter deals at length with Aiken's early years: James Wright's study of the impact of Progressive reform on Aiken. Wright's contribution is highly pertinent, but this reviewer would have appreciated fuller explorations into how Aiken's family and his work as a farmer shaped the later politician. A chapter that might have been dispensed with as superfluous to the topic is Thomas G. Paterson's "World in Aiken's Times," which, though it provides a clear overview of its subject, contains no more than a few allusions to Aiken.

In assessing Aiken's legacy, as this collection intends to do, it is necessary to attempt to separate reality from image, or at least to show how image is based in reality. Vermont state archivist D. Gregory Sanford, in his essay on the Aiken research materials, offers the hope that they might be used to do just that—to, as Sanford puts it, "cross the line from mythology to understanding" (p. 132). This is not to imply that the popular Aiken image is false. In fact, none of the collection's authors would dissent from the idea that Aiken represented the best of the Vermont tradition in his rural background, personal integrity, plainspokenness, and ability to strike reasonable compromises. Yet two of the contributors point to a side of Aiken that lovers of his myth may ignore: the complexity of his thinking on the Vietnam War and an unexpected partisanship.

It is Mark Stoler's essay on Aiken's service on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that clearly develops the complexity of his perspective on Vietnam. While Stoler sees Aiken's views on foreign affairs as generally realistic, skeptical of presidential ambitions and unlimited na-

tional power, and with a preference for using economic rather than military means to serve U.S. interests, he points out that the Vermont senator "supported all military appropriations for the [Vietnam] war, insisted that the United States had a commitment to South Vietnam, and opposed Senate efforts to set a timetable for withdrawal" (p. 100). If this seems contradictory for the famous dove, it is because Aiken was not an easily defined opponent of the war but what his friend Senator Mike Mansfield called him, "a wise old owl," who sought to bridge the divide between opponents and supporters with practical ways of serving national interests. This stance led him to give his famous advice that the United States should withdraw from Vietnam while claiming victory.

If Aiken's thinking could be complex, he could also display partisanship. Herbert S. Parmet, writing on Aiken's not always easy relationship with the Republican Party, cogently elaborates on the costs of such commitment to party. Parmet sees Aiken as one of those liberal Republicans in the third quarter of the twentieth century who essentially acquiesced in the party's takeover by conservatives allied with Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon. Though sometimes critical of the conservatives within party councils, Aiken muted his disagreements in public, most notably in his support for Nixon during the Watergate scandal. According to Parmet, such silence made it that much easier for the right wing to triumph in the years since.

Stoler and Parmet provide the most provocative studies in the collection, but each chapter offers valuable material. In addition to those already noted, Donald A. Ritchie, in his overview of the Senate during Aiken's tenure (1941–1975), analyzes the Vermonter's sometimes curmudgeonly reactions in the context of changes in the institution. Anna Kasten Nelson notes the difficulty of coming to grips with Aiken's Senate experience given his reluctance to explain his personal reaction to people or events in either his papers or his oral history. Charles F. O'Brien shows that behind Aiken's desire to promote friendship with Canada was a shrewd effort to promote the economic interests of Vermonters. And in personal reminiscences Philip H. Hoff, James L. Oakes, and Stephen C. Terry provide endearing anecdotes that help us understand why Aiken was much loved and highly respected.

DOUGLAS SLAYBAUGH

*Douglas Slaybaugh is associate professor of history and American studies, Saint Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont.*

## *The Central Vermont Railway: A Yankee Tradition*

*By* Robert C. Jones. Vol. 7 (Shelburne, Vt.: New England Press, 1995, pp. 192, $40.00).

You can almost feel the sharp, midwinter chill in the air. Snow-covered Camel's Hump glows in the fading light of the setting sun, while a northbound Central Vermont Railway freight train headed by eight diesels rumbles past a frozen cornfield about a mile north of Richmond, Vermont. The striking color photograph on the cover of *The Central Vermont Railway: A Yankee Tradition*, volume 7: *1981–1995*, by Robert C. Jones, gives a good preview of what you'll find inside. The photo was taken by well-known rail photographer Jim Shaughnessy on February 3, 1995, the CV's last day of operation. Significantly, five of the eight locomotives in the cover photo belong to the New England Central, CV's successor, which took over the railroad's operation the following day.

Prolific Vermont railroad author Robert C. Jones completes his exhaustive history of the Central Vermont Railway with this seventh and final volume. The previous volumes were produced by Colorado's Sundance Publications, but because of a backlog of railroad books there, the New England Press of Shelburne, Vermont, took on the task of completing the series. They have done an excellent job of matching the overall appearance and quality of the previous works.

Jones knows his subject well. He has worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Vermont Railway, and the Green Mountain Railroad during his forty-year railroad career. He is currently employed in train service by the New England Central. Remarkably, Jones also recently retired after teaching high school for thirty-three years and has authored an impressive number of books and articles on New England railroading.

Despite the book's title, Jones backtracks to 1980 to include a full fifteen years in this volume. The period from 1980 to 1995 was a difficult and often sad part of the CV's history. Jones has done an admirable job of briefly chronicling the deregulation of the railroad industry in 1980 and the national recession that followed, with the attendant dislocations, downsizings, cutthroat competition, reductions of rail freight traffic, and growing labor-management tensions that characterized the CV's final years. All of these factors ultimately led to Canadian National Railway's decision to sell its CV subsidiary, a move that did nothing to improve the sagging morale of the CV's embattled employees. In 1980 there had been around 412 people on the company's payroll, but by 1993 the number had dwindled to 171.

The last few years of the railroad's life were embroiled in bitter controversy over the proposed sale of the line to RailTex of San Antonio, Texas, which proposed cutting the work force in half and reducing wages by about 15 percent. RailTex, operator of twenty-three short lines in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, was able to circumvent traditional labor protection laws because of its status as a holding company—legally it was not considered a railroad. This fine distinction did not set well with the CV's employees, who were openly hostile to the sale. Jones recounts the often heated battle involving the rail unions, RailTex, Vermont politicians, the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the courts. In the end RailTex prevailed, eventually hiring about ninety-five employees for its renamed New England Central Railroad, which continues to operate trains today.

This final volume of the CV saga contains a tremendous amount of detailed information that occasionally approaches overkill. If you want to know which locomotives were painted when or how many track ties were replaced or how many tons of ballast were spread on the system in a given year, you need look no further for the answers. But Jones's coverage of Amtrak's fatal 1984 Montrealer derailment in Williston, Vermont, and the 1987 hay train that shipped seventy-two boxcar-loads of Vermont hay to drought-stricken farmers in the Southeast, as well as the lengthy battle over the transfer of CV's Burlington lakefront property to the Queen City is well balanced.

Except for a few images of excursion steam locomotives, this volume is focused almost entirely on diesels and the diesel era. Breathtaking two-page color spreads, like the view of twelve diesels pulling train 447 on pages 62 and 63, taken by Leo Landry, and the stunning night scene of train 324 at Brattleboro on pages 128 and 129, taken by Steve Carlson, come close to making up for the lack of classic steam images. Altogether this handsome volume contains 277 photographs, fifty-seven in full color, of Central Vermont scenes from one end of the system to the other. Detailed captions make the images even more interesting and useful. Overall the photographs complement the text nicely, providing a visually appealing package that could almost stand on the photography alone. A CV system map, timetables, and a diesel roster for 1980–1995 round out the book's offerings.

Steam fans will find little of interest here, but dyed-in-the-wool diesel-era railroad fans, especially CV fans, will almost certainly want to add the final volume of this monumental series to their collections.

GREG PAHL

*Greg Pahl, a Middlebury resident, is a freelance writer who has been a frequent contributor of railroad-related material to* Vermont History *in recent years.*

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## Recent Additions to the Vermont Historical Society Library

Books

Austin, Pearl M., *A Collection of Writings by Pearl M. Austin.* Vershire, Vt.: Roberta J. Perkins, 1995. 93p. Source: The publisher, Vershire Center Rd. #139, Vershire, VT 05079. List: Unknown (paper). Reminiscences of Barnet woman, 1916–1992.

*Beck, Jane C., ed., *Vermont Recollections: Sifting Memories Through the Interview Process.* Orono, Me.: Maine Folklife Center, Department of Anthropology, University of Maine, 1995. 191p. List: $15.00 (paper).

Bensen, Clark H., ed., *Demographic and Political Guide to Vermont: Towns, Cities and Places.* Lake Ridge, Va.: Polidata, 1995. Various pagings. Source: The publisher, 3112 Cave Court, Lake Ridge, VA 22192-1167. List: $72.00 (paper).

*Bonfield, Lynn A., and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995. 267p. List: $50.00, $19.95 (paper). Story of a Peacham family.

Brooke, John L., *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 421p. List: $34.95. Includes Vermont roots.

Bryant, William J., *Dear Classmates: The Vermont Legislature as Seen Through a Senate Page's Eyes.* Privately published, 1995. 20p. Source: The author, RR 1, Box 202, South Woodstock, VT 05071. List: $10.00 (paper).

*Calloway, Colin G., *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 327p. List: $59.95.

*Clifford, Susannah, *Village in the Hills: A History of Danville, Vermont, 1786–1995.* West Kennebunk, Me.: Phoenix Publishing, 1995. 274p. List: $35.00.

Conger, Beach, *It's Not My Fault: Tales of a Vermont Doctor.* Golden, Colo.: Fulcrum, 1995. 199p. List: $19.95.

Davis, Thomas C., *The Duval Conspiracy.* Manchester Center, Vt.: Marshall Jones Company, 1995. 207p. List: $24.95. Political thriller set in Vermont.

*Fisher, Dorothy Canfield, *The Bedquilt and Other Stories.* Edited with an introduction and afterword by Mark J. Madigan. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996. 234p. List: $29.95.

Freeman, Castle, *Spring Snow: The Seasons of New England from the Old Farmer's Almanac.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995. 175p. List: $21.95. Weather observations from a Vermont writer.

Marcotte, Lillian Hatch, *We Dared to Live Different.* No imprint: The author, 1994. 238p. Source: The author, RR 1, Box 794, Woodstock, VT 05091. Memories of a self-sufficient life in Hartland.

Mayor, Archer, *The Dark Root.* New York: Mysterious Press, 1995. 353p. List: $19.95. Vermont fiction.

Mills, Jason, and Adrian A. Paradis, *Partnership for Excellence, 1969–1994: The History of EHV-Weidmann Industries.* West Kennebunk, Me.: Phoenix Publishing, 1994. 98p. Source: EHV-Weidmann Industries, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. List: $30.00.

Stout, Marilyn, *Vermont Walks, Village and Countryside: Walking Tours of Forty-three Vermont Villages and Their Surroundings.* Montpelier: Vermont Life, 1995. 94p. List: $12.95 (paper).

*Taking Care of Your Old Barn.* Montpelier: Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, 1995. 40p. Source: The publisher, Drawer 33, Montpelier, VT 05633-1201. List: Free (paper).

Vermont Environmental Board, *Twenty-fifth Anniversary Report, 1970–1995.* Montpelier: Vermont Environmental Board, 1995. 16p. Source: The board, 58 East State St., Drawer 20, Montpelier, VT 05602-3201. List: Free (paper). Includes "The Evolution of Act 250."

Votey, Constance, *Constance Votey: Moments in a Life, Reflections on an Era.* Greensboro, Vt.: Greensboro Historical Society, 1995. 60p. Source: The publisher, Box 1, Greensboro, VT 05841. List: $6.50 (paper).

DISSERTATION

Yale, Allen Rice, "Ingenious and Enterprising Mechanics: A Case Study of Industrialization in Rural Vermont, 1815–1900." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1995. 380p. Source: University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. History of the E. & T. Fairbanks Company, St. Johnsbury.

ARTICLE

Saillant, John, "Slavery and Divine Providence in New England Calvinism: The New Divinity and a Black Protest, 1775–1805," *New England Quarterly* 68, 4 (December 1995): 584–608. Includes Vermonter Lemuel Haynes.

GENEALOGY

Adams, Robert Train, and Douglass Graem Adams, *A Family Record of Dr. Samuel Adams, United Empire Loyalist of Vermont and Upper Canada.* Lafayette, Calif.: R. T. Adams, 1995. 339p. Source: The author, 3146 Maryola Court, Lafayette, CA 94549-4115. List: Unknown.

Card, Charles H., comp., *Van Arnhem-Van Orman Family: A Family with Many Names.* Carrabelle, Fla.: The compiler, 1996. 27, 128p. Source: The author, P.O. Box 281, Carrabelle, FL 32322. List: Unknown (photocopy).

Hendricks, Charles H., and Burton B. Hendricks, eds., *Jennie Maria Burnett Hendricks and Those Who Preceded Her, Those Who Took the Journey with Her, and Those Who Followed Her.* Chapel Hill, N.C.: C. H. Hendricks, 1991. 234p. Source: Charles H. Hendricks, 102 Boulder Lane, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. List: Unknown. Family from Underhill.

Lewis, Charles H., *The Lewis Family of Berkshire, Vt.* Falls Village, Conn.: The author, 1995. 53p. Source: The author, 74 Dublin Rd., Falls Village, CT 06031. List: Unknown (paper).

Riegel, Florence Chase, *The Chase Family of Hudson, N.H., Newbury, Vt., and Dickinson Center, N.Y.* 61p. No publisher. Source: The author, P.O. Box 100, Newfield, ME 04056. List: Unknown (photocopy).

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