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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS



James Fuller is a school resource officer with the Winooski Police Department. While advancing toward a history degree in Pennsylvania, his studies focused primarily on life in the American colonies. After relocating to Vermont in 1987, he began to research the Green Mountain State's rich contributions to both American and world events. In addition to his work on the role of African-American soldiers he has begun to examine the lives of early Vermonters. He lives with his family in South Burlington.

Lorna Quimby, a native Vermonter, is president and curator of the Peacham Historical Association and writes for the association's newsletter, *Peacham Patriot*. She was town clerk and treasurer of Peacham from 1981 to 1994, and has served on the Vermont Historic Records Advisory Board and the Vermont Public Records Advisory Board. Her article with Shepard B. Clough, "Peacham, Vermont: Fifty Years of Economic and Social Change, 1929-1979" appeared in *Vermont History* in winter 1983. Her memories of growing up in the 1930s appear in *The North Star Monthly*, Danville, Vermont.

Kristin O'Hare is a sophomore at the St. Johnsbury Academy. Raised in Lake Carmel, N.Y., she has lived in Peacham with her family since 1994. In sixth grade, as a part of a graduation project, she began to work with Lorna Quimby at the Peacham Historical Association, where she became involved in the Blanchard Papers project. She continues to volunteer for the association and plans to be a historian and history teacher, with a specialty in the Revolution and Civil War.

Alice McShane is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the State University of New York at Albany. In 1998, working as a volunteer in the Vermont Historical Society library, Ms. McShane processed the Leonard Johnson Family papers, which include Martha Johnson's account of her experience with the Port Royal Experiment.



The Letters of Louden S. Langley

Edited by JAMES FULLER

Louden S. Langley was an African-American born to a large farm family in Huntington, Vermont. Educated and articulate, Langley posted many newspaper editorials decrying the colonization schemes of the mid-1800s, the evils of slavery, and the unjust treatment of black soldiers by the Union army during the Civil War. In 1855 he sheltered a fugitive slave in his home on Lincoln Hill in Hinesburg, Vermont. In 1863 he enlisted into the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment where his two brothers also served. During his tenure in the Union army he rose to the rank of Sergeant-Major,¹ the highest rank available to a black soldier at the time. After the war he returned² to the Charleston, South Carolina, area where it is assumed that he worked for the betterment of others of his race less fortunate. He is buried at the National Cemetery in Beaufort, South Carolina. Except for minor spelling corrections, the unusual language usage, and punctuation of his letters are preserved.

COLONIZATION

One of the many schemes perpetrated against African-Americans was the colonization of friendly African or Central American countries. Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, and the modern day Honduras-El Salvadorian areas of Central America were but two of the desired destinations³ for these hapless souls. Even President Abraham Lincoln supported the ideas of payments to the slavemasters as compensation for emancipation and relocation out of the country of southern slaves and freemen alike. Although many thousand newly freed blacks were relocated through these programs, the idea of colonization was promoted mainly by whites and was not popular among the free black population. Descendants of colonization still live in Liberia to this day.

The Green Mountain Freeman
Montpelier, Vermont
27 April 1854

Mr. Editor: Having received the paper you sent me, though not till quite recently, owing to the infrequency of my visits at Hinesburg, allow me now to say a few words to the public, through the columns of your paper, touching the prosperity of the Colonization Society.

I shall bear down against them without ceremony, nor does it require any. Sir, my attachments for a good policy towards all those whose color is identified with my own, will forever make me the antagonist of that Society. The small increase of the population of that Republic, by emigration from the United States, is alone enough to justify my last illusion. Even in a quarter of a century there have been sent out to that Republic only seven or eight thousand emigrants from the United States.

If the Society is actuated with such a love for my people, let men so interested, and every other, cease their efforts in behalf of that Society, (for their labor is in vain, so far as regards to the triumph of their policy,) and lend their influence in favor of giving us "liberty and equal rights" in the land of our birth. But they know very well that if colored people are equal with their "white fellow citizens" that their influence would be stronger for the immediate abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia, (that is there tolerated, and with shame we may say it, before the very eyes of foreign ambassadors) as well as other places where Congress has a constitutional right to govern.

Mr. J. K. Converse[sic], Secretary of the Society,⁴ in his report made in A.D. 1850, says that there were a few colored people in the vicinity of Burlington, whom he thought would go to the new Republic. Let me say to the Secretary that I am quite confident that no colored people in Burlington have gone or will ever go to Liberia. The majority of the emigrants from the United States are liberated slaves, who are compelled by the laws of free America to leave their native land; and even some of those, rather than go to that Republic, have been known to make their way north, under the pretense of going to Liberia after their arrival here.

The writer should warn all people whose color is identified with his own, to resist, with more than usual energy, the extraordinary efforts now made by the Colonizationists, inasmuch as they are founded on the most unjust prejudice against all the men of our race. What say you, Mr. Editor! Are you in favor of Colonization! If you are, my language is plain.

Hinesburg, Vt.
L. Langley

SLAVERY AND THE JUSTIFICATION OF WAR

In 1855, Loudon Langley housed a fugitive slave from the island of Cuba at his home in Hinesburg, Vermont. Cuba, a mere 90 miles off the coast of Florida, was still under the rule of the Spanish. The United States wanted to obtain Cuba and attempted several times to purchase the island from Spain. Each offer was refused. Many southern politicians saw the acquisition of Cuba as an opportunity to increase the number of slave-states. By the late 1850s and early 1860s, internal events commanded the undivided attention of the United States government. Consequently, the "Cuban Question" would not be resolved until the conclusion of the Spanish-American War.

Green Mountain Freeman
Montpelier, Vermont
8 February 1855

Mr. Editor: Allow me to relate, in the column of your paper, a story recently made to me by a gentleman named Phiseau. This gentleman was nineteen years a slave in the Island of Cuba, and came to this country in 1840. I am personally acquainted with him, and his statement can be relied upon, as an authentic account of the exertions of the U. S. Cabinet to court Spain, so as to gain her good will relative to the Cuba question, that the destiny of that fair Isle is similar to that of Hayti.

He said his business was to go from the city of Havanna to his master's farm in the country every morning to take care of the cattle and horses as well as the other animals at that place, also to bring into the city at night a quantity of coffee. After his arrival at the farm one day, he was informed by a friend that a meeting among the slaves was that day secretly to take place. He took one of his master's horses and went to the meeting. He said that there [were] two or three fellows present whom he suspected of being unfriendly to the cause, which prevented him from taking an active part in the affairs of the day. It was the unanimous voice of the meeting that they should designate some deserted part of the country, but in a convenient place, for digging either a great cellar or hole, for the purposes of secreting arms and gunpowder, and other utensils of war, preparatory to a rebellion. Each one that assisted in carrying arms to their magazine was, of course, instructed to convey them secretly, and without the knowledge of their most intimate friends. Unfortunately, for the meeting, the suspected persons, (slaves) to which I before alluded, proved fatal to their plans and preparations, and the plan which the meeting had advised to be adopted was prevented by the persons above mentioned; when, if permitted to succeed, all the Spanish power of arms, both in Europe and America, yea, and her allies too, could never have checked.

The above can, as I have before said, be relied upon as a fact, and an authentic account. Now I always entertained the conviction, even

before the above fact was communicated to me, that the Island of Cuba - that Queen of the Antilles and brightest jewel in the Castilian crown, is just as much destined to be the development of the black race as that Hayti (Hay-te) should be governed by them. In spite of all that has been said or done, or that can be, by those pirate expeditions, and in spite of all the vigilance, united, of England, France and the United States, Cuba is destined to the descendants of the children of Africa, and when the sign comes right, it will pass into their hands, and the Southern States and Europe will find it best to hold their peace.

Suppose you, my readers, that an equivocal number of colored men, that is, as the Lopez expedition,⁵ should ever land on the shores of that fair Isle, how long do you think it would remain a dependency of Spain? I have given it as my opinion, that in less than two months the Island of Cuba would be in possession, and under the government, of those who they now hold in bondage, an institution of bondage, too, that half-civilized nations are becoming heartily ashamed of. Then away with that cruel prejudice against color, which the Whig and Democratic principles represented in the Baltimore platform, alone cultivate.⁶

Now, in case a rebellion should ever happen among the slaves of Cuba, as I am quite confident there will, I presume there are many who will be influenced by prejudice to condemn both the actions and movements of the blacks, on the same ground that we condemn the actions of the Haytians, in regard to the seizure of property, and the immensity of the seizure. But let us look at the facts, and just consider that war is war, and that peace is peace, and that it was no worse, nor so bad, for the Haytians to seize the property of their masters, and drive them into exile, in time of war, than it was for the latter to claim both the body and service of the former, in time of peace. I am no advocate of war, I mean an unjust war; and as bad as I hate war, I hate tyrants and tyranny worse. Yes, I go further, and I say, that every nation has a God-given right to rebel against any laws, unjust laws, that the tyrants may deem fit to make and enforce, on the grounds that they are acting without the approbation of their people, and the Higher Law, which commands us, as the Hon. Mr. Smith⁷ said, "to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us," and who, but lunatics and insane persons, can say, justly say, but what he does? If any man of men can do so, let them speak.

I renew to you, Mr. Editor, the wish that this may appear in your columns.

Louden S. Langley
Hinesburg, Jan., 1854

EQUAL TREATMENT

Firmly grounded as an abolitionist, Langley joined the Union army to fight

against the system of bondage that held four million blacks as slaves in the South. By the war's end 152 black men would serve for the state of Vermont. The first large group of fifty-two men was mustered into federal service in December, 1863. As there were not enough black men in the whole state to fill a regiment,⁸ these men were assigned to the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, already in service at the Sea Islands off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina. While white recruits were paid at the rate of \$13.00 per month, plus a clothing allowance of \$3.50, black men were paid only \$10.00 per month, with \$3.00 deducted for clothing. To add to the inequity, promised enlistment bonuses, or bounties, were denied the black recruits. Despite Vermont's long standing pride in being the first in the nation to abolish slavery by action of its state constitution, the needs of these sons of Vermont and their families were ignored. Even the promised additional pay of \$7.00 per month by the State Legislature was refused the men for a time.⁹

The Weekly Anglo-African
New York
30 January 1864

Park Barracks
New York, Jan. 23, 1864

Mr. Editor: The members of the 54th Mass. (from Vt.), now stopping in one of the Park Barracks, have received, and duly appreciate, the copies of your valuable paper that you kindly sent them this p.m., and desire me to express to your their thanks for the same. The Anglo-African contains much information with reference to the existing U. S. Regulations for the enlistment of colored troops, which they had not seen in print. Nine-tenths of the boys had been informed by selectmen, who were very anxious to fill their town quotas, that the colored recruits received from the U. S. the same pay and bounty as the white recruits. The writer had warned and told all those who had been thus informed, that such was not the case; but the boys preferred to believe the misrepresentations with which the officers (either from ignorance or a love of falsehood) had filled their ears.

They had confidently expected to receive the seventy-five dollars that the U. S. pays their white recruits until a couple of hours before their departure, when we were ordered to "fall in," after which we were informed by Lieut. Phillips, the officer in charge of us, the real facts of the case.

The intelligence, as might have been expected, was received with (I am sorry to state it) much cursing and swearing, accompanied with the declaration that they never would have enlisted had they been truly

informed, and that they would not leave the camp until they had been paid the seventy-five dollars. The officers, apprehensive of more trouble, deemed it expedient to resort to more falsehood, so we were told that we would be paid as much as any recruits, and that our pay had been sent to our regimental headquarters, at which place we would be paid on our arrival there.

This course, it was alleged, was necessary, because we were going to a regiment from another State. This falsehood the boys believed and took courage, until to-day, when, with the aid of your paper, I have convinced them that what I had previously told them was true. I verily believe that but for the reconciling remarks of Lieut. Phillips, the boys (although having no arms) would have shown a spirited resistance to marching. Not only Capt. J. F. Brannan, but Maj. W. Austin[sic]¹⁰ positively stated falsehoods with reference to our pay. But let the sin rest where it belongs on the U. S. government and not on its officers. The latter were between two fires, the honor of the State, and the requirements of the National government. Both must be preserved, and hence personal honor must be sacrificed.

The boys feel somewhat down-hearted, but hope for the best, and have *some* faith in the justice of Congress.

And now, Mr. Editor, I would ask what can, *what ought* to be thought of a government that asks, yea, even urges and *forces* men into its service, under a most horrid system of injustice, and thereby compelling its official agents to resort to falsehood, rather than be under the dire necessity of shedding the blood of its own soldiers, to enforce a compliance with its ungodly and cruel requirements? And, Mr. Editor, may we hope that Congress, for the sake of the *honor of the country*, and for the sake of the families of a portion of its able and true defenders, will soon remove this disgraceful distinction from the military statute of this great nation?

Louden S. Langley
A Colored Vermont Recruit

Pay for the black soldiers was equalized to that of the whites in the summer of 1864, but not until after the humiliation of swearing an oath that they were not previously held as slaves prior to April 19, 1861. Not until 1865 did those black Union soldiers who were once slaves gain equal pay status.

Louden S. Langley wrote other accounts of battles for equality during his years of service. These letters were published in *The Burlington Free Press*¹¹ and *The Weekly Anglo-African*.¹²

NOTES

¹ To accept this promotion, Langley transferred from the 54th Massachusetts to the 33rd United States Colored Infantry. A regiment raised from the nucleus of the 1st South Carolina Volunteer Infantry Regiment, African Descent. This regiment had the distinction of being the very first "experiment" of using African-American soldiers in the eastern theater of operations.

² Both the 54th Massachusetts Regiment and the 33rd United States Colored Infantry were stationed in the Sea Islands off the coast from Charleston.

³ Desired by whites.

⁴ Reverend E. K. Converse was a Burlington minister and educator. As Secretary to the Colonization Society in Vermont, he wrote that colonization would rid the nation of poor and despised blacks, encourage slave owners to emancipate their slaves, and provide a nucleus of black clergy to spread the gospel to the "Dark Continent."

⁵ Narciso Lopez was a Cuban soldier-of-fortune who led several unsuccessful invasion attempts using mercenary adventurers, known as "filibusters" (from the Spanish *filibustero*, meaning pirate). He raised the majority of his men from the New Orleans area where the Governor of Louisiana, John Quitman, supplied him with material and moral support. After a failed attempt in May, 1850, Lopez was put on trial for violation of the neutrality laws. Quitman threatened to use the state militia in preventing the arrest of Lopez by federal marshals. The government dropped the charges after it became clear that no southern jury would convict him.

Lopez attempted to invade Cuba again in 1851 but was captured by the Spanish and was publicly garroted. Fifty other American prisoners were executed including the son of the U. S. Attorney General John Crittenden.

⁶ After the conclusion of the Mexican War, the Whig party was splintered along geographic boundaries. The northern or "Conscience Whigs" were anti-slavery, whereas the southern or "Cotton Whigs" were pro-slavery.

A temporary reconciliation occurred in 1850 when all sides rallied against secession while at the same time the party drafted for the 1852 election a platform taking no firm stance against slavery. By 1852, however, the split was irreconcilable. The Whig candidate, General Winfield Scott, lost by an overwhelming margin.

More inaction during the Kansas and Nebraska crises caused the party to completely dissolve into what are now Republican and Democratic parties.

⁷ Believed to be referring to Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church.

⁸ An infantry regiment consisted of 1,000 men and officers. According to the census of 1860, there were but 709 African-American men, women and children in the entire state.

⁹ In all fairness however, the State had money problems at the time and a few white troops were also not paid. Though lessening the taint of discrimination (when taken in context of the whole) this reality did not help the plight of the colored soldier.

¹⁰ Major Austine was a regular army officer assigned to Vermont to recruit and muster new volunteer regiments. It was Austine who, in the November 11, 1863 edition of *The Rutland Herald* announced "that colored recruits may be received on the same terms as others and will be duly credited to the quota of the State, though placed to serve in the colored regiments raising in other states."

¹¹ "Letters from our soldiers," *Burlington Free Press*, 22 March 1864.

¹² Founded in 1859, *The Weekly Anglo-African* was published in New York City. It was the second most-read black newspaper in the United States. After the Emancipation Proclamation it encouraged black men to join the Union army and published many letters from battlefields and base camps alike. Its founder and publisher, Robert Hamilton, died in 1865, and the newspaper folded by the end of the year. Few issues have survived.

VERMONT ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS



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

Blanchard Family Papers in the Peacham Historical Association

Edited by LORNA QUIMBY AND KRISTIN O'HARE

In the fall of 1995, Charles and Anne Gallagher gave the Peacham Historical Association papers carpenters had found while working on their house in South Peacham. There are two letters dated 1863 and one dated 1862 which begin "Dear Father." Another letter of undeterminable date begins "Friend New." There were five envelopes, four addressed to "Ralph Blanchard, Peacham, Vermont" and one dated 1864 to "Miss Jennie Kav[]." Four of the envelopes are postmarked Ottawa, Illinois, St. Louis, Missouri, La Salle, Illinois, and Brattleboro, Vermont, respectively. The fifth envelope, its postmark unreadable for the stamp has been eaten away, has the red and blue logo used during the Civil War.

The envelopes appear to have been chewed by something and there are holes in the letters, all of which are extremely brittle, dusty and wrinkled. Only vestiges of the stamps remain.



One of four envelopes in the Blanchard Family Papers addressed to Ralph Blanchard in Peacham, Vermont, bearing the polychrome logo used during the Civil War. Courtesy of the Peacham Historical Association.

Kristin O'Hare, at that time a sixth grader in the Peacham elementary school, worked with me to conserve and transcribe the letters and to find the information available about the writers and the people they mention. After unfolding, cleaning and fumigating the collection, we encapsulated each letter and envelope in Mylar and photocopied all. We then transcribed the three letters to "Dear Father." Kristin worked on the letter from Maria C. Bonner at Jefferson City and we both worked on the letters from Newell H. Blanchard at Fort Totten or Totten. Newell's letters were difficult to read, as his spelling was idiosyncratic, his grammar poor, and the letters themselves were severely damaged.

The addressee, Ralph Blanchard, belonged to a family represented in the early records of the town and of the Congregational church.¹ Born September 23, 1796, he joined the church in 1817, when he was 21. In 1824, at the age of twenty-eight, he married Maria Kellogg (born September 13, 1802), the daughter of Deacon Erastus and Judith Kellogg, and bought fifty acres of "Lot No. 10 in the Range" for \$400.² There were six children of this marriage: Henry, born August 16, 1825; Charles, August 31, 1827; Albert, September, 1829; Maria, 1833; Newell Hall, July 7, 1842; and Mary Ella, February 22, 1844.³ In 1840, for \$300 Blanchard bought fifty acres "more or less" in Lots 27 and 58 in "that part of town formerly called Deweyburg."⁴ Maria died at age 50 on April 17, 1852. The following year, on March 29, Ralph married Nancy McLachlin.⁵

A picture of Ralph Blanchard as a farmer emerges from the grand lists of Peacham. In 1825 he owned a house valued at \$150, three cows and one colt. The next year he added two oxen and seven sheep. If Blanchard had hogs, they were not listed. In 1827 the house was valued at \$100 and he had

three cows, two 2-year cows (or heifers), one horse and ten sheep. Until 1826 Blanchard's acreage was listed at only 25 acres rather than the original 50 he purchased. (Does this discrepancy mean they listed only cleared land or is it the result of an oversight?) In 1838, however, he was credited with 55 acres. He also was credited with a house valued at \$234.50, two oxen, four cows, one heifer, two horses and fifteen sheep. In 1839, 1840 and 1841 Blanchard owned twenty-five sheep, the largest number recorded. After 1840, when he bought an additional 50 acres, through 1844, money owed was \$300. In 1845, he had 108 acres and owed \$250. He also owned eleven cows, one horse, eighteen sheep and three hogs. In 1863 (the date of two of the letters) Blanchard had 100 acres in School District Twelve, five cows, eleven sheep and one hog. In 1864, he had 5 acres, a house and shop, one horse, one cow, one hog and \$1,000; in 1865, one horse and one cow and \$900; in 1866, \$700; in 1867, \$600; and, in 1868, Mrs. Nancy Blanchard, his widow, had one cow. His estate, listed separately, is valued at \$775.⁶

At first, with only the number of animals indicated by the grand lists, Blanchard would have been a subsistence farmer, raising enough food to sustain his family and trading any surpluses for items he and his family could not produce from the land. As his cattle and sheep herds grew, his cash crops would have been butter and wool. During the years he probably had the most wool (1839, 1840, and 1841) his daughter Maria was only six, seven, and eight years old, hardly old enough to help her mother with the spinning required. Blanchard probably sold his surplus to local spinners or woolen mills. He either bartered this wool or kept the proceeds "under the mattress," for we do not find him banking any cash during those years.

Butter was also taken at the stores for payment "in kind" and an invoice from McClary's store, which was in Peacham Corner from 1860 to 1893, was among the Blanchard papers. Ralph would have made the same sort of exchange of butter and eggs for sugar, nails, pail, and pitcher at the other stores in town.

A Jersey cow (Jerseys were favored for their high-fat-content milk) produced enough milk to make five pounds of butter a week.⁷ Not until 1893 would there be creameries to churn the butter and prepare it for market. In addition to the spinning, the burden of churning, working, and shaping the butter usually fell to the women of the household. Even during her numerous pregnancies, therefore, Maria would have been responsible for an important part of the economy of the family.

The efforts of both husband and wife and the help of their children paid for the schooling those children received. From 1839 through 1853, the elder Blanchards had a child in the Caledonia County Grammar School. Then after a six-year interval, Newell attended for a term. After another interval of two years Mary Ella had her turn. These were not full school years as we know them, but the so-called "Fall Term." During much of this time tuition was \$3.00 per quarter,

although after 1855 higher charges were made.⁸ Maria boarded at Captain David Sanborn's during 1850 and that would have been an additional expense.

A farmer looking at the number of cattle Ralph Blanchard owned would tell you Ralph had a problem. His herd would not generate enough manure to enrich his hay lands. Over time the land would become depleted, through lack of sufficient manure and lime. Depleted and sour soil would produce less forage to feed his animals during the severe Vermont winters. Unless he bought more land he could not expand his herd to provide a living for his grown sons and the families they would establish. Between the censuses of 1840 and 1850, the two older boys left the farm and, undoubtedly, Albert followed soon after 1850. As soon as they reached twenty-one, young men were leaving the area, "going west" to seek their fortunes. The locations where the sons died (Minnesota) indicate they joined the great western migration.

In 1863 Ralph Blanchard was sixty-seven years old. He had lived longer than many of his contemporaries. With his youngest son off to war, he had no choice but to sell the farm and retire to a village. This was an established pattern and many of the villages housed couples similarly situated. Ralph and Nancy had a horse for transportation, a cow for butter and milk, and a hog for garbage disposal and eventually salt pork, a mainstay of the local diet. Chickens are not mentioned in the grand lists, but a McClary's store invoice indicates their presence. The Blanchards lived frugally on the capital gained from the sale of the farm for \$2,000 and bought a "house and blacksmith shop on Water Street" for \$900.⁹

In 1857, at the age of twenty-four, Maria Caroline Blanchard married Samuel Bonner. She died in Peru, Illinois, in 1873 or 1874.¹⁰ At the time of the following letter in 1863, Maria was thirty and had been married six years. (Note that she still addressed her husband as "Mr. Bonner.")

Jefferson City, [Missouri] March 3, 1863

Dear Father,

I have not written you for a long time because I supposed Mary¹¹ in her frequent let[ters] gave you all the items of interest. You will probably be somewhat surprised to hear that I am in Jefferson City. I came up last Saturday to stay with Mr. Bonner a few days—I will probably go back next Saturday. Mary with Miss Tower (Sammy's¹² teacher) & by the help of [] Contraband¹³ boy are [] house & for the first time we felt best to leave Sammy at home[.] Jefferson City is a muddy little hole. And it seems very strange that the capital should have ever been located here—it is to many portions of the state [] inaccessible & can never become a town of any importance[.] the few inhabitants all take boarders during the session of the legislature & [they] calculate to make sufficient money during this time to last till the next session. The town is situated on the southern bank of the Missouri River. The counties on the Northern side are infested with guerrillas [and] some

fear has been felt —lest—when the river should be frozen over—they should cross over & gobble up the legislature before breakfast but the river has not been frozen this winter [“but the river . . .” was inserted over the preceding sentence.] as I came up I was constantly reminded that we were in what would be the enemy’s territory if they could only get the power—every bridge was guarded—a block house built near & soldiers stationed to protect the road & the bridges[.] some of the bridges were partially burned it is believed by order of our late governor Jackson, but have since been rebuilt.

I have been kept very busy this winter[.] Mr. Bonner being gone has obliged me to do all the marketing providing etc—then I visit one of the hospitals every week - also attend a society for the relief of the contrabands—the Union Aid Society—[] We [] more of the horrors [] war then the people possibly can who live at a distance yet [] in St. Louis know nothing compared with the country people. Mr. Bonner says some of the country members talk with the same gusto & spirit of their hunts after guerillas, that old hunters do of their deer and other game hunting—Missouri has been desolated by the contending armies—has experienced the worst features of civil war. We hear from Newell very often [and] he seems to be very well & in good spirits [and] seems to derive some comfort from the fact that the last conscription act can not affect him. I think they are very fortunate in being turned into an heavy artillery[.] We hear from Henry’s¹⁴ folks quite often. They are about as usual—Charles¹⁵ also—Albert¹⁶ has returned from Pikes Peak but we have not yet heard directly from him[.] I must now close as I promised Mr. Bonner to go up to the capital at eleven o’clock—to listen to the proceedings - I think you w[] see about as many that look like know nothings in a state Legislature as anywhere else. Sammy still says he would rather live in Vt than anywhere else. Mr. Bonner wishes to be remembered—please give my love to all

Truly Yours
Maria C. Bonner

The next two letters are from Newell H. Blanchard, Ralph’s youngest son. His phonetic spelling echoes the speech patterns he heard. Evidently he was not a successful student during the 1859 winter term at the Caledonia County Grammar School, for not only did he return to the district school (Ewell’s Hollow) in 1859-1860, but he is there the two following years until February 21, 1862.

On August 9, 1862 he enlisted in the Union army. He was in the Eleventh Regiment, Company A., of the First Regiment Heavy Artillery. Red chevrons and shoulder straps distinguished the uniform of the artillery units. In their introduction to the history of the Eleventh Regiment, James M. Warner and Aldace F. Walker report “The line occupied was about four miles from the city [Washington] beyond the ‘Soldiers’ Home.’ It was the daily resort of visitors from the city. No more pleasant or cheerful experiences were ever

the lot of soldiers in actual war than those enjoyed by this regiment during the whole of the year 1863 and the first three months of 1864.”¹⁷ The pleasantness of this environment is reflected in the well-being Newell conveys in his first letter from the regiment (with corrections indicated).

Fort Totten [Totten] Dec 21 - 1862

My Dear Father

I ricevd Jane[’s]¹⁸ letter a few days ago and was glad tow hear from your and hear that your was well but was sorry tow her [hear] that Jane had gone away [and] you will be all alone now but I hope your will get along We are having very nice weather [] snow and was [] I hope it will keep so[.] I was weighed tow day [and] I weighed 137 pd [.] two pounds more then I have ever weighed before[.] there was a time when I was at Fort Lincoln that I did not weighed but 118 pd[.] I was awful poor but sins [since] I had the Sumter[?] I have been fating up ever day[.] I never felt better in my life[.] we have a first rate time[.] your tell Bill Weeks that he better enlist he will have chance to enlist in this regment [for] we have been transferd tow an Atilly regment [and] we have got tow have 1200 men so they are going tow send home for recut [recruits][.] tell bill Bill he had [] come [] Bill[.] here is a good chance tow enlist in this regment then [in] eny other one for we shall stay here some time [and] when we move we shall go in tow a fort unless they put us on tow a sige [siege] train[.] I suppose that Austin Wheeler[’s] body has got home[.]¹⁹ I suppose that his mother feel dereffal[.] there is some taulk of us being paid of—if we are we will not get tow [two] month[’s] pay they owd us & so you will get 20 dolers[.] I took Austin Wheeler[’s] bed quilt and can of buter & jam sow your see Mrs Wheeler about it[.] I thought I would take the quilt for I had nothing but a Blanket so I took it[.] I cant write much more for it is to [] I had a letter fom Mary [] - they where all well[.] I had one frome Henry[’s] wife²⁰ [and] they are all well[.] she said that Albert had got back from Pike Peak [and] they are now at St. Petter[.] Albert heard of the Ingen [Indian] truble and he hard [hurried] back[.] tell Bill Weeks tow write[.] I worte tow him some time ago[.] I cant write any more[.] give my love tow Mother Write soon

From you Son

Newell H. B.

We can imagine how “dereffal” Austin Wheeler’s mother, Catherine Blanchard Wheeler, did feel at the loss of her only son. We were unable to find William Weeks in the Roster, so Newell’s advice evidently was not taken.

Fort Totten August 26 1863

Dear Father,

I thought that I would write you a few lines this afternoon and let your now that I am alive and well[.] I expted [expected] a letter from

Jane today but did not get it[.] Thare is nohing new going on hear now - [last] night it rain quite hard [and] to day it is real cool[.] I had a letter from Walbridg²¹ - he was then at Brattleboro - he worte me that Iassc Watts²² and thre or 4 more Boys had enlisted in to Battery M of this regiment[.] he worte that Issac[']s] Father²³ of[f]ered] to pay his 300 and help him to 500 more to go [to] school with but before he has been out hear a year he will wish more then once that he was back in Vermont going to school but I am glad they are coming[.] will eny of the Boys that whent out in the 9 monts enlist in to this Vetran Corps[?] is Will Brown dead[?] I heard he was some time ago but never heard for certain[.] I saw man from Charston Vt new Hunts folks[.] he said that one of the girls was dead[.] witch one is it[?] he said that Amos²⁴ had got on to the rail road[.] has he[?] the Colnel²⁵ has made out to get straw hats for the regiment - [they] are Parmleif [palm leaf] and all look a like and they will be better then our caps[.] our caps ain't good for eny thing to keep the sun off[f.] I cant think of much more to write[.] my love to M[other &] Jennie²⁶ Keep a good shar[e] for yourself write soon

from your Son
Newell H. Blanchard
Battery AM

It is interesting to note that, although in his first letter Newell is advising Bill Weeks to enlist, by the second letter he predicts Isaac Watts will regret enlisting. It is not clear from the letter what has caused the change in tone. Maybe Newell, too, during a hot summer in camp near Washington, has "wished more than once he was back in Vermont."

After the Battle of the Wilderness, May 4, 1864, Newell's regiment was ordered to the front as infantry and reported for duty near Spotsylvania Court House. They were engaged at Spotsylvania, Virginia (May 15-18, 1864), Cold Harbor, Virginia (June 1-12, 1864), and nine other battles through October of 1864.

Newell was taken prisoner June 23, 1864 in an engagement at Weldon Rail Road, Virginia. He was paroled November 26, 1864, promoted to corporal on April 18, 1865, and mustered out on June 24, 1865.²⁷ We find no further information on Newell H. Blanchard.

These letters and the information gained from our research give a picture of a Peacham family during the Civil War and the tenuousness of subsistence farming. We see the sons' and daughters' reactions to the mixture of loss and opportunity that was the effect of war on their lives. Practical, but mindful of a neighbor's suffering, Newell takes the dead Austin's quilt for warmth and charges his father to make the matter right with Austin's mother. After Newell, the last male Blanchard child, had left for war, the farm was sold and the Blanchard children ended their lives far from Peacham. We see trends in agriculture and outward migration that held true for all New England.

Thanks to the Gallagher papers, Kristin learned to process archival material. She gained experience in working with primary sources and transcribing from cursive writing to computer. She knows the patience and perseverance required when researching and writing history.

NOTES

¹ Ralph's great-grandfather was the "father of 'six gigantic sons who settled in Peacham in 1780.'" Jennie C. Watts and Elsie A. Choate, *People of Peacham* (Montpelier, VT: The Vermont Historical Society, 1965), 32.

² Peacham Land Records, Book 8, pages 27, 58.

³ Watts and Choate, *People of Peacham*, 36, 37, give Mary's birth year, incorrectly, as 1837. Census and school registers indicate a birth date in 1844.

⁴ Peacham Land Records, Book 9, page 221.

⁵ Watts and Choate, 36, erred in the dates for Maria Kellogg Blanchard's death and Ralph's remarriage (*People of Peacham*, 36). The correct date for Maria's death comes from the cemetery records and is corroborated by the following excerpt from a letter written by Almyra Martin to her son Ashbel dated April 30, 1852.

"Mrs. Farnum died three weeks ago and was buried on the sabbath. Mrs. Ralph Blanchard was there and was active in assisting them away to the grave, took the disease and died herself the next Saturday night and was buried on Monday. Mrs. Simon Blanchard was taken sick that day and died and was buried the next Monday." (The Martin family papers, unpublished, courtesy of Maxine Long.) "Mrs. Farnum" was Mary Anne (Marian) Elwell who married A. Farnum, November 2nd, 1848. She died April 9, 1852. "Her infant son died 12 hours before herself." (Peacham Town Record Book No. 1, page 289). Mrs. Simon Blanchard was Betsy Spencer, who died April 25, 1853, not April 2, 1852. Almyra Martin wrote on April 2, 1853, "Trustam Sanborn was married to Hannah Clark, Ralph Blanchard to Nancy McLoughlin (McLachlin) a short time since."

⁶ Peacham grand lists, 1825 through 1868. Numbers of animals owned and money in the bank appear in personal property lists, the second section of the grand lists.

⁷ Paul E. Kinding, *Butter Prints & Molds* (West Chester, Pa.: Scheffer Pub. Ltd., 1986), 14.

⁸ Ernest L. Bogart, *Peacham, The Story of a Vermont Hill Town* (Montpelier, VT: The Vermont Historical Society, 1948), 123.

⁹ Peacham Land Records, Book 13, page 377.

¹⁰ Watts and Choate, *People of Peacham*, 37.

¹¹ Mary Ella Blanchard was married March 26, 1867 to Charles H. Baldwin. They had two children. She died October 2, 1881. Ibid.

¹² The Peacham vital records do not show who Sammy is — neither do they show where Maria and Samuel Bonner were married. Sammy prefers Vermont, Maria wrote in her letter. Was he Maria's stepson, named after his father?

¹³ C.T. Onions, editor *The Oxford Universal Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, London 1955), 383. "4. U.S. During the Civil War; a Negro slave, esp. a fugitive or captured slave 1862; from a decision of Gen. Butler in 1861 that such slaves were contrabands of war."

See also Bruce Catton, *This Hallowed Ground* (Doubleday & Co., Inc. Garden City, New York 1956), 84 and 225-6.

¹⁴ Henry Blanchard died Zombrota, Minnesota, August 29, 1908. Watts and Choate, *People of Peacham*, 36.

¹⁵ The circumstances of Charles Blanchard's death are unknown. (Ibid.) In 1854 he resided in Ottawa, Illinois (Caledonia County Grammar School catalogue, 1854).

¹⁶ Albert Blanchard died in New Ulm, Minnesota, in 1896. (Watts & Choate, *People of Peacham*, 36).

¹⁷ Theodore S. Peck, ed., *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers and Lists of Vermonters who served in the Army and Navy of the United States, 1861-66* (Montpelier, VT: Press of the Watchman Publishing Co., 1892), 409.

¹⁸ Jane Kevanagh (Kavanaugh), daughter of Elizabeth McLachlin Kevenagh, was born ca. 1844. Her mother was Nancy McLachlin's older sister (born in Groton, April 5, 1802; died July 20, 1849). The 1860 census shows Jane Kavanaugh residing in Ralph Blanchard's household and lists her age as ten years. School register for School District No. 12 shows Jane Kavanaugh, age fifteen years and four months, attending winter term commencing December 5, 1859 and ending February 25, 1860.

¹⁹ Austin Wheeler was born in Peacham ca. 1842. His body did “get home.” His tombstone in the cemetery opposite the Peacham war monument reads: “Austin J. Wheeler,” the “only son of A.A. and C.B. Wheeler, died in the Regimental Hospital at Fort Stevens, D.C.” Austin was twenty years old. He enlisted August 8, 1862 and died December 15, 1862 of disease. (Peck, *Revised Roster*, 416). He was in Newell’s regiment and company.

²⁰ Alavoisa Palmer Blanchard married Henry Blanchard in Orford, New Hampshire, on September 27, 1849; they had five children (Watts & Choate, *People of Peacham*, 36).

²¹ Dustin S. Walbridge, Sergeant Major, enlisted from St. Johnsbury August 7, 1862 and died June 10, 1864 of wounds received June 3, 1864 (Peck, *Revised Roster*, 412 & 416). See also Watts and Choate, *People of Peacham*, 297, and Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana’s Children* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 132-133.

²² Isaac Newton Watts, Sergeant, Eleventh Regiment, was born August 16, 1842, enlisted August 10, 1863. He was mustered out August 25, 1865 and died Peacham, March 6, 1881. (Peck, *Revised Roster*, 454). See also Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana’s Children*, 119.

²³ Lyman Watts, farmer, was born in Peacham, December 13, 1802 and died in Peacham on August 31, 1875. (Watts and Choate, *People of Peacham*, 304).

²⁴ Amos R. Hunt was born in 1832 and married October 21, 1857 to Sarah M. March. (Ibid., 164).

²⁵ Colonel James M. Warner of Middlebury was a West Point graduate. (Peck, *Revised Roster*, 411).

²⁶ School registers for School District No. 12 show Jennie Kavanagh (Kavanaugh) visiting school July 10, 1860 and May 29, 1861. We assume the envelope to Jennie Kav (unreadable), which was re-addressed to Nancy M. Blanchard, was hers.

²⁷ Peck, *Revised Roster*, 410 and 414.

IN THEIR WORDS

MANUSCRIPTS IN THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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

Reading, Writing, and War: A Vermonters' Experience in the Port Royal Experiment, 1863-1871

EDITED BY ALICE McSHANE

Among the many collections of family papers at the Vermont Historical Society are those of the Leonard Johnson family of Peacham, Vermont, 1854-1904. Leonard Johnson was known for his strong abolitionist sympathies. Local tradition has it that his home on Danville Road was used as a way station on the Underground Railroad. Two of his daughters, Martha and Caroline, taught at freedmen schools during the Civil War and Reconstruction. His brother, Oliver Johnson, was a national publicist, abolitionist leader, and close confidant of Horace Greeley.

This small collection includes several fascinating letters written by Martha Johnson, the eldest of the nine Johnson children. Martha's letters recount her

experiences as a teacher at a freedmen's school on the Sea Islands of South Carolina from her arrival in 1863 to her death in 1871. These letters are of particular importance because Martha arrived in South Carolina in the middle of the war. Although Northern forces occupied the Sea Islands, they were not secure from Southern guerilla action. In addition, Martha arrived during a time of social transition: the Emancipation Proclamation had been in effect for only three months; the first black regiments were being formed; and freedmen policy was being shaped by three independent forces—the Union Army, the War Department, and private freedmen organizations. The activities in South Carolina during this period became known as the “Port Royal Experiment,” the prototype for Union occupation and reconstruction throughout the South. Martha's letters reflect the transitory nature of this period when our nation underwent a social revolution in the midst of civil war.

Four million slaves lived in the South at the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1860. When the war began, the institution of slavery was still protected under the Constitution and the Fugitive Slave Act was still federal law. In the first two years of the war, Lincoln walked a precarious tight-rope between abolitionists and radical Republicans, who advocated the abolition of slavery as a primary war aim, and supporters in the border states, whose loyalty to the Union rested on the continued federal protection of their property. During the conflict, slaves crossing over to Union lines exacerbated the situation. The Unionists in the border states were not the only ones to oppose emancipation. Farmers in the northwest feared emancipation would bring an influx of freedmen into the territories, increasing competition over land. Laborers in the northeast, in particular German and Irish immigrants, feared emancipation would bring freedmen to Northern cities, increasing competition over jobs. Northern Democrats, who opposed emancipation and its implied restructuring of the social order, played on Northern racial fears to keep restoration of the Union - *as it had been* - the primary war aim.

The resulting ambiguity of Union policy toward slavery and the lack of any specific legislative guidelines concerning refugee slaves until 1862 complicated the Union army's situation in both the states under rebellion and the border states loyal to the Union. In the first year of the war, Union General Benjamin Butler, in Fortress Monroe, Virginia, ignored federal law and kept slaves within his lines. Calling them “contrabands of war,” he put them to work building breastworks, roads, and other military essentials. Other Union officers followed Butler's example. Nevertheless, Union soldiers reflected the prejudices of their society. They often inflicted terrible cruelties upon slaves caught within their lines, including rape and torture.¹ Even if slaves were offered sanctuary, what was to become of them? Who would be responsible for them? The Union army, argues historian James McPherson, “was ill-equipped to function as a welfare agency.”

Its main task was to fight the rebels; few soldiers wanted to have anything to do with contrabands except perhaps to exploit them or vent their dislike of them. Thousands of blacks huddled in fetid "contraband camps" where disease, exposure, malnutrition, and poor sanitation took an appalling toll that accounted for a large share of the civilian casualties suffered by the South.²

On November 7, 1861, the two forts guarding the South Carolina coastal Sea Islands in Port Royal Bay fell to Union warships under the command of Samuel du Pont. Southern whites fled the area leaving behind 195 plantations and farms, 8,000 to 12,000 slaves, and the most highly prized cotton in the Confederacy.³ Faced with numbers of ex-slaves far greater than anything to that date, the Union began unofficially to shape a contraband policy.

After the capture of Port Royal and the Sea Islands, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase ordered the military to seize all plantations and ship the confiscated cotton to New York for sale. The army supported Chase's policy as a means of lessening its burden. Within two months of occupation, the army joined forces with U.S. Treasury officials and private freedmen aid organizations to revive the Sea Islands' economy using contraband labor.

Most freedmen became paid workers on the very same plantations where they had been slaves.⁴ Therefore, Secretary Chase and the radical Republicans saw the endeavor, not only as a means to provide badly needed monies for the war effort, but also as an experiment in the value of free labor over slave labor. Coinciding with the government's economic activities, freedmen aid organizations in the North commenced a program to educate the newly freed slaves in the skills and knowledge they believed were required for the exercise of liberty. The first group of teachers arrived in Port Royal on March 6, 1862. At the same time, the army was organizing the first black regiments for the protection of the Sea Islands' activities, its employees, and its students. Combined, these military, economic, theoretical, and educational endeavors became known as the "Port Royal Experiment."

When Martha Johnson arrived in Port Royal in March 1863, approximately thirty schools had been established throughout the islands with forty to forty-five teachers and 2,000 students.⁵ Control of the Port Royal experiment had been transferred from the Treasury Department to the War Department the previous summer. The commander of the experiment was General Rufus Saxton, who went on to become a ranking official in the National Freedmen's Bureau at the end of the war. In her letters, Martha often directs her family to send letters to her in care of the general.

The Port Royal educational efforts were plagued by two chronic problems. From the start, conflict existed between the evangelical societies, who wanted their teachers to double as missionaries, and the secular societies, who emphasized citizenship over "sectarian bias."⁶ Martha's first appointment

came from the Freedmen's Bureau Association of New York. During the post-war years, her appointment appears to have been from the American Missionary Association. Both organizations were evangelical and Martha's personal faith is evident throughout her letters.

In addition to being plagued by factional infighting among the freedmen organizations, the educational effort remained secondary to the government's emphasis on cotton production throughout the Civil War and Reconstruction. This emphasis influenced both the school hours and teacher availability. Most often teachers scheduled two to three hours of classroom instruction in the afternoon so children could work in the fields in the morning.⁷

Teachers were paid \$25 to \$50 a month by their sponsor organizations. The government housed them in confiscated plantation houses. The aid organizations also sent superintendents who coordinated educational activities with the teachers and army officials. Four types of schools were established: day schools for young children and unemployed older children; night schools for adults; industrial schools (sewing classes for females); and evangelical Sunday schools.⁸ Martha taught at a day school and a Sunday school. Though the army established its own schools for black regiments, Martha also taught a group of black soldiers for a brief period.

The basic curriculum began with instruction of the alphabet and advanced to more standard subjects including reading, writing, and arithmetic. Historian Martin Abbott states that the program also included "courses in the geography of Europe, Asia, and South America, history, physiology, natural philosophy, Latin, and classical literature." He condemns the curriculum for introducing the freedman "to the world of learning without realistically introducing him to the world in which he had to live."⁹ However, curricula varied from school to school. Martha Johnson does not appear to have advanced beyond the use of reading primers in her classroom.

Some teachers felt instruction in "cleanliness, industry, and patriotism" were more important than the standard subjects and developed oral lessons on the war and politics.¹⁰ These attitudes contributed to Southern white opposition in the post-war years. Martha's letters suggest a deep personal faith, and, though she came from an influential abolitionist family, it is likely her oral lessons focused more on evangelism than republicanism.

The typical teacher was a Northern Anglo-Saxon Protestant female in her forties, a profile that fits Martha Johnson. Nativism ran rampant amongst Protestants and abolitionists, and therefore the freedmen organizations tended not to hire Catholics, Jews, or the Irish. Elderly applicants and those under twenty-eight were automatically excluded. Most of those accepted had been teachers in Northern white private or public schools and few had taught in Northern freedmen schools. Few, if any, had experience teaching Southern blacks.¹¹ Martha Johnson taught at an industrial school in New York before her acceptance to teach at a freedmen's school in Port Royal.

No. 59. 1864. J. C.

CERTIFICATE OF COMMISSION.

ROOMS OF THE

National Freedman's Relief Association,

Nos. 1 & 3 MERCER STREET, near Canal.

New York, 11 Oct. 1864.

This Certifies that THE NATIONAL FREEDMAN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION have appointed Miss Martha Johnson to be a Teacher to the Freed people in the Dept. of the South and hereby commend her to the favor and confidence of the officers of Government, and of all persons who take an interest in relieving the condition of the Freedmen; or in promoting their intellectual, moral and religious instruction.

On behalf of the N. F. R. Association,

Wm. Geo. Shaw

President.

Chas. W. Leigh

Chairman of Home Committee.

Martha Johnson's Certificate of Commission, issued 11 October, 1864, by the National Freedman's Relief Associations. Vermont Historical Society, Leonard Johnson family papers (MS. 185).

Many were well educated graduates of Harvard, Yale, and Oberlin College in Ohio. A center of liberalism then as it is now, Oberlin sent the greatest number. Still others, like Martha, possessed simple teaching certificates from local normal schools. For the aid organizations, the most difficult problem was finding applicants that fit their ideal. The application process involved a highly subjective review of the applicant's health, energy, morality, commitment, religious conviction, and experience.¹² Despite her chronic poor health, Martha Johnson passed the test.

Teachers included abolitionists, feminists, civil rights workers, temperance advocates, penal reformers, and proponents of Negro emigration, and it was not uncommon to find many of these ideological sympathies in a single individual. Many bordered on "naivete and fanaticism," while others were simply looking for employment.¹³ While Martha's faith and commitment are evident in her letters, she also makes occasional references regarding salary and other employment matters. Whether motivated by principle, money, or both, Martha and her fellow teachers were extremely self-sufficient individuals who persevered in time of war with minimal governmental support.

One of the more curious aspects of Martha's letters is her seeming isolation. Indeed, the freedmen teachers were isolated physically and socially. Most Southern whites fled the Sea Islands in 1861. In 1865, 40,000 slaves fled their abandoned plantations and followed in the wake of William T. Sherman's march through Georgia to the sea. In response, Sherman issued special field order number fifteen. It set aside 300,000 acres, including the Sea Islands and a portion of the South Carolina coastline, for exclusive black settlement. The 40,000 blacks were relocated there. All remaining Southern whites were given thirty days to vacate.¹⁴

Southern whites made no systematic effort to stop the freedmen schools, though opposition became more prevalent after 1867. Southern poverty in the wake of the war's devastation was the primary cause of opposition and many felt economic and political restoration to be more important than education of freedmen. Fear of social leveling also contributed to opposition among poor whites.¹⁵ Overall, Southern whites supported freedmen education and no social stigma was attached to white Southerners who taught freedmen. They opposed, however, instruction at the schools by Northern teachers as they feared these teachers were not teaching but indoctrinating freedmen in social equality and republicanism. Such fears were not unfounded. Republican victories during Reconstruction were strongest in areas with effective black school systems. To placate Southern fears, government and freedmen organization officials advocated an accommodationist position with the white population. They instructed teachers to conduct themselves within "the limits of prudence and propriety" and to avoid any behavior that would foster "ill feelings and disrespect among the white people."¹⁶ Many teachers

objected and ignored the official policy. Indeed, Martha's stay overnight in a black couple's home suggests behavior beyond the accepted norm. Perhaps this was a reflection of the growing admiration for her black scholars and acquaintances that her letters suggest.

Martha Johnson died on December 24, 1871 after a protracted, undiagnosed illness, though yellow fever, which Martha mentions in her letters, was prevalent in the area at the time of her death. Northern involvement in freedmen education ended shortly thereafter. By the time of Martha's death, instruction of blacks had been turned over to Southern black teachers.¹⁷ The rise of black teachers was due primarily to the National Freedmen Bureau's establishment of black high schools and colleges, including, among the now famous and well regarded, Howard and Fisk universities.

From 1861 to 1872, some 20,000 to 30,000 freedmen children received education in South Carolina. Despite these numbers, nearly three quarters of school-age freedmen did not go to school.¹⁸ Was the Port Royal experiment a success? Historians' opinions are mixed. Eric Foner believes government efforts to revive the Southern economy ultimately undermined the freedmen's rights. Indeed, during Reconstruction the great abolitionist leaders, including Wendell Phillips and Frederick Douglass, refused to support the educational efforts in the South, arguing that civil rights and justice under the law were needed before education could be truly effective. Walter Abbott believes that the emotional fanaticism of Northern teachers and aid organizations was so insubstantial that it burned out quickly and helped kill the momentum. Despite his negative views, Abbott admits that "the freedmen seemed to know that in this strange world of words and letters lay a power capable of moving them along the road to freedom." It is to the experiment's transitory role that most historians nod approvingly. George Bentley writes, "The idea of Negro schools had become established in southern thinking, white and black. School organization had been developed, and buildings for Negro education had been scattered over the country." It was a good beginning.¹⁹

Ultimately, the success of the Port Royal experiment was due, in part, to teachers like Martha Johnson, of Peacham, Vermont. In Abbott's words:

They brought to the movement dignity and nobility through their willingness to forswear a life of security and comfort for one of sacrifices and physical hardship...It was persons such as these who gave strength, purpose, and high resolve to the movement to lift the pall of ignorance from the former slaves.²⁰

Martha Johnson in Beaufort, South Carolina, to Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Johnson
in Peacham, Vermont, Mar. 11th 1863

Dear Parents

...I am at the residence of Mr. French, called the Mission House where all the Teachers stay until they receive their appointments for the different places around here. Where mine will be is as yet unknown to me...

Mr. French has just come in and says he has good news. One of the largest Plantations, on Port Royal Island, belonging to one of the worst of rebels was bought this morning by the Slaves, belonging on that place and a neighboring one, with money saved from their own earnings...[The] government is trying to secure all the land she can for the benefit of the Colored Race.²¹ I am in one of the most ancient looking houses, large square rooms, immense fireplaces that will hold big logs, beautifully carved Mantel pieces and cornice, elegant pieces of furniture, but all having the marks of War, defaced and broken...It seems as though I have lived a month in the last six days. I begin to realize something of War where I am now in a sense I never did before...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to family in
Peacham, Vermont, Apr. 11 1863

Dear Sisters

...On Thursday morning I was awakened about five o'clock by the sound of Cannon [that] seemed very near. I was up and to the window very soon—the atmosphere was full of smoke and the sound of the cannon continued for some minutes. Then we saw a blaze and the colored people said the boat was burning for they could see it from their houses. It proved to be a wooden Gun boat lying at the Ferry—the rebels fired into her and the second shell struck the powder magazine and she was burned. We could hear the rebels' shouts of triumph as the boat was burning for it was not more than four miles from here. It is reported that the Captain was asleep when the rebels first fired and not a gun on the boat was loaded. Smart Gun boat it was not. The Pickets on this shore said they heard the rebels at work all night getting their Artillery down to the shore—heard the car whistle which brought them down within a few miles of the shore and the Gun boat lying near the rebel shore. Knew nothing of it until they were fired upon and they could not return the fire for they had no loaded guns. One man was killed (scalded) and four or five wounded. I can see from the window where I am writing into "Secesh" country not more than two miles from here, across the Broad river...

Mr. Root has three Plantations under his charge, twelve Negro cabins on this place, and as many more on the other two places. The men and women work in the field, and both receive the same pay, except a few

who are too old and infirm to labor—they are supported on the Plantation. They have nearly done planting corn and sweet potatoes and are preparing the ground for planting cotton which is to be planted this month. There is a certain number of acres of cotton which is to [be] cultivated for the Government, that is for the use of the Superintendent and the horses, mules, and cattle on the Plantations for which the colored people are paid twenty five cents per day for their work and each man, woman, and child has a certain number of tasks, 4 of which make an acre to cultivate for their own use and so many tasks of cotton ground and the government pays them for every pound of cotton they raise. So you can see they are induced to take the best care of their cotton ground...

Very few of them [freedmen] could read when Mr. and Mrs. Root came here, but now there are eight or ten women that have learned their letters and can read a few verses in the Bible. To be able to read the Bible is their great desire. They come in after a hard days work to read a few verses and then go home and read it over again by their pitch [illegible] fires until they can read it quite well. They seem so grateful for a little instruction. It is a pleasure to teach them. The children are quick to learn as white children and as full of fun and mischief. I never think of their black skins when I am with them and have become as much attached to them as to any white children...

I suffer that you will see the account of the burning of the Gun Boat in the papers before you get this but do not get alarmed about me. I feel as safe as I did in Vermont...The Pickets are stationed almost under our windows. They have been white soldiers but on Monday they were relieved by the 1st S.C. Colored regiment...A company of the 4th N.Y. was here when I first came and we formed some very pleasant acquaintances among them. One of the Corporals was a Vermonter...he had a Montpelier paper which he lent me...Mr. Root invited him and another young man here to dinner. They said it was the first time they sat down to a table with a cloth on and laid in order with dishes since they left home...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to family members in Peacham, Vermont, Apr. 25th 1863

Dear Brother and Sister

...The nearest white family is three miles from here so we have to depend upon our work and ourselves to make time pass pleasantly. I have not had time as yet to feel lonely for I find employment and amusement also among these people until I am tired and then it seems so good to rest...

The Teachers in Beaufort do not have but one lesson of three hours in a day and sewing school two days in a week in the afternoon, and are required to visit among the families in each one's district as often they can consistently. I have not had school here more than three

hours in a day as that is as much as is profitable for the children until they are more advanced for they cannot study themselves much and everything has to be talked into them. Three hours is as much as is good for Teacher or pupils at one time...You would smile to see them come into school in the morning. The boys touch their caps, if they have any or not, make the motion. The girls curtsy in the manner peculiar to the race with a "Good morning maam" and when school is closed in the same manner as they go out. I could hardly maintain the school marm dignity the first day I was in school. Some of the men will touch their hats when I meet them as gracefully as any gentleman. The women are more uncouth than the men. I think perhaps it is owing in part to their dress for they wear cotton bag dresses, very narrow skirts not reaching their knees, while the men dress like white men. On Sunday the women dress more like white women...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to [Clarissa Johnson in Peacham, Vermont?] May 23 1863

Dear Cassie

...I have a nice school of thirty children and twenty five men, soldiers of the 1st Colored S.C. Regt.. They do picket duty on this Island. The Headquarters are very near my school and the Capt. of the company asked permission for the boys to come to my school. I very gladly gave them permission to come. It is uncertain how long I may have them but I shall endeavor to do them all the good I can. They are some of them very fine looking men. Very few can read anything more than the letters but are improving fast. I have two or three only that can read the testament. I wish you could look in upon me surrounded by the dark faces, but bright and pleasant. My school room [is] in the Piazza of the old Plantation house. When I have all the children and a good many soldiers I have to send a part of them out of doors...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to family in Peacham, Vermont, [part of a letter, 1863]

...I realize more and more every day the awful wickedness of Slavery and wonder they are as good as they are. I have visited them in their homes as much as I could find time or strength. They seemed a little suspicious at first but now they give me a pleasant greeting and seem pleased to see me and have me talk with them. They all seem to have a strong religious element in their natures. Cut off from all earthly comfort, they have gone to God for consolation. Their childlike faith and entire confidence in their Heavenly Father is often a reproof to me for I have so much more given to me than these poor degraded children of our common Father. I have not yet heard one man or woman speak

unfriendly of their old Massa or Missus, say they worked them hard and did not give them enough to eat and don't care to see them but never seem [to] cherish a revengeful feeling towards them...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to [family in Peacham, Vermont, [part of a letter, 1863]

...The Secesh took the house servants with them so it is very difficult to find a woman on the Plantations that knows how to do work in a house properly.

...The great fear that has prevailed in the north of the colored people all working north if they were free—nothing but Slavery will drive them from their homes. They are so strongly attached to their old homes, they do not like to go to another Plantation to live and almost without exception reply when asked if they would like to go north "I had rather stay in my old home. I am use to this place and don't know anything about the North."

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation, South Carolina, to family in Peacham, Vermont, Jan. 12th 1865

Dear Brother & Sister

...There was an Emancipation celebration in Beaufort on New Years. We did not know of it until it was past so of course were not present—had we known it, should have tried to have gone. Sherman has sent a great many contrabands to Beaufort so the town is full and the country around covered with tents. The Hospitals are full of sick and wounded. We have not heard the sound of war very much for a few weeks...

Martha Johnson at Perryclear Plantation to family in Peacham, Vermont, Mar. 28th 1865

My dear Brother & Sister

...Last Sunday Mr. K, Miss Clary, and I went to Church (colored) on Ladies Island. Crossed the river and walked two miles. Heard a Colored preacher, Kit Green. His text was in Acts—Paul's defense before Agrippa. Said Paul must have been of low origin or he would not have been so mean as to persecute the Christians—"he did not even know his daddy" brethren. He read all of the chapter where Paul heard a voice saying "it is hard to kick against the bricks." Asked if they knew what kicking against the bricks meant—it was kicking against God. It is the only sermon I have heard since I left N.Y. and I enjoyed it very much. The preacher possessed a good deal of native talent. If he had had the benefit of an education, would be equal to the average of white preachers.

The Church was built in Sesech times for the Colored people—a

frame, boarded on the outside, no windows, a few wooden shutters, and a floor, rough made movable benches, will seat about two hundred. Every seat was occupied. We were the only white faces in the house.

My new scholars [here], a large part of them are quite light colored but few of them have ever been slaves but are as ignorant, and not as good looking as the real Negro—were the most forlorn looking set of people I ever saw, were ragged and dirty. Had been following Sherman's army and fared hard on the journey. The children are bright and eager to learn. It is a pleasure to teach them. I enjoy this work more and more...

Martha Johnson at Brickyard Plantation, South Carolina, to family in Peacham, Vermont, April 12th, 1871.

Dear Sister

...You need not worry about the Klu Klux. They are not near us. There are too many northern people about here for them to care to come here. Uncle Kit is still in jail, will stay his time probably there, not be sent any further. Heard the others concerned are having a new trial this month. Have not heard anything from it. Do not think anyone believes Uncle Kit guilty of any intentional wrong only ignorance...²²

Martha Johnson at Brickyard Plantation, South Carolina, to family in Peacham, Vermont, Oct. 20th 1871.

Dear Brother & Sister

...Uncle Sancho & Aunt Minna have a good size cabin and no one but themselves occupy it. They were very glad to see us but so overcome with surprise & pleasure as to be hardly able to give us a welcome for a few minutes. Did not last long however. I asked Aunt Minna to give us some supper for we had eaten nothing but an apple since our supper on the Steamer the night before...They gave us their bed with clean sheets...they slept on the floor on a pile of Cotton...

Martha Johnson in Beaufort, South Carolina, to family in Peacham, Vermont, Dec. 5th. 1871.

Dear Brother & Sister

...School is larger than a year ago—have over eighty names. For two weeks have not had more than fifty per day as the people have been digging "tater." Yesterday had a room full. Today it had been so cold, did not have but forty two...

...I want very much forty copies of the Child at Home which will cost \$5.00. If you think it proper will you ask the Sunday School to send them to me...I want them to begin the new year. My Sunday School I hope to make better this year than ever before, if with the help of our great Father above.

The sickness in B. has abated—two of our friends died with Yellow fever beside several others. A few had it and recovered. Our friends there advised us to stay away so we did...

MANUSCRIPT

The Leonard Johnson family Papers (MS 185) consist of correspondence and related documents from 1854 to 1904. The collection primarily pertains to the experiences of Martha Johnson who served as a teacher for the freedmen schools in the Beaufort/Port Royal area of South Carolina from 1863 to 1871. The collection was donated to the Vermont Historical Society by Leonard Johnson's great great granddaughter, Betty Wilkinson of Barre, Vermont, in 1997. The collection occupies one box (.25 linear feet).

NOTES

¹ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry Of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 497.

² *Ibid.*, 709.

³ McPherson, 371; George Bentley, *A History of the Freedmen's Bureau* (Philadelphia: American Historical Association, 1955), 6; Paul Skeels Peirce, *The Freedmen's Bureau* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1904), 21; and Laura Josephine Webster, *The Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina* (South Hampton, Mass.: Smith College Press, 1916), 71.

⁴ Freedmen were given food and shelter, and paid 25 to 40 cents a day. Government rations ceased at the end of the first year, when the freedmen were expected to be self-sufficient. While less draconian than slavery, the government nevertheless implemented paternalistic policies designed to elicit output from the freedman, i.e. withholding wages, etc. Foreshadowing the sharecropping system to come, most freedmen rented their homes and land from the government and bought supplies, often on credit, from government stores. In exchange, the freedman either worked on government-owned plantations or sold his cotton to the government. Any advance from or debt to the government was subtracted from the freedman's meager profit. See Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 69; Martin Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 5-6; McPherson, *Battle Cry Of Freedom*, 710-711; and Bentley, *History of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 6-8.

⁵ Robert C. Morris, *Reading, 'Riting, and Reconstruction: The Education of Freedmen in the South, 1861-1870* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 7; Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 6; and Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 81.

⁶ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 86; and Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 3-4.

⁷ Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 5-6.

⁸ Rupert Sargent Holland, ed. *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne: Written from the Sea Islands of South Carolina, 1862-1884* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), xii; Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 49; and Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 75.

⁹ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 91.

¹⁰ Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 7-9; and Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 82.

¹¹ Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 58-69, 80-83.

¹² *Ibid.*, 59, 84.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 54, 76.

¹⁴ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 8; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 71, Webster *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 82-83.

¹⁵ Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 80-82.

¹⁶ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 83, 93-95; Bentley, *History of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 180-183; Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 41-42; and Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 80-81.

¹⁷ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 90, 96; and Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 78-79, 82.

¹⁸ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 97.

¹⁹ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 153; Morris, *Reading, 'Riting*, 47; Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 82, 97; Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 84; and Bentley, *History of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 183- 184.

²⁰ Abbott, *Freedmen's Bureau in S.C.*, 83.

²¹ Despite Martha's enthusiasm, southern freedmen were ultimately cheated out of the promise to own land. Ambiguity surrounding government hold on titles and a chronic racism denied ownership to most freedmen. Of the forty-seven plantations sold in 1863, only six were sold to freedmen. Northern speculators bought up the majority of confiscated land. Eric Foner argues that what speculators didn't get, white Southerners ultimately regained during Reconstruction. See Bentley, *History of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 6-7; Peirce, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 22; Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau*, 76-78; and Foner, *Reconstruction*, 158-163, 171, 183-184, 310-311.

²² Martha Johnson adopted the paternalistic custom of referring to and addressing adult blacks as "Aunt" and "Uncle." It is unknown why "Uncle Kit" was jailed or if and when he was released. Uncle Kit and the freedman preacher, Kit Green, referred to in an earlier letter, may be the same person. The letter reflects the growing plight of freedmen as Reconstruction drew to a close and the Southern white ruling class regained hegemony. Incarceration was just one of the many civil and economic measures used to intimidate the freedman and limit his freedom in the new social order. For an in depth analysis of Reconstruction's lost promise to freedmen, see Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution*.

BOOK REVIEWS



Spanning Time: Vermont's Covered Bridges

By Joseph C. Nelson (Shelburne, Vt.: The New England Press, Inc., 1997, pp. 292, \$60).

If you were to start at the mouth of the Connecticut River at Long Island Sound, first entered by a European in 1614, and begin walking north, through the Connecticut towns settled in the 1630s, you would have to travel 170 miles, passing through all of Connecticut and Massachusetts, before finding a place in the river as narrow as the gorge at Bellows Falls, Vermont. Here, in 1785, the first bridge anywhere over the 410-mile-long waterway was built. Knowledge of these facts has deepened my pleasure whenever I've crossed that scenic gorge, walked its bedrock riverbanks, or canoed the eddies there. But author Joseph C. Nelson raised the hair on the back of my neck when he wrote that Colonel Enoch Hale's 1785 timber bridge in that place was the first bridge in New England with a clear span longer than a single timber. This is but one of many detailed, technical revelations to be found in this ambitious, conflicted book that approaches Vermont history through the narrow, wooden portals of a certain type of what is known today as transportation infrastructure.

Those wooden portals, after all, lead to a Vermont that is both valued and vanishing. It was that quantum leap in bridge technology at Bellows Falls in 1785 – from the tall tree thrown across the stream, to the invention of timber trusses to span greater distances – that opened up Vermont's water-riven topography to European immigration, settlement and commerce. Topped with sheltering roofs to slow the decay of their wooden members, these timber trusses are the bones of the "covered bridges" that survive today as icons of rural, pastoral, scenic Vermont. And while many of these antiques still creak like hutches under the weight of daily local traffic, many others are being taken off the transportation system, fenced like animals in a petting zoo, or left to rot.

It seems to me a bridge is the only architecture that flies. It carries us through the air, taking off here and landing over there. Until I read Nelson's explanations, I had no idea how bridges hung against the sky. Without numbing the reader with mathematics, Nelson, a retired engineer, describes how forces of compression and tension are balanced in a truss. The strength of this book, like the truss itself, is in the technical details. And like the truss, which is hidden on the outside by roof and boarding, the best part of this book is hidden, behind pages of pretty scenic photographs, in the appendices at the end. There is found a comprehensive list of 101 covered bridges in Vermont, a glossary of pertinent terms, an illustrated description of the various timber truss types, and thumbnail biographies of notable bridge builders and truss designers.

In these appendices we learn that it was farmer/carpenters of early Vermont who applied their knowledge of timber framing with large posts and beams, gained in the building of barns and meeting houses, to the construction of bridges. The same king-post and queen-post forms visible in Vermont timber-framed barns are also visible in twenty-five Vermont covered bridges still standing, according to Nelson's count. Determined to span ever longer distances and build fewer piers in the water, bridge designers tinkered with the king-post form, added segmented arches and a variety of braces, and replaced large beams with a lattice-work of thick planks. Among the early innovators were Theodore Burr, Peter Paddleford, and Ithiel Town, all born in the eighteenth century. Later designs were developed by Stephen Long, Willis Pratt, Herman Haupt, and William Howe, all trained engineers responding to the greater weights required by railroads and increased commerce. All seven men gave their names to truss designs whose examples are still standing in Vermont, in pure, hybrid, or since-altered states. Nelson also gives deserving credit to the men who built the bridges in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as those in the twentieth century who have sustained the bridge builder's art in Vermont and have kept many covered bridges standing and in use.

The reasons many Vermonters and Vermont communities cherish and pay to maintain their covered bridges may be seen in the 197 pages Nelson devotes to fifteen "tours," with descriptions of each bridge, gorgeous color photographs, thumbnail town histories and assorted historical vignettes. Each bridge emerges as a unique individual, an emblem of its time and place, linking communities with their very local pasts. But like most writers who take up the subject, Nelson sometimes loses his clarity in the cultural fog of nostalgia in which covered bridges are enveloped; he locates them near "quaint villages," in "idyllic" settings, where they may transport viewers "to the days of horses and buggies, sleigh rides, and a simpler way of life" (p. ix), or they may be a "reminder of less hurried days" (p. 129). He comes back to his researcher's senses when he notes that "It would be wrong to think of the Hutchins Bridge's history as idyllic and bucolic" (p. 69) and goes on to describe the frenetic pace of butter tub manufacturing at the place in Montgomery where, in 1883, the bridge was built.

The difference between these two perspectives – the fogged and the factual – illustrates the divided nature of this book. While dressed up as an expensive, coffee-table photo album and overtly addressing the casual, non-native tourist, it is also a valuable reference work, written and illustrated by an engineer who knows whereof he speaks. The book left me wishing the author had devoted more time and space to pursuing his special expertise and provided both interior photographs or drawing of significant truss features in important bridges and longer biographical sketches of notable designers and builders, his colleagues.

This volume also gave me hope that the author-engineer has arrived who will document and celebrate Vermont's historic stone arch, steel truss, and concrete arch bridges, which are disappearing now at a faster rate than covered bridges. At the same location where Colonel Hale built the first covered bridge over the Connecticut River, at Bellows Falls, two extraordinary spans, an 1899 stone arch railroad bridge and a 1930 concrete arch highway bridge, still fly across the gorge but will, without enough Nelsons, too soon come back to earth.

RICHARD EWALD

Richard Ewald is an architectural historian and journalist. He is editor of "Historic Vermont," the newsletter published by the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings

By Thomas Durant Visser (Hanover, N.H., University Press of New England, 1997, pp. 213, paper, \$19.95).

Thomas Visser's book is probably the best regional field guide to farm building ever published in the United States. Even experts will learn something from this book, and for most readers it can be the key to an informed point of view on the built agricultural landscape.

The *Field Guide* attempts to cover all types of farm buildings in the six New England states. This includes a multitude of hay and dairy barn types, silos, corn cribs, wagon sheds, and henhouses and extends itself to lesser known structures such as cranberry bog pump houses and privies for harvesters in the blueberry barrens. One strength of this book is that it discusses the obscure and humble along with the grand and picturesque, fleshing out the picture of agricultural life and economy in the region.

The organization of the *Guide* is by building type rather than by state or locality; form and external appearance are explained in terms of use in a way that illuminates the interior of the structures as well. Rather than merely listing and describing barn types, Visser describes their evolution in relation to the agricultural history of New England. The first chapter is entitled "Discovering the History of Farm Buildings" and deals with dating of barns by form, style, and building technology. The discussion of framing, which includes types of frames, methods of timber conversion (hewing and various types of sawing), and scribe and square rule layout systems, is in the advance of almost all architectural books available. The photographs that distinguish pit-sawing from mechanical sash-sawing should clear up an issue that has confused many architectural historians. The understanding of how barns are constructed is fascinating in itself and crucial to dating and tracing the evolution of any given farm structure, which may contain within it all or part of earlier structures, frequently expanded by creative means.

Another great strength of Tom Visser's book, and one that further separates it from coffee table books on barns, are nearly 200 footnoted quotations, almost all originating from nineteenth-century agricultural handbooks and periodicals. There are few pages that do not contain a quote from a source contemporaneous with the structure being discussed. These quotations are often very specific, i.e., a farmer in 1867 discusses why "Barns with three stories are the best for saving labor" (p. 91). The emphasis on the history of agriculture and its technology will help the reader understand why three-story barns were not built before about 1820 and were no longer seen as desirable after 1950. Discussing stables, a 1797 source tells us that "Some of the windows should be glass, because horses are fond of light" (p. 143).

If you own or visit a derelict rural outbuilding, and some of its interior layout is intact, Visser's book can help you determine whether it was a granary, hop house, carriage shed, or some unexpected sort of workplace. The book will allow you to date your silo by construction type. Visser discusses the evolution of the cupola, both as a means of ventilation and as a symbol of successful farming. This evolutionary

approach, combined with an awareness of how frequently barns were moved in the past, allows Visser's book to make good sense of what he calls extended, reconfigured, and connected farm buildings.

Are there other good books on barns? Yes, but none that serves as well all the same purposes for a resident of New England as Tom Visser's *Field Guide*. Arthur and Witney's *The Barn* is a coffee table book, though a beautiful and inspiring one. John Fitchen's *The New World Dutch Barn* is an in-depth study of a particular subset of buildings. Daniel Fink's *Barns of the Genesee Country, 1790-1915* comes closest, with its use of period agricultural literature to inform a knowledgeable survey, combined with incomparable photography. Noble and Cleek's *The Old Barn Book* calls itself a *Field Guide to North American Barns* but attempts to cover so much ground that it ends up frequently mistaken and misleading.

There are some small errors in Visser's *Field Guide*. The flared posts of the older English style barn are described as having "a mortise for the plate and a tenon for the tie beam" (p. 13). These posts actually have two tenons on top, set at two different elevations. The sixteen-sided barn identified as being in Newbury, Vermont, is found just across the river in Piermont, New Hampshire (p. 93). But these are small points. For a book trying to communicate such a large amount of technical information about a complex phenomenon that is virtually lying all over the landscape, its level of accuracy is very high.

The *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings* measures approximately 6 by 9 inches so that it can be slipped into a jacket pocket. Its format requires that the illustrations be small, but they are numerous, very clear, black and white, and to the point. Anyone interested in barns, the rural landscape, or American history will love this book.

JAN LEWANDOSKI

Jan Lewandoski restores barns, covered bridges and steeples throughout New England. He researches and writes widely on the topic of historic building technology and lives in Stannard, Vermont.

After King Philip's War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England

Edited by Colin G. Calloway. (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1997, pp. 268, paper, \$19.95).

Ever since that fateful encounter in 1492 between Columbus and American natives, there has been a shared belief among Europeans and their descendants, of whatever nationality, that these were a people destined to disappear, if not physically, then through assimilation into one or another of the European American societies that developed in the "new world." This being so, authorities in the various colonies and their successor states/countries pursued policies designed to speed the process. Here in New England, these policies ranged from deliberate acts of genocide (exemplified by, but not limited to, the Pequot massacre of 1637), through various forms of

missionizing and economic exploitation, to legislation unilaterally (and in the face of clear evidence to the contrary) declaring one or another Indian group extinct.

For their part, historians writing about New England commonly portrayed the end of "King Philip's War" in 1676 as marking the disintegration (and even disappearance) of Indian societies in the region. It speaks volumes about the strength and determination of the various Indian peoples that, in spite of all, they have not only survived, but show renewed vigor today. Accordingly, historians and other scholars, for some three decades now, have been engaged in restoring Indians to their rightful place in New England's history. And this is of more than academic interest, for, as Calloway states (p. 12): "if Indians disappeared after King Philip's War, how can the people asserting their rights today be 'real Indians'?" The question will have a familiar ring to anyone who has followed debates over Abenaki rights in Vermont.

In the present volume, Calloway brings together nine previously published papers (two revised for this volume) that deal with New England Indians from the late 1600s to more recent times. Though most authors are historians, other disciplines are represented as well. Following Calloway's introductory overview, historians Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney look into the identity and motivations of the participants in the famous 1704 attack on Deerfield, finding that it was instigated and carried out primarily by Indians (including some from Vermont) as a measured response to English acts of treachery and aggression. Next, David Ghere looks at the supposed disappearance of Abenakis from western Maine, showing this to be a myth resulting from faulty assumptions combined with the self-interest of "white" settlers. Historian Daniel Vickers then shows how Anglos manipulated credit so as to indenture Nantucket Indians in order to have available a pool of labor for jobs in the new whaling industry considered too onerous and demeaning to do themselves. In the next essay, historian Ruth Herndon and Naragansett medicine woman Ella Sekatau discuss events leading up to 1880 legislation that, contrary to hard evidence, declared the Naragansetts to be extinct, illegally taking away their status mandated by U.S. law. They document a deliberate policy to "erase" Indians by simply redesignating them as "poor," "blacks," or "negros."

The sixth essay is by Jean O'Brien, an Ojibwa, who discusses how native women adjusted to changed gender roles brought about by landlessness, pressures from English authorities and missionaries, and frequent absence (at sea or in the military) of native men. Yet they still managed to maintain ties to their own traditions. Next, Barry O'Connell (a professor of English) discusses Pequot activist William Apess, whose writings give us insight into both Indian and "white" societies in the nineteenth century. Historian Ann Marie Plane and anthropologist Gregory Button follow with a discussion of a Massachusetts 1869 act declaring Indians to be citizens. In the context of reconstruction era politics and race relations, this presaged the disastrous Dawes allotment act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1887.

The penultimate essay is by Nipmuc historian Thomas Doughton, who discusses the supposed disappearance of natives from central Massachusetts, even while Indians were being identified as such in the records. But given the mindset that they were supposed to be gone, evidence to the contrary was ignored. Finally, anthropologist Harald Prins discusses the importance of wage labor in Maine's potato fields and blueberry barrens for the Mi'kmaq in their resistance to assimilation, and for the emergence of pan-Mi'kmaq nationalism.

Overall, this collection is an excellent sample of recent scholarship on New England Indians over the past 300 years. One of its strengths is the diversity of specialists involved; another is its readability. Although none deal explicitly with Vermont's Abenakis, the papers by Calloway, Haefeli and Sweeney, Ghre and Prins are relevant, and the others provide useful regional context. Too often, Vermonters think the situation of Abenakis in this state is unique. They should read this book to learn that this is not so, even though details differ from place to place.

WILLIAM A. HAVILAND

William A. Haviland is professor of anthropology at the University of Vermont. He is co-author with Marjory W. Power of The Original Vermonters: Native Inhabitants, Past and Present (1981; revised and expanded edition, 1994).

Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War

By Richard M. Ketchum (New York: Henry Holt, 1997, pp. xii, 545, \$30.00).

The Honor of Command: General Burgoyne's Saratoga, June-October 1777

By Stuart Murray (Bennington, Vt.: Images from the Past, 1998, pp. xii, 114, paper \$14.95).

These two books are of special interest to Vermont readers because Vermont had so much at stake in General John Burgoyne's attempt to split the erstwhile colonies along the Champlain-Hudson line. Both are well worth reading. Richard M. Ketchum's offering is by far the longest and most comprehensive; Stuart Murray's is brief and written only from Burgoyne's perspective, but it is a most handsome book and has the best illustrations I have ever seen for the Saratoga campaign.

Ketchum covers every aspect of the Saratoga campaign. His readers get to know all the main actors, including those far from the battlefield, like Benjamin Franklin and Lord George Germaine, and the details of the preliminaries as well as of the campaign itself. The only exception is the exceedingly terse treatment he gives to the naval building race on Lake Champlain in 1776. It ended with Benedict Arnold's flotilla being destroyed by Thomas Pringle's heavy guns and Royal Navy veterans, but it delayed Burgoyne's campaign for a whole year. One wonders why such a large book did not have two or three more pages for such a vital preliminary.

Otherwise, Ketchum's *Saratoga* is a very satisfying read. One feels the frustration and boredom inherent in military campaigns, as well as the heat, mud, and mosquitoes of this one in particular, without losing interest or being tempted to page ahead. Scholars may wish for regular footnotes instead of the detailed but inconvenient "Notes on Sources" for each chapter, but most readers will be glad to avoid the intrusion of scholarly trappings. All will be impressed with Ketchum's twenty-one-page bibliography, six pages of which are manuscript sources from nineteen different

repositories. It is gratifying to see that both Ketchum and Murray made extensive use of Donald Wickman's unpublished 1993 University of Vermont master's thesis on the American occupation of Mount Independence. Ketchum also utilizes Brian Burns's 1973 UVM thesis for his lengthy discussion of Burgoyne's use of Indians. However, neither he nor Murray could bring themselves to buy Burns's convincing debunking of the myth that the New England militias turned out to avenge the murder of Jane McCrea. Ketchum finds another myth less sacred. The image we all had of the miserable Hessian dragoons slogging through the forest in thigh-high cavalry boots and heavy uniforms falls victim to Ketchum's observation that they had been reissued infantry gear. Nor does he, unlike many writers on the campaign, overstate the importance of rifles, although Daniel Morgan and his Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland riflemen clearly fascinate him.

Ketchum is not as impressed as Murray with either the victor, Horatio Gates, or the loser, John Burgoyne. Surprisingly but convincingly, Ketchum elevates Philip Schuyler and Arthur St. Clair, both much maligned for abandoning Fort Ticonderoga without resistance, for making a proper strategic move, though they knew it would damage their reputations. He finds Burgoyne only slightly more sympathetic than William Howe, whose failure to move up the Hudson to rendezvous with Burgoyne sealed the latter's fate. On the British side, the general who gets the most praise from Ketchum is a Brunswicker, Friedrich Baron von Riedesel, who had a much better grasp of the situation than Burgoyne. And Ketchum, like most readers of her journal, falls in love with the baron's wife, the intrepid Friederike, who with her three children stayed with the army through the whole campaign. Both Benedict Arnold and Simon Fraser are given their due, as is the irascible John Stark. But what Ketchum does especially well is to tell the story of the enlisted men on both sides, so that the reader can really identify with them.

Vermonters will be particularly pleased with Ketchum's lengthy treatment of the battles of Hubbardton, fought in Vermont, and Bennington, just over the New York line. Hubbardton, though a defeat for the Americans, served notice for the first time that they were good fighters, and Riedesel, at least, took the warning. Bennington was not only a British defeat, it exposed the weakness of Burgoyne's planning both to the Americans and to his own forces. It was the beginning of the end. The actual battles of Saratoga get a surprisingly small—not much more than Hubbardton—though quite adequate, part of the book. Fittingly, *Saratoga* ends with Benjamin Franklin receiving the news of Burgoyne's surrender and using it to achieve his dream of an alliance with France.

Murray's *Honor of Command* seems pretty thin if one has read Ketchum first, since it has probably less than a tenth as many words. It is, however, an adequate account from the British perspective, and its illustrations go well with Ketchum's book. All Vermont libraries ought to have both books.

NEIL R. STOUT

Neil R. Stout is Professor of History at the University of Vermont and a former editor of Vermont History. He has written extensively on the American Revolution, including The Royal Navy in America, 1760-1775 and The Perfect Crisis.

In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820

By David Waldstreicher (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, pp. 364, \$45.00, paper, \$16.95).

Festivities and celebrations have been vehicles for expressions of American nationalism since the formative years of the Republic. David Waldstreicher argues in this fascinating and erudite book that public ceremonies and printed discourse about them have allowed distinctive groups of Americans to put forward their own conceptions of the nation. In his view, our ways of commemorating the past have revealed social, regional, and political conflicts as much as the elusive goal of national unity.

Waldstreicher begins with the arresting thought that nationalism in the United States "hasn't been a great idea," but rather a "set of practices that empowered Americans to fight over the legacy of their national Revolution and to protest their exclusion from that Revolution's fruits" (p. 3). *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes* is most valuable for its rich detail about the manner in which Americans publicly expressed their political attitudes in arenas beyond the ballot box. Being interested in "the everyday interplay of rhetoric, ritual, and political action," Waldstreicher carefully analyzes the significance of ballads, broadsides, public speeches and toasts, and newspaper reporting, as well as parades and processions (p. 3).

The struggle against Britain prior to the Revolution set the tone for subsequent displays of public opinion. Drawing upon English traditions, colonial Whigs staged "the funeral of Liberty" during the Stamp Act crisis, and later burned the king's effigy at the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence (p. 25). Festivities and celebrations were important rites that linked the Whig elite to the broader populace in a common cause. During the debate over the Constitution in 1787, Federalists successfully practiced a form of "street theater" displaying the orderly and respectable character of the pro-ratification movement (p. 98). In the 1790s, Republicans pushed the nation in a democratic direction by celebrating the Fourth of July in their own fashion. For example, a Vermont militia company in 1792 issued a commonplace warning against aristocracy: "May the American states be long defended from the inundation which is threatened by the increase of aristocrats, who wish for a rich metropolis and a poor peasantry" (p. 128).

Waldstreicher is adept at showing the close relationship between politics and society in the early American republic. He explains how women participated alongside men in public festivities. The presence of women and girls exemplified the allegedly non-partisan and patriotic character of public gatherings. Women helped to define their own public role rather than being mere pawns of male leaders. For example, ladies in York, Pennsylvania, in 1796 issued their own Fourth of July toasts that reflected their own special concerns. In addition to honoring George Washington, they lauded "the American Fair [sex]" and "the Rights of Women" (p. 236).

If national celebrations invoked democratic values, they also expressed deeply ingrained racial prejudice. Waldstreicher's most original insights are based on his analysis of processions and publications that disparaged African-American aspirations for

freedom. In Boston, Republicans issued a broadside in 1816 that mocked in false dialect "the Grand and Splendid Bobalition [i.e., abolition] of Slavery" (p. 337). This type of publication ridiculed the town's black citizens for planning their own celebration of liberty on July 14—a day that the party of Jefferson had itself long commemorated in honor of the French Revolution. Notwithstanding racist attacks, African Americans fashioned their own sense of national independence by holding annual celebrations on various days, including January 1, since that day in 1808 had marked the official end of U.S. participation in the African slave trade. Waldstreicher merits praise for ferreting out these previously neglected events, which were often ignored by the white press.

Waldstreicher argues that U.S. nationalism in its formative years was not a uniform phenomenon, but an ideal that was defined by contending forces. New England and Southern spokesmen attempted to present their respective regions as paragons of the nation—as did Western interests which gained increasing strength over time. Waldstreicher excels in identifying particular strains of American nationalism, though he understates the degree to which citizens in various regions were able to transcend sectional differences by celebrating collectively the founding fathers and military heroes and the virtues they represented. Above all, the author's analysis tends to skirt, rather than confront directly, its major theme—the making of American nationalism. The reader is therefore left unsure about the relative importance of various factors that allowed Americans to feel loyalty to the nation. For example, to what degree did American nationalism depend on the veneration of republican ideals such as liberty and self-government? How important was the sense of moral superiority relative to perceived Old World corruption and decay? How did American nationalism differ from other nationalisms of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? Waldstreicher identifies American nationalism as future-oriented, but he never explains which forces were most important to creating the sense of liberation from the past.

In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes is a provocative, sometimes brilliant, and generally well-written book despite the author's occasional lapses into current academic jargon. Most importantly, Waldstreicher reminds us that public festivities in the nation's honor have always had multiple meanings. Often occasions for self-applause, they have also provided opportunities for citizens to contend over the Revolution and its legacy.

DAVID E. NARRETT

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Between Authority and Liberty: State Constitution Making in Revolutionary America

By Marc W. Kruman (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, pp. xiv, 223, \$39.95).

Marc Kruman's important new study of the first state constitutions challenges the classic work in the field, Gordon Wood's *Creation of the American Republic* (1969). Wood had argued that a profound ideological transformation occurred during

the Revolutionary Era, culminating in the drafting of the federal Constitution in 1787: revolutionary republican concepts of public good and virtuous, disinterested citizenship gave way to the values of a liberal, recognizably modern, pluralist regime. It was, Wood famously concluded, the “end of classical politics” in America. Kruman offers an alternative chronology, insisting that revolutionary American constitutionalism was instead decisively shaped in the years *before* independence. “An American theory of constitutionalism that Wood sees emerging only in the 1780s in response to the chaos of revolutionary politics,” Kruman concludes, was “already in place in 1776” (p. 7).

American revolutionary constitutional thought was driven by a “pervasive fear of arbitrary power” (p. xii). Kruman’s pivotal argument is that the revolutionaries feared legislatures, beginning with the British Parliament, as much as they feared executives who might claim quasi-monarchical prerogatives. Wary of legislative despotism, the first state constitution writers well understood the distinction between fundamental, constitutional law and statutory law. “Revolutionary Americans plainly thought of provincial congresses as extraordinary political bodies,” Kruman writes; “they also assumed that only such assemblies—not legislatures—could write constitutions which, after all, aimed to restrict governmental powers” (p. 24).

Kruman effectively dismantles Wood’s sophisticated but Whiggish account of the movement from early state constitutions dominated by popular assemblies to more complex, and supposedly more conservative, charters. Revolutionaries did not have to be taught that legislatures could be dangerously despotic, and therefore had to be restrained by constitutions deriving their authority directly from the sovereign people. Because they grasped this basic point in 1776, the more elaborate procedures developed in Massachusetts in 1780—the special election of a constitutional convention and the submission of the constitutional text to the towns for popular ratification—“looks less pathbreaking and more typical than historians have suggested” (30). Revolutionary constitutionalists did not beat a retreat from direct democratic rule—or classical republicanism—by embracing the separation of powers, or by rehabilitating executive power, or by substituting bicameral for unicameral legislatures. Nor could the putative inadequacy of these belated efforts to curb the “democratic despotism” of state legislatures explain the movement for national constitutional reform.

Kruman is at his best in deflating exaggerated claims for constitutional or ideological transformations in the Revolutionary era. The resulting prevalence of argument over narrative gives his book a somewhat static quality: the most important development, from the customary constitutionalism of provincial Anglo-American patriots to the “mechanical polity” of 1776 (p. 161), was essentially complete before Kruman’s constitution writers began their labors. Echoing Wood’s mentor Bernard Bailyn, Kruman concludes that the “imperial controversy prompted colonists to reaffirm their adherence to the English constitution of restraint and to transform it” (p. 157). Readers who want to know more about the pre-Revolutionary dialectic of liberty and power should refer to Bailyn’s *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967) or to John Philip Reid’s exhaustive *Constitutional History of the American Revolution* (4 volumes, 1986-93).

Between Authority and Liberty is not a compelling general interpretation of early American constitutional history; nor is it an exercise in intellectual history showing how “liberal and republican traditions” were fused “into the distinctly American alloy transmitted into the age of Jefferson and Jackson” (p. xii). But Marc Kruman’s valuable

deflationary exercise clears the way for important insights about developments in the respective states. A wide suffrage helped new governments such as Vermont's, with its "enfranchisement of all freemen" (p. 92), mobilize desperately needed popular support. In Vermont and Pennsylvania, publication of assembly journals, open sessions, and constitutional review by the Council of Censors were designed *both* to legitimize and to restrain unicameral legislatures. "Like bicameralists elsewhere, advocates of unicameral assemblies worried about the tyranny of unchecked legislative power" (p. 151). Vermont was certainly not a typical state, remaining as it did outside of the union during the entire period of this study. But the response of the Green Mountain state to pervasive challenges to its authority illuminates the constitutional values and political imperatives of the Revolutionary era.

PETER S. ONUF

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Thomas Chittenden: Vermont's First Statesman

By Frank Smallwood (Shelburne, Vt.: The New England Press, 1997, pp. 278, \$35.00; paper, \$19.95).

A sizable amount of scholarship focusing on the early history of Vermont has appeared within the last two decades. Those works providing important new insights into this era include Aleine Austin, *Matthew Lyon: "New Man" of the Democratic Revolution, 1749-1822* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press 1981); Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791-1850* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); William J. Gilmore, *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life: Material and Cultural Life in Rural New England, 1780-1835* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1989); Michael A. Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws: Ethan Allen and the Struggle for Independence on the Early American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); P. Jeffrey Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District: Patterns of Community Development and Religious Activity, 1761-1850* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1991); Robert E. Shalhope, *Bennington and the Green Mountain Boys: The Emergence of Liberal Democracy in Vermont, 1760-1850* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); and several important essays by J. Kevin Graffagnino. These works, combined with two older studies, Matt Bushnell Jones, *Vermont in the Making, 1750-1777* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939) and Chilton Williamson, *Vermont in Quandary: 1763-1825* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1949), provide an essential corpus of scholarship for those interested in the formative years of Vermont history.

Frank Smallwood relies heavily on this work in his study of Thomas Chittenden, Vermont's first governor and leading political figure until his death in 1797. In fact, his study of Chittenden rests almost entirely upon this secondary literature. Due to the absence of Chittenden papers that do not appear as a part of the public record, this

reliance upon secondary material is unavoidable. Thus, despite his stated hope that Chittenden “will come alive again” (p. xvi) in his pages, Smallwood is unable to portray Chittenden as more than a one-dimensional character. The result is a political narrative of Vermont’s early years with a primary focus on the actions of Thomas Chittenden, represented by Smallwood as an ill-educated democrat who rose to power in Vermont on the strength of his ability to relate to the needs of ordinary people. Indeed, the unifying theme of Smallwood’s book is Chittenden the common man, the “statesman” whose success emanated from an abundance of common sense.

Because of the archival restraints under which he labored, Smallwood tells what has by now become a very familiar tale: led by a small cadre of egalitarian democrats, Vermont’s early settlers struggled to protect their land titles from New York authorities; then, under the auspices of a similar set of individuals with Thomas Chittenden as their titular leader, Vermonters established an independent republic, entered the Union as the thirteenth state, and endured the struggles between Jeffersonian-Republicans and Federalists that affected the entire nation throughout the first two decades of its existence.

Smallwood does do a wonderful job of tracking Chittenden’s English ancestry and investigating his childhood in East Guilford, Connecticut. And, for the years between the time Chittenden first entered the New Hampshire Grants in 1774 until his death in 1797 he offers an excellent synthesis of the recent work dealing with Vermont’s early history. For the lay reader there is no better introduction to Vermont’s early years than Smallwood’s wonderfully readable narrative of Thomas Chittenden’s political career.

ROBERT E. SHALHOPE

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Thomas Chittenden: Vermont’s First Statesman, by Frank Smallwood.

An Appreciation

Frank Smallwood’s book about Thomas Chittenden, the enigmatic, first governor of Vermont, is a meaningful and delightful companion piece to my 1,027-page volume, *The Public Papers of Governor Thomas Chittenden, 1778–1789, 1790–1797*, which I edited under the direction of the secretary of state of Vermont in 1969.

Smallwood brings Chittenden right into our living rooms. One feels his presence while reading. Smallwood makes it crystal clear the Chittenden was his own man, and that he made the decisions that shaped Vermont. Thus we are forever thankful to Governor Chittenden, and to Professor Smallwood for telling us about his life and career in this exquisite little illustrated, splendidly indexed book. What a gift: what a legacy for all time.

JOHN A. WILLIAMS

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Indian Stream Republic: Settling a New England Frontier, 1785-1842

By Daniel Doan; Edited by Ruth Doan MacDougall, with an introduction and afterword by Jere R. Daniell (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1997, pp. 288, \$45.00, paper, \$19.95).

Daniel Doan's *Indian Stream Republic* provides a detailed account of some fascinating North Country events that could have triggered a border war between British North America and the United States in the late 1830s.

The Treaty of Paris ending the American Revolution was ambiguous concerning the border of northwestern New Hampshire. It was defined as "the northwestern most head of the Connecticut River" down to the forty-fifth latitude. The British claimed the border went down the center of the Connecticut River from the Third Connecticut Lake. The Americans argued that Hall Stream was the line. The area between became known as Indian Stream after a tributary which runs down its center.

The problem was compounded as area settlers acquired land from two competing companies, whose claims were based on Indian grants forbidden by federal law. Doan does a superb job of detailing the activities of these two companies and the settlement of Indian Stream. In 1820, New Hampshire determined to exert its authority over Indian Stream territory. In 1824, New Hampshire disallowed previous deeds, but granted one hundred acres to each settler. Unfortunately, some purchasers of Eastman or Bedel deeds were not then settled and others held deeds in excess of the one hundred acres. These individuals attempted to get the New Hampshire legislature to recognize their earlier claims.

The border dispute also resulted in the lack of a recognized legal system to adjudicate conflicts among settlers. In 1832, after the United States Senate rejected the King of the Netherlands's ruling favoring Canada's claim to the area, the Indian Stream settlers drafted a constitution to provide a government and legal system for the area until the border dispute was resolved. For over two years, the Indian Stream Republic functioned in relative peace. Unfortunately, it challenged New Hampshire's claims of jurisdiction, and, in 1835, the sheriff of Coos County sent deputies to arrest a couple of debtors. This resulted in a schism between settlers sympathetic to Canada's claim and those siding with New Hampshire. What followed were arrests and rescues, gun fire, kidnapping, and occupation by the New Hampshire militia. Meanwhile, a flurry of notes passed among the Council of the Indian Stream Republic, the Governor of New Hampshire, the United States Secretary of State, the British Ambassador to Washington, and the Governor General of Canada.

Jere Daniell's introduction, recounting the history of attempts to publish this book, is interesting in its own right. Doan finished the history of attempts to publish this book, is interesting in its own right. Doan finished the manuscript in 1966. He submitted it to several publishers, including University Press of New England, all of whom rejected it when the author was unwilling to make certain revisions. After his death in 1992, the manuscript again came to the attention of University Press of New England, which decided to publish it.

A problem with posthumous publication may be the editor's reluctance to make necessary modifications to the original manuscript. As a result, the book contains many of the shortcomings that bothered earlier publishers.

One of the appeals of the book, Doan's attempt to portray the natural ambiance of events, is a potential trap for historians. Chapter 34 recounts the events of October 22, 1835. It opens with a description of the scene: "White frost lay on the withered corn in Blanchard's clearing . . . under the gray sky" (p. 215). While this may be a general description of an October morning in the north country, without footnotes, the reader cannot be sure it describes that morning.

Another problem is the surfeit of detail that at times strangles the narrative. While the issue of land titles is extremely relevant to the story, the detailing of land transfers and chains of titles, at times, overloads the reader. In part, the surplus detail is due to a desire by the novice historian, which Doan admits he is (p. 262), to include every bit of information he has uncovered. For example, Doan writes that Nathaniel Perkins' "son Joshua died in 1815, aged two years, one months, and twenty-six days" (p. 54). This detail adds nothing to the story.

Another weakness is the many non sequiturs. Doan notes a deed's date on "Washington's birthday, only thirty-three years after the first president's death" (p. 151). In a later paragraph he mentions President Jackson's visit to the New Hampshire capital. These had no relevance to the story (p. 177). If they had been eliminated, it would have made for a more compact and coherent narrative.

Future researchers of the subject will rue the lack of citations, but this should not detract from the general public's enjoyment.

Despite these shortcomings, *Indian Stream Republic* is an ambitious piece of scholarship and a valuable contribution to the history of northern New England. While the book will be of special interest to residents of Coos County, New Hampshire and Essex County, Vermont, it should also appeal to those interested in New Hampshire history, Canadian-American relations or the problems of settling the northern frontier.

ALLEN RICE YALE, JR.

Allen Yale is assistant professor of history at Lyndon State College in Lyndonville. He is author of While the Sun Shines: Making Hay in Vermont, 1789-1990.

The Steamships of Lake Champlain

By Ogden Ross (1930) reprint, with new essays by Art Cohn (Quechee, Vt.: Vermont Heritage Press, 1997, pp. 210, \$39.95, paper \$29.95).

There is much to be gleaned from Ross's original company history of the Champlain Transportation Company (CTC), first published in 1930. Both professional historians and interested individuals from outside the academy will find this detailed narrative a good starting point for any research of the Lake Champlain area. Ross's text is also well illustrated: the photographs and drawings of the vessels themselves are valuable sources for maritime historians interested in the maritime architecture of the nineteenth-century transition from sail to steam. Ross may have overstated his

assertion that between 1809 and 1826 "Sailing vessels slowly went out of use," (p. 50) as he also points out that two vessels, originally built as steamships, were later retrofitted to be sailing schooners. But in all, readers will find this work informative in a variety of fields of interest that converge in Lake Champlain.

Ross presents detailed maps on a period-by-period basis that show steamer routes, shipyards, and landings—basic information often difficult to find compiled in one place—consistently presented to cover a period of over a century and a quarter. Detailed information about the twenty-nine vessels the CTC operated on the Lake between 1809 and 1930, including dimensions, speed, horsepower, place of construction, and dates of extensive refitting, will also prove extremely useful for anyone interested in the details of the ships and the evolution of steamer construction.

But there is more for historians interested in the social relations of the Lake Champlain area. A set of reprinted steamer regulations that the CTC chose to enforce in the cramped quarters of its first steamships in the 1830s raises questions about early American cultures of travel and reveals key gender and class assumptions. More intriguing to social historians is Ross's account of rival steamship companies in the 1840s, especially Peter Comstock's company with its steamship *Francis Saltus*. Comstock's price war with the CTC and his appeal to the non-elite community around the Lake reveal tensions between the CTC, whose captains at this time catered to more refined and elevated tastes, and a local community who viewed such behavior as "aristocratic" and resented the high costs of the CTC's essential transportation services. In addition, Ross's accounts of the popular outrage at the CTC's ferrying of British troops to suppress Robert Nelson's "Patriot" uprising in Canada in 1838 invites historical inquiries into a conflict between populist sentiments of the surrounding Lake communities and the company's alleged "Tory" reputation in this period. This is, in this reviewer's opinion, one of the larger benefits of reprinting *The Steamships of Lake Champlain*: Ross's account of these events invites questions into the tension between a "soulless Corporation" and the "Patriot" community (p. 54) within which they operated.

But this work is also company history, and especially for the period after 1865, it becomes a listing of occasional accidents and changes in ferry routes made to accommodate rail travelers. An Afterword fleshes out how the CTC adapted to changes brought on by the automobile and how the CTC has emerged in the 1990s as one of the largest employers in the region.

In his "Foreword" as Director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM), Art Cohn wisely reminds readers that Ross ignored many other steam vessels operating on Lake Champlain. In the final essay of the book, Cohn uses Ross's detailed narrative of the CTC as a foundation to bring the LCMM's marine archaeological activities to public attention. Cohn's brief account also highlights the work of more than thirty years of marine archaeology done in the Lake. This brief but informative essay reminds the maritime historian not to forget the rich and recoverable historical resources available in Lake Champlain, and reminds the general reader that Lake Champlain was a long-time center of human activity in the region.

The *Steamships of Lake Champlain* has much to offer the historian and the general reader alike. It reunites the Lake with the land and communities that surround it, reminds the reader of the close ties between the CTC (and later the LCTC) and the

region's development, and highlights the important work of the LCMM in preserving those connections. In all, this work is a valuable and enjoyable resource.

MATTHEW MCKENZIE

Matthew McKenzie is the author of Barefooted, Bare Leg'd, Bare Breech'd: The Revolutionary War Service of the Massachusetts Continental Line (Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, 1995) and currently a Ph.D. candidate in Atlantic maritime and American social history at the University of New Hampshire. He is also the managing editor of the journal Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power.

Letters to Vermont from Her Civil War Soldier Correspondents to the Home Press

Compiled and Edited by Donald H. Wickman (Bennington, Vt.: Images From The Past, Inc. 1998, pp. 256, \$35.00, paper, \$19.95).

The compendium of literature for America's Civil War now approaches gigantic proportions. Little of this writing, however, deals with war reporting contained in newspapers of the time. In Volume I of a projected two-volume compilation of letters from Vermont soldiers to the *Rutland Herald*, Don Wickman seeks to address this void in what must be viewed as a fresh approach to the study of the War of the Rebellion.

Wickman strives for insight into the war by attempting to establish personal links between soldier correspondents and contemporary readers. Producing a remarkable spin off from his research on Vermont's battle flags, he traces the lives and military careers of seven Vermonters from the First and Second Vermont Brigades, the First Vermont Infantry, and intriguingly, the Twenty-first Massachusetts Infantry. Originally published in the *Rutland Herald* between 1861-64, the letters appear here as a collection for the first time. By allowing those Vermonters to tell the story of the "most exciting and memorable time of their lives" (p. 9), yet judiciously providing necessary background, references, copious illustrations and transitional information, Wickman has succeeded admirably in his task.

Civil War newspapers present a double-edged sword. Modern researchers find them difficult to obtain and even more laborious to analyze. Nevertheless, they represent the greatest underutilized source of attitudes and information concerning this Republic's most costly war. Undaunted by the challenge, Wickman cut through this Gordian knot and extracted from the various battle fronts a fascinating cross section of wartime experiences, which puts a human face on their soldier-authors.

Fortunately for historians, the Civil War preceded the era of the military censor. Soldiers commonly used their letters to family and press not only to update the folks at home as to their own activities, but also as a medium for conveying military activities and for venting their complaints outside the army's formal command structure. In order to protect themselves from potential retaliation, many of these writers used code-names or vague initials to disguise their identity. Wickman's admirable detective work resulted in his tracking down the identities of six of his seven correspondents in this initial volume.

The correspondents originally entered the army from such varied civilian pursuits as "college graduate, student, mechanic, writer, teacher, painter, and harness maker" (p. 8). An interesting group in themselves are the farmers. This reviewer trusts Volume II will include some of this section of Green Mountain society which provided, in fact, most of Vermont's soldiers.

Those who choose to enter the world of Vermont's Civil War correspondents will be exposed to the full gamut of human emotions and experiences. Readers will easily empathize with the boredom, exhaustion, hunger, loneliness, love, pain, glory, and terror of these men, and, at times, look in on their unfortunate demise in battle. This is tragically the case with one of Wickman's most compelling letter writers. First Lieutenant Albert A. Crane. As did so many other Vermonters, he gave his all for the Union in the Wilderness on May 5, 1864. Crane fell "a young man of fine culture, of good talents and kindly disposition [and] also a brave and gallant officer" (p. 202), one of 1,232 members of the Old Brigade who were killed, wounded, or missing in action in that horrible engagement.

This reviewer found little to criticize or correct. Wickman states "the Vermont Brigade was not involved with the December (13, 1862) battle of Fredericksburg" (p. 172). In fact, the brigade was engaged, though not in the famous assaults on Marye's Heights, scoring one of the Army of the Potomac's few tactical successes on that bleak day. Footnote 30 (p. 210) to "Sigma's" (Captain Albert R. Sabin) letter concerning Dartmouth students of the Rhode Island cavalry at Winchester, should have also mentioned the "College Cavaliers." This unique unit, a cavalry company, was formed entirely from Norwich Cadets and students from Dartmouth and other New England colleges. These students served their time (90 days) and then returned to studies at their respective campuses. "Mooer" (p. 213, footnote 13) is a typo for (Albion) Mower. Lastly, the mention of the "appointment of Col. [Lewis A.] Grant," commander of the Vermont Brigade, to brigadier general (p. 197, footnote 40) is a bit confusing. Grant actually did not obtain the appointment until June 29, 1864, as indicated by a VI Corps special order.

In sum, Wickman's compilation is worth the price and is a must purchase for anyone interested in learning more of the Vermonters who exchanged the beauty of their Green Mountains for the bloody chaos of the battlefield. This reviewer eagerly awaits Wickman's next volume.

ROBERT G. POIRIER

Robert G. Poirier is a historian and retired CIA analyst. His latest book is By The Blood of Our Alumni: Norwich University Citizen-Soldiers in the Army of the Potomac, (1999). He is currently completing a history of the Third Vermont Infantry.

Julian Scott: Artist of the Civil War and Native America

By Robert J. Titterton (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 1997, pp. 315, 97 illustrations. \$48.50).

Robert Titterton's biography of Julian Scott is the first complete study of the life and work of this important artist. It is a significant and welcome contribution to a growing literature about Vermont artists who have made their mark in America.

Scott (1846-1901) is best known to Vermonters as the nineteenth-century artist who painted "The Battle at Cedar Creek," the large mural in Montpelier's State House commemorating the Civil War engagement. More Vermont soldiers fought at Cedar Creek than in any other Civil War conflict. Efforts of the last several years to honor Scott's birthplace and artistic achievements have been realized in the Johnson State College Art Gallery bearing the artist's name. Less well known to the general public are Scott's other paintings and drawings of the Civil War and the extensive images of the Indian West: specifically the Oklahoma Territory near Fort Sill, and the Arizona Territory of the Hopi. Scott created his Western art while engaged as a special agent working on the Indian Census of 1890.

Why has Scott's recognition been such a long time in coming? "When I began this work," Robert Titterton writes, "I was surprised to learn that no published study of Julian Scott existed . . . Few secondary sources mention Scott's name . . . There are no public collections of his personal papers" (p. 1). In spite of such seeming obstacles and limitations, Titterton had the advantage of access to the unpublished material of earlier Scott scholars such as William M. Murphy. In addition, the cooperation of libraries, the Kramer Gallery of Minneapolis, and private collectors enabled him to slowly uncover heretofore unknown material about and by the artist. Titterton cites both primary and secondary sources in extensive notes at the end of each chapter and in a useful bibliography. The result is an extensively detailed and illustrated biography of the artist, rich with fresh material and narrative, which thoughtfully documents and reconstructs "a life that intersected the two great cataclysmic events of the nineteenth century: the Civil War and the demise of the Indian West" (p. 4).

A storyteller at heart, Titterton begins by retelling the Battle of Cedar Creek and of the role of the Vermont Brigade under the leadership of Union General Philip Sheridan. This lively account establishes the significance of the event to be commemorated by the "drummer boy hero" turned artist under commission by the State of Vermont. Titterton then chronologically delineates Scott's achievements and the key events of his life. Scott enlisted in the Union forces at the age of fifteen as a young noncombatant musician, witnessed many engagements of the Army of the Potomac, and received a Congressional Medal of Honor for coming to the aid of his fellow soldiers. Scott's family background and genealogy and the lively community life in Johnson, Vermont, in the mid-nineteenth century are also detailed. Judiciously placed in the opening chapter, the black and white illustrations of pencil drawings are reminiscent of the "farm portraits" of James Gilman and of the genre scenes of Thomas Waterman Wood.

They are intermingled with woodcuts by Scott that appeared in *Harper's Weekly*. The juxtaposition of illustration and text is one of the more compelling features of the book. Extensive captions indicate title, medium, dimensions, and appropriate commentary. Sixteen color plates of the artist's previously unpublished work are inserted mid-way through the book. The quality of reproduction throughout is exceptional.

Two well-constructed chapters on campaigns of the Civil War with significant illustrations are interspersed with a chapter on Scott's artistic education and patronage by native Vermonter Henry Clark, whom Scott met in New York while recuperating from wounds incurred during the Battle of White Oak Swamp. It was Clark who introduced Scott to such men of wealth as William E. Dodge Jr. Clark and Dodge together encouraged Scott to enroll at the National Academy of Design, where Emanuel Leutze was Scott's principal tutor. At war's end, Clark made it possible for the discharged veteran to journey with him to Paris. Returning from that adventure, Scott took up a studio at the Tenth Street Studio Building, the premier address of American artists at the time. Titterton presents much material on the eventual commission by the State of Vermont for a commemorative mural of the Civil War, a commission whose scale and cost exceeded what was originally allocated.

Scott's move to Plainfield, New Jersey, and his experiments with watercolor are described. The interest in an historical iconography of the American Revolution prompted by the Centennial celebrations is thoughtfully discussed. Throughout the book Titterton shows a sensitivity to social and cultural events of the day, giving the reader an informed view of the contemporary scene. His discussions of American artists of the 1870s, the growing interest in watercolor, and of Scott's watercolor technique are especially perceptive. "[His] watercolor method is clearly derived from his oil technique. He used toned paper, the equivalent of subduing the white background in oil painting, thereby enabling him to build the illusion of a three dimensional surface. The same treatment in watercolor defeats the transparent luminosity created when light reflects through paint off the white paper" (pp. 120-121).

An important episode in Scott's life and work in Plainfield, New Jersey, involved his painting of a mural for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. He had himself taken the pledge, and, as a reformed drinker, contributed his artistic talents for the cause against alcohol. Titterton's discussion of Scott's conversion to abstinence and subsequent participation in the temperance movement is insightful and well-researched.

In his important chapter entitled "Photography and Art" the author details Scott's use of photography as a compositional source for his paintings and drawings and uses many ambrotypes as illustrations to the text. He also discusses the work of Eakins and Muybridge, placing Scott's photographic experiments within the artistic milieu of the 1880s, and appraising Scott's contributions to the period.

The last third of the book discusses Scott's appointment as an artist and Special Census Agent in 1890 "to preserve 'fast disappearing phases of Indian life'" (p. 185). His first assignment was in Oklahoma as artist and photographer. Using a hand-held No. 2 Kodak box camera, he documented nine different tribes as their way of life was being uprooted. Titterton shows a keen sensitivity to the issues of cultural biases facing Scott and his colleagues as they assumed their task. "Scott's analysis was governed by his value system which was rooted in white, Eastern culture. Attitudes

that he developed early in life . . . converge with themes encountered in his census work" (p. 191). Scott also demonstrated a remarkable sensitivity to the trauma and transition facing the Native Americans. "With the buffalo gone and tribal affiliations dissolved, the basis of Plains Indian culture would be destroyed. . . . A social structure that supported tribal members with mutual aid, communal property rights, and spiritual bonds was to be replaced with one that called for survival of the fittest" (p. 190). Scott's drawings, photographs, and paintings bear remarkable witness to this disappearing culture. In his later assignments to the New Mexico and Arizona Territories, specifically at Acoma and Laguna, Scott showed a similar sensitivity to the plight of the native peoples.

Scott's work was acknowledged during his lifetime. Aquatint illustrations were commissioned for Edna Dean Proctor's *The Song of the Ancient People*, published in 1893. Towards the end of his career "Scott's passion for Civil War subjects had not been displaced, but . . . now shared equal time with scenes of Indian life." Patronage, however, was not forthcoming. Ill health, a meagre pension, a studio fire, and personal problems hastened his demise. Julian Scott died on July 4, 1901, an appropriate date and "a fitting tribute," as Titterton notes, ". . . for a man who gave so much of his life to American history" (p. 294).

Working during an important period of transition and change in American culture, Julian Scott had similar artistic aims, within the broader cultural context, to those of such notable contemporaries as Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, Albert Bierstadt, and Frederick Remington. Regionally, his works bear comparison to those of fellow Vermonter, Thomas Waterman Wood. Scott's artistic achievements are not as considerable as those of the better known "Realists" of the period. He shared with them an aesthetic credo based on a Dusseldorf-inspired realism practiced most successfully at mid-century by Emmanuel Leutze, with whom he studied, and Eastman Johnson. It was an artistic posture that was challenged and superceded by the exploding innovations of photography. As Titterton has aptly noted, Scott's work was often inspired if not directly impacted by photographic experimentation: ambrotypes, glass plate negatives, and circular Kodak views. But it is a body of work also informed by an artist of note whose reputation will surely rise as a result of this book. Future scholars and students of American art will be indebted to this significant contribution to the study of American culture and of Julian Scott. Titterton is a scholar at heart, and his concern for accuracy and detail nicely mirrors the aesthetic stance of his subject towards his work.

WILLIAM C. LIPKE

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They Came to Work: Oral Histories of the Vermont Granite Industry During the 1920's and 1930's

By Marjorie Strong and Greg Sharrow (Middlesex, Vt.: Franglais Cultural Center, 1997, pp. 64, paper, \$4.00).

They Came to Work continues a constructive trend in the exploration of the history of Franco-Americans in Vermont. Special challenges await those who labor in this vineyard. For over a century, these Vermonters have been nearly invisible. Yet, as Anne McConnell has underlined in her graceful essay on "The Franco-Americans of New England and Vermont," (*We Vermonters*, 1992), the 1980 census indicated that "thirty-seven percent of Vermonters said they were of French-Canadian descent, making them in all probability the largest single group in the state" (p. 124).

Paradoxically, the least obvious group is also the most numerous, possessing a rich culture and history still scarcely known by society at large. Indeed, McConnell declares that only one single sentence out of a nearly 300-page 1976 Bicentennial publication for Vermont and New Hampshire students regarded Franco-Americans. To be sure, Franco-Americans were often hidden from sight—tucked away in one of the many "Little Canadas," cultural and population enclaves within the textile cities of New England.

Fortunately, works such as Gerard Brault's evocative *The French-Canadian Heritage in New England* (1986) and Peter Woolfson's sensitive essay published by the Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1983) have moved our understandings well beyond the often condescending perspectives of a Rowland Robinson in the late nineteenth century or the frequent temptations to treat this subculture as being merely "quaint" or "picturesque."

In *They Came to Work*, Marjorie Strong of Barre's Aldrich Library and Greg Sharrow of the Vermont Folklife Center in Middlebury present fascinating oral histories recalling the tumultuous period of the Barre granite worker strikes of 1922 and 1933. In the eyes of the Italian-American communities of Barre, the coming of the French Canadians was prompted by some granite owners' desire to break these strikes—the Franco-Americans came as scabs, bozos, and strike-breakers. Gently but persistently encouraged by Strong and Sharrow to discuss their experiences and family memories of those difficult times, the generation of 1920-1940 candidly acknowledges the sometimes fierce and even violent tensions between these ethnic groups during the great strikes.

These interviews also reveal, however, that after initial periods of high tension, with militia in the streets guarding the intentions of the strikebreakers to work, relations between the groups mellowed somewhat. Cross-over marriages became more common after the Second World War. There was also great respect for the French-Canadian family and work ethic—qualities that could be admired without qualification after the strikes concluded and tensions eased.

While a key goal of this oral history project was to "increase accessibility and visibility of Franco-American culture," (p. 2) the interviewers talked with both Franco-Americans and Italian-Americans in Barre. Given the intense hostility that greeted the strike-breakers, it is perhaps not surprising that it has taken over half a century to

begin to relate both sides' stories. Many communities besides Barre have preferred to sweep such conflicts beneath convenient carpets of historical amnesia.

The provocative oral histories in *They Came to Work* suggest the riches in this historical mine. Ray Rouleau discusses the first groups of Franco-Americans who "just came here to work during the long strike" (p. 6). Nelia Spinelli laments the lack of suction devices in the granite industry: "if you were to poke your head in the shed door, you couldn't see anything, all you could see is white dust, and these men would come out of the shed all white" (p. 12). Joseph Calcagni delights in recalling the friendly competitiveness of the old stonecutters who gathered at Depot Square to brag about "the fineness of the work they did and how one man could do this and another could do that" (p. 59).

They Came to Work will prove an admirable resource for those interested in probing more deeply into the rich nuances of ethnic, immigration, labor, and Vermont history during a particularly vexed period.

RICHARD HATHAWAY

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Behind the Iron Horse: The People Who Made the Trains Run in the Bellows Falls, Vermont, Area (1941-1980)

By Giro R. Patalano (Montpelier, Vt.: Vermont Historical Society and the Vermont Labor History Society, 1997, pp. 188, paper \$16.95).

When Giro Patalano went to work for the Boston & Maine Railroad in 1941, it was an integral, vital part of the New England economy, touching nearly every citizen's life. By the end of the four decades he worked there, the railroad had dissipated into an anachronism, its infrequently used rails no longer of much interest or importance to late twentieth-century business.

Author Patalano was born in the United States in 1918 and then taken to his parents' native Italy in 1929, where he received a first-rate education over four years. Returning in 1933 at age fifteen, he was denied public high school and was forced instead to attend night school. He found it uninspiring and dropped out.

Patalano spent three horror-filled years working in a sweat shop, an experience that taught him survival skills and the comforting value of the union. With a new bride he sought a more stable working and living environment and was hired by the B & M in Bellows Falls, Vermont. He was active in the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, later becoming chairman of the local grievance committee for twenty-five years.

His detailed narrative is a fascinating look into the politics of railroad work. Unlike the adoring prose of some rail-fan writing, this story is frank and sometimes combative, portraying both the good and bad aspects of work at track level and the good and bad

habits of the workers. Patalano describes his colorful colleagues through the years in considerable detail, and he devotes much attention to his own work as chairman of the local grievance committee. The relationship between railroad and union was frequently adversarial, especially in later years, and we are given an inside look at problems and their resolutions.

We are also given a detailed tour of operations around-the-clock at the station at Bellows Falls, a busy railroad town. It was the junction of the B & M main line between White River Junction, Vermont, and Springfield, Massachusetts, the western end of the B & M's Cheshire branch from Boston and the eastern end of the Rutland Railroad. There was much work for the switching crews, of which Patalano was a member. They worked for the local industries, serviced several daily passenger trains, and assisted heavy freights through town (encompassing a steep grade, sharp curves, and a tunnel). It was grueling work, made even more arduous by the long, severe winters. Accidents and the occasional death were unfortunate occupational hazards.

The book is a fine historical record. Among such writings actually done by railroaders, few are as literate. Indeed, Patalano's grasp of English is admirable, especially considering that he was largely self-taught, the result of a voracious reading appetite fueled by his lifelong desire to continue learning and to improve.

As a hard-working, conscientious railroad man, the author is understandably angered by the fast decline of the B & M after World War II, which accelerated when a new administration took control in 1956. Patalano's special villain is Patrick B. McGinnis, the corporate raider who took over the New Haven Railroad in 1954 and the B & M in 1956. In those years the B & M's passenger business was eroding rapidly, too, and McGinnis systematically eliminated all long-distance trains from the railroad along with many branch-line commuter operations.

Nonetheless, these were inevitable changes, consistent with the direction of American commerce since then, regrettable as that might be. As New England's industrial base slipped away, so did the railroad's local business. Trucks proved better able to handle short-haul commodities. Passengers preferred the freedom and privacy of the auto. Railroad management, stockholder driven, found it more profitable to sell off its assets than to fight the trend. It's true that McGinnis was a crook—he went to federal prison for accepting a kickback on an improper sale of B & M passenger cars—but the railroad was ripe for plucking. It is lamentable but true that capitalism is not sentimental about people or jobs when the bottom line is threatened.

So Patalano misses the mark when he attributes the decline of the railroad to simple greed. It was really about the constantly grasping, American entrepreneurial spirit looking for cheaper places to make things and new ways to move them. Business solutions are not nostalgic; indeed, they are often the harbingers of great social upheaval. We have lost the intricate web of rail lines that touched almost every city and town in America by 1900, providing jobs for vast numbers and a way of life that served us well in its era.

Today, mainline freight is big business and commuter rail in various forms is expanding rapidly in our cities. Soon we will have a whole new generation of higher-speed trains in the northeast corridor. Seen in this light, railroads appear stronger than ever financially.

But the sense of family that drove so much of American railroading is gone, in the same way that we have lost much of main street business in our march to the mall. Giro

Patalano's account of the Boston & Maine at Bellows Falls is a welcome tale of what a rich, human endeavor it was, a detailed memoir of a man who lived it passionately.

ROBERT WILLOUGHBY JONES

Robert Willoughby Jones, a railroad historian, has authored three books on New England railroading: Boston & Maine—Three Colorful Decades of New England Railroading; Green Mountain Rails—Vermont's Colorful Trains; and Boston & Albany—The New York Central in New England.

Civil Rights in the Whitest State: Vermont's Perceptions of Civil Rights, 1945-1968

By Stephen W. Wrinn (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1998, pp. 110, \$29.50)

This is a brief, but important book. Stephen Wrinn tackles a significant theme with implications that stretch well beyond Vermont history.

Wrinn opens with a concise yet probing overview of the rise of the modern civil rights movement and the growing national commitment to racial justice. He then highlights three stories from Vermont's engagement with civil rights issues during the 1960s. The first chronicles Senator George Aiken's influential role in shaping the scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this century's most important legislative statement on the rights of minorities. The scene shifts from Washington to the Vermont legislature in the second story, the struggle to pass a state fair-housing law. The Vermont Civil Rights Union requested such a law in 1965, but the measure was defeated once before its adoption in 1967. The final story involves the complex Irasburg affair of 1968, in which David Lee Johnson, an ordained black Baptist minister and a newcomer from California, was ultimately forced to leave Vermont with his family because of racially motivated pressure from both private citizens and public authorities.

Wrinn's broader argument is that Vermont's self-image as a racially enlightened state requires close scrutiny. To be sure, Vermont was the first state to prohibit slavery, and most Vermonters favored the abolition of slavery elsewhere before the Civil War. Moreover, during the twentieth century, Vermonters backed civil rights projects, and the Vermont legislature passed a fair-housing law one year earlier than the United States Congress. Yet Wrinn demonstrates a significant vein of anti-black feeling even beyond the Irasburg affair. Drawing on the papers of public figures and back issues of newspapers, Wrinn presents many striking examples of racial prejudice in Vermont. In response to the New York-Vermont Summer Youth Project, a short-lived effort to bring inner-city blacks to Vermont in the late 1960s, one Vermonter declared: "[M]ost of us don't want to learn how to get along with the blacks. We'd rather get along without 'em" (p. 68). Another Vermonter feared that a state fair-housing law would create "urban Harlems in Vermont" (p. 63).

Yet Wrinn's analysis points to an even more subtle fault line in Vermonters' attitudes toward civil rights. Traditionally inclined to limited government and self-reliance, many Vermonters worried about too much meddling by government into the private realms of life. It is not surprising, then, that it was Senator Aiken, a supporter of the quest of

southern blacks to dismantle legalized segregation, who called for limits on the coverage of Title II, the public accommodations section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Aiken first invoked the mythical character, "Mrs. Murphy," a widow running a boarding house, in order to gain support for an exemption for small proprietors from the anti-discrimination clause. Like Aiken, many Vermonters, Wrinn argues, feared too great an emphasis on civil rights could jeopardize other rights, especially property rights.

With this line of inquiry, Wrinn raises issues that scholars of the civil rights revolution have not fully probed. To what extent did the concern by whites over competing rights in the 1950s and 1960s (and even beyond) represent a cloak for anti-black sentiments? Moreover, how did the belief in expansive private realms—including neighborhoods and their public schools—shared by many northern whites contribute to the attenuation of northern support for civil rights measures not directed just toward the South? Wrinn's study suggests the importance of these questions, but he could have furthered our understanding had he more thoroughly compared the Vermont civil rights story with developments in other northern states. After all, although by 1966 more than fifty states and cities had adopted fair-housing measures, no such law had been approved by a public referendum. Furthermore, Wrinn could have drawn on a new body of scholarship that stresses the importance of the concept of "whiteness." David Roediger and others have shown how "whiteness" emerged as a key source of identity for Euro-Americans during the nineteenth century. One suspects that this concept shaped attitudes in the "whitest state" in the union across the twentieth century as well.

In conclusion, Wrinn has produced a valuable, nicely written book that answers important questions and raises many others. It suggests that Robert Penn Warren's comment about a deceptive northern "treasury of virtue" that emerged after the Civil War has relevance for the civil rights era of the 1950s and 1960s. Many northern whites deceived themselves about the essential soundness of their region's stance on race matters because the attitudes of southern whites, by contrast, were so starkly racist.

JAMES RALPH

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Green Mountain Troopers: Vermont and Its State Police

By Michael J. Carpenter (Shaftsbury, Vt.: P.T.R. Publishing, 1997, pp. 316, \$29.95).

The Vermont State Police was established as a consequence of changing social conditions that also brought about the creation of state-wide and province-wide law enforcement agencies throughout North America. The particular strengths and weaknesses of the Vermont State Police over the past half-century have been the consequences of choices made by the leadership of Vermont and of the Vermont State Police.

Michael Carpenter's history supports a common view that motor vehicles contributed in major ways to the needs for statewide law enforcement in the United States. Before Vermont had a state police, it had a highway patrol. The Vermont Motor Vehicle Bureau initiated a highway patrol in 1919 with a single inspector responsible

for 15,000 miles of roads (p. 27), and about half of the 60 persons who joined the Vermont State Police in 1947 were former highway patrolmen. Carpenter reports that twenty-three states now have state police agencies and twenty-six have highway patrols (p. 55). When Vermont transformed its highway patrol into a state police in 1947, state police agencies already existed in the five other New England states, and in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Vermont, then, chose to conform to the pattern common to other eastern states.

Carpenter sees the Vermont State Police as a successor to a sheriff-constable system of law enforcement that was no longer adequate to meet the needs of counties and towns throughout Vermont. The English system of enforcing law in shire and town was adopted by most states and provinces in the United States and Canada, and the growth in towns and cities led to the addition of municipal police departments from the nineteenth century onward. Carpenter does not examine the municipal police departments that developed in some Vermont communities prior to the formation of a state police agency, so he does not consider fully enough the relationships between the Vermont State Police and some fifty other police departments now active in the state. As a state agency, the Vermont State Police is positioned to draw on state resources to provide services for centralized information, integrated communication, laboratory analysis, and criminal investigation that are beyond the means of municipal departments.

Carpenter organizes the latter part of his narrative by decades, focusing particularly on the impact of governors and commissioners of public safety. He identifies, as well, a number of events that generated public action for change. Carpenter writes that the still unsolved disappearance of Bennington College student Paula Jean Welden in 1946 was "one final deciding incident that would resolve the state police debate" (p. 90), resulting in legislative enactment of the Vermont State Police. He says that the Irasburg Affair of 1968-69 "had a profound impact on many of the people involved" (p. 166), including Governor Philip Hoff, Attorney General James Oakes, Public Safety Commissioner Erwin Alexander, several state police officers, and the family of the Reverend Daniel Johnson. Carpenter describes the Router Bit Affair of 1979-81 as "perhaps the most damaging event that has occurred in the history of the state police" (p. 194), but then concludes: "Out of controversy and scandal came a professional set of policies and procedures that could be used as a model for any police organization" (p. 195).

This book, published in the year marking the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the Vermont State Police, draws together material from a wide range of sources. The bibliography has 200 published items and eight interviews. Also there are 474 endnotes, and some 60 black and white photographs are scattered throughout the text. The endnotes, bibliography, and index, however, present the reader with some challenges. For example, T. D. Seymour Bassett appears correctly in the endnotes (p. 273), but he is identified twice in the bibliography as T. D. Seamer Basset (p. 298). Page numbers in the index do not always conform to the actual pages on which the indexed material appears in the text. Furthermore, this is the first book in this reviewer's experience that indexes persons by first name: thus, Ethan Allen appears between Ernest W. Gibson and F. Ray Keyser (p. 312). The narrative itself is satisfying for casual reading, but a reader will have to exercise great care in relying on the book for research.

ROBERT E. STANFIELD

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MORE ABOUT VERMONT HISTORY



Recent Additions to the Vermont Historical Society Library

BOOKS

- Aiken, Kenneth, *Touring Vermont's Scenic Roads: A Comprehensive Guide*. Camden, Me.: Down East Books, 1998. 287p. List: \$16.95 (paper).
- Ambrose, Harry, *The Horse's Mouth: The Story of the Birth of Modern Skiing at Woodstock, Vermont, and the Saga of Woodstock High School's Vermont Interscholastic Championship Teams of 1940, 1941, and 1942*. Houston, Tex.: A&E Products Co., Inc., 1997. 129p. Source: Rivendell Books, 100 Main St., Montpelier, VT 05602. List: \$18.95 (paper).
- Bazilchuk, Nancy, and Rick Strimbeck, *Longstreet Highroad Guide to the Vermont Mountains*. Atlanta, Ga.: Longstreet Press, 1999. 338p. List: \$18.95 (paper).
- *Bellico, Russell P., *Chronicles of Lake Champlain: Journeys in War and Peace*. Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 1999. 440p. List: \$29.00 (paper).
- *Boyajian, Robert, photographer, *Strafford at the Millennium: Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Strafford Town House*. Strafford, Vt.: Strafford Millennium Book Committee, 1999. 104p. List: \$45.00; \$15.00 (paper). Photographs of Strafford today.
- Cassidy, Jane, *History Under Their Feet*. New York: McGraw-Hill School Division, 1998. 16p. List: Unknown (paper). Children's book about archaeological dig in Williston.
- *Citro, Joseph A., *Green Mountains, Dark Tales*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999. 229p. List: \$19.95.
- Crockett, Larrimore C., *Safe Thus Far: A History of the Guilford Congregational Church a.k.a. The Guilford Community Church United*

- Church of Christ in Guilford, Vermont, 1767-1997*. Dummerston, Vt.: Black Mountain Press, 1999. 275, 136, 39p. Source: The publisher, 194 Prospect View Drive, Dummerston, VT 05301. List: \$53.00.
- *Davies, Jean S., et al., *Pittsford's Second Century, 1872-1997*. West Kennebunk, Me.: Published for the Pittsford Historical Society, Inc., by Phoenix Publishing, 1998. 753p. List: \$65.00.
- *Day, Gordon M., *In Search of New England's Native Past: Selected Essays*. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998. 328p. List: \$19.95 (paper).
- Doerner, Carl, *Ashes and Embers: Stories, Photographs, and Poems*. Wooster, Ohio: Wooster Book Company, 1999. 177p. List: \$13.00 (paper). "This book is, in large part, a celebration of place [i.e., Vermont]."
- *Ehrich, Fred, *Vermont Tales from My Arlington Years*. Arlington, Vt.: The Arlington Community Club, 1998. 56p. List: \$12.99 (paper).
- *Field, Sabra, and Jenepher Lingelbach, *Before Life Hurries On*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999. 31p. List: \$16.95. Poetry and illustrations of Vermont.
- Fisher, John R., *The First Licensed Female Steamboat Pilot and the Daniels Steamboat Family of Vergennes*. Burlington, Vt.: The author, 1998. Unpaginated. Source: John R. Fisher, 1595 North Ave., Burlington, VT 05401-2433. List: Unknown (spiral bound).
- Haas, Jessie, *Unbroken*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1999. 185p. List: \$15.00. Young adult fiction; an orphan goes to live on a Vermont farm in the early 1900s.
- Hathaway, Richard O., *The Friendly Pioneer: An Informal History of the Adult Degree Program*. Montpelier, Vt.: Word and Image, 1997. 15p. Source: The author, Vermont College, Montpelier, VT 05602. List: Unknown (paper). History of program at Goddard College.
- Howland, John H., *Ventures & Adventures: The Memoirs of a Vermont Businessman*. West Windsor, Vt.: Vermont Historical Narratives, 1999. 365p. Source: The publisher, 58 Cemetery Road, West Windsor, VT 05089. List: \$25.00.
- Kiley, Dan, and Jane Amidon, *Dan Kiley: The Complete Works of America's Master Landscape Architect*. Boston and New York: Bulfinch Press, 1999. 224p. List: \$65.00. Kiley lives in Charlotte.
- *Mantell, Suzanne, *Vermont: The Spirit of America*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998. 96p. List: \$12.95. Art of the state.
- *Marshall, Jeffrey D., ed., *A War of the People: Vermont Civil War Letters*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999. 357p. List: \$50.00; \$25.00 (paper).
- Miles, Victoria, *Releasing Rebecca: An Exploration of Life, Death, Gravestone Art in Early Vermont*. Grafton, Vt.: Grafton Historical Society, 1998. 8p. Source: The publisher, P.O. Box 202, Grafton, VT 05146. List: Unknown (paper).

- Mitchell, Don, *Compass American Guides: Vermont*. New York and London: Fodor's Travel Publications, Inc., 1999. 336p. List: \$19.95 (paper). Includes chapter on history.
- *Murphy, Robert M., *Vermont City Directories in Vermont Repositories*. Montpelier, Vt.: Vermont Historical Society, 1999. 26p. List: \$5.95 (paper). Inventory of libraries' holdings of city directories.
- Nichols, Joann H., *"With Interest: " An Index*. Brattleboro, Vt.: Brattleboro Historical Society, 1997. 82, 43p. Source: The publisher, P.O. Box 6392, Brattleboro, VT 05302. List: Unknown (paper). Indexes a bimonthly publication of the Vermont National Bank, Brattleboro, 1922-1932.
- *Parini, Jay, *Robert Frost: A Life*. New York: Henry Holt, 1999. 514p. List: \$35.00.
- *Petersen, James E., and Max P. Petersen, *Lord Dunmore's Lake*. Salisbury, Vt.: Dunmore House Publishing, 1998. 120p. List: \$12.00 (paper).
- *Poirier, Robert G., *"By the Blood of Our Alumni: " Norwich University Citizen Soldiers in the Army of the Potomac*. Mason City, Ia.: Savas Publishing Co., 1999. 446p. List: \$29.95. Civil War.
- Powell, Phelan, *John LeClair*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999. 63p. List: \$16.95. Biography of Vermont hockey star for young readers.
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