VERMONT HISTORY

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Book Reviews

About the Cover Illustrations

"'Twill Cure Your Cold!": Vermont-made Patent Medicines

Vermonters like other Americans in the nineteenth century, sought cures for their ailments, real and imagined, through "patent medicines." As Gary Shattuck reports in his article, "Opium Eating in Vermont: 'A Crying Evil of the Day,'" in this issue of *Vermont History,* these ready-mixed nostrums were self-prescribed and vigorously marketed by their creators. Although their benefits were dubious, consumers clung to the hope that, in an era of rapid technological and social change, patent medicines would cure the stresses of modern life. Vermont was home to an untold number of patent medicine companies, many of which are documented by advertisements, publications, and bottles in the collections of the Vermont Historical Society.

This issue's cover shows an advertising flyer for Greene's Warranted Syrup of Tar, "sold by nearly every Druggist in new England." This patent medicine was manufactured by Lester H. Greene, who operated successive drugstores in Swanton, St. Johnsbury, and Montpelier where he prepared his "Syrup of Tar." The demand for his cold remedy became so great that in 1898 he formed a separate company for the manufacture of the syrup. The company erected a three-story building on River Street in Montpelier and employed numerous people there (see back cover).

The label on the bottle of Greene's syrup claimed that it contained alcohol, heroin, and chloroform "compounded in proportions and by

Dr. B. J. Kendall's Pectoral Exlier. Advertising broadside, no date

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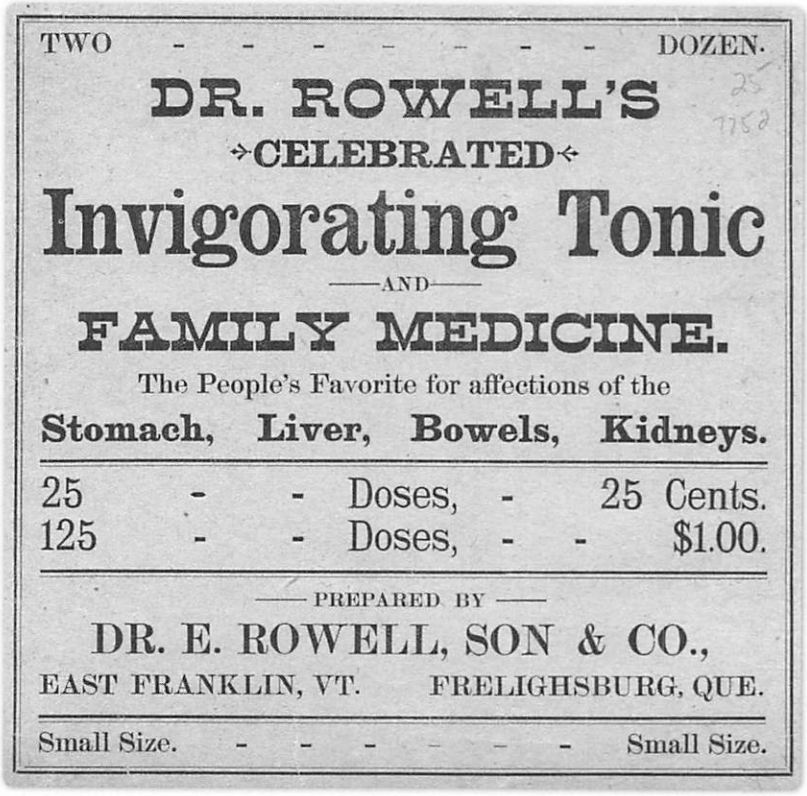

Dr. Rowell's Celebrated Invigorating Tonic. Advertising broadside, no date.

processes known only to the proprietors." In 1916 the United States attorney for the District of Vermont began an investigation into Greene's Warranted Syrup of Tar and its claims to be a remedy for croup and all throat and lung ailments, in violation of the Food and Drugs Act. The company pled guilty and the court imposed a fine of $50. The lawsuit seems to have put Greene's out of business because its manufacturing building was soon purchased by the U.S. Clothespin Company.

Greene's was just one of many patent medicine companies that flourished in Vermont in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Perhaps the most famous of them was Dr. B. J. Kendall Company of Enosburgh Falls, maker of a spavin cure for horses which was also marketed for human use. Kendall produced a range of other nostrums that he manufactured in an impressively large factory in Enosburgh Falls. They were marketed with attractive, colorful advertising.

Other Vermont patent medicines included Green Mountain Balm of Gilead and Cedar Plaster from M. K. Paine of Windsor, a Blood Purifier and Nerve Tonic made by D.S. Green in Enosburgh Falls, Church's Elixir made by C. F. Smith in West Topsham, Susan Lawrence's Green Mountain Balm from Wm. H. Lawrence & Co., Burlington, Paine's Celery Compound from Wells Richardson & Co., Burlington, Bedell's Balsam or Indian Salve from Richford, and Dr. Rowell's Invigorating Tonic and Family Medicine from Dr. E. Rowell & Son Company, East Franklin, and Frelighsburg, Québec. All of these patent medicines were part of the social and economic scene in the state in the nineteenth century.

PAUL A. CARNAHAN, *Librarian*
Vermont Historical Society

Front cover: Greene's Warranted Syrup of Tar. Advertising broadside, no date.
Back cover: Greene's Warranted Syrup of Tar factory, Montpelier. Photograph, no date.

Andrew Harris, Vermont's Forgotten Abolitionist

Andrew Harris was a man of constant activity and tremendous energies, all of which were devoted to what at the time was the truly radical cause of racial equality in America. His untimely death of fever in December 1841 at the age of 27 is the only reason he is not remembered as a significant figure in African-American history.

By Kevin Pierce Thornton

Andrew Harris, University of Vermont Class of 1838, was one of the first handful of black college graduates in America, and was very likely the first black graduate of any American college to commit himself to immediatist abolitionism—that is, to the immediate end of slavery in America without the removal of freed African Americans to African colonies.[1] By his mid-twenties, he became a leader of the newly emerging black middle class and one of the central figures in the tiny, emerging black intellectual, antislavery and reform elite of the 1830s. A member of various antislavery and reform societies in both New York and Pennsylvania, he was a featured speaker at the American Anti-Slavery Society convention in 1839. He was also a political abolitionist, which is to say he believed that political action rather than moral suasion alone would be necessary to end slavery. In this capacity he was a member of the convention that nominated James Birney for president on the Liberty Party ticket of 1840. In addition to all his antislavery activity, Harris was an outspoken and courageous advocate for the equality of people of color in the North.

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This cause was at least as important to him as antislavery, and he saw the two as intimately related. He developed a reputation as a powerful orator and was ordained a Presbyterian minister in Philadelphia in May 1841. His pulpit made him a leader in the largest free black community in the North. A classic example of a Second Great Awakening figure and among the first black middle-class intellectuals, he believed strongly in moral reform and revival, and that these values must be embraced by the African American community. He was, unsurprisingly, a strong advocate of black education. In short, he was a man of constant activity and tremendous energies, all of which were devoted to what at the time was the truly radical cause, one not shared even by all abolitionists, of racial equality in America. Harris's untimely death of fever in December 1841 at the age of 27 is the only reason he is not remembered as a significant figure in African American history.

The Erie Canal District

Harris's early life is obscure. He was born in New York in 1814. Both of his parents appear to have been black; the only reference to his appearance describes him as a "full-blooded Negro." He was almost certainly illegitimate, and his mother was very young, possibly as young as twelve, when she became pregnant.[2] At age two Harris was adopted into a devout white family, in Cayuga, in the Finger Lakes region. He was "brought up in the family of a Presbyterian minister, by a man and his wife who never had been worth $500 in their lives, and had a family of nine children of their own."[3] His adoptive family encouraged both his piety and intellectual bent; by his teens "his superior talents, and ardent piety gave him a commanding influence over the religious circle in which he moved, and, for a considerable time, the singular spectacle was presented of a full-blooded Negro presiding over a white Sabbath school." Supported by his adoptive family, he attended the nearby Geneva Lyceum, "an institution designed to fit pious young men for College, with the ministry in view," where he learned Latin and Greek.[4] This early biographical information, scant as it is, tells us something very important: that Harris grew up in a pious evangelical household at the edge of the canal area's Burnt-Over District during the period in which the revivalist fires were at their hottest. The canal, a conduit for piety and religious ideas as much as it was for goods and people, became famous for its evangelical revivalism during Harris's boyhood. He would have been at the impressionable age of seventeen during the intense revivals of 1831. Immediately, then, all his adult religious and reform sensibilities become recogniz-

able, even obvious. In most ways he grew up to become a typical evangelical reformer of his time. The only thing that made him unusual was the fact that he was black.

But that made him unusual indeed. It is hard to overemphasize how much. His aspirations, and the opportunities rewarded to him, were very nearly unique.[5] Slavery was still legal in New York all through his childhood. It did not end completely there until 1827, and some masters tried to keep former slaves ignorant and unpaid even after that date.[6]

Harris began searching for a college in 1834. He first looked east along the canal, to Union College, in Schenectady.[7]

> But on making his application for admission to College, he found himself surrounded by unlooked-for difficulties. The abolition excitement was then at its height. The Negro riots in New York had just then taken place. Men's minds were every where in a ferment, and as a natural consequence, the imprudent zeal, and misguided efforts, of well meaning friends were constantly increasing the bur thens of, and the prejudices against colored men.
>
> Mr. Harris' application for admission to Union College was rejected. The Faculty informing him, that had his application been made at another time, and under other circumstances, they would have received him, but in the present state of public feeling, they decline.[8]

The "Negro riots" referred to here occurred in July 1834 after the black Presbyterian Samuel Cornish (1795-1858) attended a service at Samuel Hanson Cox's Chatham Street Chapel in New York. When some congregants objected to Cornish's presence alongside white women in the pews, an exasperated Cox responded with a sermon asserting that Jesus Christ "was of the dark Syrian hue, probably darker than his brother Cornish." (Cornish was light skinned.) Mob violence began that Tuesday and lasted through Friday. Cox had to leave the city permanently.[9] In this atmosphere of overheated racism, Union claimed, it was too provocative to admit Harris.

He became a student at the University of Vermont (UVM)[10] by a process of elimination. Working his way north after Union rejected him, he had tried Middlebury, only to be rejected again, for the same reason.[11] If in his search Harris was working his way north up the Champlain Canal, which makes sense geographically, that would have left UVM as the end of the line: "The doors of Union College had been shut against him simply on account of his color, and he had been obliged to go to Vermont to a college where that was no bar."[12]

Except that race still turned out to be a bar.

Burlington

First envisioned as Dartmouth's complement west of the Green Mountains, UVM—intended to be the college of the Champlain Valley as Dartmouth was the college of the Connecticut Valley—had been crippled even before it opened by Middlebury College's ability to draw students from Addison County and points south. (Middlebury opened in 1800; although founded in 1791, UVM didn't have a building or students until 1801.) Classes were tiny—no students whatsoever graduated in 1815. Then a fire in 1824 destroyed UVM's sole building and nearly closed the university for good. Rebuilt on a shoestring, it barely survived. In 1833 the Reverend John Wheeler took over as president of a bankrupt and nearly defunct institution consisting of one building on a reduced acre-and-a-half lot. The university graduated two students that year. Wheeler promptly raised a $30,000 subscription, fought off a faction among the trustees that wanted to use the money to pay off debt, began aggressively purchasing books and laboratory equipment (including a telescope), and succeeded in resuscitating the university. Yet this accomplishment was almost immediately subverted by the Panic of 1837, and the university's situation remained precarious through 1839. Thus Harris matriculated at a tiny, isolated, provincial school with a faculty of five (including Wheeler) that teetered on the edge of bankruptcy the entire time he was there.[13] It was, moreover, an environment that was largely hostile to him. Once again the "Negro Riots" were an issue: "On his making application to the University of Vermont the Faculty felt deeply the force of the objections already urged [i.e., the political climate in the wake of the riots] as they were extremely urgent to keep aloof from the excitement then raging." But Harris nevertheless squeaked in: "still they did not consider themselves called upon to yield so far to the prejudices of the community, as to refuse the advantages of a collegiate education to a man wishing to qualify himself 'to preach the Gospel to the poor.'" He was admitted.[14]

The fact that Harris aspired to preach the gospel to an underserved population undoubtedly went a long way with Wheeler, helping override his concerns about the possibility of a racist backlash against the university. But Wheeler was probably also personally ambivalent about Harris. A lifelong, unusually devoted colonizationist,[15] Wheeler was no friend of either unconditional abolition or of racial equality, despite opposing slavery as a cruel and unchristian institution. As late as 1857 he was arguing, as president of the embattled and shrinking Vermont Colonization Society, that "a lower or weaker race cannot long co-exist with a stronger." In retirement he wintered in the South, where "he

studied carefully the development of public opinion in that part of the country" and where "his influence upon Southern men was considerable," which implies that he was hardly confrontational about slavery. He was in North Carolina when the Civil War began, and when he died, in April 1862, barely six months before the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, he left the by-then ridiculously out-of-date Vermont Colonization Society a substantial $300 in his will. No one could describe him as a racial progressive, and there can be little doubt that he indeed "felt deeply"—and at least somewhat shared—the "objections" to a black college student.[16]

Yet Wheeler (in contrast to the administration of Union) still admitted Harris. In part, as noted above, this was because Harris wished to preach. But we must also give Wheeler his due as a gentleman and a man of honor. He appears to have admitted Harris, despite whatever reservations he may have held, for the simple reason that Harris was qualified, and that there was no rule against admitting colored students. *Frederick Douglass' Paper* later told this version of the story:

> A young colored man named Harris, was examined and admitted to the sophomore class of the University of Vermont at Burlington. He pursued his studies regularly and graduated with his class. A few of the students objected to recite with him, but this insubordination was very soon put down by the College authorities. None of the Faculty were abolitionists. They took the ground in adducting Harris that he gave evidence of the requisite qualifications, and that nothing in the laws of the University warranted the rejection of his application on account of his color. We understood at the time that he previously applied unsuccessfully for admission to Union College. The Faculty [at Union] could find no law or rule excluding him, but having chosen to submit the question to the class, he was voted out. Harris we believe has been dead some years.[17]

Wheeler presumably would have been perfectly willing to reject Harris if there had been a racially exclusionary rule in place; but there wasn't, and he acted accordingly. Whether he knew it or not (and he probably didn't), facing down the resulting segregationist "insubordination" of the students was his finest hour. While he was certainly not a man to brook challenges to his authority, we must also keep in mind that he led an institution constantly in danger of insolvency and closure. The risk of losing students was a serious matter. Furthermore, we must remember that Wheeler, as a colonizationist, was himself a segregationist of the most extreme and literal kind. In his ideal society Harris would have been deported. But however tortured his path, Wheeler stuck to his rules as his conscience dictated. The segregationist students backed down. Harris stayed, and classes continued. Since Harris's name does

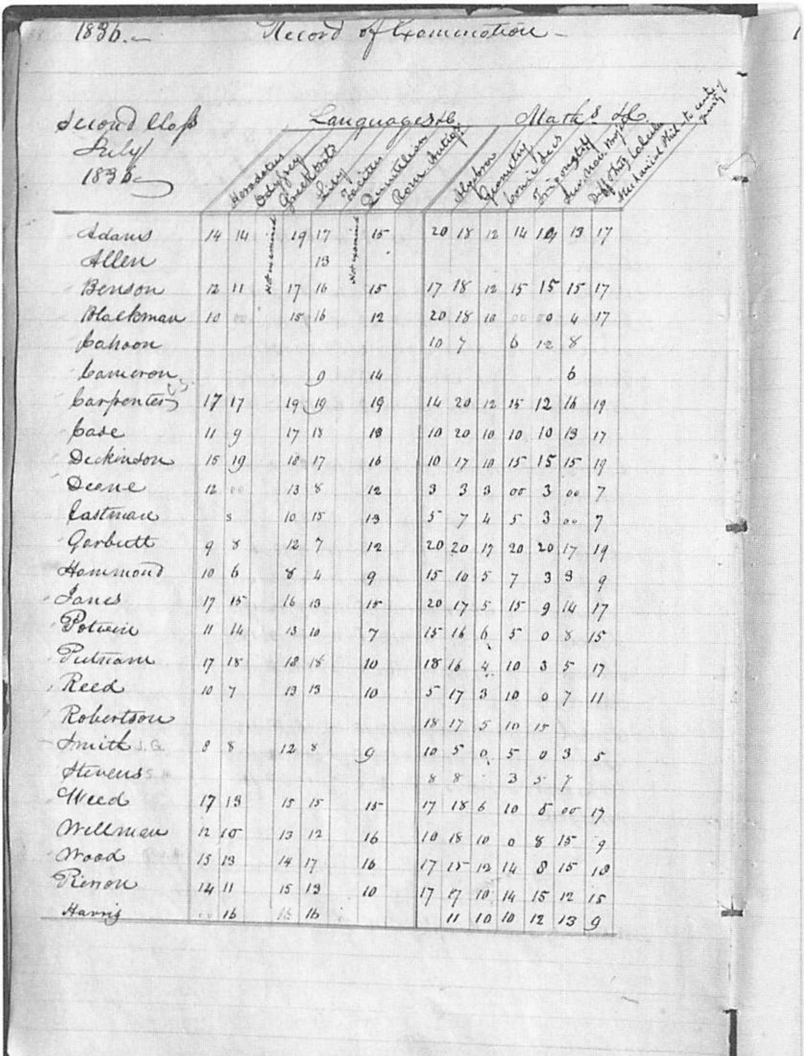
not appear in any faculty meeting minutes between 1835 and 1838, the decisions to admit Harris and then to call the bluff of the rebellious students were apparently Wheeler's alone.[18]

The Douglass account is credible, despite being published secondhand in 1854, almost thirteen years after Harris's death. It gives a slightly different but not incompatible version of events at Union and correctly notes that Harris entered UVM as a sophomore. But it is mostly credible because of the source from which Douglass reprinted it, the *Rochester American*. Between 1844 and 1856 the *American* was edited by Alexander Mann, UVM '38, Harris's friend and classmate. Mann, who was also at least professionally friendly with Douglass in the small world of the Rochester press, and defended Douglass's right to equal treatment as a journalist, is also almost surely the author of the single best source on Harris's life, the December 17, 1841, *Rochester Daily Democrat* obituary. "The writer of this notice knew him well," it says, "and intimately, when at College." Mann is also an example of the sort of personally honorable but racially conservative white man that Harris was able to impress throughout his life. (Mann, a Fillmorite, eventually supported both the Compromise of 1850 and by extension the Fugitive Slave Act.)[19]

Harris entered UVM as a sophomore in November 1835, midway through the semester that began in September. He paid a $1.00 initiation fee on November 10, and bought his books on the 17th. He began the next term, the second of the sophomore year, on time, on March 5, 1836. He registered for both terms of his junior and senior years, and was most likely resident in Burlington for much, though not all, of that time. (He would spend the winter of 1836-37 in Troy, N.Y.) He was in Burlington to take his final exams with his class in July of 1836, 1837, and 1838. (Exams were only held once a year.)[20]

Wheeler's toleration only went so far. Harris did not have an easy time of it. There were only twenty-four students in his class (including him),[21] so though they must have come to know one another well, many fellow students' hostility to him remained undiminished for the entire time he was in Burlington. Ten years before Douglass retold the story, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* referenced it: "Mr. Andrew Harris, unable to obtain a regular standing at Union College, went to the University of Vermont; but even there, though allowed more priveleges [*sic*], he was not suffered to stand on the same footing with the other students."[22] What that meant in practice is nearly impossible to say, but there are hints that Harris may have held some kind of distinct, if not segregated, status. For one thing he was not listed in the catalogue of students between 1835 and 1838. For another, UVM's final examination

records in the 1830s listed the members of each class, along with their grades, in alphabetical order, but Harris's name only appears in the proper place once out of six exam records from 1836 to 1838; otherwise his name was always listed last, out of order.[23]



1836. — Record of Examination —

Second Class July 1836 — Languages &c. / Maths &c.

Name	Herodotus	Odyssey	Greek Tests	Livy	Tacitus	Quintilian	Rom. Antiq.	Algebra	Geometry	Conic Secs	Trigonometry	Surv. Nav. Proj.	Diff. Calculus	Mechanical Phil.
Adams	14	14	Not examined	19	17	Not examined	15	20	18	12	14	14	13	17
Allen					13									
Benson	12	11		17	16		15	17	18	12	15	15	15	17
Blackman	10	[illegible]		15	16		12	20	18	10	[illegible]	0	4	17
Cahoon								10	7		6	12	8	
Cameron					9		14						6	
Carpenter	17	17		19	19		19	14	20	12	15	12	16	19
Case	11	9		17	18		18	10	20	10	10	10	13	17
Dickinson	15	19		18	17		16	10	17	10	15	15	15	19
Deane	12	[illegible]		13	8		12	3	3	3	00	3	00	7
Eastman		s		10	15		13	5	7	4	5	3	00	7
Garbutt	9	8		12	7		12	20	20	17	20	20	17	19
Hammond	10	6		8	4		9	15	10	5	7	3	3	9
Janes	17	15		16	13		15	20	17	5	15	9	14	17
Potwin	11	14		13	10		7	15	16	6	5	0	8	15
Putnam	17	18		18	18		10	18	16	4	10	3	5	17
Reed	10	7		13	13		10	5	17	3	10	0	7	11
Robertson								18	17	5	10	15		
Smith J. G.	8	8		12	8		9	10	5	0	5	0	3	5
Stevens S. H.								8	8	·	3	5	7	
Weed	17	13		15	15		15	17	18	6	10	5	00	17
Wellman	12	10		13	12		16	10	18	10	0	8	15	9
Wood	15	13		14	17		16	17	15	12	14	8	15	10
Rixon	14	11		15	13		10	17	17	10	14	15	12	15
Harris	[illegible]	16		[illegible]	16				11	10	10	12	13	9

UVM Second Class Exam Records, July 1836. Harris's name is listed at the bottom, in a smaller hand. Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington.

A few months after taking finals at the end of his sophomore year in July 1836 Harris, apparently running out of money, found a job in Troy, New York. It would mark a decisive turn in his life.

Troy

Harris first appears in the historical record as a public person on November 2, 1836 in Troy, acting as the secretary of a reform-minded "General Meeting of the Colored People of Troy." He had been "employed to take charge of their school for the winter."

> On motion of Mr. Yates, Resolved, That we cordially welcome among us Andrew Harris, of Vermont, who comes to take charge of our school. We pledge him our cordial cooperation, and regard him, the teacher of our children, equally with our pastor and spiritual leaders, as entitled to our prayers and persevering support.[24]

What was Harris doing in Troy? For one thing, he was probably broke. "He struggled hard against accumulated disadvantages," Mann recalled, "and that worst of all annoyances of a student's life—pecuniary embarrassments."[25] UVM's tuition was only fifty cents a term, but room, board, and firewood were all expensive. Nineteenth-century college students often worked as schoolteachers to earn money (John Dewey did it immediately after graduating from UVM in the 1880s). Moreover UVM appears to have taken a lengthy winter break during the 1830s, probably because firewood was expensive. There was nothing to prevent Harris from working for months in Troy and remaining a student in good standing, so long as he appeared for and passed his exams in July, which he did. Beyond the job, Troy was appealing for another reason. Located at the junction of the Erie and Champlain canals—in other words at the center of the geography of Harris's life to that date, and readily accessible from Burlington—it contained the nearest black community to Burlington, a group of some 311 souls.[26] It therefore offered Harris his first opportunity not only for membership in a racial community but for leadership, an opportunity that over the course of just a few months he took up with gusto.

In the winter of 1836-1837 Troy was the twenty-first largest city in America, a canal boomtown of some eighteen or nineteen thousand people. Its small colored population was just in the process of becoming a community, especially if "community" is defined by the existence of formal institutions. None had existed in Troy before emancipation became final in New York in 1827. In 1825, when the canal boom was just beginning, Troy's population was 7,859 and the town-based colored population had been only 32, 7 of whom were qualified to vote under

the 1821 New York Constitution. (New York's constitution required black men to be worth $250 to be able to vote, so we can take the number of black voters as an indication of the miniscule size of Troy's black middle class.) Rensselaer County's overall colored population in 1825 was 1,004, of which 23 could vote. Thus the black population within Troy was almost nonexistent before emancipation became final, and no black voluntary institutions whatsoever existed before 1828, when a meeting was held to organize an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. "The first public meeting of the colored people of the city, looking towards reform and advancement," was held in 1830. A black Female Benevolent Society began meeting in 1833. In 1834, the Liberty Street church—the one that became Harris's—was organized by black Presbyterians. A black school opened in the church basement a week later.[27]

When Harris arrived in late 1836 he was therefore entering a community still in the very earliest stages of organization. Its institutions were brand new and the settled, middle-class population (defined by those men wealthy enough to vote and their families) was still miniscule. Almost all of the black men in Troy were laborers; given the canal trade, it's also likely that many of them were itinerant, or at least impermanent members of the community. On his arrival Harris instantly became the most educated African American in Troy, and though young, a stranger, and a temporary resident, a community leader as well. Moreover, the values he espoused and embodied—evangelical uplift, sober hard work, morality, education, upward mobility, democratic patriotism—were those most prized by the handful of men and women struggling to build a respectable, rooted black community.[28]

Thus, by the midwinter of 1836-37 Harris was well-established as a leader in the colored community of Troy. The breadth of his reform interests, moreover, become evident over a span of just a few weeks. On February 13, 1837, he was the featured speaker at a mixed-race meeting of the Female Benevolent Society, which met in the new colored church.[29]

> The reading of the report was followed by an address from Mr. Harris,—a young man of color, and a member of the junior class, in "Vermont University." During the exercises, the choir sung [*sic*] several pieces prepared for the occasion. The most perfect decorum was observed, and a deep interest manifested by all, through the evening.[30]

In March he spoke on one of his favorite topics, the importance of education, at a six-evening-long meeting on reform topics for the colored population.

> Mr. Harris evinced much ability in his remarks. His language was good, his enunciation distinct, his gesticulation easy and forcible, and the position of his person firm and manly. There was never a more salutary impression made upon a colored audience in this city.

On subsequent evenings he spoke "with force, upon the consequences to society, of the universal disregard of the Sabbath," and, later in the week, on temperance, making "a solemn and successful appeal to Christians, to take the high ground of total abstinence, from all that can intoxicate." In the meanwhile he had earned $78 as the teacher in the colored school over the winter.[31]

Then, also in March, Harris reappears as the secretary of a "Union Meeting of the Colored People of Albany, Troy and Vicinity." He was one of two men to draft the circular the meeting subsequently issued, calling for the "combined action" of all people of color within the region "for our improvement in 'Morals, Education and the Mechanic Arts.'" It is worth quoting at length, because it is one of only two sources (his American Anti-Slavery Society speech is the other) through which we can hear Harris directly:

> This measure has been resorted to for the purpose of creating a spirit of union,—oneness of sentiment, and effort among our brethren....
>
> That these subjects are of the first importance to our people, must be plain to all.... For, with ourselves, at least, the question is forever settled, that our children and youth are not deficient in native capacity, for high improvement in any department of literature and science. The only deficiency is to be found in the want of opportunity and sufficient inducements for improvement.... Virtue and intelligence constitute the sure foundation on which we are to rise. For we believe, that our benevolent Creator will not always suffer his own image—immortal mind—to remain in ruins, although it be in the person of his children, who bear a darker hue than their more highly favored white brethren. When we arise in the dignity of our nature and with confidence in God's paternal regard for all his offspring, and form plans and make sacrifices for the improvement of our children, in whatever will honor Him, and bless the world, we feel sure his cheering smile and blessing will be secured to us. Here, then, is a sure ground of hope which can never be wrested from us....
>
> All, therefore, that remains is Union and Energy among ourselves....
>
> Let us, therefore, to a man, meet in Albany, on the 20th instant, and complete the organization of a society which may bless our children, and hasten the redemption of two and a half million of our enslaved brethren.[32]

To the modern student, the most striking aspect of Harris's story is the appalling racism that he faced all of his life. But we must also keep in

mind that since boyhood he had lived in places where the canal system was bringing with it growth, increasing prosperity, and new ideas; that the New York Constitution of 1821, ratified when Harris was seven, had established democratic suffrage for poor white men for the first time and allowed at least some black men to vote as well—that is, it at least established the principle of the black franchise; that slavery had ended in New York in Harris's early teens; that democratic politics were largely being invented in New York by Martin Van Buren at the same time; and that, most important of all, the evangelicalism of the Second Great Awakening, in which Harris had cut his teeth, promised not only that God loved individuals, not only that God named the poor as blessed and ached for justice, but that reformers, called and inspired to do God's work of improving the world, were destined to succeed. God would advance equality on earth if his servants worked for it. Harris's belief in the democratic promise of America and his faith in the power of the Lord to transform society sprang from the same sources. St. Luke had written that God has made of one blood all the peoples of the earth. Who then could deny the power of the Lord to make Americans into one people, especially when that mighty work seemed to have begun and was proceeding?

Unless we understand that Harris carried that belief within him even as he was surrounded by racism we fail to understand him, or give him his due.[33] In the circular to the colored people of the Hudson Valley, the central themes of his life are evident: the belief in morality and, especially, education as the means to self-improvement; the need for black unity and "combined action"; the insistence that the image of God was found in the human mind, and that the cause of racial equality was therefore a holy one; the understanding that the noble causes of black equality and the emancipation of slaves were entwined; and the evangelical faith that a loving God would see to it that human efforts at moral reform would overcome all obstacles. Harris would never deviate from any of these beliefs.

Harris was the featured speaker at the meeting on March 20 that the circular had called for, and which was devoted to the idea that education was uplift. Harris spoke "in an eloquent and efficient speech, of more than half an hour. . . . The two points enforced by the speaker, with great earnestness, were education and a more general attention to the mechanic arts."[34] By the end of March 1837, no more than five months after his arrival in the area, Harris had become a leading figure among the colored population around Troy and Albany as well as a well-known figure to local white reformers.

He would soon return to Burlington, but there is one more thing to note about his time in Troy. While there over the winter of 1836-37, Har-

ris made one of the most important connections of his life in Daniel Alexander Payne (1811-1893). Payne, later the sixth bishop of the AME church and the first black college president in America, at Wilberforce, was appointed in June 1837 as the black Presbyterian pastor in Troy. Given the size of the colored population of Troy at the time and the size of the congregation (Payne estimated it to be "forty or fifty persons"), the religious and reform connection, the closeness in their ages (three years), their common belief in higher education for blacks (Payne had had to drop out of a Pennsylvania seminary due to eye trouble), it is no surprise that Harris and Payne became close friends during their brief time together in Troy.[35] They would have been natural companions, and in some ways a circle of two. While their mutual time there didn't last long—Harris was back in Burlington by September 9, when he paid his tuition in cash[36]—their friendship would be one of the most important of Harris's life, and would last until his death. As soon as Harris finished at UVM, Payne would provide his means of introduction into the black intellectual, ministerial, and reform elite.

Burlington Again

Harris returned to Burlington no longer a lone scholar but as an active abolitionist and proponent of black equality. One indication of that is that as of October 7, 1837, the New York City-based African American newspaper the *Colored American* began listing "Andrew Harris" of "Burlington College" as the paper's sole Vermont subscription agent, and his name appears regularly in this capacity between then and April 19, 1838, near the end of his final term at UVM.[37] It's almost certain that Harris first became exposed to the paper in Troy; it didn't begin publication until 1837.

Does it follow, then, that Harris was active in antislavery activities while he was in Burlington? Probably not. There are two reasons for this conclusion. One was Harris's situation at UVM. His goal was to graduate, and we have already seen how Wheeler, who ran a very tight ship, was concerned that Harris's admission might create a backlash. Chances are that the authoritarian Wheeler, though he tolerated abolitionist opinion among his students, would have reacted poorly to Harris drawing attention as a vocal proponent of equality.

The other reason was the state of abolitionism in Burlington. Dominated by a colonizationist Congregationalist establishment, and containing a healthy waterfront working-class minority, it was far from being the most fertile abolitionist soil in the 1830s. Its black population was actually dropping during the decade in which Harris attended UVM, from fifty-three in 1830 to thirty-eight in 1840.[38] As late as 1835,

the *Burlington Free Press* was applauding the fact that abolitionist organizer Orson Murray was being thrown out of Vermont towns, and he failed in at least one attempt to organize in Burlington. A tiny, informal, "Anti-Slavery Society of Burlington" eventually began meeting, in either 1836 or 1837, organized by the UVM alumnus and New York antislavery apostle Alvan Stewart, and "the anti-slavery students soon found them," remembered Orville G. Wheeler in 1878. But if Harris was among them, Wheeler, who was in the class of 1837 and surely knew Harris, either didn't remember or didn't consider it worth mentioning. By the time the more formally organized, and more active, Chittenden County Anti-Slavery Society organized in March 1838, Harris was only a few months away from graduation. His name was not recorded at the meeting (though, to be fair, only officers' names were). To sum up, while it's possible that Harris may have attended a few antislavery meetings in Burlington between 1836 and 1838, there is absolutely no evidence that he did, and the preponderance of the thin available evidence gives no indication that he was ever involved in Vermont antislavery circles. My supposition is that, keeping an eye on his goal, he stuck to his books while in school.[39]

That eventually led, in due time, to his graduation, and the final story about Harris at UVM. It shows that, despite the presence of a tiny antislavery minority, the segregationist impulse and hostility among the majority of his classmates lasted until the very end. The account of the 1838 graduation by "a young lady in Vermont" (that for some reason was not printed in the *Liberator* until October 1839) reported that:

> Last week cousin H. and myself went to Burlington, and the next day attended the commencement. Mr. James Harris,[40] a colored man, who was a member of the graduating class, was not permitted to speak or to come upon the platform to receive his diploma, but was obliged to take it one side. The class declared that if he came upon the stage, they would have nothing to do with the exercises. If I could have presided I should have preferred to have had him speak, whether any of the rest did or not. It would have been an honor to the faculty as well as to the class to have granted him this right. For it was allowed by all that he was a student possessing as much native energy and was as good a scholar as any of the class. Now was not such treatment decidedly wrong? Methinks I hear you answer in the affirmative.[41]

In the 1830s, UVM students each gave a graduation oration in order of "the merit of their orations."[42] The *Burlington Free Press* has Harris scheduled fourteenth (of 24) to give an oration on what we have seen was a favorite topic of his, the "Development of the Intellect," which must have been in concert with the belief in education he had expressed

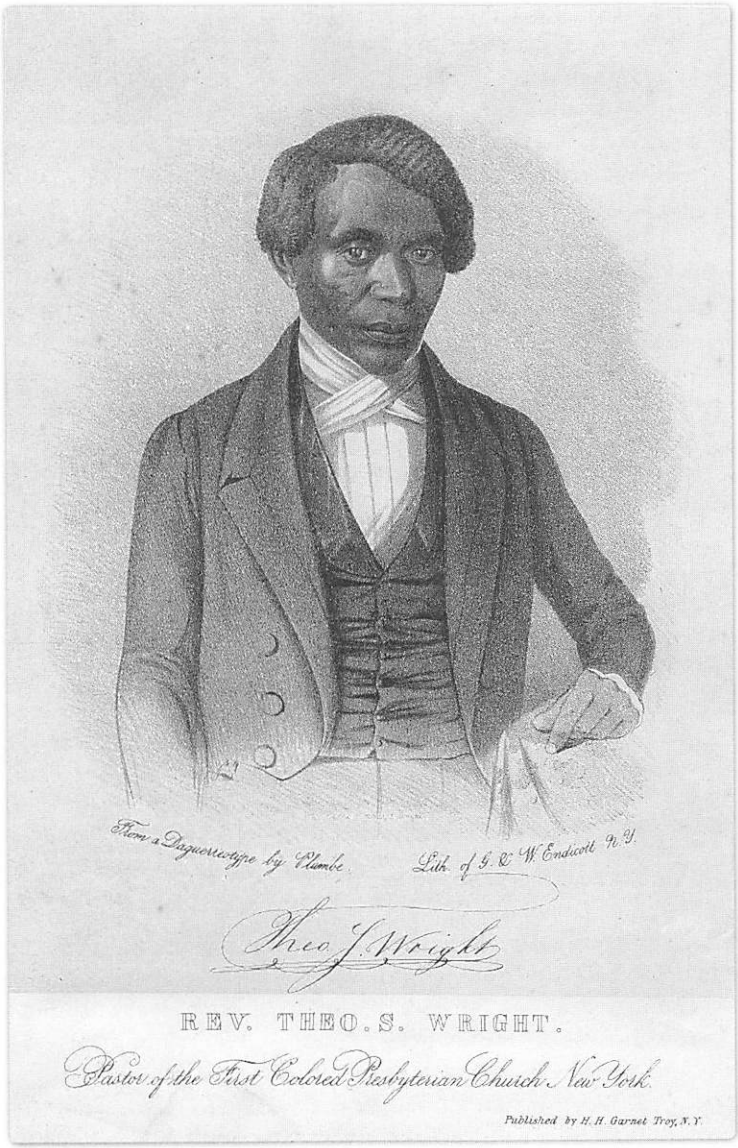
the previous winter in Troy. Though Mann assured his readers that he had "several times heard different members of the Faculty pronounce high encomiums on [Harris's] excellent character, and scholarship," the oration apparently didn't happen. The *Free Press* was likely simply reprinting the schedule.[43] Andrew Harris graduated from UVM because he was determined and persistent, not because he was welcome. He was not. But the degree would nevertheless prove a precious credential.

Debut

Graduation took place on July 31, 1838. After the final indignity at the hands of UVM, Harris understandably shook the dust of Burlington from his feet as quickly as he could. He returned to Troy for about a week, then left again on the ninth of August, arriving in New York City on the tenth in the company of Payne. The following ten days turned into Harris's debut among the abolitionist reformers of New York and Philadelphia. His newly minted degree made him a potential star in reform circles and he spent the week showing his promise. On Friday the tenth, the day they arrived, Payne introduced Harris to Theodore S. Wright (1797-1847).

Wright, a generation older than Harris and Payne, was one of the most important African American leaders of the 1830s (along with his friend Samuel Cornish, a fellow Presbyterian pastor, and founding editor of the *Colored American*). In 1833, Wright had been one of the original executive committee members at the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Wright was also an educated man—a graduate of Princeton Seminary—and pastor of the First Colored Presbyterian Church in New York.[44] Harris could not have made a more supportive or auspicious connection. Wright became an enthusiastic mentor and friend; he would make the trip to Philadelphia to speak both at Harris's ordination and his funeral. The debut introductions and performances continued on Sunday, the 12th, when Harris led prayers at "Temperance House. Later the same morning they visited Lewis Tappan's integrated Sunday school and Harris spoke again:

"Mr. A. Harris addressed the audience in an able manner on the blessing which the Bible confers and our duty to study it." He was to speak at least twice more that day: "The remainder of this day was spent in the sanctuary of the Lord. Both in the afternoon and evening we listened with much satisfaction to the young brother mentioned above, who expounded to an attentive congregation the words of eternal life. We speak truth when we say, if this pious and learned young man lives prayerfully, humbly and studiously, he will become a very



Lithograph portrait of Rev. Theodore Sedgwick Wright, from a daguerreotype by Plumbe. Lithograph by G. S. W. Endicott, New York. Image courtesy of the Randolph Linsly Simpson African-American Collection, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University (via Wikipedia).

useful and an eminent minister of the Lord Jesus."[45] With these appearances he was also well on the way toward becoming someone "useful and eminent" among abolitionists, who were constantly searching for articulate, dynamic black speakers they could put before white audiences. Harris's talks thus also functioned as auditions, and Payne was determined to make the most of them. On Monday, August 13, he and Harris visited the New York "Anti-Slavery office." On Tuesday they made personal calls. Done in New York, on Wednesday the 15th they sailed for Philadelphia. Arriving there, they went straight to the black Presbyterian church on St. Mary Street (where Harris would later be pastor), to a meeting of the American Moral Reform Society. At this convention, which lasted from Wednesday to Friday, Harris spoke again, apparently repeatedly.

> The proceedings of the two following days, Thursday and Friday, were marked with measures and resolutions full of thrilling interest to the human race, especially our injured kinsmen according to the flesh. Those foremost in discussions were Messrs. C.W. Gardner, S.H. Gloucester, J.C. Bowers, J. Bird, R. Purvis, Bias, Nichols, and Harris. As all, except the latter gentleman, are well known to the public, I will take this opportunity of speaking particularly of him. Mr. Andrew Harris is a graduate of the University of Vermont. His personal appearance is very modest—his mental character not of the florid, but solid kind. This seems evident from his public speeches, which evince more of the discriminating logician, than the fanciful poet. His piety seems pure and ardent. Throughout the debates of the Society he displayed great decision of moral character. In a word, his real worth, mental, moral and literary, will not fail to secure the high esteem of all who may become familiarly acquainted with him.

Then, on Sunday, he preached in three churches, along with "Messrs. Gardner... and Douglass."[46]

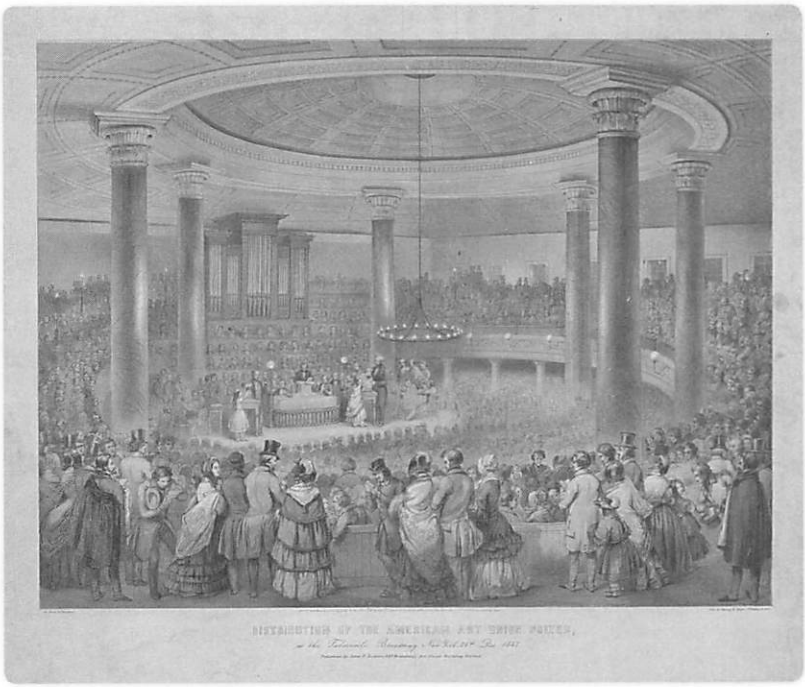
Thanks to Payne, over the course of less than a week Harris had not only met some of the leading abolitionists in New York, he had become established among the core abolitionists and moral reformers in the largest free black community in America. His fellow speakers offer a glimpse into this world. Charles W. Gardner was pastor of the First African Presbyterian Church and a very active moral reformer, abolitionist, and advocate for free blacks. Stephen Gloucester, a used clothing dealer, was also one of four ordained brothers who made up black Philadelphia's leading ministerial family. His father had been the first ordained black Presbyterian in the country. John C. Bowers was a tailor and an active reformer and anti-colonization abolitionist. James Bird, a bootmaker, was extremely active in moral reform and anti-colonization. Robert Purvis was the son of a white Charleston

cotton broker and a mulatto slave, and was probably the wealthiest man in the group. Purvis had attended Amherst College for a year before committing himself to antislavery work in Philadelphia.[47] James G. Bias was both a physician and a clergyman, and known for harboring runaway slaves. The "Douglass" in question was probably Robert Douglass Sr., a prosperous barber and co-founder of Philadelphia's First African Presbyterian church and the head of one of the city's leading black abolitionist families. (His wife Grace was one of the founders of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 and his daughter Sarah, a friend of Lucretia Mott and the Grimkés through her mother, was running a school for black women in the city in 1837. His son Robert Jr. was an artist specializing in portraits.) Nichols I have been unable to find.[48]

What does this circle add up to? For one thing, a respectable black middle class that was just beginning to emerge. Purvis was wealthy and Douglass was well-to-do, while Gloucester struggled to make a living; the others, mostly skilled tradesmen and small merchants, ranged between. Men of the word, they prized education, and knew all too well it was hard to come by. In this regard, Harris, with his degree, was the most impressive among them, young as he was. More than anything they were united by piety, moral fervor, and a hunger for the betterment of their community. In them Harris had, quite literally, found his people. Over the course of the eleven days since he had departed from Troy, he had made his debut among the most educated and activist leaders of black America. He had met leading reformers of both races, established himself as a potential star among abolitionists, and been welcomed into a place among black Philadelphia's small intellectual and reform elite. By the middle of the spring of 1839, he would move there. During the intervening months, though, he first succeeded Payne as the pastor of the Liberty Street Presbyterian Church in Troy.[49]

The American Anti-Slavery Society Convention Speech

On May 7, 1839, Harris was one of the featured speakers on the first morning of the American Anti-Slavery Society's annual meeting, held at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York. The reasons why are self-evident. As one of a handful of college-educated African-Americans, and one of an even smaller group among them committed to activist, radical abolitionism, he was a living symbol of the potential for black intellectual attainment. He was also a practiced and impressive speaker, a devoted moral reformer, and a pious Presbyterian. Furthermore, he had obviously impressed Wright, and it's likely he had similarly impressed Lewis Tappan, the wealthy white abolitionist who had paid for the



The Broadway Tabernacle, 1847 (Library of Congress).

construction of the tabernacle in 1836 to provide a pulpit for the famous evangelist and abolitionist, Charles Finney. (Tappan was not present when Harris visited his Sunday school in August 1838, but he had surely heard about it, and it's very likely that they met before Harris's speech at the annual meeting.) Finally, the annual meeting was developing a tradition of showcasing prominent young, educated black men. James McCune Smith had spoken in that slot the year before, in 1838, while Henry Highland Garnet (another young Presbyterian, who was educated at the abolitionist Oneida Institute) would appear in 1840.[50] The speech marked Harris's arrival as a national figure among black intellectuals and reformers. He spoke by prearrangement in favor of a resolution he had introduced: "That the degradation and crime charged upon the free colored people of this country, is the result of the wrongs under which they suffer." A "large assembly" of the most active American reformers was on hand to hear it.[51]

A close paraphrase of Harris's speech that day was transcribed in the May 16 issue of the *Emancipator*, the New York abolition journal. It is

the only speech, sermon or prose of Harris's still extant. Its subject was the issue nearest to his heart: the argument for black equality, the importance of education in achieving it, and the difficulties imposed by a racist Northern society. Much of it alluded to his own experiences. He began by drawing a link between the condition of slavery and the racism that attempted to justify it. Stating that "it is with feelings of great responsibility" that he spoke as the "representative" of African-Americans, he moved on to the standard abolitionist argument that the "oppression and wrongs of millions" of the enslaved were caused by "the corruption of the human heart" and made manifest in "*slavery*": "the anguish produced by separation of husband and wife, children and parents, and the scourges of the defenseless and unoffending slave, are a fathomless sea, and an ocean without a shore." Then he warmed to his real subject, racism in the North:

> But slavery does not stop here. It presses down upon the free people of color. Its deadly poison is disseminated from the torrid regions of the South to the frigid north. We feel it here. Yet, with all this, if the colored man is vicious, or if he is not elevated, it is set down to his natural stupidity and depravity, and the argument is raised that he belongs to an inferior race. The colored people are also charged with want of desire for education and improvement; yet, if a colored man comes to the door of our institutions of learning, with desires ever so strong, the lords of these institutions rise up and shut the door; and then you say we have not the desire or the ability to acquire education. Thus while the white youth enjoy all these advantages, we are excluded and shut out, and must remain ignorant. It is natural to suppose, then, that there should be more crime among us. But is this crime properly chargeable to the colored man, as evidence of the vicious propensities of his race?

Harris was alluding to his experiences with Union, Middlebury, and UVM. And education was the least of it. The desire of any black man for self-improvement, he pointed out, was suppressed in America: "if he wishes to be useful as a professional man, a merchant or a mechanic, he is prevented by the color of his skin and driven to those menial employments which tend to bring us more and more into disrepute.... The church itself was not free from the general guilt of oppressing the black man."

Harris went on to explain to his overwhelmingly white audience the no-win burden of racism: "Again, in the social relations of life, wrongs are inflicted upon us that are grievous and heavy to be borne, and we must fold our arms and bear it. But even this is thrown out as a taunt against us, that we do not speak of our wrongs, as evidence that we are too stupid and degraded to feel them: while, if we rise to defend ourselves and to plead our cause, the torch and brick-bat are poured out as arguments on

the other side." As an example, he spoke of his own recent trip from Philadelphia to attend the meeting at which he was speaking. Denied a seat among the passengers, he had been forced to sit in a boxcar. "On the way, they refused to give the colored man a seat.... And why was this? Was it because he had no money? No. Was it because he was not decently clad? No. Was it because he was an idiot, and they feared he would annoy the company with his foolishness? No—it is because he has *the complexion which God has given him.*" Slavery's spawn, Harris insisted, was an even more pervasive sin, racism:

> The bible says the love of money is the root of all evil; and if the love of money is a predominant passion anywhere, it is in this land. Yet, without disputing the correctness of the declaration, it seems to me that slavery has developed a passion in the human heart that is stronger than the love of money; for they refuse to gratify this disposition which the bible says is the root of all evil, through the influence of that still deeper root of evil, *prejudice.*

He ended with a shot against the colonizationists: Despite everything, he said, he would "rather stand and endure it all, choosing rather to suffer affliction with my people, than to immigrate to a foreign shore, though I might there enjoy the pleasures of Egypt. And while I live, let my prayer be, that the same soil which cherished my father may cherish me; and when I die, that the same dust may cover me that covered the ashes of my father."[52]

It was a short but an extremely ambitious speech. Fifty-eight years before W.E.B. Du Bois came up with the term, Harris was attempting to explain double-consciousness.[53] He was also arguing that the dismantling of slavery—the purpose of the antislavery society—would only be the start of resolving the American race problem. And taking the colonizationist argument head-on, he was insisting that the only viable American future lay in following the logic of equality.

Even to an audience of abolitionists, this was a call to radical action. Some of the praise for him indicated the depth of the problem: "Mr. Harris, a colored graduate of the University of Vermont," said the *Liberator*, "acquitted himself honorably not merely as a colored man, but as a MAN. This speech would have done discredit to no white speaker on the platform."[54]

PHILADELPHIA

By May 1839, as he indicated in the Anti-Slavery Society speech, Harris was living in Philadelphia. For the two and a half years remaining to him, he would engage in a whirlwind of activities there.

Why Philadelphia? First, because it had the largest black community

in the free states, about 20,000 people. Harris's friend Payne would move there and run a school from 1840 to 1843 after his convalescence, and described why Philadelphia drew him: "I selected Philadelphia as my field," he wrote, "because that of all the free cities had the largest population of color."[55] One reason for that was the city's presence on just the right (north) side of the Mason-Dixon Line, which made it a magnet for runaway slaves. But as previously discussed, it was also large enough to include a small middle class and even a few wealthy individuals, most famously the sailmaker James Forten, who had been an anti-colonizationist and antislavery activist since at least 1817, and had financed the *Liberator* in its early days. Forten was elderly in Harris's day (he was born in 1766), but he lived until 1842.

The second reason Philadelphia probably appealed to Harris was, as we have noted, that it had a large and energetic community of reformers, both black and white (its Quaker element made it a center of white abolitionism), many of whom were known to Harris and vice-versa.[56] Finally, Philadelphia afforded Harris the chance to pursue his vocation, in both the religious and aspirational senses of the term. By May 1839 he had begun theological studies there with Albert Barnes, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church and a prominent New School (i.e., revivalistic) Presbyterian theologian.[57] Harris's vocation reflected both his personal piety and the fact that much of the black intellectual elite was also a ministerial elite (a fact also true for whites of the day). He is listed as a licentiate in the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1839—that is, he was certified as able to preach in Presbyterian churches, though he had not as yet been ordained.[58] He did, however, have a job, which was the final thing that brought him to Philadelphia. About the same time he began his theological studies, which was also just about when he gave his address to the antislavery meeting in New York, he had become the interim pastor of Philadelphia's St. Mary's Street Presbyterian Church, also known as the Second African or Second Colored church.[59] A small building in the heart of black Philadelphia, the St. Mary's Street Church was where Harris had attended his first reform meeting in the city, the evening of the day he had arrived with Payne on their August 1838 trip.

New School Presbyterianism would have appealed to Harris for at least three reasons. First, a Finney-inspired revivalistic style and theology had swept Presbyterians in the Erie Canal district during Harris's formative years. Second, the worship of the black church was (and is) amenable to revivalism, so Harris's congregation on St. Mary's Street presumably would have been comfortable with it. Third, and this cannot be emphasized enough, northern evangelicals were far more sympathetic to and active in moral reform in general and abolitionism in par-

ticular than their more conservative brethren. In fact the association of New School revivalism with abolitionism was an especially inflammatory issue in Philadelphia. In his autobiography, Thomas Brainerd, the white Philadelphia New School minister who would preach Harris's ordination sermon, described how the association of evangelicalism, reform, and abolition led to mob violence in Philadelphia in mid-May 1838, when an Old School denunciation of New School ideas occurred at the same time mob violence against abolitionists and blacks broke out. To Brainerd this was no accident.

> All the odium of the antislavery excitement at that time, with exaggerated and unfounded reports of the imprudences of antislavery men, were artfully drawn in and made subservient to the prejudices industriously cultivated toward the New School party. It seemed at one time as though the "powers of darkness" were let loose; for the stormy debates of the Old School Assembly, in doors, were alternated by the incendiary fires and shouts of the mob without, who selected this very time to burn "Liberty Hall" [i.e., Pennsylvania Hall] in Sixth Street, where the Antislavery Society were holding a convention, and the "African Hall" in Thirteenth Street—a modest building in which the colored people were allowed to hold meetings for promoting their religious and social interests.[60]

Harris had a long, two-year road to ordination, and along the way he faced what must have been a grave crisis: he was accused by the daughter of his landlady of seduction, or breach or promise, or both. Payne tells the story:

> Andrew Harris fell under a[n]... accusation [the fastidious and circumspect Payne will only describe the possible crime as "the snares of Satan"], was tried before a "Police Court Justice," and subsequently before an ecclesiastical court. Being his friend, and believing in his innocence, I made it my duty to be present at both trials. His case was carefully and thoroughly searched to its very bottom; but, finding no evidence of guilt, he was declared innocent and honorably acquitted.
>
> If my recollection is accurate, the ecclesiastical court that examined the charge brought against Rev. Andrew Harris was the "Third Presbytery of Philadelphia," of which Dr. Albert Barnes, the commentator, was a member; and Dr. Barnes was present from the beginning to the end of the trial, and took an evidently deep interest in it.... [The] conclusion was that Mr. Harris was "blackmailed by an envious and jealous woman...." Harris was living in the same house with his accuser—boarding with her mother. I think his case was similar to that of the incorruptible Joseph in Potiphar's palace.[61]

There is no telling what happened. It is worth pointing out, however, that Harris had a tremendous amount at stake in the affair: his

position, his career, and his standing, both in the black community and among highly moralistic reformers. Everything he had worked for years to become and to achieve was endangered. Moreover, at least early on, he had likely had the chance to make the case go away by marrying his accuser. He was tried twice, both criminally and in the church, and acquitted both times. At the same time it's worth noting that Harris had influential friends, who had many hopes invested in him, acting on his behalf. One of them—his theological tutor Barnes—even served as one of the judges at his ecclesiastical trial.

After a two-year theological and ministerial apprenticeship, Harris was ordained on April 15, 1841. Theodore Wright made the trip from New York for the occasion. The *Colored American* covered it at some length, with the article probably written by Payne, who by that point was established at his Philadelphia school awaiting his own return to the ministry.

> It is a cause of gratitude to God that he is raising up young men who have the piety and intellect which enables them to take the most important stations, and fill them with credit to themselves and to the community; and we rejoice to see that there are those, who, overlooking all *prejudice,* are ready to take them by the hand and sustain them, while they stand as pioneers to the glorious cause of *emancipation*.[62]

The occasion was notable enough for the congregation to print up the Rev. Thomas Brainerd's sermon, which is the only remaining artifact of the day.[63] Brainerd, the white pastor of Philadelphia's Third Presbyterian Church at the time, had been converted by Finney and was another New School disciple. His sermon, read out of context, is an unremarkable exhortation arguing that Christian piety will always be rewarded. But in light of the occasion, the setting, and the audience, it becomes a remarkable document, not only because in seven pages Brainerd makes no fewer than nine references to "race," but because the ways he did must have been deeply satisfying and moving to his audience.

> For Brainerd's concern was with the race of redeemed sinners:
>
> The blood of Jesus was designed to be available for the salvation of a world. Its efficacy is limited to no one period. . . . It is limited to no race. The nations, diverse in all, but common depravity, may meet and share alike in renewed holiness and the smiles of God.
>
> It was the design of God in the gospel, to level the mountains and elevate the valleys—to break the gates of brass and make a clear, lawful, open, accessible way by which a race ruined, accursed, might if they would, march with songs of joy and shouts of victory from this world of sin, out upon a plains of blest eternity.

Most of Brainerd's remaining allusions to race refer to "the human race" and "our race." The history of salvation he lays out as the journey of "a people despised" becoming "a race redeemed": "To the heavenly places in Christ Jesus... a race is climbing." Moreover, he contrasts the divine offer of salvation with compulsion:

> Tyrants and bigots may attempt to force the mind, by inflicting pains upon the body, but God does not deal with men in this manner. He approaches man as a free agent. He addresses truth to their understandings. He comes in person to apply this truth to the conscience and the heart. He honours his creatures by applying to them the same principles of government which sway his own infinite mind—the government of truth and duty.

In one sense this is the standard evangelical critique of the counter-reformation (Brainerd describes the "gibbets," "racks" and "chains" of coercion and even disparagingly mentions "popish magnificence"), but on the Mason-Dixon Line in 1841, in a black church, it meant something else as well. Brainerd told the congregation a story in which "a ruined," "accursed," and "despised" people climbs through the love of God, a story in which diverse nations are joined and leveled into one race, "our race," the race of the saved. He said that God wanted them to be free agents, and that God established a principle of government based on truth. He addressed them as "my brethren" and Harris as "my brother." "He honours the gospel," Brainerd advised Harris, "who like Jesus, gives his message with boldness, but with tears of sympathy for the lost, and, who illustrates truth, embodied and glorious, radiating out, from his own personal example."[64] For at least one day in his life Brainerd, who did not consider himself an abolitionist,[65] accomplished that.

In tandem with his ministry Harris kept up constant reform and abolitionist activity during the years he was in Philadelphia. Perhaps most importantly, he became an active participant in the national debate among abolitionists over the direction of the anti-slavery movement. The abolitionist movement had begun to split at the 1839 American Anti-Slavery Society annual meeting, the one at which Harris spoke, over the question of how much abolitionists should devote themselves toward a whole series of reform causes. Put another way, was the purpose of the movement the eradication of slavery alone, or was it the advancement of a just and godly society in general? Perfectionists (a.k.a. "Ultraists") believed that God required a commitment to justice in all things. Their opponents wanted a practical focus solely on the problem of slavery.

The dispute emerged in a number of particular ways. One issue was the role of women. Ultraists believed in female equality and called for

it within the movement. The opposition claimed that feminism muddied the waters and alienated at least some men who might otherwise oppose slavery. Another issue was whether abolitionists should engage in direct political action in fighting slavery, as opposed to moral argument alone. The Ultraists mistrusted politics, believing slavery was a sin. Political action, they believed therefore, was the wrong approach. Sin required repentance, not reform or restructuring. Harris, who like the rest of the black clergy was concerned first and foremost with slavery and black equality, voted against perfectionism and in favor of politics.[66]

The next year, in 1840, the split became formal. The opponents of perfectionism broke away from the AASS at a contentious annual meeting in New York – the immediate cause of the breach was the Ultraists' nomination of a woman, Abby Kelley, to the annual meeting's business committee. Then (fully prepared in advance for an eventuality they knew had been coming), the political abolitionists moved to the basement of the same building in which the convention was meeting and formed a new organization on the spot, the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Harris was one of them, along with seven other black clergymen, including Wright, Henry Highland Garnet, and Samuel Cornish. Following the logic of politics further, Harris also helped form the Liberty Party, and was a member of the convention that nominated James G. Birney for president as the party's candidate.[67]

Beyond politics Harris kept up a swarm of local religious, abolitionist, and reform activities. These are the meetings we can document: He was active in the Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and Philadelphia's Leavitt Anti-Slavery Society (organized by blacks as a biracial working man's antislavery organization), as well as in the New York Committee of Vigilance (it aided runaways). He was a Temperance advocate. He helped organize a Philadelphia anti-colonization meeting for colored people. He led a fundraiser for the *Colored American* at his church, and spoke in favor of public education at the same meeting. He was around the corner on Sixth Street for the 1841 dedication of the third church edifice of the Bethel AME church. In August 1841, he attended a three-day convention back in Troy, along with much of the black leadership of New York state (Theodore Dwight and Henry Highland Garnet were there), designed "to secure the extension of the franchise" to working-class black men in New York—those who held property worth less than $250 (i.e., most of them). A few days later he gave "an animated and soul-stirring address" at a subsequent meeting on the subject in New York City.[68]

And then, suddenly, Harris died. In November 1841, he came down

with a fever; he died on December 1st. The *Colored American* barely had time to run a correction:

> Our Rev. young brother Andrew Harris, of Philadelphia, was thought, at the last accounts to be dying. His complaint was intermitting fever.
>
> P.S. Since the above was in type, a letter has been received, which informs us that brother Harris is no more; he died on Wednesday morning about 6 o'clock.

Harris's obituaries show the extent to which he was becoming known and respected. Three Philadelphia papers, and at least five outside the city, ran variations on the following:

> DIED On Wednesday, 1st inst., Rev. Andrew Harris, Pastor of the Second African Presbyterian Church, aged 27 yrs. Mr. Harris was a graduate of Vermont University. His people have lost a faithful, self denying pastor; the *colored people* a bright ornament and an effective helper; the cause of truth a hearty lover, a bold and fearless advocate.
>
> His friends are invited to attend his funeral, from the residence of Stephen H. Gloucester, 136 Lombard street, above 5th, to-morrow afternoon, at 2 o'clock.[69]

Three weeks later the *Liberator* and at least six other papers ran the following: "In Philadelphia, Rev. Andrew Harris, late Pastor of the 2d African Church. Mr. H. was a graduate of the University of Vermont and was probably the best educated colored man in our country. As a minister he was very highly esteemed."[70] His college friend Alexander Mann wrote the lengthy and affectionate obituary in the *Rochester Daily Democrat* that remains the best source on Harris's life. "But he has gone beyond the reach of our praises," wrote Mann, "the many whose friendship he had won feel deeply the loss of so good a man. They had hoped to have seen much fruit of his labors, and their expectations were just being realized, when an allwise Providence, has seen fit to remove him from his field of usefulness, and from a life of labor and mortification to one where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."[71]

On Christmas Day, the struggling *Colored American*, in its first issue in three weeks, stated, "The excellent poetry on the death of our esteemed young brother, Andrew Harris, by D. A. P., came to hand too late for this number. It shall appear in our next." "D. A. P." was Payne. One eagerly turns to the next issue of the *Colored American* only to find that the paper never published again after the issue of December 25. The poem never appeared in print.[72]

Payne came through for his friend, however, in describing the funeral,

which sparked a revival that extended across the city, through New Jersey, into Baltimore, New York, Pittsburgh, and eventually into Ohio:

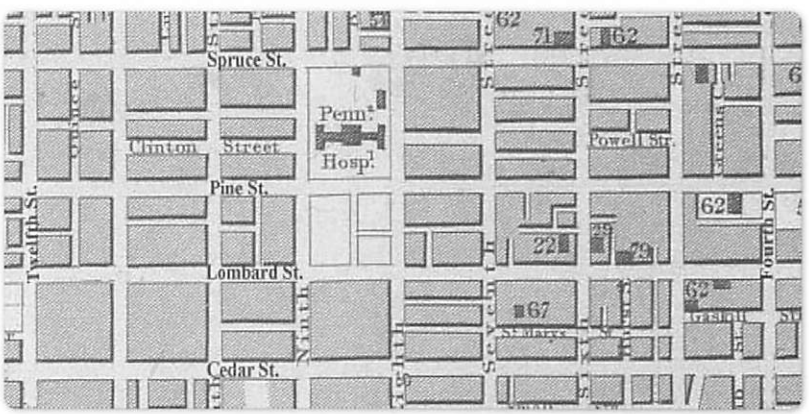
> [A] remarkable outpouring of the Spirit... began in the city of Philadelphia in the following manner and under these circumstances: A young Presbyterian minister, Andrew Harris, of classical attainments, took suddenly sick, and died at the end of the week. He was the pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of color. Rev. Theodore S. Wright, of New York, came by invitation to Philadelphia, with a view to be present at the funeral of Brother Harris. While there he preached in the vacated pulpit from Psalms, cxix., 59-60, "I thought on my ways," etc. The sermon made a deep and visible impression on the audience, and yet it was made evident by no sign beyond the fixed attention of the people. His sermon was followed by an exhortation by Rev. D. A. Payne, and an invitation to all who felt concerned about their souls to come forward and occupy the front pews. This invitation was immediately responded to by some half dozen young men and women, with whom we prayed about an hour or two. This encouraged us to protract the meetings, and every night witnessed an increased interest on the part of the people, and a deepened zeal on the part of the ministry. Soon the cries of the anxious inquirer were exchanged for the shouts and rejoicings of the happy converts. The work extended from St. Mary's Street to the surrounding churches. As it deepened sinners were awakened and converted to God by scores and hundreds, till the whole city was enveloped in the hallowed flames, and in every house and every church were heard the cries of the convicted sinner or the praises of the redeemed. Bethel shared largely in the grace of God. Her ministers preached with more than common unction, and her converts were counted by hundreds. Among the precious souls gathered into the ark of safety during this season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, were many of the best educated and most respectable youths of the city, and that, too, of both sexes. Nor was the work confined to the city of Philadelphia. It extended to all the churches of the Conference District.[73]

The Presbyterian General Assembly noted Harris's passing and prayed for him among the other ministerial dead. The American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society missed him at their next annual meeting: "His eloquent voice will be heard no more at our anti-slavery anniversaries." Frederick Douglass mentioned him as the "lamented Andrew Harris" in an 1848 story about temperance in Philadelphia, and told the story of his graduation again in 1854. That same year, UVM would list him among its dead alumni.

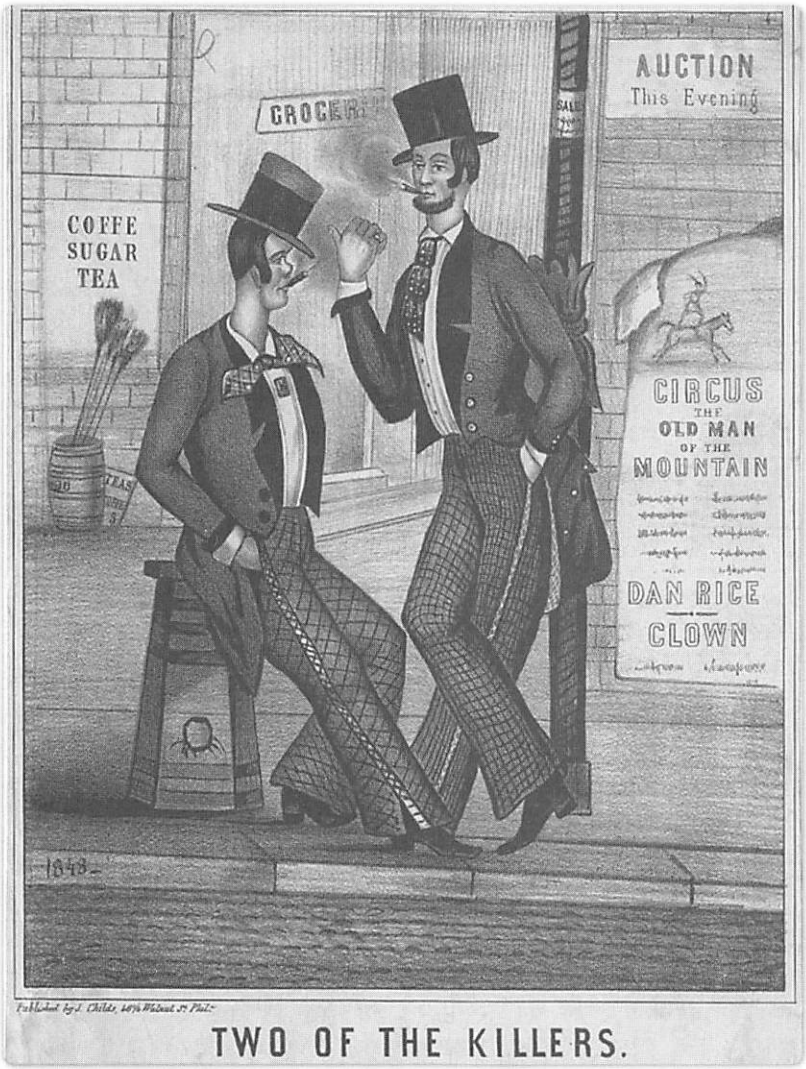
Then Andrew Harris was forgotten. In Vermont he had always been nobody, probably even among reformers. In Philadelphia he had primarily made his mark in a small black society unnoted by the outside world. And in any case he was very young. How well would we know Frederick Douglass today if he had died at 27?[74]

There is one more point to make, regarding Harris's courage. His persistence, determination, and forbearance in the face of rejection and prejudice are amply demonstrable. I would argue that he was physically courageous as well. Harris's demand not just for an end to slavery but for educational, legal, political, and social equality for blacks was at the far edge of the American radicalism of his day. Even among abolitionists in the warm confines of the Broadway Tabernacle, his egalitarianism was radical. But abolitionists were not his only audience. At least one Philadelphia newspaper attacked his appearance at the 1839 annual meeting, mocking Harris for complaining about segregation on railroad cars, arguing that exhortations such as his were "causing them ['the free negroes of the North'] to become discontented with the sphere of life in which the Creator of all good has seen fit to place them, and to envy and pine after the condition of those with whom they never can hold intercourse," and accusing "Harris, Esq. A.B.A.M. and his sable colleagues" of "impudence."[75] In the Philadelphia of 1840, in Harris's neighborhood, this was no small matter. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that St. Mary's Street, during this era, was under siege.

The first Philadelphia race riots broke out in 1829. There was another in 1831. In August 1834, a larger riot erupted; a mob destroyed houses and assaulted people on St. Mary's Street, which ran between 5th and 7th and Lombard and Cedar Streets in the heart of the black neighborhood near the Pennsylvania Hospital. The next night they burnt a black church and destroyed more houses on other streets. The night after that they burnt another church and attacked a house on 7th, "below Lombard," in which a hundred blacks had "barricaded themselves."



Philadelphia, 1840, Published by H. S. Tanner (David Rumsey Collection). St. Mary's Street is in the lower right quadrant.



"Two of the Killers." Philadelphia: J. Childs, 1848 (Library Company of Philadelphia).

The next year, 1835, another mob "assembled at the corners of Sixth and Seventh and Lombard Streets" before eventually burning a row of houses on 8th Street. The following night they attacked St. Mary's Street again, where people had once more barricaded themselves. "The whole of the afternoon of that day black women and children fled from the

The California House Riot, St. Mary's Street, Philadelphia, 1849, from The Life and Adventures of Charles Anderson Chester (Library Company of Philadelphia).

city." In 1838 there were riots on 5th Street. In May of that year, a city mob famously burned the abolitionists' Pennsylvania Hall three days after it opened (Philadelphia's firemen refused to put out the fire). In the subsequent rioting the mob burnt a black orphanage and at least one church, and damaged Bethel Church, around the corner from St. Mary's Street on 6th Street. In August 1842, eight months after Harris's death, a mob attacked St. Mary's Street again. This time the rioters beat people, assaulted homes, and burnt both a black-owned meeting hall and Harris's church, the Second African. It was never rebuilt.[76] The militia had to be called out to quell the riots. Finally, in 1849, St. Mary's Street was attacked again by a mob led by the extremely violent street gang, "The Killers"; a black-owned bar, the "California House," was destroyed.

St. Mary's Street was only two blocks long. It was little more than an alley, and no longer exists. It was very, *very* dangerous to be a prominent black man accused of "impudence" in the Philadelphia of 1840. Andrew Harris had to be prepared for violence every day of his life there.[77]

When I began my investigation of Harris, I expected to find a few biographical facts about an obscure person of interest solely in Vermont. What I found instead was a young man who immersed himself in the

political, reform, intellectual, and religious circles of his generation, "the most educated colored man in our country," and a representative figure for a new generation of educated and uncompromising abolitionists and advocates of black equality. When Harris died in 1841, he was 27; James C.W. Pennington, the escaped slave blacksmith who attended Yale, was 34; Harris's friend Payne (Gettysburg Seminary) was 30; James McCune Smith (University of Glasgow) was 28; and Henry Highland Garnet (Oneida Institute) was about to turn 26. The uneducated and as-yet-unknown Frederick Douglass was 23 or 24. Harris's career had begun in a Troy in which the colored community barely knew what was going on outside their locality.[78] Taking advantage of the still-developing transportation revolution, the brand-new rise of a reform press, and the energies of the Second Great Awakening, he and his friends, and their mentors from the previous generation (such as Wright and Cornish), built a black reform community in America. With untiring energies they set out from their tiny churches in impoverished alleys to do the task that they believed God had commissioned for them: bringing racial equality to America.

Looking back near the end of his life, in his autobiography Payne described a moment in 1837 when he faced a difficult choice. One day in New York,

> I met that gifted man, Theodore Weld, one of the most eloquent of anti-slavery lecturers. He invited me to the Shiloh Presbyterian church, where, at the request of the pastor, I preached. Lewis Tappan and others of the Executive Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society were present. Soon after my return to Troy I received a commission from this committee to be one of its public lecturers, with a salary of $300 per year and traveling expenses. Here was an inducement. . . . But I had consecrated myself to the pulpit and the work of salvation. Could I turn aside from so high a position and so holy a calling?

Payne ultimately decided that he could not, and never regretted the decision. "When God has a work to be executed he also chooses the man to execute it," he concluded. "He also qualifies the workman for his work. Frederick Douglass was fitted for his specialty; Daniel Alexander Payne for his."[79]

Andrew Harris strove to be both Daniel Alexander Payne and Frederick Douglass—that is, he strove to be consecrated both to the work of salvation and to the work of freedom and equality. In a way, he wrote his own epitaph when, a few months before he died, he submitted the following resolution at the 1841 voting rights convention in Troy: "That we consider it criminal in the sight of God and man, lon-

ger silently to submit to our indignities, or suffer them to be transmitted to posterity."[80] Harris has been forgotten for too long, and it is long past time to rectify that oversight.

Notes

[1] Middlebury College claims Alexander Twilight, Class of 1823, as the first black college graduate, but it is likely that Twilight passed as white while at Middlebury. It is more accurate to say that Twilight is currently suspected to be the first person of African ancestry to graduate from an American college. See David Stameshkin, *The Town's College: Middlebury College, 1800-1915* (Middlebury, Vt.: Middlebury College Press, 1985), 108-109. Andrew Harris is almost surely the first black graduate of an American college who was an antislavery immediatist, an anti-colonizationist, an advocate of equal rights in America, and a full-time activist. John Brown Russworm (Bowdoin, Class of 1826) became editor of the black-owned antislavery *Freedom's Journal* in 1827 and immediately (and controversially) announced his support for colonization, creating a firestorm of opposition among blacks. He ultimately emigrated himself. James McCune Smith (University of Glasgow, Scotland, 1835, '36, and '37), who held similar views to Harris and spoke to the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) national meeting in 1838, did not, quite obviously, graduate from an American college and, in any case, concentrated on establishing his medical practice in his first years back in America. Henry Highland Garnet (Oneida Institute, 1839) was younger than Harris and later in establishing his career, and in fact followed Harris into the black Presbyterian pulpit in Troy, N.Y. For brief respective biographies see C. Peter Ripley, et al. eds., *The Black Abolitionist Papers*, Volume 3, *The United States 1830–1846* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). On early black abolitionism see David E. Swift, *Black Prophets of Justice: Activist Clergy before the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989) and Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969). However one considers the case, it is extremely safe to say that Harris was among the very first handful of educated black men to be Garrisonian immediatists. I would like to thank my student Patrick Maguire, my friend Michael Dwyer, and Chris Burns of Special Collections at the University of Vermont, each of whom enthusiastically took up this project and generously shared sources on Harris that I was not able to discover on my own.

[2] Harris obituary, "Died," *Rochester Daily Democrat*, 17 December 1841, 3. Harris's mother is named in the obituary as "Rebecca Verplank, of this city." In the 1850 census Rebecca Verplank of Rochester is listed as a 49-year-old illiterate black woman, born in 1801 in Maryland. If that birth date is correct (though the birth dates listed on the census can be notoriously inaccurate), she was 13 when she gave birth to Harris. *Seventh Census of the United States*, Third Ward, Rochester City, Monroe County, New York, 197.

In the Rochester city directory of 1851, Mrs. Verplank is listed as a widowed washerwoman. "Colored Persons," *Daily American Directory of the City of Rochester for 1851-52* (Rochester, N.Y.: Lee, Mann & Co., 1851), 280. For a brief summary of Harris's life see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 296-297. (NB: This summary misidentifies the *Rochester Daily Democrat* as the *Rochester Daily Advertiser*.)

[3] "The Annual Meeting: James C. Fuller," *The Emancipator*, 16 May 1839, 10; See also "Abstract of the Sixth Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society," ibid., 9 May 1839, 6, for an abstract of the same remarks. James Cannings Fuller, who provided to the convention the biographical details on Harris, "whom he had known for a long time by reputation, although personally a stranger," was from Skaneateles, N.Y. Harris is listed as being from "Cayuga, N.Y." in the "Commencement of the University of Vermont," *Burlington Free Press*, 3 August 1838, 2. Skaneateles and Cayuga are just a few miles apart. There appears to be no birth record for Harris, which was not uncommon for free people of color in New York, and he never appears in the census. Harris is also stated as being from Cayuga County in the *Rochester Daily Democrat* obituary.

[4] Harris obituary, "Died." Geneva is just west of Cayuga. On the Geneva Lyceum see "Congregational Necrology: Rev. Justus Warner French," in *The Congregational Quarterly*, 5: 192-193.

[5] Henry Highland Garnet and James McCune Smith, Harris's closest contemporaries among black intellectuals in New York, were both graduates of the African Free School in New York City. Harris's small-town origins make his ability to get an education extremely unusual to say the least, and possibly unique.

[6] "A Sketch of the Past History and Present Condition of the Colored People of Troy," *The Anglo-African* (New York), 7 October 1865, 1, tells of slaves in the canal district whose masters concealed the fact they were free after emancipation.

[7] Harris's choice of Union is an unsolved mystery. Geneva College (later Hobart) was in the same town as his preparatory school, while both Hamilton and Colgate colleges were closer to his

hometown than Union. His choice may have been influenced by denominationalism (Geneva College was Episcopalian and Colgate was Baptist), or he may have already moved to Troy by 1834 in search of a black community.

[8] On Union's rejection see Harris obituary, "Died," and James C. Fuller's biographical remarks on Harris at the American Anti-Slavery Society Convention in 1839, "The Annual Meeting: James C. Fuller," *The Emancipator*, 16 May 1839, 10.

[9] Henry Fowler, *The American Pulpit, Sketches Biographical and Descriptive of Living American Preachers* (New York: J. M. Fairchild & Co., 1856), 373-377.

[10] UVM stands for Universitas Viridis Montis, or "University of the Green Mountains."

[11] The Middlebury story is told in the Harris obituary, "Died."

[12] "Abstract of Speeches," *The Liberator*, 17 May 1839.

[13] See "Historical Discourse by John Wheeler, D.D., Late President of the University of Vermont," in *A Historical Discourse by Rev. John Wheeler, D.D., an Address by James R. Spaulding, Esq., and a Poem by Rev. O. G. Wheeler delivered on the Occasion of the Semi-Centennial of the University of Vermont with an Account of the Proceedings of the Celebration* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Printing Co., 1854), 31-35, in Record Group President Series Wheeler, 1823-94, RG 2, Box 7, Special Collections, UVM, https://archive.org/stream/60640070R.nlm.nih.gov/60640070R#page/n7/mode/2up. The UVM trustees archives from the period reflect Wheeler's aggressive book and equipment purchasing program. For class sizes in the first fifty years see the *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854 (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Printing Co., 1854). See also T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Origins of UVM, 1791-1833: Overview" in Robert V. Daniels, ed., *The University of Vermont: the First Two Hundred Years* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1991), 10-41.

[14] "Died."

[15] See *A Sermon Preached Before the Vermont Colonization Society at Montpelier, October 25, 1825 by John Wheeler, Pastor of the First Congregational Church, Windsor, Vt. Published by Request* (Windsor, Vt.: Printed by W. Spooner, 1825) in Record Group President Series, Wheeler, 1823-94, RG 2, Box 7, Special Collections, UVM.

[16] 1857 speech: *The Thirty-Eighth Annual Report of the Vermont Colonization Society, Presented at the Annual Meeting in Montpelier on the Fifteenth of October 1857* (Burlington, Vt.: C. Goodrich & Co., 1857), 3. $300 bequest: *The Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the Vermont Colonization Society, Presented at Their Annual Meeting in Montpelier on the 15th of October, 1863* (Burlington, Vt.: Times Books and Job Printing Establishment, 1864), 21. Wheeler was a long-time supporter of the Vermont Colonization Society and served as its president from 1852 through 1861. I would like to thank my student Alex Jones for his research into Wheeler's colonizationism. Stay in North Carolina: Rev. Ezra H. Byington, *Rev. John Wheeler, D.D., 1798-1862, President of the University of Vermont 1833-1848: A Biographical Sketch* (Cambridge, Mass.: John Wilson and Son, University Press, 1894), 19.

[17] Anonymous, "Colored Students in American Colleges," *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, 22 September 1854.

[18] College Faculty Records, *Faculty Meeting Minutes, 1827-53*, Special Collections, UVM.

[19] On Mann's career see William F. Peck, *Semi-Centennial History of the City of Rochester* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1884), 351-352. See also "From Albany," *New York Tribune*, published as *New-York Daily Tribune*, 3 March 1857, 4 and "Savannah; Republican," [New York] *Commercial Advertiser*, 18 December 1860, 2. On Mann's respect for Douglass see "Progress of Justice and Equality, Rochester Jan. 1848," *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, published as *The North Star*, 23 June 1848, 1. Mann is established both as a member of the UVM Class of 1838 and the editor of the *Rochester American* in the *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854, 29.

[20] Harris's term fees, other bills, and payment records are listed in Record Group 42, Financial Records, and Series Early Journals, call number A W15 D 1835-41, pp. 42-43; his examination records are in Record Group 41, Registrar's Records, *Records and Examinations, 1828-1852*, all at Special Collections, UVM. He is also listed in the *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854, 29. Other evidence confirming he was a student can be found in *The Emancipator*, which described him as "Andrew Harris of Vermont" (indicating he was a student) as of November 1836, and in *The Colored American*, 1 April 1837, which accurately described him as "a member of the junior class, in 'Vermont University'" as of February 1837. See "General Meeting of the Colored People of Troy," *The Emancipator*, 1 December 1836, 123, and "Colored People of Troy," *Colored American*, 1 April 1837.

[21] *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854, 28-29. One of Harris's classmates, and therefore presumably one of the students who boycotted him, was Calvin Pease, later president of the university.

[22] "For the New-York Observer: Colleges and Colored People," *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 23 November 1843, 98.

[23] *Catalogue of Students* and *Records and Examinations, 1828-1852,* in Record Group 41, Registrar's Records, Special Collections, UVM. The fact that Harris is missing from the catalogue confused whoever created UVM's general catalogue in 1901, who apparently didn't think to consult the examination or financial records. The entry on Harris in the class of 1838 section reads: "**Andrew Harris**, licensed by presb of Phila 40; d 1841; name not in catalogues or President's record; must have entered after Oct 37." *General Catalogue of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, Burlington Vermont 1791-1900* (Burlington: Free Press Association, 1901).

[24] "General Meeting of the Colored People of Troy," 123. See also "The Colored People of Troy" in the same issue, 122.

[25] "Died."

[26] "Colored People of Troy," 122.

[27] In 1840, Troy's population was 19,334 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1840") http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab07.txt; "A Sketch of the Past History and Present Condition of the Colored People of Troy," 1, and 14 October 1865, 1; "Colored People of Troy," 1; Arthur J. Weise, *Troy's One Hundred Years, 1789-1889* (Troy, N.Y.: William H. Young, 1891), 110, 120, 130-131.

[28] There is a growing literature on the development of northern black communities and the rise of a black middle class. Much of it emphasizes the importance of evangelical belief, middle-class morality, and patriotism as means of resistance to racism and a counter-example to slavery. As a start see Rita Roberts, *Evangelicalism and the Politics of Reform in Northern Black Thought, 1776-1863* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010); Erica L. Ball, *To Live an Antislavery Life: Personal Politics and the Antebellum Black Middle Class* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2012); James O. Horton and Louise E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community, and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Leonard P. Curry, *The Free Black in Urban America, 1800-1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[29] The church was non-denominational, with Presbyterians dominant.

[30] "Colored People of Troy."

[31] "Colored People of Troy–Union Protracted Meeting, Held Six Evenings, to Promote Their Intellectual and Moral Development," *Colored American*, 1 April 1837.

[32] "Union Meeting of the Colored People of Albany, Troy and Vicinity," *Colored American*, 15 April 1837.

[33] Whether this vision was realistic and sustainable in the face of slavery and racist violence became the key black internal debate of the 1840s. Garnet famously broke with it in 1843 in his "Call to Rebellion" speech, calling for slaves to use "every means, including physical resistance" to oppose slavery. Harris did not live long enough to really participate in that debate, although, like virtually all of his peers, he endorsed the turn to politics in 1840.

[34] "Union Meeting of the Colored People of Albany, Troy and Vicinity."

[35] Daniel A. Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years* (Nashville, Tenn.: Publishing House of the A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1888; reprint: New York: Arno Press, 1968), 65-67.

[36] Series Early Journals, call number A W15 D 1835-41, Record Group 42, Financial Records, Special Collections, Bailey Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, pp. 42-43.

[37] Harris is first listed as an agent in Burlington in *The Colored American*, 7 October 1837. For further listings as agent see also the issues of 11, 18, 25 November 1837, 9, 16, 23, 30 December 1837, 13 January 1838, 3, 22 March 1838, 5, 19 April 1838.

[38] Elise A. Guyette, "Black Lives and White Racism in Vermont, 1760-1870" (M.A. Thesis, University of Vermont, 1992), Table 4.7, "Five Largest African American Communities in Vermont, 1800-1870," 85-86.

[39] Murray is mocked in the *Burlington Free Press*, 6 February 1835, 3. For more on his troubles as an antislavery organizer see David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 146-148. The story of the "Anti-Slavery Society of Burlington" is recounted in O.G.W., "The Long Ago, No. V," *Burlington Free Press*, 26 April 1878, 2. Orville G. Wheeler is listed as a member of the class of 1837 in the *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854, 28. Alvan Stewart was from Chittenden County and attended UVM between 1809 and 1811, but did not graduate. He became an antislavery man while practicing law in Utica in 1833 and was instrumental in forming the New York State Anti-Slavery Society in October 1835. He gave up his law practice to organize full time in 1836. This, and the fact that he told a story about Gerrit Smith's conversion to abolitionism when he was organizing in Burlington, leads me to conclude that he could not have been in Burlington before 1836. See Luther R. March, *Writings and Speeches of Alvan Stewart on Slavery* (New York: A. B. Burdick, 1860), 9-39, and "Stewart, Alvan," in James G. Wilson and John Fiske, eds., *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: D. Appleton

& Co., 1888), 5: 683. On the formation of the Chittenden County Anti-Slavery Society see "Anti-Slavery Society," *Burlington Free Press*, 16 March 1838, 2.

[40] She got the first name wrong. There was no James Harris in either the UVM class of 1838 or 1839.

[41] "What has the North to Do with Slavery?" *The Liberator*, 25 October 1839. For a comment on this *Liberator* item see also "I have seen in the Liberator of the 25th October last, an extract," *Colored American*, 25 April 1840.

[42] Julian I. Lindsay, *Tradition Looks Forward: The University of Vermont, A History* (Burlington: The University of Vermont, 1954), 163, quoting William Bissell, class of 1836.

[43] "Commencement of the University of Vermont," *Burlington Free Press*, 3 August 1838, 2. Mann's opinion appears in his Harris obituary, "Died."

[44] For a brief biography of Wright see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 187-88; on Cornish see ibid., 3: 95-96. On their friendship and their central places in black intellectual life and black reform circles see Swift, *Black Prophets of Justice.*

[45] "To the Church and Congregation at T. LETTER II," *Colored American*, 8 September 1838.

[46] "To the Church and Congregation at T. LETTER III," *Colored American*, 15 September 1838.

[47] Purvis was also the son-in-law of James Forten, the well-to-do black abolitionist Philadelphia sailmaker and early financial backer of the *The Liberator.*

[48] On Gardner see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 212-213, and Julie Winch, ed., *The Elite of Our People: Joseph Willson's Sketches of Black Upper-Class Life in Antebellum Philadelphia,* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 147. On Gloucester see *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 198-199. On Bowers see Winch, *The Elite of Our People*, 153-154. On Bird see ibid., 156. On Purvis see *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 81-82. On Bias see Winch, *The Elite of Our People*, 127, and Quarles, *Black Abolitionists*, 148. On Robert Douglass Sr. see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 117-118 and Winch, *The Elite of Our People*, 162.

Frederick Douglass, on the other hand, escaped from Baltimore just a few weeks later, on September 3, 1838. He found Philadelphia so treacherous that on September 4 he went straight to New York, where in fact he was aided by many of the men, including Wright, who had welcomed Harris in August. Frederick Douglass would not make his debut as a speaker before a mixed-race audience until August 11, 1841. See Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, His Early Life as a Slave, His Escape from Bondage, and His Complete History to the Present Time* (Hartford, Ct.: Park Publishing Co., 1881), 202-206. http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/douglasslife/douglass.html.

[49] Harris is listed as one of Payne's successors in the Liberty Street pulpit (and incorrectly listed as Henry Highland Garnet's direct successor–Garnet in fact took the job in 1841) in "A Sketch of the Past History and Present Condition of the Colored People of Troy," 1. Payne had strained his vocal chords on New Year's Eve 1837 and convalesced in Troy through April 1838 before resigning shortly thereafter. (See Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 68-42.) I believe Payne stayed in Troy until August and then left with Harris; he is certainly the author of the September 8, 1838, letter "To the Church and Congregation at T.," published in *The Colored American*, the second in a series of letters describing his travels after he left Troy, in which he describes his feelings on leaving ("Very dear Friends,—I left your pretty and flourishing city... precisely at 6 o'clock A.M. The sky was somewhat overcast, the atmosphere damp and heavy, yet ever and anon, the sun did throw aside the gloomy clouds.... The phenomena of nature was a picture of the emotions of my own bosom, for hope and fear, joy and grief alternately glided across my soul. Hope, that all was well;—Fear, that I was doing wrong, or in error relative to my departure from T. Joy, because of the promises of God, and Grief, because of the forlorn state of the 'little flock' whom I left without a Shepherd's care!"). Since Harris was on the trip Payne describes in the letter, and there was at the time no new pastor as yet in Troy, Harris could not have succeeded Payne as of that date. Harris graduated in Burlington on July 31, was in New York on August 10, and then in Philadelphia until at least August 20. It is unclear when he permanently moved to Philadelphia, but he was likely living there by May 1839. It follows then that he served as a pastor in Troy for an interim period from September of 1838 through the spring of 1839.

[50] Susan H. Ward, *The History of the Broadway Tabernacle Church, from Its Organization in 1840, to the Close of 1900, Including Factors Influencing Its Formation* (New York: The Broadway Tabernacle Church, 1901). https://archive.org/details/historyofbroadwa00ward. On the Smith and Garnet speeches see Quarles, *Black Abolitionists*, 34.

[51] "Sixth Anniversary," *The Emancipator*, 9 May 1839, 6. Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 296-297, lists attendance at 5,000, but this is almost surely incorrect. The church, built both for reform meetings and to accommodate the crowds drawn by the mesmerizing Finney, was designed to hold 2,400. The next week *The Emancipator*, which carried a paraphrased transcription of Harris's remarks, reported attendance at the business meeting at about 500. Harris probably spoke to something approaching a full house of 2,400. "Speeches at the Anniversary," *The Emancipator*, 16 May 1839, 10. *The Colored American* called the assembly, with no more precision, "large and brilliant."

See "The 6th Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society," *Colored American*, 11 May 1839. "See also "Power of the Free States," *Colored American*, 18 May 1839.

[52] "Speeches at the Anniversary," *The Emancipator*, 16 May 1839, 10. Interestingly, the speech was reprinted, without comment, under the same title by the *Voice of Freedom* in Montpelier, beginning on the left column of page 1, 8 June 1839. Did this prominent placement indicate that Harris was known in Vermont, or was it due to the mere fact that he had graduated from UVM?

The speech has been anthologized a number of times since. See for example, Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 296-297, as well as Philip S. Foner and Robert J. Branham, eds., *Lift Every Voice: African-American Oratory, 1878-1900* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1998), 179-182.

[53]Du Bois first defined the term "double-consciousness" in 1897. "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." W. E. B. Du Bois, "Strivings of the Negro People," *Atlantic Monthly: A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics* 80 August 1897, 194. He published a revision of the article as chapter one of *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903.

[54] "Anniversary of the American A.S. Society," *The Liberator*, 10 May 1839. See also "Abstract of Speeches," ibid., 17 May 1839. The same issue contained yet another positive review of Harris: "not one of the speakers was listened to more attentively, or acquitted himself more ably, than Andrew Harris, a young colored graduate of the University of Vermont. He showed, in a logical and conclusive manner, that if the free colored population of the United States are a degraded and ignorant class, the guilt belongs almost exclusively to the white people. His speech was happily conceived, enunciated with distinctness, and delivered in a modest yet unembarrassed manner." "Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society," *The Liberator*, 17 May 1839.

[55] Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 72. Regarding the size and vibrancy of the colored population of Philadelphia see Winch, ed., *The Elite of Our People*, and Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988). Nash discusses the 1840 population on 247. See also Dell Upton, *Another City: Urban Life and Urban Spaces in the New American Republic* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2008), 21, 39. W. E. B. Du Bois lists the 1840 black population as 10,507 in the city and 19,833 in the county, in *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1899), 47.

[56] As an introduction to the network of reform in Philadelphia see Richard Newman and James Mueller, eds., *Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia: Emancipation and the Long Struggle for Racial Justice in the City of Brotherly Love* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

[57] Barnes (1798-1870) was also a friend to the black community of the city. (Frederick Douglass would quote him in "*What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?*": "Albert Barnes but uttered what the common sense of every man at all observant of the actual state of the case will receive as truth, when he declared that 'There is no power out of the church that could sustain slavery an hour, if it were not sustained in it.'") That Barnes was Harris's tutor is stated in Harris's *Rochester Daily Democrat* obituary, "Died." Daniel Alexander Payne also confirmed that Harris was a New School Presbyterian (Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 326).

[58] *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, With an Appendix* (New York: Molineux, 1839), 48.

[59] "Ordination and Installation of Rev. Andrew Harris Over the Second Colored Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia," *Colored American*, 8 May 1841.

[60] See M. Brainerd, *The Life of Rev. Thomas Brainerd, D.D., For Thirty Years Pastor of Old Pine Street Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1870), 145. https://archive.org/details/lifeofrevthomasb00brai.

[61] Payne's memory, which appears to have been remarkable, is correct in all verifiable details. Harris was in the Third Presbytery and Barnes's interest makes perfect sense given their relationship. Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 324-327. The story of Potiphar's wife's unsuccessful attempt to seduce Joseph and her later revenge as a scorned woman is told in Genesis, Chapter 39.

[62] "Ordination and Installation of Rev. Andrew Harris Over the Second Colored Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia."

[63] The St. Mary's Street Church was burned in 1842, never rebuilt, and dissolved as a congregation in 1867. The Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia has no records from the church.

[64] Thomas Brainerd, *The Gospel Honourable to Its Advocates A Sermon, by the Rev. Thomas Brainerd, at the Ordination and Installation of the Rev. Andrew Harris* (Philadelphia: Published by the Session of the Second African Church).

[65] "I have always stood aloof from the abolition societies," Brainerd wrote in 1837 (he believed their radicalism did more harm than good and precluded the possibility of Christian reconciliation

with slaveholders), but he was also outraged by the murder of Elijah Lovejoy, supported black churches that were destroyed or damaged in the Philadelphia riots of 1838, prayed with slaves on a visit to North Carolina, and smuggled to freedom two light-skinned little girls, whom he pretended were his daughters, on his return from that trip. See Brainerd, *The Life of Rev. Thomas Brainerd*, 109, 140-146, 176-77. https://archive.org/details/lifeofrevthomasb00brai.

[66] For complex reasons the immediate issue in 1839 revolved around women's rights, specifically whether women would be formally recognized as members of the society. Here is *The Liberator*'s summary of how the question played out at the meeting: "Amos A. Phelps moved the following amendment to the amendment.... 'That the term "person," as used in the 4th Article of the Constitution of this society, is to be understood as including men and women, and as entitling women to sit, speak, vote, hold office, and exercise the same rights of membership as persons of the other sex.' ... the amendment of Amos A. Phelps was rejected.... The question was then taken by yeas and nays, on the resolution, as amended, and carried as follows: 'Resolved, that the roll of this meeting be made by placing thereon the names of all persons, male and female, who are delegates from any auxiliary society, or members of this society.' Those opposed to it were at least in part concerned about what they saw as two related issues: watering down the cause of anti-slavery, and alienating men who could be persuaded to oppose slavery but had no interest in either perfectionism or women's rights. Harris voted 'no.'" "American Anti-Slavery Society. Meeting for Business," *The Liberator*, 24 May 1839.

[67] A good general account of the 1839-40 antislavery schism can be found in Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1998), 264-281. On the black clergy who joined the American and Foreign Antislavery Society, including Harris, see Quarles, *Black Abolitionists*, 68, and Swift, *Black Prophets of Justice*, 110. Harris is listed as a delegate to the 1840 AASS meeting in "Annual Meeting of the Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society," *Pennsylvania Freeman*, 14 May 1840, 2. He is listed as one of the founders of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in "American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society," *The Emancipator*, 29 May 1840, 18. He is also listed as a delegate to the business meeting of the "American Anti-Slavery Society" on May 12, 1841 ("Business Meeting," *The Emancipator*, 20 May 1841, 11), but since the officers listed include James G. Birney, Joshua Leavitt, Lewis Tappan, Henry B. Stanton, and Theodore S. Wright, I can only conclude the article is mistaken and this was the business meeting of the American and Foreign ASS. Harris is also listed as a delegate to a May 12, 1841 "National Nominating Convention" that nominated Birney for president and James Morris for vice president for the 1844 election ("National Nominating Convention," *The Emancipator*, 20 May 1841, 11). On Cornish, see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 95-96, 216-218.

[68] Eastern Pennsylvania ASS: "Annual Meeting of the Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society," and "Pennsylvania," *The Emancipator*, 29 May 1840, 19; Leavitt ASS: "Business Meeting," ibid., 20 May 1841, 11. For a very brief description of the Leavitt Society, see Newman and James Mueller, eds., *Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia*, 189; New York Committee of Vigilance: "New-York Anniversaries," *Boston Recorder*, 21 May 1841, 82; Temperance: "From the Philadelphia Daily Republican: Temperance Celebration in Philadelphia," *The North Star* (Rochester), 24 November 1848, 4; Anti-Colonization: Samuel E. Cornish and Theodore S. Wright, *The Colonization Scheme Considered, In Its Rejection by the Colored People—In Its Tendency to Uphold Caste—In Its Unfitness for Christianizing and Civilizing the Aborigines of Africa, and for Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade: In a Letter to the Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen and the Hon. Benjamin P. Butler* (Newark, N.J.: Aaron Guest, 1840), 4; *Colored American* fundraiser: "Public Meeting for This Paper," *Colored American*, 5 December 1840; Bethel AME Dedication: A. W. Wayman, *My Recollections of African M. E. Ministers, or Forty Years' Experience in the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: A. M. E. Book Rooms, 1881), 16 http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/wayman/wayman.html. For the relative locations of Harris's Second African and the Bethel AME ("Mother Bethel" or "First African") churches, see E. L. Carey and A. Hart, *Philadelphia in 1830-1: or, A Brief Account of The Various Institutions and Public Objects in This Metropolis. Forming a Complete Guide for Strangers and a Useful Compendium for the Inhabitants* (Philadelphia: James Kay, Jun. & Co., 1830), 41 and 49; Voting rights, Troy: "Proceedings of the New York State Convention," *Colored American*, 11 September 1841; Voting rights, New York City: "Public Meeting," ibid.

[69] *Philadelphia Inquirer*, published as *Pennsylvania Inquirer and Daily Courier*, 3 December 1841, 2; *North American*, published as *The North American and Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 3 December 1841, 2; *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), 4 December 1841, 2. Versions of this obituary also ran in the *Commercial Advertiser* (New York) on December 4, the *Daily Atlas* (Boston) on December 7, the *Spectator* (New York) on December 8, the *Boston Courier* on December 9, and the *National Aegis* (Worcester) on December 15. Gloucester, who was a member of the most prominent black Presbyterian family in the city, had helped form the American and Foreign Antislavery Society. He succeeded Harris as the pastor at St. Mary's Street Presbyterian (his brother Jeremiah Gloucester had founded it in 1824) and was also involved with the *Colored American*. On Glouces-

ter, see Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers*, 3: 198-199. For more on the Gloucester family see Nash, *Forging Freedom*.

[70] "Deaths," *The Liberator*, 24 December 1841. Versions of this obituary also ran in the *Salem Register* on December 20, the *Salem Gazette* on December 21, the *Massachusetts Spy* (Worcester) on December 22, the *National Aegis* (Worcester) on December 22 (the *Aegis* ran two versions of the obituary a week apart), the *Yarmouth Register* on December 23, and the *New Bedford Mercury* on December 24. Harris's ordination and death are also both listed in *The American Quarterly Register*, 14: 91 (ordination) and 308 (death). The death is misdated as occurring on December 2.

[71] "Died."

[72] "The excellent poetry on the death of our esteemed young brother," *Colored American*, 25 December 1841. Abolitionist papers regularly published poetry, but I could find no poem by this title, or one that mentions Harris or was written by either Daniel Alexander Payne or D.A.P. Payne did, however, write poetry. In 1850 he published a small volume of religious poems, *The Pleasures and Other Miscellaneous Poems*, which included two mourning poems, one for his first wife, and one for a daughter who died. There is no poem for Harris in the volume. Daniel A. Payne, *The Pleasures and Other Miscellaneous Poems* (Baltimore: Sherwood and Co., 1850).

[73] Daniel A. Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 163-166.

[74] "Presbytery of Philadelphia New School," *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), 14 April 1842; *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1843* (New York: Daniel Fanshaw, 1843), 41; "Second Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society Presented May 10, 1842," *Emancipator and Free American*, 26 May 1842; "From the Philadelphia Daily Republican: Temperance Celebration in Philadelphia," *The North Star* (Rochester), 24 November 1848; "Colored Students in American Colleges," *Frederick Douglass' Paper* (Rochester), 22 September 1854; *Triennial Catalogue of the University of Vermont*, 1854.

[75] "From the Philadelphia Commercial Herald. The Abolitionists," *The Liberator*, 9 October 1840.

[76] The St. Mary's Street Church had a troubled, tenuous history. Founded in 1824, it did without a pastor from 1828 until Harris's ordination in 1841 before burning in August 1842. See "Ordination and Installation of Rev. Andrew Harris Over the Second Colored Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia," and Matthew S. Hopper, "From Refuge to Strength: The Rise of the African-American Church in Philadelphia, 1787-1949" (Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, undated), http://www.preservationalliance.com/files/aachurches.pdf.

[77] The riots are described in Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 26-30. Thomas Brainerd discusses the 1838 Pennsylvania Hall riot in Brainerd, *The Life of Rev. Thomas Brainerd*, 109, 145-146, https://archive.org/details/lifeofrevthomasb00brai (Brainerd says two churches burned; Du Bois says one). A good description of the 1842 rioting around St. Mary's Street can be found in "Riot in Philadelphia," *Signal of Liberty* (Ann Arbor, Michigan), 15 August 1842. A description of the 1849 riot can be found in Upton, *Another City*, 106-109. On Philadelphia's black churches, see Hopper, "From Refuge to Strength," http://www.preservationalliance.com/files/aachurches.pdf. On the burnings of churches and social halls as attacks on black social networks see Emma J. Lapsansky, "'Since They Got Those Separate Churches': Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia," *American Quarterly* 32 (Spring 1980). For good measure it is worth mentioning that massive anti-Catholic riots wracked the City of Brotherly Love in 1844.

[78] "One of the most painful embarrassments with which we ever had to contend," the African Americans of Troy claimed in 1837 in a statement written by Harris, "is the want of combined action. And this is more especially felt by us, in consequence of the smallness of our numbers and resources, in any one place in this region" ("Union Meeting of the Colored People of Albany, Troy and Vicinity").

[79] Payne, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, 67-68.

[80] "Proceedings of the New York State Convention," *Colored American*, 11 September 1841.

Opium Eating in Vermont: "A Crying Evil of the Day"

In 1900 Dr. A.P. Grinnell surveyed druggists, general store owners, physicians, wholesalers, and manufacturers of opiates in Vermont on their sales of opium and opium products, then made his grim assessment that Vermonters consumed an incredible 3,300,000 doses of opium each and every month. The numbers were simply staggering.

By Gary G. Shattuck

> In every corner of our state, heroin and opiate drug addiction threatens us. It threatens the safety that has always blessed our state. It is a crisis.
>
> *Governor Peter Shumlin, 2014*[1]

> [T]here is more morphine, chloral, opium and kindred drugs consumed in our state per capita than in any other state in the Union.
>
> *Percival W. Clement, 1902*[2]
> *Gubernatorial candidate*

> Vermont expect[s] her Senators and Representatives to be at their posts, with clear heads, and steady nerves, and strong hearts, to do their duty.
>
> *Governor William Slade Jr., 1846*[3]
> *Opium eater*

.....

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If opiate addiction in Vermont in the twenty-first century is of particular moment, it is not at all a new problem. At the end of the nineteenth century the use and abuse of opiates in the state was nothing short of remarkable. A reliable but conservative estimate revealed that Vermonters in 1900 were ingesting 3,300,000 doses a month, enough to provide one and one-half doses of the drug to every adult man and woman every day of the year.[4] With no sign of the problem abating any time soon, it is clear that a deep addiction to one of the strongest narcotics known existed well over a century ago in the Green Mountains.[5]

Dr. Ashbel Parmlee Grinnell, professor and dean of the University of Vermont Medical Department and consulting physician to the Mary Fletcher Hospital, bore the grim news in 1900 when he introduced to the public his appropriately titled report, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont."[6] He based his findings on a comprehensive and wide-ranging survey of a substantial number of the state's druggists, general stores, physicians, and manufacturers in the waning months of 1899, seeking information on the extent of their sales of various drugs, including opium, morphine, laudanum, and cocaine. Because many were suspicious of Grinnell's motives, not all of them cooperated, leading him to suspect that even the 3,300,000 dose figure was low and that a more accurate result could be obtained by multiplying that number by a factor of five. The results were simply incredible.

Grinnell was not alone in sounding warnings at the time. Two years earlier, at their 1898 annual meeting in Montpelier, members of the Vermont State Pharmaceutical Association listened to Dr. J. C. F. With present on opium as he put a startling face on the state's addiction problem:

> We have all of us had our experiences with the opium and morphine user. They enter our stores, and under one pretext or another call for the article.... I have seen a man get from a druggist an eight-ounce bottle of laudanum, tear the wrapper off and deliberately drink half the contents. I looked on in amazement, thinking surely it was a deliberate attempt at suicide; but it proved not so, for it simply quickly restored the man to a normal condition, whereas he was fearfully nervous and agitated when he entered.[7]

With noted further that "country localities" consumed the bulk of these drugs, finding it strange that a druggist in New York or Boston required only five ounces of morphine for an entire year when so much more was needed in a rural setting. It all seemed so incongruous in the context of what Vermont had to offer. "One would think the human

mind more equally balanced," he said, "where God's free nature, green and fresh, surrounds us, and where life is not rushed out of the body and the candle burned at both ends, as in our city life. Country villages and farmhouses seem to furnish the greater number of users, and why this is so let anyone tell."

The efforts of people such as Grinnell and With were not without results, for the times were ripe for legal reforms to curtail rising addiction rates. Testimony before Congress showing that opium consumption increased 351 percent between 1869 and 1909 underscored widespread recognition of a growing national crisis.[8] Inherent conflicts rooted in a federal style of government giving states the responsibility to police their own internal affairs, which resulted in a laissez-faire attitude toward virtually anything related to health care, lay at the heart of the opiate problem allowing it to develop to the devastating proportions witnessed in Vermont.

Other states certainly shared a similar situation, but, as described herein, the environment in which the drug gained a foothold that was then exploited to such a pervasive presence made Vermont's experience significantly different from the others. Widespread, unrestricted access to opium and morphine was the norm for much of the nation at the time. In Vermont, however, a struggling state medical establishment, constantly at war with itself throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, set the stage for allowing addiction to take hold and grow. The problem advanced to even higher levels following Vermont's prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcohol in 1852. Then, persistent and egregious failures by the legislature to take responsibility in ensuring the competencies of the medical and pharmaceutical professions allowed others to exploit that vacuum to hawk their many bogus opium-infused patent treatments on an unsuspecting population. Collectively, their neglect only exacerbated Vermonters' dependence on the drug as they sought to administer their various folk remedies and feed their silent addictions, many caused in the first place by irresponsible, over-prescribing doctors. Virtually none of this information has found a place in the state's vast historiography, and in order to understand now the critical situation at the time of Grinnell's explosive report, one must look back over the preceding one hundred years.

Opium's Allure

Opium (Homer's "nepenthe") stands out unquestionably as the most important weapon in the *materia medica* of its day. Its analgesic ability to remove pain and calm a patient in a state of distress, thereby allowing needed rest (albeit, following a period of exhilaration) to per-

mit healing to begin, made it an attractive remedy for many ailments. In the hands of a competent medical practitioner it was administered in measured amounts at various stages of illness in order to alleviate particular symptoms. Huge doses of the drug were also fed to individuals (which too often also included doctors) suffering from the fits, spasms, and hallucinations experienced while in the throes of delirium tremens.[9] The reliable results that opium, and its derivative morphine, delivered allowed it to gain easy access into mainstream American culture, where it also became known derisively as "the quack's sheet anchor" for its unquestioned presence in so many of the unregulated concoctions made available by those with more interest in their customers' money than in their health.[10] Unfortunately, the opium they all pedaled was also attended by the serious health hazards that the accompanying euphoria, addiction, and tolerance produced through its use.

The refined product of the plant *Papaver somniferum,* or poppy, virtually all of the opium used in America in the early nineteenth century originated in Asia Minor and the subcontinent. Known commonly as Turkey or Smyrna (reddish brown in color), and East India opium (almost black), the compressed cakes of the odorous, nauseating, bitter-tasting drug, covered with leaves and poppy petals, entered into the nation's stream of commerce eventually arriving in remote Vermont towns, where they were sold to physicians and common folk alike. Notwithstanding the several Latin names the medical community attached to it (*Opium purificatum, Extractum opii, Pilulæ oppi, Tinctura opii, Confectio opii*), the public came to know it simply as "laudanum [opium mixed in wine], the black drop, or acetate of opium; the Dover's Powder, and Paregoric Elixir [camphorated opium]," made available in the form of pills, tinctures, confections, electuaries, and anodynes.[11]

In his comprehensive, 419-page *Sketches of Epidemic Diseases in the State of Vermont, from Its First Settlement to the Year 1815,* the highly esteemed Dr. Joseph A. Gallup (1769-1849) conducted an exhaustive review of virtually all outbreaks of disease in the state up to that time, describing in detail the various peculiarities of each and their treatment.[12] On October 10, 1822, upon his election as president of the Vermont Medical Society (VMS), Gallup provided additional insights into the treatment of disease and then proudly watched as society members voted his book "made requisite for students to read in order to admit them to an examination" before being allowed to practice medicine.[13] In each of these works, Gallup made several references to the use of opium; but he did so cautiously, in full recognition of its extreme potency, anxious that it be closely monitored whenever it was used.

In spite of Gallup's concerns, it is clear that opium retained a prized role in Vermont society outside of the medical arena, a fact made clear by fellow professor and a co-founder of the Castleton Medical Academy, Dr. Selah Gridley. In 1816, Gridley had occasion to speak before the VMS at its annual meeting in Montpelier on "The Importance and Associability of the Human Stomach," revealing yet another aspect of the drug's benefits:

> Does any one ask, what constitutes the pleasure of existence? I answer, it consists of a pleasant and easy action of the stomach, and other organs immediately associated with it. Do any doubt the truth of the position? I reply, when the stomach is duly excited by food, by wine, by opium, and by tea, the highest degree of corporeal, moral and mental happiness is enjoyed. It is in this state only, that the person feels social pleasure, or exercises, in perfection, the faculties of taste, judgment and reason. In this state only, man delights in action and business, or reclines himself into rest and sleep.[14]

In acknowledging that opium held equal sway with other stimulants affording "social pleasure," Gridley's important admission suggests that many in Vermont were willing to tread the fine line the powerful drug demanded as they sought the euphoria it provided. Certainly a two-edged sword, opium was a tiger demanding great respect, responsible for turning upwards of 16 percent of the nation's physicians, a disproportionate number of them working arduously in the countryside, into addicts by century's end.[15] Unfortunately, at this much earlier moment many frontier physicians had already set off on that path, possessing a reputation for intemperance exceeding that of any other profession.[16]

The wide-ranging effects of opium were only then becoming more commonly known, but principally within the nascent medical community that Gallup and Gridley occupied. There, debates raged among the well-intentioned, though frequently woefully uneducated, members of Vermont's second generation of doctors attempting to understand whether, because of the drug's conflicting results on a patient, it served as stimulant or sedative. At the same moment Thomas De Quincey's explicit *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* describing his various pleasant debaucheries under its influence (mainly laudanum) was released in London in 1822.[17] There, such questions as the Vermonters sought to answer were simply irrelevant to the common folk who knew full well the pleasures opium delivered. By then, the drug had become so entrenched in London's environs that local druggists supplying De Quincey told him the number of "amateur" opium eaters (compared to his voracious appetite) was "immense." It was so large that "on a Saturday afternoon the counters of the druggists were

strewed with pills of one, two, or three grains, in preparation for the known demand of the evening" when factory workers appeared at the end of their work day.[18]

Vermonters' own opium dependency never attained the degree of openness that Londoners witnessed, but it did become every bit as voracious. Unless they traveled to a large far off city to obtain life's necessities, inhabitants on the frontier in early nineteenth-century Vermont depended wholly on the local general store. There, they could fulfill most of their needs and speak with an untrained clerk selling them the drugs they desired while dispensing similarly untrained advice in their use. Period newspapers are replete with advertisements for drugs: in Middlebury, "Pomeroy & Williams, have just received ... an extensive assortment of Drugs & Medicines," including various patent medicines (Hooper's Pills, Anderson's Pills, Lee's Bilious Pills, Bateman's Drops), together with "Opium Turkey";[19] in Peacham, Elisha Phelps sold crockery, dyes, paints, and a vast number of drugs including opium;[20] in Brattleboro, Arms, Clark & Co. offered another huge selection of drugs, including opium, together with groceries, paint, and dye, while further directing the attention of "Physicians and heads of families in particular" to the fact that they took particular care in providing drugs of "superior quality."[21] If people wanted these products for any reason for themselves, their families, or even to treat their sick or injured animals, nothing prevented them from buying them.

Walking into one of these stores could be an eye-opening experience. First, they acted as the only local point of sale directly to physicians purchasing the raw products, frequently of inferior quality, for their practice. The doctor then returned to his home or office, where he maintained a "miniature apothecary" and "supplied his spacious saddlebags each morning, or answered calls for Epsom Salts, Senna, Essences or Paregoric from the families around him."[22] That practice persisted for decades into the 1870s, when the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association (VPA) sought to implement a written prescription system, only to run into resistance from doctors uninterested in change, clinging to their old ways and finding still "many of our physicians who prefer to carry their score or two of drugs, and dispense them in a manner repulsive to delicacy and refinement."[23] And when those many drugs were called upon, only a few actually served their purpose, as "Calomel, Opium, Tartar Emetic, and the Lancet formed the four corner-pillars" of medical practice.

If a customer chose to make his purchase personally rather than from a doctor, he went to the store's "drug department" for the transaction, described by the VPA's president Dr. C. L. Case, as:

> a curiosity; it was the *dirtiest* part of the whole establishment; its smell overpowered that of the tobacco, codfish and bad whiskey. It was a heterogeneous array of paper bundles, densely covered with dirt, mingled with bottles of all forms and sizes, well coated with a mixture of the contents and dirt, having labels with mis-spelled English and worse Latin, and no labels at all. From these were dispensed picra, oil of spike, laudanum, paregoric, and sundry other villainous compounds.
>
> The tinctures were never filtered, and never of any definite strength. A coating from half an inch to an inch thick ornamented the counter on which every drug in the establishment was represented. Mortars, graduates, and other implements, if there *were* any, were rarely, if ever, washed, and a general air of filth and slovenliness pervaded the whole concern. . . . The compounds dealt out to their patients were prepared in the most crude manner, and often so nauseous and disgusting that the remedy was indeed "worse than the disease." . . . I have seen a pill mass dispensed on an old bit of a written sheet of paper, which had served a child as a writing book at school, and the patient directed to *pill* it out for himself.[24]

Given the off-handed, careless manner in which medicines were handled early on, allowing for extraordinarily free access to drugs in general, and opium specifically, it is hardly surprising that stimulant-seeking Vermonters' obsession with them developed in the first place, and then only increased with the passing years.

Birth of Addiction

The dangers presented by the possibility of opium addiction, or "habit" as it was called, were certainly well known in America before De Quincey's 1822 revelations. One 1803 writer described "its effects on those who are habituated to its use, being, in many respects, analogous to the operation of wine. It produces pleasing sensations, exhilaration of the spirits, and makes them gesticulate in a variety of ludicrous forms, and in a word to act like men intoxicated with vinous liquors."[25] After noting similar effects (a feeling "as though they were in heaven"), two Philadelphia medical students admitted in 1792 that it could easily be used to escape life's difficulties, because "opium may bring pleasure by suspending these many little uneasinesses."[26] However, in 1806 the first edition of the important *American Dispensatory* cautioned that "the habitual use of opium produces the same effects with habitual dram drinking, tremors, paralysis, and stupidity, and like it can scarcely ever be relinquished."[27]

Opium enveloped all ages of Vermont's population. In 1817 a Bennington newspaper published the impressions of one individual assuming an early temperance stance, bemoaning the way children became

indoctrinated to the use of ardent (distilled) spirits, wine, bitters, and sling (water and spirits), resulting in their habitual use in the same way as snuff, opium, or chewing tobacco.[28] Eventually, as children took up the habit alongside their parents, the use of narcotics became an accepted fact of everyday life simply because it was "a very common and agreeable stimulus."[29]

Opium's acceptance within the community continued and managed to withstand the firestorm that erupted in 1828 with the formation of the Vermont Temperance Society, which focused its efforts on alcohol. Pride of place allowed it to escape close scrutiny because it had occupied a privileged, recognized role in the treatment of illness for a much longer time than ardent spirits, whose more recently sanctioned production resulted from zealous Washington, D.C. advocacy perpetuating its use and allowing substantial taxes to flow into the national treasury. As a result, opium, tobacco, and other addictive substances escaped limitation throughout the temperance years, remaining very much a part of everyday life and affecting the state's health well past the imposition of alcohol prohibition in 1852.

Another important factor contributing to the lenient atmosphere that allowed the use of opiates to accelerate was the lack of regulation of the medical profession itself. Joseph Gallup made this point in *Sketches of Epidemic Diseases* when he wrote that he wanted to "harmonize the vague and adverse practices, discoverable throughout the country, originating from a too successful promulgation of absurd and visionary theories, not conducive to practical utility."[30] The need to address the "vague and adverse practices" of a rising generation of Vermont doctors resulted in the 1820 law, "An Act, regulating the practice of Physic and Surgery," which allowed the Supreme Court, with the advice of two or more "regular Physicians," to grant licenses to those seeking to practice medicine.[31] Despite those good intentions, in 1825 the VMS was forced to admit that the problem remained, as the "scanty requirements" placed on applicants "tend[ed] to depreciate the reputation of the profession and to injure the community."[32] The legislature's feeble attempts to monitor doctors were subsequently abandoned in 1838 when the licensing law was repealed, thereby allowing doctors to escape oversight until reforms were instituted in 1878.[33]

The potential for opium abuse increased after 1838 not only because it escaped the attention of temperance advocates or legislative control of the medical profession, but also because the latter persistently failed to harmonize its own means and methods. First, in the years immediately following the divisive anti-Masonry movement that swept the state, medical practitioners' attempts to even associate with one an-

other raised significant suspicion. Many people believed that doctors wanted to exclude those not graduating from a medical college from their ranks, thereby invoking the dreaded presence of a monopoly of the rich over the poor: "They hate the *name,* but love the *thing,*" one legislator said in support of abolishing the 1820 licensing law. But more importantly, physicians' own internal disagreements, such as their inability to reconcile conflicting empirical versus rationalist viewpoints in diagnosing ailments, was irksome to all. "The Faculty, as we all know, are at variance in regard to the origin and nature of diseases and their modes of treatment. Nor is there any certainty in their prescriptions or predictions," the legislator continued. Then, in ringing condemnation of the profession, he said:

> Indeed, Sir, you may at any time put it to the learned Doctors themselves, and you will be satisfied of the extreme uncertainty of all their knowledge, by the disagreement and disputes among them in respect to the most common cases in practice. They are all licensed to practice, but a great majority of them must necessarily be unsound in their notions. With what propriety, then, do you give a monopoly of practice to a class of men, who, for aught you know, are all wrong, and of whom eight in ten, as you certainly know, are guided by erroneous opinions?[34]

Agreeing that the population needed to be freed from the tyranny that that medical profession posed, another legislator expressed his belief that the people themselves knew what was best and that repeal would result in "leaving true knowledge to flourish, as it always best did, without restraints."[35]

This was not the first time that the Assembly missed an opportunity to improve the quality of health care in Vermont. In 1798, Brattleboro's Dr. Samuel Stearns understood the medical community's dire need for a treatise covering treatment of the sick and approached it seeking authority to conduct a statewide lottery to facilitate publication of a first-of-its-kind medical compendium, "a Regular System of Pharmacy, Physic, and Surgery." Believing that such an effort would substantially improve the quality of care, Stearns explained it would be of great interest and use to physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries "in all the difficult and dangerous Cases, Operations, and Processes they May have to Encounter."[36] Many other esteemed individuals throughout New England enthusiastically endorsed the project by providing testimonials of its worth. One Rhode Island doctor was emphatic that it should be allowed, stating "it is much better to have the Minds of Physicians illuminated, than to keep them groping in the dark for want of Information, wandering about with the Engines of Destruction, and

Ignorantly Committing Slaughter and Depredation amongst their Patients."[37] Alas, Stearns's noble effort was denied.

Even though the legislature had abandoned its oversight of physicians, Gallup persisted in his attempts to convince his colleagues to unite. Unfortunately, in 1845 he was still railing at their continued disputes, now becoming even more disruptive as the proliferation of alternative methods of treatment offering offensive patent medicines, or nostrums, made inroads on an unsuspecting public. "Who shall we consider as of the profession, or what constitutes the profession?" he asked, lamenting that "the votaries of medicine are divided into as many sects as religion or politics."[38] He went on to identify several offenders contributing to the problem, those practitioners of "refined quackery," including the homeopaths, hydropaths, steamers, and Thomsonians.[39]

Gallup also sought to try and assign appropriate blame for this seemingly never-ending discord, telling the profession to look first to itself for an answer and questioning whether "there is not a rottenness in Denmark?" And what effect was this "almost constant clashing" of ideas taking place within and without the medical community having on a bewildered public watching on the sidelines? His answer: "It is notorious that the most ignorant gossip will undertake to decide for them." He was right, for, in a state where some 80 percent of the population engaged in agriculture, many living in remote, hard-to-reach enclaves, and with limited educational opportunities, they naturally turned within themselves, to their comfortable, familiar traditions and folk remedies to satisfy their health needs.

What Gallup did not mention, but certainly could have, was an additional problem in the form of doctors' proclivities, themselves addicted to their own concoctions and also distributing them to their friends. While a student at Castleton's medical school, young Asa Fitch had no shortage of opportunities to experiment with fellow students on a variety of substances, purportedly in the name of advancing science, including the use of copious amounts of nitrous oxide, ether (available "as free as water"), and opium. Yet despite a rather bad experience the opium inflicted on him ("turns of nausea, retching, and eructation of air"), Fitch and his peers persevered and he documented additional instances of use.[40]

For students at Dartmouth's medical school, including many coming from Vermont, matters of conscience arose in 1833, and again in 1835, over their own use of opium and providing it to others. Recognizing such actions as inconsistent with pledges of abstinence in their newly formed temperance society, they resolved to stop doing it.[41] Early exposure to substances they might not otherwise have been drawn to, and

their unfortunate ready availability, afforded these young men with their own personal trials as they later plied their trade, with many falling victim to addiction.

Evidence of Vermonters' openness to the use of stimulants is present early on. In 1786, surveyor and self-professed doctor Eben Judd told of treating others with opium, and also described a visit with a doctor in Guildhall. "He told me a method of making Opium by Cuting of the tops of Popies and drying them and then boiling them [?] away."[42] When a visiting New York physician attempted to administer a conservative course of treatment to an individual who had fallen victim in the disease period between 1810 and 1816, he met with strong opposition from local residents accustomed to remedies requiring the use of stimulants. As the doctor explained, "On inquiry what was to be done, the reply was, give opium, brandy, ardent spirits, wine, sweating . . . . These opinions generally prevailed among the people and the physicians. It was considered malpractice to neglect these remedies, or to use bleeding or other [methods]."[43] It certainly required a strong will to refuse to do otherwise, but the stranger was successful in pursuing his chosen treatment on this occasion.

Pervasive self-diagnosing and medicating, or "dosing," by Vermonters without conferring with a doctor was widely practiced. As one Bennington paper reported in 1827:

> One way in which the people become sick, is by doctoring themselves when well. Medicines were never designed for persons in health; and to them nothing on earth is more useless than a physician, or more detrimental than an apothecary's shop. And yet some will be continually dosing themselves with drugs and specifics, for fancied ailments, which a little more exercise and attention to diet would soon make them forget.[44]

Dartmouth medical professor Dr. Reuben Mussey recalled these times when self-dosing, or "pill-drugging," was in strong evidence, and told of a young Vermont man consulting him for an ailment. "He said that he had taken *six hundred of Brandeth's pills* [a purgative] *within a few weeks* [emphasis in original]. I asked him if he thought he had derived benefit from them. He replied that he thought not, on the whole, but suspected he had been injured, as he had lost much strength." When asked why he continued to take them, the young man answered, "Because my way is to give everything a fair trial."[45] In Middlebury, the respected local couple Charity Bryant and Sylvia Drake made free use of opium, morphine, and laudanum on many occasions, for not only themselves, but also in administering to the needs of family members, neigh-

bors, and friends. When their stores of drugs ran low, they readily replenished their stock from local doctors and apothecaries.[46]

Additional problems occurred as well-intentioned mothers dosed their infant children without consulting a doctor "with paregoric, or Godfrey's cordial [containing morphine] or laudanum, to make them sleep and be quiet," only to have to then medicate them with "counter medicines" to offset any untoward condition brought on by the first administration.[47] In a telling condemnation of the practice, Addison County's widely respected Dr. Jonathan Allen told of children in 1829 refusing to drink their daily allotment of alcohol and being coaxed to do so through "the inviting influence of sugar."[48] Then, he explained "[t]he same requisites are essential to induce children to take opium, tobacco, or most other medicines," with the result that the substances became "desirable as articles of living and even seem to constitute one of the necessaries of life." Fellow physician William Sweetser agreed that children were receiving harmful treatment from their parents and nurses and that "all the injurious consequences of the spirit and opium must result from its abuse."[49]

For one discerning local layman seeking to counter this harm it was enough to propose that the state's school districts create their own temperance societies to instruct children to ward them off the opium, tobacco, and alcohol habit: "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart therefrom."[50] But the odds of doing so were decidedly unfavorable when families living in the Vermont countryside, frequently destitute of sufficient means to afford the services of scarce doctors in the first place, continued with their own remedies. There was no shortage of information, both learned and unlearned, telling them what and how to do it. In nearby Washington County, New York, John Williams, identifying himself as a "doctor" who gained his knowledge "in the wilds of America, from the natives of the forest," penned his *Last Legacy, and Useful Family Guide.* Predictably, his well-intended suggestions simply repeated the treatments familiar to all, such as that for toothache, "take gum opium, gum camphor, and spirits of turpentine and rub them into a paste and apply it."[51] More sophisticated instruction was also available, as shown by a Bellows Falls newspaper describing the arrival in 1830 of one of the more comprehensive authorities of the times, *The Book of Health: A Compendium of Domestic Medicine,* a London publication "with directions how to act when medical aid is not at hand." Various revisions were made by Boston physicians to adapt it to North American needs, thereby allowing anyone, whether living in an urban or rural setting, to ponder its 179 pages containing more than fifty references to opium.[52]

Also stepping in to aid the medicine-imbibing community were the unregulated pharmacists themselves, frequently doing so in an open and aggressive manner far outstripping the efforts of physicians. In 1839, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, druggist and apothecary William R. Preston authored *Medicine Chests for Ships and Families*, which provides additional insights into the nature and quality of medical advice available to the public. According to Preston, the well-equipped home should possess no less than forty-five different drug preparations, including the ever-present opium-based Dover's Powders ("particularly recommended in rheumatism, dropsy, and other complaints where a free and copious perspiration is required") and laudanum ("be very careful in its use, as too large a dose might be attended with fatal consequences").[53]

Exploiting Quack Medicines

When Vermonters actually allowed a doctor into their home to attend to a loved one, they could expect to see a variety of competencies. Not all were as attentive or intellectually engaged in the measured application of drugs as Gallup, Sweetser, and Allen. Rather, the more common practice was that of the country doctor, someone such as Dover's Dr. Jedidiah Estabrooke, who took full advantage of opium's ready ability to turn a writhing, anguished patient into a docile, sleeping creature. Over the course of 219 pages of his journal kept between 1827 and 1853, Estabrooke reveals in cursory manner his normal routine as he entered, on literally hundreds of occasions, the names of patients, dates of attendance, and the type of drug(s) administered for their particular problem. Estabrooke made repeated references in one way or another to opium itself or some opiate-laced creation such as Dover's Powder, pills, or cough drops. Other remedies included paregorics, calomel (a mercury compound used as a laxative), and morphine.[54]

Similarly, one of the Castleton Medical Academy founders, Dr. Timothy Woodward, also kept a journal between 1832 and 1835, revealing, once again, that opium and morphine were freely distributed to patients.[55] As Estabrooke had done, Woodward's entries show that he closely engaged with his patients, attended them on many successive days, and routinely delivered the same drug (most prominently opium on dozens of occasions) during the course of their particular ailment, perhaps a developing addiction. Many times he provided the drug to patients' family members when they came calling, presumably reporting they were doing so on their relative's behalf.

By the 1840s, the temperance movement's campaign to suppress the consumption of alcohol attained such success that those seeking alter-

native stimulants, simply turned to opium. While the western states had yet to experience the drug's dire effects (waiting only for the arrival of the railroad and Chinese workers setting up smoking dens), in the East it was another matter. There, as one observer wrote of those times, "It is scarcely extravagant to affirm, that not a physician with opportunities for judging, not a druggist can be found, but will tell you the demand for opium is growing extensively and alarmingly, now that liquors are so fiercely decried."[56]

Evidence of opium's increasing prominence came from both Vermonters and those in other states. One physician-druggist in an unidentified New England city explained that beginning in the 1840s, his sales of opium went from fifty to 300 pounds a year and sales of laudanum increased four-fold. "About 50 regular purchasers come to my shop," he said, "and as many more, perhaps, are divided among the other three apothecaries in the place.... Small country dealers also have their quotas of dependents." Similarly, another noted "the opium-mania, far from being restricted within the purlieus of our cities and rural areas, is fast pervading the country-populations. Scarcely a village or a hamlet is to be excepted as unrepresented by its two classes of inebriates, the devotees to alcoholics and the more miserable slaves to opium."[57] Indeed, Weybridge storekeeper Julia Thomson's 1846 account book confirms that fact when she recorded numerous sales of brandy, wine, and opium to Samuel Balon on several occasions.[58]

Even more telling are the records of a single Middlebury storekeeper, and local physician, Dr. William Russel, who sold opium in various forms to more than four dozen people in the 1840s, several of them on numerous occasions.[59] Most notably, Amos Nichols, clearly an addict, purchased raw opium no less than an eye-popping 100 times. Also notable was a "Mrs. Brewster," who bought tea and brandy to accompany her opium elixir and paregoric. Shockingly, William Slade, past vice president of the Vermont Temperance Society and congressman (and member of the Congressional Temperance Society), was also one of Russel's opium customers. Between 1845, while serving as governor, and 1847, Slade purchased the drug on several occasions, in its raw state and also in the form of pills, black drops, and Dover's Powder, all accompanied by surprising entries for gin and bitters. It is not known if she had an addiction problem or used the drug solely to treat an ailment, but in 1856 Addison County doctors thought it noteworthy enough to point out that over the course of the preceding twenty-one years, or her entire adulthood, thirty-eight-year-old Sophronia Croix had spent a respectable $22 every year on morphine, equating to the consumption of a staggering four pounds annually.[60]

Writing of the phenomenon in general, another writer noted that "opium is continually resorted to by many of both sexes, but particularly by females, and these of the higher circles, as a substitute for the stimulus ordinarily afforded by gin or brandy."[61] Their use was obvious, he said, for their very countenance changed as demonstrated by their "emaciation, and. . . dyspeptic symptoms, and gastric derangement." When the Temperance Society of the University of Vermont met in June 1841, they heard a similar reference in the preferences of the sexes, "the gentlemen to wine, and the ladies to opium."[62] Others found that "All classes, in a greater or less degree, resort to it, as a solace in grief, a remedy for pain; to cheer the spirits, to brighten the intellect, to blunt morbid sensibility, to drown reflection, in short, to change and pervert our nature, and dim the reflection of God's image within us."[63] Vermont children unable to escape the drug's ready presence in their lives simply had to acknowledge that reality. Indeed, they were expected to know how to spell "laudanum," that it was a noun, and that it was derived from opium.[64]

It is not surprising to see such accounts, considering the rapid increase in opium importation following its arrival in New England ports in sizable quantities in 1840. Beginning with 24,000 pounds, the quantities increased three and one-half times by decade's end to 87,000 pounds, then to 105,000 pounds in 1860 and 146,000 in 1867.[65] By 1898 those numbers paled in comparison to the 565,317 pounds arriving in the preceding twelve months.[66] In the last half of the century, opium imports increased three times faster than the growth in the nation's population, accelerating rapidly from 1,425,196 pounds in 1860s to 6,435,623 pounds arriving between 1900 and 1909.[67]

While it is not possible to specify the numbers of deaths in Vermont attributable to the use of opium, the evidence of addiction and numerous suicides and accidental poisonings because of it is without question. While the state did not institute formal recordkeeping of its morbidity rates until 1857, statistics gathered after that date did not address drug usage *per se*.[68] Even had that information been sought specifically, it is highly doubtful the medical community would have cooperated in the effort, for it had a long history of concealing the true cause of death attributable to intemperate means. As William Sweetser sheepishly admitted in 1830, "Turn over the records of our hospitals and see how many of their inhabitants they owe to intemperance! But shall I proceed? Shall I withdraw the veil concealing from the public view the secret victims to this vice? Shall I tell how many deaths are continually occurring from intemperance, which are never referred to their true cause?" Not giving any indication of their numbers, he explained that

these secrets remained forever hidden. "The physician is a mournful witness of too many such cases, but they must lie deep buried in his own bosom."[69]

For those dying because of opium, the form in which they ingested it made little difference. Vermont doctor J. D. Wood is representative of what physicians and druggists experienced in this regard. Upon relocating to the village of Brandon in 1838, he took out an advertisement announcing his arrival and noting that he had "Medicines of all kinds on hand (Quack Nostrums Excepted) which will be carefully compounded and prepared for the accommodation of those that may want."[70] While newspapers continued to advertise opium's ready availability, a move was underway to make it accessible by other names in the form of patent, nostrum, or the "quack" medicines that Wood decried. As newspapers in Montpelier and Middlebury hawked "Dr. McMunn's Elixir of Opium. Superior to Parigoric or Laudanum, or any of the preparations of opium" and the availability of twenty-five cases of Turkey Opium at New York City's H. H. Schieffelin & Co., others told of other seemingly innocuous compounds and mixtures offering relief from a variety of ailments.[71]

In Newbury, the entrepreneurial Dr. W. Henry Carter began offering his pulmonary balsam in the 1840s, proudly proclaiming it "A superior article for coughs, colds, asthma, and all pulmonary complaints" and that it was "Prepared from Vegetables Only."[72] Omitting the fact that his concoction also contained morphine, he later confessed its presence in 1849. Disingenuously backtracking, seeking to save face and his reputation, Carter explained that he "never designed it to be a secret remedy or nostrum," pleading to his fellow doctors that "I deprecate secrecy in medical practice, and nostrum-making in any form, and with such I have nothing to do."[73]

Efforts by the many profit-seeking opportunists like Carter, together with the effects of the temperance movement, are responsible for fostering the development of a vibrant quack medicine experience in Vermont. Whereas the medical community previously relied on the ills and injuries that inebriates brought their way for treatment, things changed so radically when the consumption of alcohol became unacceptable, publicly at least, that their practices fell off precipitously. When the Addison County Medical Society met in 1846, one of its members spoke and "animadverted very seriously upon the profession's countenancing or in any way promoting the use of nostrums, patent medicines, &c. which are calculated to deceive the people and often prove of most serious injury."[74] Others joined him in condemning the practice, but surely some paused to consider otherwise when an-

other member seems to have recognized a tantalizing opportunity opening up before them. It was ironic, the account of their meeting relates, but "the true meaning of [his statement] was too plain to be misunderstood":

> He remarked that he had been much gratified with the evening's discussion, that he believed that all of us had made a mistake on this subject. That only a short time since intoxicating drinks were sold promiscuously to every body in every village, public house and nook. Then, diseases were manufactured in abundance and we had business in plenty. That the temperance reform had nearly destroyed our business. He plainly saw, that by the use of nostrums, &c. we could again restore our business to its former abundance. All that we had to do was to encourage their use today and tomorrow the Doctor would be needed to remove the disease produced by the nostrum.[75]

While it seems unlikely that a group of learned physicians would advocate the use of harmful nostrums, the "true meaning" of precisely that, an inference which "was too plain to be misunderstood," indicates they knew some would indeed do so. As those from within their ranks pushing the nostrum trade clearly demonstrated, there was money to be made and if the temperance movement had caused the degree of financial harm that the speaker described, then who among even themselves could resist the temptation to engage in that activity if the opportunity arose? Such a possibility is not unfathomable when one considers the several reprimands, suspensions, and dismissals taking place in various of the state's medical societies throughout the nineteenth century.

Certainly not all doctors were so inclined to misbehavior and in 1849, Brownington, Vermont, physician J. F. Skinner provided a succinct overview of the problem posed by incompetent practitioners selling their suspicious concoctions:

> The facts are, that the influence of the press, and the influence and interest of the men of trade, are all enlisted in favor of quackery. Now the question is, shall the physicians of the country stand silently by, and see the game of deception played off, and quietly surrender the whole field to the occupancy of quackery; or shall they themselves engage in that most difficult and laborious part of professional labor, and prepare and furnish to the public good and efficient medicines, honestly and faithfully recommended, with plain directions for their proper use?[76]

Skinner may as well have been whistling in the wind, for the patent medicine trade, riding high on opium's disguised presence, only accelerated as anyone with imagination, including doctors hawking their own concoctions or those aiding in their efforts, needed only to call a drug by some other name to dupe the public.

Bogus mixtures notwithstanding, even the product sold as authentic opium could not escape suspicion. In 1846, one investigator concluded that "There is no article in which frauds have been more extensively practiced than in opium [including] Turkey opium, the best kind in the market."[77] He explained that "one-fourth part generally consists of impurities" made up of "extracts of the poppy, lettuce, and liquorice, gum Arabic, gum tragacanth, aloes, the seeds of different plants, sand, ashes, small stones and pieces of lead." Even though Vermont passed a law in 1839 punishing the adulteration of any drug or medicine "as to render the same injurious to health," it appears to have had virtually no impact.[78] While other states had already taken similar action, they also recognized the increased dangers that poisons represented and placed restrictions on their sale. However, Vermont persisted in its inaction and failed to follow their example, eventually drawing the attention of the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1853, which noted that in "nearly all of the little stores in the villages throughout the state, arsenic, opium, and even *strychnia* are sold without being labeled."[79] It is not known if such labeling would have saved the life of 42-year-old doctor and state representative from Bristol, William Cullen Warner, who suddenly died in Montpelier while attending the legislature in October 1846, but it could not have hurt.[80] Warner was alone in his Pavilion hotel room when he ingested a large dose of strychnine, apparently believing it to be morphine, in order to treat neuralgia pain, expiring in ten minutes time.

Awakening to the Crisis

In this environment devoid of oversight of their activities, Vermont physicians and druggists remained largely unconcerned with the quality of the drugs they provided their clients. As the VPA noted, when doctors came to their members for supplies, they constantly placed more emphasis on the bottom line than the efficacy of their concoctions. "You can sell them their drugs, if you have a supply of cheap, worthless or adulterated goods; otherwise they will go where they can find them."[81] When they actually did work together, untoward results could occur. In 1866, VMS Vice President Dr. J. Henry Jackson took the two professions to task, exposing an unseemly side to each. After slamming the medical profession's long-standing practice of "dispensing quack medicines, such as Heart Correctors, Shaker Anodyne, Diphtherine, Iodo Bromide Calcium Compound Elixer, Fellows' and Winchester's Hypophosphites," he told the story of a family that became addicted to Shaker Anodyne, a product containing opium and morphine. "During the next twenty years" after a Society member prescribed it, "more than

three thousand bottles were used in the family, and to pay for it children were obliged to go without sufficient food and clothing."[82] But what of the one who was supplying the doctor, the druggist who he said, "should be the physician's right hand man in all that is pure and useful"?

In explanation, Jackson then laid out exactly what was driving their respective actions: money. "What shall we think of him who while he dispenses our prescriptions at the same time carries on a patent cure establishment, and at his counter recommends for every complaint some bogus mixture, with a positive assurance of its value, because forsooth it leaves him a good margin[?]" He then added, "I am fully aware of the inducements offered by agents for the introduction of some double-distilled-disease-destroyer, or John Smith's unexcelled and inapproachable sneeze producer, forty or one hundred per cent profit, and no pay required for ninety days."

Four years later, the VMS took up the looming narcotic issue and on June 7, 1870, gathered to hear Dartmouth Medical College Professor Dr. Carlton Pennington Frost present on "Opium: Its Uses and Abuses."[83] While he discussed many of the drug's positive and negative aspects in treating illness, he also addressed its deeper effect on patients themselves, their families, and society. Not surprisingly he turned to the habits that opium fostered, ones made all the worse because people were allowed to prescribe it for themselves. "There is great objection on this account, to allowing the patient to regulate for himself the dose or the time of continuance of this medicine." It could be avoided, he said, if doctors retained "entire management of the matter." And woe to him should he fail in that regard and allow the formation of a habit, for then "that physician is guilty of a grave crime."[84]

From there, Frost made an observation that few seemed willing to acknowledge about the pervasive presence of opium in the state: "We can satisfy ourselves by very limited investigation that the amount of opium prescribed by medical practitioners for the cure of disease, large as its use for this purpose, constitutes but a small proportion of the amount consumed in the communities in our own State." Huge amounts of the drug were being used outside the scope of any valid physical complaint or upon the prescription of a doctor, and only those selling the drug, abetted by druggists and apothecaries acting independently, or in conjunction with the ubiquitous quack physician, could have fulfilled that need.

Frost then made reference to the sad fact that opium was largely consumed in secret, stating that it "is generally used without the knowledge of many persons outside the family of the user, unless the amount required becomes pretty large and the effect plainly marked."[85] Continu-

ing as others had noted, he pointed out the effects the opium habit was having on those besides the addict. "We know there are those who will deprive themselves and their families of all but the absolute necessaries of life, and pinch on those, to obtain opium. Most take it in the form of morphine, and by the mouth."

Vermonters did indeed love their opium and in an effort to wean themselves off of foreign suppliers some took the next logical step by attempting to grow it at home. This was not a new concept, for Brattleboro's Jonathan Allen appears to have first suggested it in 1817 after learning that others met with success growing poppies in New York and Massachusetts. He had also observed the efforts of "a Mr. Greenfield in Stratton, Vt." and was impressed, calling them "equal in quality to any brought from Turkey."[86] As a result, no doubt propelled by the rising interest in developing the state's agricultural practices, a wholly new product appeared that gained national attention called "Vermont," or "American," Opium, leading optimistic federal officials to declare it "an important industry" in the state.[87]

Their enthusiasm stemmed from the work of Welcome C. Wilson, a Monkton farmer who reportedly began cultivating poppies on his land in 1862. Then, as he explained it, over the next several years he developed a "wonderfully profitable" enterprise selling his product directly to druggists and physicians. In doing so, he said he transitioned from obtaining two-and-a-half pounds of opium per square meter of earth (netting him $10 a pound) to 640 pounds coming from six acres (earning him between $8 and $10 per pound).[88]

Wilson put together a prospectus in 1869—"Notice to Farmers in Vermont, and Other States. A New Discovery in the Money System"—in an effort to convince customers to purchase seeds and processing equipment from him, officiously identifying himself as "Prof. W. C. Wilson of Weybridge, Vermont, as the inventor and producer of American Opium."[89] He apparently succeeded in generating sufficient interest that his neighbors readily bought into the scheme, as one newspaper reported "quite a few farmers propose to cultivate the plant."[90] However, Wilson's charade began to unravel shortly afterward when samples he sent to reputable scientists were exposed as fraudulent, most likely local poppy residue mixed with authentic Turkey opium, thereby yielding a morphine level substantially higher than any purported product coming from the northern climes could produce.[91] By 1870, a discredited Wilson moved westward, where he continued seeking to pass off his bogus claims of success, only one of many charlatans saturating the medical supply market at the time. What happened to C. M. Robbins, of Hancock, who also tried to hawk his samples of opium,

initially testing as "pure and of extraordinary strength," as a Vermont product is not known, but he appears to have quietly dropped out of sight after similar questions were raised about his "so-called opium."[92]

Meanwhile, in 1871 nearby Massachusetts attempted to grapple with its own addiction problem as the State Board of Health inquired into its extent in order to fashion a response. Experiencing less than enthusiastic assistance from physicians in gathering information, the board nonetheless concluded that an opium habit "is more or less prevalent in many parts of the state," finding further that "while it is impossible to estimate it, the number of users must be very considerable."[93] In tracking down the sources of the drug, one of its investigators provided a telling assessment that directly implicated the state's immediate neighbors:

> There are so many channels through which the drug may be brought into the State, that I suppose it would be almost impossible to determine how much foreign opium is used here; but it may easily be shown that the home production increases every year. Opium has been recently made from white poppies cultivated for the purpose, in Vermont, New Hampshire and Connecticut, the annual production being estimated by hundreds of pounds, and this has generally been absorbed in the communities where it is made.[94]

While there is no indication in the literature of what Vermonters were doing with their excess opium, it had to go somewhere and appears a contributing factor to the ills experienced in Massachusetts.

Recognizing the narcotic problem the VMS had been decrying, the VPA was formed in 1870 and immediately took up the issue of accountability in dispensing drugs through the use of written prescriptions to replace the haphazard practices of the times. In 1871, members published their first Code of Ethics, which provides great insight into the unregulated drug world as they imposed a necessary obligation upon themselves: "And we hold that when there is good reason to believe that the purchaser is habitually using opiates or stimulants to excess, every druggist or apothecary should discourage such practice."[95] At the urging of President C. L. Case, who explained his own problems in dispensing opium and other drugs, they further agreed to document their drug sales not only for their own benefit, but for "the people's protection" as well. The concern with drugs also became an issue for life insurance companies, who noted that the consumption of alcohol, opium, chloroform, ether, cannabis, and other narcotics had increased "enormously" in the past several years, forcing them to exclude those abusing them from obtaining coverage.[96]

By 1874 the potential for additional abuse exploded, because in the

previous two years the number of drug stores in Vermont doubled to 107 and they began edging out competing general stores.[97] Although an 1862 law required apothecaries to record the name of anyone purchasing poisons (arsenic, strychnine, etc.) and banned the use of anesthetic agents for the purpose of rendering another person unconscious in order to commit a crime, nothing was being done specifically to address the serious impact of opium abuse.[98]

Feeding the frenzy was one of the country's largest wholesale drug suppliers, Burlington's Wells, Richardson & Co. Employing some 200 workers and utilizing a huge advertising budget, it offered for sale a substantial number of patent medicines, many infused with opium, listed in twenty-three pages of its 1878 catalogue.[99] The company also maintained a particularly comfortable relationship with members of the VPA, on whom it depended to sell its wares. In September 1873, the pharmacists, and accompanying wives, attending their annual meeting were graciously hosted by Wells, Richardson, who transported them from prohibition's restrictions in Burlington across Lake Champlain to Plattsburgh for a memorable dinner, including a half hour consuming "several toasts."[100] Egregious collusion also existed with pharmacists providing monetary rewards, or kickbacks, to physicians sending patients to them for their drugs, and with doctors writing prescriptions in code so that only favored druggists could decipher them, thereby prohibiting the patient from transacting business with someone else.[101] The times were very good indeed for manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer, dispenser, and prescriber of patent medicines, who were reaping the substantial monetary benefits they provided, and few, if any, saw any need for reform. Meanwhile, in October 1874, the VPA met again to hear yet another discourse on society's ills when Chester's Dr. J. N. Moon presented on the "Use and Abuse of Opium," described as "a very able paper" with "many instances cited which showed the harm that the abuse of opium" caused.[102]

One organization that did confront the narcotics problem was the state Women's Christian Temperance Union, which in 1882 assumed a vanguard position in lobbying for legislation mandating temperance education for youth. The WCTU actually found a sympathetic ear in the legislature, and later that year Vermont became the first state to pass a law requiring training in physiology and hygiene, with added emphasis on "the effects of stimulants and narcotics upon the human system." Their success was noted elsewhere and by 1886, fourteen additional states adopted similar legislation.[103] However, the condition of the state's medical profession lagged behind, as the legislature ignored repeated calls for a centralized licensing system to screen out the in-

competents. Certainly, overwhelming evidence of wrongdoing became evident when four bogus diploma mills were reportedly issuing fraudulent medical diplomas in Bennington, Newbury, Newfane, and Rutland.[104] When in 1890 the VMS sought the assistance of the state's 562 practicing physicians to get to the bottom of it and verify their credentials, of the 312 responding, 86 were determined to be unlicensed. However, resigned at its inability to get lawmakers' attention on this easily corrected problem, the Society simply noted that "politicians attach but trifling weight to medical opinions or wishes."[105]

At the same time, Vergennes doctor Elliot Wardsworth Shipman issued an urgent call for legislative action with his attention-getting "The Promiscuous Use of Opium in Vermont" announcing that the state's population "consume as much if not more *opium* and *morphine* than the same number of people any where in the United States."[106] Lamenting that he was "particularly impressed by the loose method in which this drug is handled in the Green Mountain State," his allegations could not have come as a surprise to anyone.

The opium habit was so well established that Shipman called it "a crying evil of the day," and he told the VMS what he had witnessed: "I have seen five victims of this habit enter a drug shop in the town in which I live and purchase what opium and morphine they desired, within less than two hours time and no questions were asked." Calling on his peers for assistance, he told them, "It seems to me that it is our duty as guardians of the public health, and as members of this Society to do all in our power to influence the passage of a law to mitigate this evil." The situation required their attention because, while alcoholics were most able to reform themselves, those opportunities for opium addicts were "exceedingly rare" and the crisis necessitated outside action.[107]

Shipman then described several sad cases he was involved with to further convey the dire situation: the doctor who became addicted to injecting himself hypodermically; the gardener prescribed huge amounts of opium to treat neuralgia; a twenty-four-year-old girl told by a doctor tired of her complaints to purchase a hypodermic syringe to administer morphine to herself; a man "eating opium for no other reason than its stimulating effects were more lasting than whiskey"; and a woman, also taking morphine hypodermically, who first developed her habit because "she wanted something to give her rest, and used opium pills."[108]

Finally, there was the female suffering from menstrual problems who had consulted numerous doctors prescribing large amounts of opium, interspersed with "inhalations of chloroform," to no effect and which

allowed her to cultivate the insidious habit. Then Shipman revealed in telling fashion through his subsequent actions the struggles that the medical establishment was experiencing in identifying and understanding the extent that opium could be used without causing harm. Concluding that the woman had become so accustomed to the drug, he decided to load her system with so much morphine that it would overcome its resistance, but without success. While she survived the experiment, he described it as "the largest quantity of morphine taken by any one person within 24 hours which has come to my knowledge. I have searched extensively through several libraries but can find nothing on record to compare with it."[109] Shipman then ended his talk to his fellow doctors with a call to arms. "As a duty to the public let us endeavor to reduce the enormous sale of this drug in Vermont, and confer a lasting benefit upon her people."

In 1893, doctors in Chittenden County formed the Burlington Clinical Society, meeting together periodically to hear presentations on local medical cases of interest and discuss various treatments. Unsurprisingly, opium became a topic and in 1894 one doctor described the extraordinary use of its strong derivative, morphine, by a woman with uterine cancer. Considering that 1/8 of a grain of morphine constituted a dose (one grain for opium), he reported that she was injecting herself hypodermically with four grains each hour for sixteen hours a day, followed by an additional four, totaling a huge sixty-eight grains each day.[110] Two months later, her consumption increased so much he felt compelled to relate that she was now up to ninety-six grains a day, or the equivalent of 768 doses. Her final outcome is not recorded, but, notably, as occurred with Shipman's experiment, at no point is there any indication of anyone's concern that the patient had become heavily addicted, or any acknowledgement that a doctor should possibly share some responsibility in allowing her condition to reach such dangerous levels of consumption.

In 1896, the Society's January meeting considered why numbers of local women reported so many more cases of uterine troubles. They identified syphilis as the underlying cause, one made evident by the "very prevalent" practice of "criminal abortions" taking place, resulting in the presence of an "abortion habit" within the community.[111] While these seasoned practitioners discussed using opium to treat such complaints, on another occasion they bemoaned the fact that the younger doctors among them still failed to appreciate the harm that drugs posed. As one of the older physicians explained, "one of the greatest difficulties he had in teaching medical students was to impress on them the importance of knowing the physiological allur[e] of drugs." Echoing

that concern, one of the state's most experienced doctors also in attendance, Dr. Ashbel Grinnell referred to earlier, told the group that he would not recommend that heart patients use opium, for fear they "might contract the habit."

Unsurprisingly, the problems presented by physicians' lack of training and licensing, their continued failure to appreciate the addictive qualities of opium and morphine, and the relentless overprescribing of the drugs remained in place, and in 1896, Dr. F. W. Comings of Derby made yet another presentation to the VMS bearing the same title others had used, "Opium. Its Uses and Abuses."[112] By now addiction to both alcohol and opium was so well known that creative entrepreneurs went about pushing their various "cures." In 1892, the Keeley Institute of Vermont was established in Montpelier, promising relief from "Drunkenness, Opium Habit, Neurasthenia and Tobacco Habit" utilizing the "Double Chloride of Gold, the Only Cure," where alcoholics received a three-week course of treatment and "four or more weeks for the morphine habit."[113]

Comings was himself quite familiar with the addiction problem, telling his peers he had treated many such cases as he then turned to assign blame. "I speak from experience when I say that out of every ten cases of addiction I believe some doctor was responsible for nine of them." To his mind the situation was intolerable. "I can hardly find words strong enough with which to condemn the careless—nay criminal—prescribing of opium in chronic cases."[114] The harm inflicted on the population required a remedy and he warned it was time for the medical profession to right its ways and be more truthful with its patients regarding the hazards of opium, for "by doing so we shall in some measure atone for the mistakes made by some of the more careless of the profession in too prolonged and injudicious administration of the drug."

Proof of Addiction

Four years later, the much needed bombshell finally exploded when Dr. Grinnell's report, the "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," was released. The results of his far-reaching effort left him dumbfounded at what he had uncovered, and he exclaimed "I have been so astonished, so amazed at the result of my investigation."[115] Grinnell deemed the information he gathered so important that he wished it could be placed before the Vermont legislature, itself myopically focused on the state's five-decades-old prohibitory law, believing "it would open its eyes to the fact that there is something beside alcohol that can spoil moral development and mental capacity." To his mind, banning the use of alcohol failed to do anything to dissuade people from seeking out their

stimulants and had, instead, simply forced them to switch to the easily obtained narcotics. Propelled by the enthusiastic response the report generated, Grinnell went on to write "Stimulants in Forensic Medicine and a Review of Drug Consumption in Vermont" in 1901, and then, utilizing both works, a third effort in 1905, "A Review of Drug Consumption and Alcohol as Found in Proprietary Medicine."[116]

Based on a longtime interest in the drug problem, Grinnell sought to identify as carefully as possible just how pervasive it had become. First, he looked to the particular outlets where drugs were distributed and identified each of the state's 130 druggists, 172 general stores, 690 physicians, 5 wholesalers, and 3 manufacturing facilities turning out paregoric, laudanum, essence of peppermint, wintergreen, and valerian (and which relied on their own "pedestrian peddlers" for sales).[117] Then he wrote a letter to each, assuring them of anonymity, explaining that he was preparing a paper for the VMS "upon the use of opium and other anodynes," and requested information on their average monthly sales of opium, morphine, Dover's Powder, paregoric, laudanum, cocaine, chloral, Indian hemp, and quinine.

Responses varied, with some refusing to participate at all and others suspicious and evasive. Nonetheless, Grinnell succeeded in obtaining enough information from 116 druggists (located in 69 of 244 towns), 160 stores, and 90 percent of the doctors to begin to understand the situation. The numbers that initially came in were so large that he thought the respondents had not understood his request and, instead, provided yearly amounts. Writing to them again to see if any corrections were needed, they advised that their responses were indeed correct. Because of those who chose not to participate and his habit of assigning zero sales in questionable situations, Grinnell believed his numbers were low and could easily be multiplied five times to achieve a more accurate assessment of sales.

Some of the reports are so startling they merit repeating. One store, located in "a place so small it hardly appears upon the map," sold every month three and one-half pounds of gum opium, six ounces of morphine, five pints of paregoric, five pints of laudanum, and three ounces of quinine. In another town with two drug stores (one refused to participate), one reported that it sold three pounds of opium, one gallon of paregoric, three-quarters of a gallon of laudanum, five ounces of quinine, and 1,000 quinine pills. In a third town, with a population of over 10,000 and eleven drug stores, a single one reported selling five ounces of opium, two ounces of morphine, eight quarts of laudanum, and six quarts of paregoric.

When added up, the numbers revealed statewide monthly sales of:

over forty-seven pounds of opium; nineteen pounds of morphine; 3,300 grains of morphine pills; twenty-five pounds of Dover's pills; thirty-two gallons *each* of laudanum and paregoric; twenty-seven ounces of cocaine; thirty-two pounds of chloral; thirty-seven ounces of hemp; fifteen pounds of quinine; and 74,200 grains of quinine pills. Importantly, none of the results reflected the large quantity of drugs sold by doctors or those hawked by roving peddlers, those contained in the many patent medicines, or the fact that residents living on the shores of Lake Champlain frequently made their purchases in New York, where prices were cheaper.

With these numbers, Grinnell made his grim assessment based on the population and average dose consumed by an individual, finding that Vermonters consumed an incredible 3,300,000 doses of opium each and every month. And if one of those month's distributions constituted a daily dosing of one and one-half grains for every adult man and woman in the state for an entire year as he calculated, then twelve months of the same would result in a similar increase (18 grains) each and every day. The numbers were simply staggering.

By the turn of the century, the national addiction problem had the attention of policymakers, and the necessary parts finally came together allowing for a more united effort to confront it than ever before. In 1905, Congress prohibited the importation of opium except for medicinal purposes; then the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 required accurate labeling on patent medicines. In 1910, Vermont Congressman David Foster introduced the nation's first anti-narcotics bill seeking to control dangerous substances through taxation, an effort that was never voted on. However, the House of Representatives' Committee on Ways and Means continued to pursue the matter with hearings and in 1911 received testimony describing Grinnell's findings in Vermont.[118] Foster's bill was subsequently resurrected following his untimely death in 1912 as the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act (named after a New York representative) and, subsequent to the 1912 Hague International Opium Convention, the nation finally had its first law addressing domestic needs, taking effect in 1914.

Throughout this period, choosing to remain apart from actions taken in neighboring states, Vermont persisted in refusing to address the problem, and it was taking a toll on the population. "A morphine fiend nearly slugged the life out of a leading Waterbury citizen last week while suffering the cravings of the habit," one paper related in 1908.[119] Singling out those responsible, it identified the culprits standing in the way of legislation: "The small country merchants, who deal in 'dope' without any knowledge of its dangerous effects; the regular druggists,

who don't like to have their business interfered with, and the physicians, who see no advantage, and some possible bother, to themselves." Yet inaction prevailed and by 1915 Vermont had attained a reputation for permissiveness and as a mecca allowing easy access to drugs by those seeking to avoid the consequences of their illegal pursuit in New York and Massachusetts: "The enforcement of these laws in neighboring States has driven a great many 'dope fiends' to this State, and every Vermont druggist can attest to a large demand upon the part of non-residents for these deadly drugs."[120] Finally, the legislature took the most forceful action in its history, passing that year "An Act to Regulate the Sale of Opium, Morphine and other Narcotic Drugs" providing for comprehensive oversight of these dangerous substances.[121] Additional legislation ensued, allowing for the committal of those suffering from alcohol and drug addiction, and imposing various recordkeeping requirements on pharmacies.

Identifying the scope of Vermont's problem in relation to other states, while a challenge, is not impossible. All shared similar experiences with the increasing use of opium and morphine in the years following the end of the Civil War and the introduction and prevalent use of the hypodermic needle that was accessible to medical practitioners, patients, and the general public. While isolating definitive causes for the rapid increase in opiate abuse remains elusive, one contemporary argument attributed it to rapid changes taking place in society causing people to become unnerved and then seeking solace in various stimulants, a condition called "neurasthenia."[122]

Evidence of widespread abuse forced alarmed officials to consider the phenomenon as never before resulting in several studies: Michigan (1878), Chicago (1880), Iowa (1885), Massachusetts (1888), Vermont (1900), and the American Pharmaceutical Association (1902 and 1903). Others followed, including one by the "Special Committee of Investigation" appointed by the secretary of the treasury in 1918 pursuant to the Harrison Act. The committee's survey of responses from physicians around the country concluded there were 237,655 addicts under their care. Included in that number, 1,554 were attributed to Vermont, as well as many from nearby states: New York, 37,095; Massachusetts, 13,770; New Hampshire, 3,460; and Maine, 1,084. After obtaining data from additional sources, the committee concluded that there were more than a million addicts in the country.[123] In 1921, a distinguished group of medical and education practitioners reviewed these numerous studies, noting the wide range in estimates of addicts they provided nationally (from between a few thousand to over two million), and concluded it was impossible to obtain an accurate figure.[124]

Over the following decades various investigators have examined the addiction issue even more closely, with one of them concluding that at the peak of the country's drug abuse at the turn of the twentieth century there were an estimated 250,000 addicts residing within a population of 76 million, "a rate so far never equaled or exceeded."[125] The findings of another researcher, who determined that nationwide there were an average of 4.59 addicts per one thousand people, suggests that in Vermont, with a population of 343,641 in 1900, there were an estimated 1,577 individuals suffering from addiction.[126]

Grinnell's study of the amount of narcotics distributed by Vermont's druggists in 1899 is also enlightening when one considers the national rate of consumption over the passage of time. In the 1840s, the average annual per capita consumption of crude opium was 12 grains (roughly two aspirin), rising to an estimated 52 grains by the 1890s.[127] Using Grinnell's calculation of six grains daily for each Vermonter, or 2,190 over the course of a year, the state's druggists sold amounts far in excess of the rest of the country.[128] In fact, one analyst at the time studying Grinnell's work concluded that Vermonters' consumption of such a large quantity of opium could not possibly be attributed to medicinal use, but, rather, to "a large number of habitual users."[129] Certainly the state's population in general was not staggering about publicly under the wholesale influence of opium at that moment. But it is undeniable that many—doctor, patient, and common addict alike—ingested it in a private manner by one of the three ways then in vogue: By mouth, rectum, or vagina; via respiratory mucous membrane through smoking or smelling; or by hypodermic syringe.[130]

As noted, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century Vermont was attracting people from outside the state seeking easy access to drugs. Whether some arrived on vacation and seeking narcotic relaxation is not clear. By 1911 Maine had also attained an unenviable reputation for making drugs easily available. There, one investigator described to Congress, "The largest amount of morphine and cocaine . . . is used in the summer months; and there is no doubt that that has a great deal to do with the transient population that goes there perhaps to recover from too much of the use of the drug in winter."[131] This may explain some of Vermont's experience, but the total absence of any reference to such a phenomenon by Grinnell or any of the other Vermont physicians and pharmacists long focusing on their respective professions' deficiencies, and those forcibly advocating for change within their respective communities, makes it doubtful. Further, Dr. J. C. F. With's observation in 1898 that Vermont's "country villages and farmhouses

seem to furnish the greater number of users" belies the possibility of placing the blame wholly on those coming from outside the state.

Questions abound: Was it merely a coincidence that prohibition Vermont experienced a notorious drug epidemic seemingly out of all proportion to that of other states? What, if any, were the lobbying effects of special interests, such as the pharmaceutical trade, on a legislature that focused so heavily on alcohol issues to the detriment of its inhabitants becoming addicted to drugs? Why did Grinnell receive noticeably less than enthusiastic support for his inquiries unless there was something to hide, such as addicted doctors or persons of repute, or to otherwise protect the lucrative, unregulated trade that the medical and pharmaceutical professions relied on? Why were remote Vermont towns, those not even on a map, reporting huge sales of narcotics unless it was for the use of the local population? And why were Vermonters living near Lake Champlain traveling to New York for cheaper drugs unless it was to feed their own addictions?

Vermont's travails with opium in the nineteenth century were both the same as and yet remarkably dissimilar from other states' experiences. Many in those other locations fell victim, allowing addiction to grow because politicians and policymakers chose not to become involved in policing health care issues, leaving it to the population and medical profession to sort out. Some states did take more aggressive action earlier than Vermont did, perhaps reflecting a higher degree of understanding of the problem. In its removed frontier location, the challenges for those in the Green Mountains were uniquely different. A sparse medical profession spread out over the state, with decades of discord in its past, and viewed by some with suspicion, forced many to turn to themselves to administer to their particular needs. While doctors and pharmacists grappled with modernizing their professions, the state legislature took a hands-off approach to oversight, remaining resolutely focused on alcohol prohibition. They did so for an extraordinary length of time which then allowed amateurs free rein to foist their many bogus opium-based concoctions on an uninformed population with little understanding of their dangers beyond the relief they offered from pain or for mental escape. Because the legislature ignored calls for reform coming from the VMS, the medical profession found itself unable to take effective action to address the continued presence of ill-educated and unlicensed doctors, diploma mills, and the widespread availability of death-dealing drugs in their midst.

As a slice of Vermont's nineteenth-century experience, the difficult and complex challenges posed by identifying, acknowledging, and

ameliorating drug abuse and addiction are worthy of notice today. These examples serve an important purpose in instructing later generations of the commonality we all share in dealing with many of the same issues that continue to plague society in general and Vermont specifically.

Notes

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[1] Governor Peter Shumlin, 2014 State of the State Address, January 8, 2014, http://governor.vermont.gov/newsroom-state-of-state-speech-2013.

[2] Percival W. Clement to W. E. Aldrich, undated, in Mason A. Green, *Nineteen-two in Vermont* (Rutland: Marble City Press, 1912), 12. Clement lost the 1902 election, but later served as Vermont governor between 1919 and 1921.

[3] William Slade Jr., *Gov. Slade's Reply to Senator Phelps' Appeal* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1846), 28. Temperance leader William Slade's comments on this occasion drip with hypocrisy. As noted herein, he was consuming opium during his term as governor and while engaged in a very public and highly contentious dispute with Vermont Senator Samuel S. Phelps after failing to attain that seat for himself. Slade alleged that Phelps was intoxicated at the time of an important Senate vote. Phelps (a former Vermont Supreme Court judge and who served in the Senate between 1839 and 1851) then fired back, dismissing the allegations as delusional: "Does he really imagine that the good people of Vermont can be so far deceived as to mistake the ravings of . . . a distempered mind for proof?" He also attacked Slade's repeated allegations of intemperance, writing that it was "a topic about which he has told lies enough to discredit him forever." Undated, "To the People of Vermont. Mr. Phelps' rejoinder to Mr. Slade's 'Reply,'" https://archive.org/details/topeopleofvermon00phel.

[4] "By a dose I mean one grain of opium, one-eighth grain of morphine, one-half ounce of paregoric and twenty drops of laudanum." A. P. Grinnell, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," *Transactions of the Vermont State Medical Society, 1900* (Burlington: Free Press Association, 1901), 66. Apothecary equivalents provide that one grain equals 60 to 65 mg. and one ounce liquid is 30 ml. The common aspirin tablet weighs five grains, or 325 mg.

[5] Voluminous evidence reveals the presence of the drug in its raw or "crude" state and in gum opium, as well as in various concoctions, including: Allen's Lung Balsam; Bateman's Pectoral Drops; Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup; Dr. Carter's Compound; Dover's Powder; Godfrey's Cordial; Dr. Moore's Essence of Life; Dr. Munn's Elixer of Opium; Paregoric Elixer; Perry Davis' Pain Killer; Scott's Emulsion; and Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup.

[6] Grinnell, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," 61; "A Review of Drug Consumption and Alcohol as Found in Proprietary Medicine," *The Medico-Legal Journal* 23 (June 1905): 426.

[7] *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Vermont State Pharmaceutical Association, October 25 and 26, 1898* (St. Albans, Vt., 1898), 54-55.

[8] Statement of Dr. Christopher Koch, "Importation and Use of Opium," *Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives*, 61st Congress, 3d Session, December 14, 1910, and January 11, 1911 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 70. [Hereafter *Hearings*].

[9] John Woodcock, "A Dissertation on Delirium Tremens," and Cyrus B. Hamilton, "On Ebriety," Medical Theses, 1815-1819, DA-3, 10925, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H. In 1811, Dartmouth Medical School's founder, Dr. Nathan Smith, asserted that much of the current alcohol abuse problem began, in fact, with doctors prescribing powdered drugs be taken in mixture with spirits at certain times of the day, a practice called "dram drinking." Henry Ingersoll, "Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Physic & Surgery. Delivered at Dartmouth Medical Theater, D. 1811 by Nathan Smith, M.D.," Rauner Library, MS. 811602.3.

[10] First discovered in 1805 in Germany, morphine is the active ingredient in opium and constitutes approximately nine percent of its bulk. David F. Musto, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1973), 2. Morphine became so wildly successful that by the time of its 200th anniversary in 2005, more than 230 tons of it were used yearly by the medical profession. http://www.uchospitals.edu/news/2005/20050519-morphine.html.

[11] Nathan Allen, *An Essay on the Opium Trade: Including a Sketch of Its History, Extent, Effects, Etc. as Carried on in India and China* (Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1850), 4; William G. Smith, "An Inaugural Dissertation on Opium, Embracing its History, Chemical Analysis, and Use and Abuse as a Medicine," (University of the State of New York, April 2, 1832), 10-11, 16.

[12] Joseph A. Gallup, *Sketches of Epidemic Diseases in the State of Vermont, from Its First Settlement to the Year 1815. With a consideration of their causes, phenomena, and treatment. To which is added Remarks on pulmonary consumption* (Boston: T. B. Wait & Sons, 1815). Gallup also served as president and professor of Theory and Practice at the Vermont Academy of Medicine in Castleton (1820-1825) and was a founder of the Clinical School of Medicine in Woodstock in 1827.

[13] Joseph A. Gallup, *Pathological Reflections on the Supertonic State of Disease* (Montpelier, Vt.: E. P. Walton, 1822); *Woodstock Observer*, 19 November 1822.

[14] Selah Gridley, *A Dissertation on the Importance and Associability of the Human Stomach, both in Health and Disease; delivered before the Vermont Medical Society, at their annual meeting in Montpelier, Oct. 17, 1816* (Montpelier, Vt.: Walton and Goss, 1816), 4.

[15] David T. Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: A History of Opiate Addiction in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 41.

[16] "Too often . . . the physician flies from the sickroom to the barroom." John P. Batchelder, *On the Causes which Degrade the Profession of Physick; An Oration Delivered before the Western District of the N.H. Medical Society* (Bellows Falls, Vt.: Bill Blake & Co., 1818), 5, 7. Batchelder's list of physicians' misbehavior also included: irreligion (Sabbath breaking); conducting abortions (describing one physician "who has been in the constant habit" of practicing it on his wife and causing her death); quackery; disagreements among physicians; want of humanity ("neglecting the poor"); indecency of behavior; want of firmness and decision of character; and dissipation.

[17] De Quincey's book garnered substantial worldwide interest, earning him a less than positive response from a dismissive American intelligentsia, who initially, and quite wrongly, opined, "We believe that very few persons, if any, in this country, abandon themselves to the use of opium as a luxury; nor does there appear to be any great danger of the introduction of this species of intemperance." Jared Sparks, ed., *The North American Review* 18 (1824): 92.

[18] Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater: And Suspiria de Profundis* (Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850), xii-xiii.

[19] *Middlebury Mercury*, 2 March 1803.

[20] *Green Mountain Patriot* (Peacham), 15 June 1803.

[21] *The Reporter* (Brattleboro), 11 November 1809.

[22] *Proceedings of the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association, October 11, 1871* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle & Co., 1871), 7.

[23] Ibid., 8-9.

[24] Ibid., 7-8. "In country villages, East as well as West, the principal dealers in drugs and medicines were country storekeepers who knew as much about bark, rhubarb and opium as they did about algebra and conic sections." Joseph W. England, ed., *The First Century of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, 1821-1921* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, 1922), 150.

[25] Franklin Scott, *Experiments and Observations on the Means of Counteracting the Deleterious Effects of Opium, and on the Method of Cure of the Disease Resulting Therefrom* (Philadelphia: H. Maxwell, 1803), 45.

[26] Valentine Seaman and Adam Kuhn, *An Inaugural Dissertation on Opium* (Philadelphia: Johnston and Justice, 1792), 20-21.

[27] John R. Coxe, *The American Dispensatory* (Philadelphia: A. Bartram, 1806), 497.

[28] *Vermont Gazette*, 2 December 1817.

[29] *Independent Inquirer* (Brattleboro), 9 November 1833.

[30] Gallup, *Sketches of Epidemic Diseases in the State of Vermont*, 2. This was the age of heroic medicine, in which the appearance of a doctor's competency, as demonstrated by outlandish and outrageous conduct, was deemed of greater importance by an ignorant population than the actual result obtained on a patient.

[31] "An Act, regulating the practice of Physic and Surgery within this State," November 14, 1820, *Laws Passed by the Legislature of the State of Vermont, 1817-1820* (Middlebury, Vt.: William Slade, 1820), 27.

[32] Arthur F. Stone, *The Vermont of Today with Its Historic Background, Attractions and People*, vol. 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1929), 313.

[33] In the interim, in 1850 it was noted that lawsuits for malpractice "were becoming almost as common in some parts of Pennsylvania, as in Western N. York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and sections of Massachusetts. They are found to frequently terminate profitably for the patient, and hence their frequency." J. V. C. Smith, ed., *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 42 (1850): 67.

[34] *Vermont Patriot and State Gazette*, 6 November 1837.

[35] Ibid., 30 October 1837. These sentiments were linked with the rise of President Andrew Jackson, who was enthralled with the concept of the "common man" possessed of common sense and who, therefore, did not require professional training. Martin Kaufman, *The University of Vermont College of Medicine* (Hanover, N.H.: University of Vermont College of Medicine, 1979), 43.

[36] "For a Lottery to Publish a Medical Compendium," *State Papers of Vermont, General Petitions 1797-1799*, vol. 11, ed. Allen Soule (Lunenburg, Vt.: Stinehour Press, 1962): 321.

[37] Ibid., 325.

[38] Joseph A. Gallup to Jonathan A. Allen, June 16, 1845, Allen Family of Middlebury and Rutland, Vermont Papers, MSC 187, Vermont Historical Society, Barre [hereafter VHS].

[39] Samuel Thomson (1769-1843), originally from Alstead, New Hampshire, and formally uneducated, traveled throughout Vermont and New England, constituting the greatest threat to the contemporary medical establishment as he promoted the use of herbal remedies and despised the use of opium. See his *New Guide to Health; Or Botanic Family Physician* (Boston: J. Q. Adams, 1835), *passim;* see also, Joanna Smith Weinstock, "Samuel Thomson's Botanic System: Alternative Medicine in Early-Nineteenth-Century Vermont," *Vermont History* 56 (Winter 1988): 5-22. Additional practices considered quackery by conventional doctors included those called electro-magnetic, mesmeric, and Indian.

The decades-old battle between the formally trained portion of Vermont's medical community and the quacks relying on empiricism as a basis for diagnosis and treatment lasted for decades. T. S. Brooks, "Relation of the Medical Profession to Quackery," *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for the Years 1871, 1872 and 1873* (Montpelier, Vt.: Argus and Patriot, 1874), 303.

[40] Samuel Rezneck, "The Study of Medicine at the Vermont Academy of Medicine (1827-1829) as Revealed in the *Journal of Asa Fitch,*" *Journal of the History of Medicine* 24 (October 1969): 416-429.

[41] "PLEDGE," September 9, 1835, in Constitution and Records of the Temperance Society of the N.H. Medical Institution, Organized October the 19th, 1832, Rauner Library. They further pledged to abstain from "intoxicating drinks" and tobacco.

[42] "Eben Judd's *Journal of Survey to the Upper Coos, 1786,*" transcribed by Reidun D. Nuquist, *Vermont History* 81 (Summer/Fall 2013): 202. I am indebted to former Vermont State Archivist Gregory Sanford for directing me to Judd's interesting life and his journals retained in the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration.

[43] Hunting Sherrill, *On the Pathology of Epidemic Cholera* (New York: Samuel Wood and Sons, 1835), 147.

[44] *Vermont Gazette*, 13 March 1827.

[45] Reuben D. Mussey, *Health: Its Friends and Its Foes* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1862), 309-310.

[46] Rachel Hope Cleves, *Charity & Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 175-189. I am grateful for the assistance of Eva Garcelon-Hart, archivist, Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, Middlebury (hereafter, Sheldon Museum), where several of their letters are stored.

[47] *Vermont Gazette*, 13 March 1827.

[48] Jonathan A. Allen, "An Address Delivered before the Addison County Temperance Society at Newhaven, Vt., Oct. 20, 1829," Allen Family of Middlebury and Rutland, Vermont Papers, 1804-1910, MSC 187, VHS.

[49] William Sweetser, *A Dissertation on Intemperance* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1829), 91.

[50] *Vermont Gazette*, 9 February 1830.

[51] John Williams, *Dr. John Williams' Last Legacy, and Useful Family Guide* (New York, 1827), 5-6; decades later, one Vermonter recalled, "My grandmother raised poppies in her garden and scraped the pods for a small supply of opium for severe cases of toothache." William McGinnis, "A Vermont Sketchbook," *Vermont History* 37 (Summer 1969): 225.

[52] *Vermont Chronicle*, 4 June 1830; *The Book of Health: A Compendium of Domestic Medicine* (Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1830), 170.

[53] William R. Preston, *Medicine Chests for Ships and Families, with New and Approved Directions* (Portsmouth, N.H.: C. W. Brewster, 1839), *passim.*

[54] Dr. Jedidiah Estabrooke Journal, 1827-1853, Martha Canfield Library, Arlington, Vt.

[55] Dr. Timothy Woodward Daybook, Calvin Coolidge Library, Castleton State College, Castleton, Vt.

[56] Alonzo Calkins, *Opium and the Opium-appetite* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1871), 290.

[57] Ibid., 40-41.

[58] Julia Thomson account book, Weybridge Collection, Box 206, VHS.

[59] Dr. William P. Russel Papers, Large ledger vol. 1, 1833-1851, Sheldon Museum. Russel was also the local authorized dealer for spirits during these temperance years and, while also selling large

amounts of opium, morphine, laudanum, paregoric, Dover's Powder, morphine, and dysentery drops, he dispensed all manner of alcohol and tobacco, revealing the presence of a very robust stimulant-seeking community.

[60] Minutes, January 23, 1856, Records of the Addison County Medical Society, 1835-1920, Vol. 1, Sheldon Museum. Croix's consumption is calculated based upon Russel's sales of opium at 34 cents an ounce.

[61] Smith, "An Inaugural Dissertation on Opium," 21.

[62] Leonard Marsh, *The Physiology of Intemperance, an Address before the Temperance Society of the University of Vermont, June 29, 1841* (Burlington, Vt.: Chauncey Goodrich, 1841), 15.

[63] Ralph B. Grindrod and Charles A. Lee, *Bacchus: an essay on the nature, causes, effects, and cure of intemperance* (New York: J. & H. G. Langley, 1840), 179.

[64] Robert McKinley Ormsby, *Vermont Speller; or, Progressive Lessons* (Bradford, Vt.: A. Low & Co., 1859), 95.

[65] Calkins, *Opium and the Opium-appetite*, 36-38; Thomas M. Santella, *Opium* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 14.

[66] *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Vermont State Pharmaceutical Association*, 54.

[67] Basil M. Woolley, *The Opium Habit and Its Cure* (Atlanta: Atlanta Constitution Print, 1879), 45-46; Statement of Dr. Christopher Koch, *Hearings*, 70.

[68] *First Report to the Legislature of Vermont Relating to the Registry and Returns of Births, Marriages and Deaths* (Burlington, Vt.: Daily Times, 1859). Just obtaining the legislation allowing the collection of these vital statistics in the first place was a battle, as many in the medical establishment fought against laws requiring them to go to town clerks' offices to record relevant information because they failed to describe how they were to receive compensation for their efforts.

[69] Sweetser, *An Address Delivered before the Chittenden County Temperance Society*, 12.

[70] *Vermont Telegraph* (Brandon), 30 May 1838.

[71] *The Middlebury People's Press*, 15 June 1841; *Vermont Watchman and State Journal*, 9 August 1844.

[72] Dr. Carter's Compound Pulmonary Balsam (1845), Newbury, Vt., Pamphlets, VHS.

[73] Smith, ed., *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 40 (1849): 207.

[74] Minutes, February 5, 1846, Records of the Addison County Medical Society, Sheldon Museum; *The Northern Galaxy* (Middlebury) 14 April 1846.

[75] Ibid.

[76] J. F. Skinner, "Domestic Medicines," *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, 40 (1849): 309.

[77] Lewis C. Beck, *Adulterations of Various Substances Used in Medicine and the Arts, with the Means of Detecting Them* (New York: Samuel S. and William Wood, 1846), 157.

[78] *The Revised Statutes of the State of Vermont Passed November 19, 1839* (Burlington, Vt.: Chauncey Goodrich, 1840), 445.

[79] *Proceedings of the American Pharmaceutical Association* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Thompson, 1853), 11.

[80] *Vermont Watchman and State Journal*, 15 October 1846.

[81] *Proceedings of the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association, October 11, 1871*, 8.

[82] *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for the Year 1866* (Burlington, Vt.: R. S. Styles, 1866), 30.

[83] C. P. Frost, "Opium: Its Uses and Abuses," *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for the Years 1869 and 1870* (Burlington, Vt.: R. S. Styles, 1870), 131.

[84] Ibid., 145.

[85] Ibid.

[86] *The Reporter* (Brattleboro), 29 April 1817. In 1814, a Dartmouth medical student recorded Dr. Reuben Mussey's lecture on "Theory and Practice of Physic" describing the sleeping poppy, which yielded opium that came from gardens. Dr. Reuben Mussey lectures 1814, DA-3, Box 2177, Rauner Library.

[87] *Twentieth Annual Report of the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Printing Co., 1908), 378; Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the Year 1870, *Executive Documents Printed by Order of the House of Representatives 1870-71* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1871), 210.

[88] *Burlington Free Press*, 14 May 1869.

[89] Prospectus, *American Opium Raised by Wilson & Chase at Monkton and Berlin, Vermont* (Montpelier, Vt.: Argus and Patriot Job Printing House, 1869), 7. I am indebted to Paul Heller, author of *The Calais Calamity: and Other Tales of Wonder and Woe* (San Bernardino, Calif., 2014) for sharing information concerning Wilson's activities.

[90] *Vermont Watchman and State Journal*, 14 July 1869.

[91] William Proctor Jr. "Notes on American Opium from Vermont," *Buffalo Medical and Surgical Journal* 8 (1869): 151; "Additional Note on American Opium from Vermont," *The American Journal of Pharmacy* 41 (1869): 23.

[92] William Proctor, Jr., "Assay of Pure American Opium from Poppies Grown at Hancock, Vermont, by Mr. C. M. Robbins," *The American Journal of Pharmacy* 42 (1870): 127.

[93] Charles E. Terry and Mildred Pellens, *The Opium Problem* (Camden, N. J.: Haddon Craftsmen, 1928), 6-7.

[94] Ibid., 7.

[95] *Proceedings of the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association, October 11, 1871*, 17, 31.

[96] J. Adams Allen, *Medical Examinations for Life Insurance* (New York: J. H. and C. M. Goodsell, 1870), 21-22.

[97] *Proceedings of the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association, 1873* (Rutland, Vt.: Globe Paper Company, 1874), 27. Taking pharmacists to task at their annual meeting, one doctor boldly challenged their involvement in pushing questionable medicines: "How many of you have washed your hands from the sale of proprietary medicines that are made *only* to fill the pockets of the proprietors—and *you* are made the vendors of them because you can pocket a large share of the profits. . . . There is not a druggist in the country who would keep them 24 hours were it not for the profit. This morbid demand of the people degraded the dignity of the profession of scientific pharmacist, and in our State you will find it will never be eradicated until the people become educated to know what they need," 48.

[98] *The General Statutes of the State of Vermont* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1870), 690.

[99] Catalogue and Handbook of Wells, Richardson & Co., Wholesale Druggists, Burlington, Vt., 35-57. Pamphlets, VHS.

[100] *Proceedings of the Vermont Pharmaceutical Association at the Fourth Annual Meeting* (Rutland, Vt.: Globe Paper Co., 1874), 15.

[101] Edward H. Currier, "Relations existing between Physician and Apothecary," 1880, Medical Theses, 1878, DA-3, Box 10955, Rauner Library.

[102] *Rutland Daily Globe*, 23 October 1874.

[103] *Acts and Resolves Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, 1882* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle & Co., 1883), 36; Mary Hunt, *A History of the First Decade of the Department of Scientific Temperance Instruction in Schools and Colleges of the Women's Christian Temperance Union* (Boston: Washington Press, 1892), 10.

[104] John M. Currier, "Medical Colleges of Vermont—Bogus and Genuine," *The Medical and Surgical Reporter* 64 (1891): 237.

[105] *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for the Year 1890* (Burlington, Vt.: R. S. Styles, 1890), 46-47.

[106] E. W. Shipman, "The Promiscuous Use of Opium in Vermont," Ibid., 72.

[107] Ibid., 73-74.

[108] "The introduction of the hypodermatic syringe has placed in the hands of man a means of intoxication more seductive than any which has heretofore contributed to his craving for narcotic stimulation. . . . For every remote village has its slave, and not infrequently several, to the hypodermatic syringe." Roberts Bartholow, *A Manual of Hypodermic Medication: The Treatment of Diseases by the Hypodermatic Method* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1882), 120.

[109] Shipman, "The Promiscuous Use of Opium in Vermont," 75-76.

[110] Records of the Burlington Clinical Society, 1893, *passim*, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

[111] Ibid. In fact, the VMS warned as early as 1870 of "professional abortionists in the regular profession, men who for no more palpable reason than their love of gain, make criminal abortion an every day affair." *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for the Years 1869 and 1870*, 107.

[112] F. W. Comings, "Opium. Its Uses and Abuses," *Transactions of the Vermont Medical Society for 1895 and 1896* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Association, 1897), 359.

[113] *The Vermont Watchman*, 15 June 1892; Leslie E. Keeley, *Keeley Institute, Montpelier, Vermont.* Pamphlet, Sheldon Museum. Keeley described Montpelier as a place where recovering addicts "are not looked upon as criminals, but as invalids who are making manly efforts to be made whole, to be freed from the disease of Alcoholism or Morphine, as the case may be," 31.

[114] Comings, "Opium," 366-371.

[115] Grinnell, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," 67-68.

[116] Grinnell, "Stimulants in Forensic Medicine and a Review of Drug Consumption in Vermont," *Journal of Medicine and Science* 7 (October 1901): 396; Grinnell, "A Review of Drug Consumption and Alcohol as Found in Proprietary Medicine," 426.

[117] Grinnell, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," 64-65.

[118] Statement of Dr. Alexander Lambert, *Hearings*, 144.

[119] *Orleans County Monitor*, 9 December 1908.

[120] *Middlebury Register*, 22 January 1915.

[121] *Acts and Resolves Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont ... 1915* (Hanover, N. H.: J. Padock & A. Spooner, 1915), 336.

[122] Timothy Hickman, "'Mania Americana': Narcotic Addiction and Modernity in the United States, 1870-1920," *Journal of American History* 90 (March 2004): 1281.

[123] Terry, *The Opium Problem*, 9-32. Of note, Grinnell's Vermont study was the only effort that sought quantitative information from the state's doctors, pharmacists, and manufacturers. The remaining studies attempted to identify specific numbers of addicts through responses from various professionals as well as unprovable anecdotal accounts.

[124] Ibid., 1.

[125] Musto, *American Disease*, 5; David F. Musto, M.D., "The History of Legislative Control over Opium, Cocaine, and their Derivatives," http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/History/ophs.htm.

[126] Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*, 28. Courtwright further calculates with certainty that prior to 1842 the nation's opiate addiction rate was no more than .72 per thousand, meaning that Vermont's population of 291,948 in 1840 contained just over 200 addicts.

[127] Musto, *American Disease*, 5; Musto, "The History of Legislative Control over Opium."

[128] Grinnell, "Use and Abuse of Drugs in Vermont," 66. In an accompanying estimate of the scope of the problem, Grinnell determined that on a per capita basis there was enough opium being sold each month to provide one-half dose each day for every individual, or the equivalent of six doses when an entire year is included.

[129] Smith E. Jelliffe, "Some Notes on the Opium Habit and Its Treatment," *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, 125 (1903): 789. Jelliffe further notes that Grinnell's work constituted "one of the few systematic inquiries regarding the prevalence of any drug habit in a limited area," 788.

[130] Ibid., 788.

[131] Statement of Dr. Hamilton Wright, *Hearings*, 93. Wright further testified that doctors were largely responsible for the morphine habit: "I have an estimate from one of the largest dealers that the use of morphine in Massachusetts and the other New England states, excepting Maine, has increased 100 percent in the last ten years." Concerning Maine, he reported that the increase was closer to 150 percent, and that he had personally witnessed "six stage coaches drawn up in front [of a large wholesale drug store], each coming there to get its supply of morphine. That was then distributed out along stage routes radiating from Portland." In the state's lumber camps he also observed the heavy use of "alcohol tabloids" containing cocaine which, when dissolved in water, "give a highly stimulating effect," 92-93.

When Cowboys Rode the Airwaves

From the mid-1930s through the 1950s, the Vermont airwaves resounded to the live sounds of "cowboy bands"—often in full Hollywood movie finery and playing a mixture of country and western songs, fiddle tunes, jazz standards, and pop tunes of the day. At night, the bands drew large crowds to barn dances throughout the state. But by the mid-1950s rock and roll had begun to take its toll, and the Vermont cowboy bands faded into the sunset.

BY MARK GREENBERG

If you were taking a Saturday morning stroll along Main Street in Waterbury in the early 1940s, you might have thought you'd wandered onto the set of the latest Hollywood western as men in full cowboy regalia emerged from the rooming houses and restaurants, loaded up their wagons, and hit the trail. Instead of six-guns, however, these cowpokes carried musical instrument cases and sometimes even strapped a stand-up bass to the roof of their station–not covered–wagons. After a short drive, most of these hombres would head into the Blush Hill studio of radio station WDEV, where they'd open the cases, tune up their guitars, fiddles, and basses, and gather around the single microphone for their weekly fifteen minutes of music, banter, and plugs for their upcoming personal appearances and souvenir photos.

It was, according to accordionist and radio cowboy Zeke Zelonis, "just like goddamn Dodge City."[1] That image was reinforced by the late Craig "Rusty" Parker, longtime WDEV station manager. Water-

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bury back then, said Parker, invoking another American city not usually associated with quiet, rural Vermont, was the "Nashville of Northern New England."[2] Yet, like Nashville station WSM's Grand Ole Opry, WDEV was where central Vermonters tuned in for live music played by skilled musicians following the trail of Gene Autry and the western-style groups, such as the Sons of the Pioneers, that were winning rural audiences across the U.S. (and Canada) with music that was part traditional, part Tin Pan Alley, and part Hollywood. It was music that the late Waterbury virtuoso fiddler and bandleader Don Fields, the "King of the Vermont Cowboys," wryly called "synthetic western."[3]

Now a medium for mostly recorded music, radio originally depended on live performances for much of its content. In 1924, the Sears and Roebuck-sponsored "National Barn Dance" on WLS (World's Largest Store) in Chicago became the model for the Grand Ole Opry, the WWVA "Jamboree" (Wheeling, West Virginia), the "Louisiana Hayride," and other radio variety shows that provided homespun entertainment for rural audiences. Local musicians could hear and learn the songs and styles that were gaining national popularity, while barnstorming musicians could use their radio appearances to publicize their personal appearances. Short early morning (for milking farmers) and noon-time shows by local bands and touring musicians also became popular. All of this contributed to the creation of standardized popular styles that threatened and often displaced local vernacular culture while being presented as genuine folk art. In the introduction to a 1941 souvenir booklet for Fields's band, The Pony Boys, WDEV owner Lloyd Squier commended Fields for helping to preserve "American Folk Songs . . . many of which were handed down to us from pioneer forefathers."[4]

Not everyone agreed. Concerned about the new medium's effect on older (and perhaps "purer") Vermont ways, the Committee on Traditions and Ideals of the Vermont Commission on Country Life in 1930 asked Springfield writer and arts patron Helen Hartness Flanders to travel the state collecting old songs and tunes, particularly those rooted in the Scots-Irish-Anglo traditions of Vermont settlers.[5] Mrs. Flanders, fearing that it was already too late, nevertheless accepted the charge. But while Flanders did find and help preserve a bonanza of Vermont music rooted in the nineteenth century and earlier, radios were fairly common in relatively isolated Vermont, and homogenized popular culture continued its relentless march forward.

Other media contributed to this change as well. In the 1930s, Americans looking for escape from the ravages of the Great Depression quickly fell under the spell of a new, mythic American hero, the singing

cowboy. It was a sign of both hard and changing times. "The farther Americans became removed from the cowboy past," writes country music historian Bill C. Malone, "the more intense became their interest in cowboy songs and lore."[6]

Introduced into popular culture by the dime-store novels that began appearing in the 1860s, the cowboy was first portrayed as more of a scoundrel than a hero, a rough-hewn cattle driver who liked to let off steam by getting drunk and shooting up the town. A more romanticized figure began to emerge in the 1880s from Buffalo Bill Cody's "Wild West Show," followed by Owen Wister's novel, *The Virginian*, in 1902. In 1903 the first narrative film, *The Great Train Robbery*, set the stage for the cowboy as the hero who saved the day. Following the addition of sound in 1927, Ken Maynard soon became the movies' first singing cowboy, leading the way for Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, and others who evoked a simpler, pre-Depression time when, at least in the telling, goodness prevailed and a smoothly sung ballad could win a fair maiden's heart.

In Vermont, as throughout Northern New England, cowboys and other rugged individualists had been long-standing ideals, and by 1930, according to musician and researcher Clifford R. Murphy, "Country & Western [music] had become a relatively lucrative occupation . . . from Connecticut to Maine."[7] Some Southern musicians, including Bluegrass Roy, Bradley Kincaid, and Ramona Jones, even relocated—albeit briefly—to New England in the 1930s.[8] Others included New England on their tours, as did Otto Gray and His Oklahoma Cowboys, the first of the traveling Western bands, when they stopped at WDEV in the mid-'30s. They also made a deep impression on a young announcer named Don Fields.

Fields was just a few months old in 1913 when his family moved to Waterbury from Montreal so his father could work on the railroad. The elder Fields was also a fiddler, a country-style ear player. "He was pretty good at it, and he knew quite a few tunes–'Irish Washerwoman,' 'Devil's Dream,' 'Portland Fancy,' 'Old Zip Coon,'" Fields recalled. By age five or six Don was playing too. "I know I had quite a time to chin the full-size fiddle," he recalled in 1981 at his home on the slopes of Camel's Hump in Duxbury. "And that's all I had. Reach right out straight to get to the fingering part."[9]

Soon Fields began taking proper violin lessons from local music maestros, first a Mr. Trombley, then a Mr. Bruce, who hoped to send his prized student to Europe to pursue a classical career. Although the death of Don's father in 1928 ended any such thoughts, Fields never lost his taste for classical music, becoming a great admirer of classical

violinists Fritz Kreisler and Jascha Heifetz as well as jazz virtuoso Stephane Grappelli. With the Depression looming, Fields was forced to quit high school and get a job.

But he didn't quit music. At basketball games, St. Patrick's Day dances, and other local social events Fields played popular fox trots and waltzes along with a smattering of the older fiddle music with a group that variously included fiddle, tenor banjo, piano, drums, sax, and guitar. Occasionally, in the late 1920s, he'd still play at a "kitchen tunk" or "junket," a musical party in a local farmhouse and a vanishing reminder of the days before electronic sound inventions altered home entertainment for Vermonters. "You'd take the largest room," Fields remembered, "move the furniture, roll up the rug. You could have a square dance. You could have a waltz. You could do most anything like that. Generally there'd be a neighboring fellow on the fiddle, his wife on piano. I played for a few. I liked it quite well. Just a good neighborly time, you know. Someday they'll come back, I bet."[10]

By the early 1930s, however, commercial "hillbilly" music had begun taking over. Fields found the music easy to play. He also started announcing at WDEV and got to know the traveling bands, including Otto Gray's. That was the group that Fields emulated with the little

Pony Boys. Left-to-right: Don Fields, Chickie Corelli, Andrew "Zeke" Zelonis, Carl Durgan, Bob Preavy. No date. Courtesy of the author.

band he put together around 1935 to play on the air at noon. Eventually, Fields' group became the Pony Boys, whose broadcasts some weeks drew as many as 200 letters to WDEV. Eventually the Pony Boys added regular shows on WJOY and WCAX in Burlington and WNBX in Springfield to their radio schedule. At the latter station, Fields met and struck up a friendship with nationally prominent balladeer Bradley Kincaid, "The Kentucky Mountain Boy." And when the film *Scattergood Baines* had its world premiere in Montpelier in 1941, Fields appeared on stage with its star, Guy Kibbee.[11]

Fields himself was not particularly interested in the big time, however, and he remained a strictly local phenomenon, secure in his ability to attract as many as 900 people (huge crowds even by today's Vermont standards) to the larger barn dances. "I'd have taken it if it came," he said of greater fame, "but I didn't look for it. I had a pretty good life. The money was pretty good, and I was doing something that I liked."[12]

He also remained steadfastly eclectic. Along with such "folk" chestnuts as "Red River Valley" and such old-time fiddle tunes as "Soldier's Joy," Fields regaled his audiences with jazzy pop songs like "Bill Bailey" and "Honeysuckle Rose." It was the Swing Era, and even rural music reflected America's enthrallment with the popular, up-beat, anti-Depression dance music of the Dorsey Brothers and Benny Goodman. Later in the 1940s, the combination of the older country breakdowns and the newer rhythms and harmonies derived from African American jazz would be called Western Swing, perhaps most associated with Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys.

Other bands were sprouting up throughout Vermont as well, including Shorty and the Pioneers, the Bar-X Cowboys, the Western Aces, and the Broncho Busters. Following their sometimes daily broadcasts on WDEV, WWSR in St. Albans, WNBX in Springfield, and WCAX in Burlington, many of the bands would load up their cars and head to dances throughout Vermont and into western New York and even Canada.

Occasionally, a Vermont musical cowboy brushed up against greater fame. Accordionist Joe Mayo, of the St. Albans-based Western Aces and the Western Ramblers, was born in Pennsylvania and began his musical career as a regular on Wheeling, West Virginia's WWVA, and once played with Gene Autry, America's leading singing movie cowboy. Mayo also recalled spending a wartime afternoon in Paris jamming with guitarist Django Reinhardt and receiving an invitation to join the legendary Gypsy jazz musician's group. He declined, as he did a later invitation to play with the Lawrence Welk Orchestra.[13]

One of Mayo's partners in the Western Aces, bassist-guitarist-singer-

Western Aces. Left-to-right: Carl Durgan, Buddy Truax, Joe Mayo, Cliff Japhet. No date. Courtesy of the author.

trumpet player-songwriter Cliff Japhet, however, did respond to the call of the big—or at least bigger—time, joining up for a while with Polly Jenkins, who had sung with Otto Gray and who had appeared with Gene Autry in the 1938 film *The Man from Music Mountain*. The first woman to headline a country music act on the vaudeville circuit, Jenkins soon formed her own band, Polly Jenkins and Her Musical Plowboys, featuring such novelty "instruments" as a hay rake, hat rack, and funnels. Jenkins toured widely before landing in Waterbury, where she continued to sing on WDEV.

Born in Portland, N.Y., Japhet began as a solo singer-guitarist, then started the Broncho Busters along with fiddler Lyman "The Old Sheriff" Meade before leaving to tour with Jenkins. In 1947 Japhet headed for St. Albans, along with Joe and Jimmy Mayo, to form the Western Aces and to fill a slot on radio station WWSR that had recently been vacated by Meade's group.[14]

Japhet and Mayo weren't the only outsiders to find fertile musical ground in Vermont.

Dusty Miller and the Colorado Wranglers started out in their home state in the early 1930s, then followed the trail east until, by the mid-1940s, they were performing on WCAX and WDEV. Meanwhile, Dusty's brother, Jimmy, and his band, the Saddle Mates, now with Vermonters Smokey and Lois Carey, landed in Rutland, eventually joining the parade of cowboy bands at WDEV, which included Pennsylvanian Jack Carnes and the Kentucky Ramblers (featuring Canadian fiddler Slim Coxx), along with the Pony Boys, the Northern Ridge Runners, and Buddy Truax and His Playboys.

It was probably guitarist-fiddler-saxophonist-vocalist Sheldon "Buddy" Truax who came the closest to touching the big time. Born into a musical family in Dunkin, Québec, in 1923, Truax began winning local talent contests with his singing in the mid-1930s, after his family had moved to Troy, Vermont. A smooth-voiced crooner, Truax had begun figuring out chords on an uncle's guitar in Canada. He also started playing fiddle.[15]

Sometime between ages 12 and 14, while he was still going to school and working in his father's veneer mill and learning carpentry, Truax formed a band, the Newport Ramblers, which he recalled as a "little noisy thing with a banjo, guitar, bass, all that stuff. We played little honky tonk places for 3, 4 bucks a night."[16] The band also performed at church socials and grange halls, with Buddy fiddling for square dances and singing and playing guitar on popular Country and Western songs learned by ear from the radio.

The guitar soon became young Buddy's passion. In 1940 he was working at his father's mill in Bethel, Vermont, when he received a call from Don Fields to take over as the Pony Boys' guitarist. He jumped at the chance. "I walked right over to the [milling] machine and pushed the button and said to the guy, 'I'm all done.' Walked right out and never came back," Buddy recalled.[17]

World War II interrupted Truax's stint as a Pony Boy. It also exposed him to a new musical world. Assigned to the army's Special Services Unit, Truax spent his military service playing guitar with musicians from all over the country, including such nationally, and even internationally, known players as trombonist Glenn Miller and members of his popular swing band. For the troops, Truax and his bandmates played what Truax called "modern dance music."[18] For themselves, however, Buddy and musicians including pianist Mel Powell and other players from Miller's, Stan Kenton's, and other bands put aside the written parts and arrangements and played improvised jazz. It was the music that was to remain

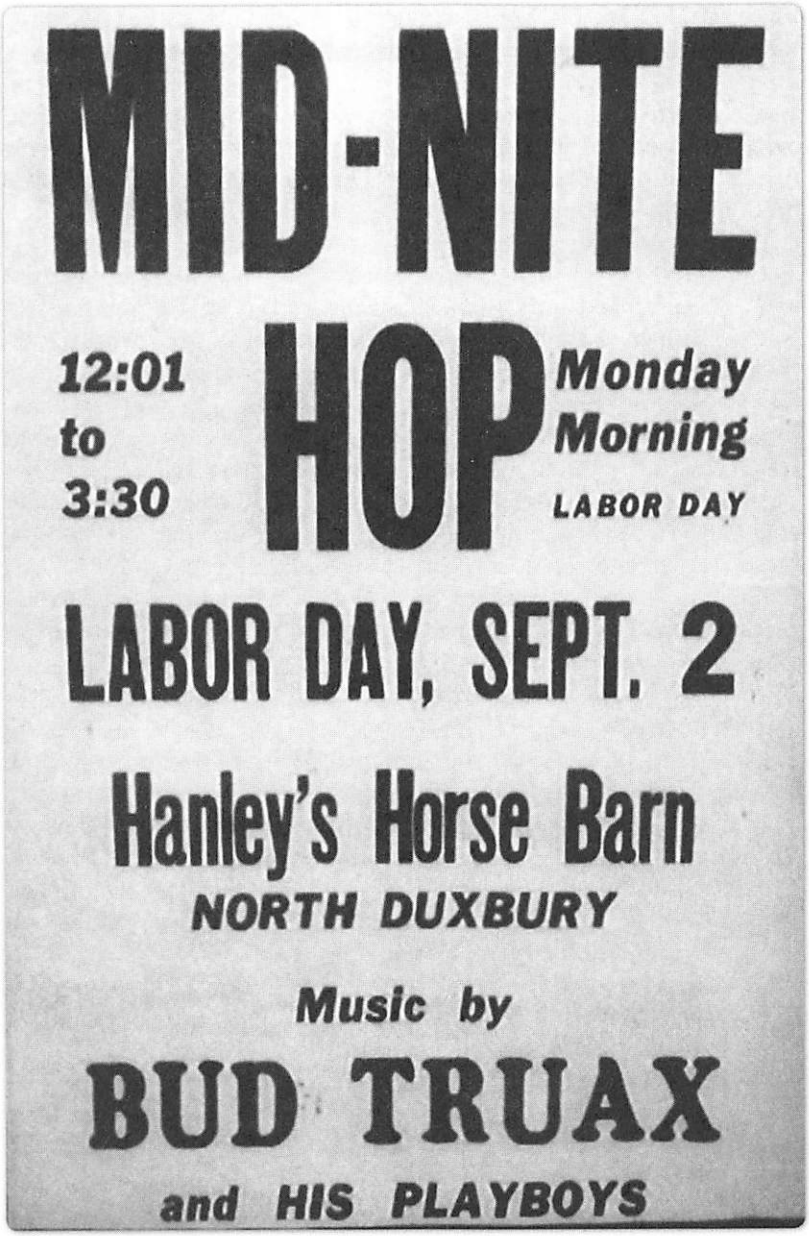
at the top of Truax's personal hit parade. His skill as a jazz player served him well when, back in Vermont, he was called to play with Louis Armstrong at International House in Newport, along with jazz legends drummer Cozy Cole, pianist Earl "Fatha" Hines, and trombonist Jack Teagarden. He also played, on at least one occasion, with Armstrong, Hines, and Teagarden at the famous Birdland jazz club in New York City.[19]

But the big time didn't interest Truax, even when Canada's first country music star, Wilf Carter, better known as Montana Slim, offered him a job. Buddy was working in St. Albans when a big car pulled up at the store and a guy with a guitar got out. It was country music singer, songwriter, guitarist, and yodeler Carter, who had heard of Buddy and who invited the Vermonter to join him on the road. But, again, Buddy chose to stay close to home. "I'd seen all the road I wanted to see for a while," he wryly recalled.[20] Truax remained a Vermont cowboy, lending his talents to several St. Albans-area groups including the Broncho Busters, The Old Sheriff, and the Western Aces. In 1950 he rejoined the Pony Boys and around 1953 formed his own band, the Playboys.

Along with ex-Pony Boys' banjoist Smokey Carey and accordionist Zeke Zelonis, Buddy's Playboys included his younger sister, Barb, who played piano, sang lead on some songs, and joined Buddy for harmony duets. Like Fields's group and other Vermont cowboy bands, the Playboys wore western clothes and featured current Nashville hits along with pop standards. Barb especially liked Patsy Cline songs, while Buddy favored country crooner Jim Reeves. Hank Williams, he said, "was a little too honky for me."[21] The band could also strike up a hot "Blue Suede Shoes" or "Down by the Riverside"—"show stuff," in Buddy's term—that sometimes featured key changes and other ear-catching arrangements. There was always a hot, jazzed-up guitar tune as well. Still, according to Truax, it was the singing that got the attention.[22]

But while Vermont was fertile territory for the cowboy bands, life on the musical range wasn't easy. Some, like the Pony Boys, maintained a daily broadcast schedule, some days playing on two stations, then racing to gigs on pre-interstate roads in cars bulging with musicians, instruments, and costumes. "I don't know how some of those trips were made," Fields said, recalling a weekly Sunday night gig across Lake Champlain in New York. "That was a short-cut to the cemetery, I'll tell you that. I don't know why I did it."[23]

Nor were accommodations lavish. Cliff Japhet recalled sharing a single room in the old St. Albans Hotel with the three other Western Aces



Poster for dance at Hanley's Horse Barn, North Duxbury, Vermont [1957]. Courtesy of the author.

for their first winter in Vermont.[24] Joe Mayo pointed to the wear-and-tear on both his instruments and his body: "In fourteen years I went through fourteen accordions," he said, pointing out that the heavy instrument wreaked havoc on his back until he "couldn't hold it no more."[25] Truax and the Playboys also kept a grueling schedule, playing dances as far afield as Cherry River, Québec, and Chazy, N.Y., before hustling back to Waterbury for their 9:30 AM broadcast. "That was a rugged life," Buddy recalled.[26]

The times were changing as well, and by the mid-1950s the Vermont cowboy bands had begun riding into the sunset. After the war, bars began to supplant barn dances as the preferred venue for younger audiences and the latest musical styles.[27] The newer honky tonk music, with its songs of cheating and heartache, epitomized by the songs and plaintive singing of Hank Williams, was more suitable, perhaps, to what musician-historian (and latter-day singing cowboy) Douglas B. Green has called a "new sense of realism in America."[28] Idealized, nostalgic odes to hearth, home, and rural life—country music staples since the first successful commercial country music recording, "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane," by Fiddling John Carson in 1923[29]—were no longer in fashion. Soon, only the term "Country and Western," big hats, rhinestone-festooned costumes, and "synthetic western" classics such as "Cool Water" and "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" were all that was left of the cowboy music craze.

The biggest threat came from one of the music's own offspring, the latest American musical hybrid, Western Swing, with more blues and a heavier beat—the music soon to be known as rock and roll. "Elvis was coming on the scene, and things were changing pretty fast," ex-Pony Boy guitarist and singer Chuck Donnelly maintained.[30] By the late 1950s, Don Fields had had enough (although he returned for a summer spin on WDEV in the 1970s). Buddy Truax lasted a bit longer, until 1962, when he disbanded the Playboys to devote himself to running the Waterbury restaurant he owned with his wife, whom he had met at a Don Fields barn dance.

Moreover, the new electronic medium, television, was replacing radio. A few bands made the transition for a while. For thirteen weeks in the mid-1950s the Bunkhouse Trio—Cliff Japhet, Pee Wee Arsenault, and Lyman Meade—appeared on WMVT-TV, followed by Buddy Truax and the Playboys on "The Real Chrome Roundup" on WCAX. When Duke Palilo and His Swingbillies, with their repertoire of honky tonk, as well as "classic" Nashville music, moved to Winooski from Maine in 1958, they landed on WCAX, where they held down a daily fifteen-minute slot until 1962, traveling, as had their cowboy band predecessors, to

as many as six or seven gigs a week. Willing and able to play rockabilly and rock and roll numbers, the Swingbillies, featuring singer Doris Waite (Lee Jollota), who later settled in Marshfield, Vermont, pointed the way toward the next generation of Vermont country bands, for whom rock and roll, not swing, would provide the favored up-tempo dance beat.

Soon the sun had set on the Vermont cowboy bands, and live music of any sort was becoming increasingly rare on the radio. Even the magazine published by the Vermont Association of Broadcasters to commemorate its thirty-fifth anniversary in 1989 made scant mention of the cowboy bands that had ridden the Vermont airways just a few decades earlier.[31] The popular Country and Western music and the radio cowboys who played it—once seen as sullying Vermont's musical history—were now part of that history as well.

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Audio Links

Don Fields: http://www.upstreetproductions.com/DonFields.html (music samples).

Lee Jollota: http://www.upstreetproductions.com/Lee.htm (music samples).

Notes

[1] Zeke Zelonis, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, Colchester, Vermont, 20 October 1981.

[2] Craig "Rusty" Parker, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, Waterbury, Vermont, 22 July 1981.

[3] Don Fields, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, Duxbury, Vermont, 22 July 1981.

[4] L. E. Squier, "Foreword," *Don Fields and His Pony Boys* (Waterbury, Vt.: The Record Press, no date).

[5] George Brown and Helen Hartness Flanders, eds., *Vermont Folksongs and Ballads* (Brattleboro Vt.: Stephen Daye Press, 1931), 7-9.

[6] Bill C. Malone, *Country Music USA* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 138.

[7] Clifford R. Murphy, "The Diesel Cowboy in New England: Source and Symbol in Dick Curless's 'A Tombstone Every Mile,'" *Journal of American Folklore*, 127 (Spring 2014): 194.

[8] Ibid., 263.

[9] Fields, interview, 1981.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Joe Mayo, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, St. Albans, Vermont, 12 April 2004.

[14] Cliff Japhet, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, Burlington, Vermont, 1 April 2004.

[15] Sheldon "Buddy" Truax, interviewed by Mark Greenberg, Waterbury, Vermont, 27 October 1981.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Fields, interview, 1981.
[24] Japhet, interview, 2004.
[25] Mayo, interview, 2004.
[26] Truax, interview, 1981.
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[28] Douglas B. Green, "The Singing Cowboy, An American Dream," in Paul Kingsbury, ed., *The Country Reader: Twenty-five Years of the Journal of Country Music* (Nashville and London: The Country Music Foundation Press and Vanderbilt University Press, 1996), 66.
[29] Malone, *Country Music USA*, 37-38.
[30] Donnelly, interview, 1984.
[31] Ellie Thompson, *Seventy Years of Vermont Broadcasting* (Colchester, Vt.: Vermont Association of Broadcasters, 1989).

Book Reviews

"Hero Strong" and Other Stories, Tales of Girlhood Ambition, Female Masculinity, and Women's Worldly Achievement in Antebellum America

By Mary F. W. Gibson; edited with an introduction by Daniel A. Cohen (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014, pp. xviii, 172, $69.00).

In 1966 historian Barbara Welter wrote a seminal article in the *American Quarterly* outlining the "cult of true womanhood," a feminine ideal that not only circumscribed a generation of white women in antebellum America but also predominated in women's domestic fiction. Womanly virtue consisted of piety, purity, domesticity, and submissiveness; to stray outside these boundaries of selflessness was to risk the loss of love and threaten the social order. Mary F. W. Gibson (1835-1906), an aspiring author from Woodstock, Vermont, sought to challenge the prevailing ideal by subverting the binary relationship between the sexes. She imagined female characters with male traits, feminized their suitors, and fantasized different outcomes. Her tales are filled with ambitious young heroes with strong muscles and "hearts of steel"; they act out their desire for fame, fortune, and romantic love by wielding their pens to great effect. Yet Gibson was as bound by the constraints of true womanhood as any of her contemporaries.

In *"Hero Strong" and Other Stories,* Daniel A. Cohen, an associate professor of history at Case Western Reserve University, reprints ten of Gibson's earliest tales written between 1853 and 1859 to restore her place in literary history. Barely entering adulthood, Gibson was part of that "damned mob of scribbling women" whom Nathaniel Hawthorne fa-

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mously denigrated in 1855 for their formulaic domestic plots. By 1860, Gibson and many other nascent women writers had been eclipsed by rampant competition and the rise of a male-dominated highbrow literary canon, but she wrote poetry, satirical sketches, and adventure stories sporadically until the end of the century.

Cohen asserts that Gibson represents a new breed of budding women writers who reveal the rising expectations of American girls in the 1850s. They gave expression to their literary ambitions through the advent of weekly "story papers," in which Cohen finds early models of the woman author-as-artist. Urban publishers stimulated an outpouring of eclectic literary production to fill these new periodicals geared to the popular taste of a burgeoning class of readers. Literary scholars have largely overlooked the merits of story papers, such as the *True Flag, Waverley's Magazine, American Union, Olive Branch,* and the most popular, the *New York Ledger.* Yet Cohen insists that they helped launch the careers of such famous literary icons as Fanny Fern, Louisa May Alcott, and E. D. E. N. Southworth, who wrote in a similar vein about the quest for artistic expression during an era that prized romantic love and domestic happiness.

Little is known about Mary Gibson, though her tales reflect aspects of a troubled childhood. A doctor's daughter who was orphaned as a toddler, Gibson grew up feeling like an outlier and acting the "tomboy" in the busy household of a stern guardian. Whatever deprivations she may have experienced, she did attend Thetford Academy for one year before migrating at age 17 to Boston, where she began writing under the pen name "Winnie Woodfern." Following in the footsteps of Fanny Fern, Gibson achieved considerable renown as an author before moving to New York in 1855 in search of greater fame. Meanwhile, her encounters with men left her disillusioned with heterosexual love; she married twice without getting a divorce and quickly left her second husband. Unable to repeat her early success, Gibson moved to London in the late 1850s and eventually returned to Vermont about 1867. For the remainder of the century, her stories appeared irregularly under the name Mary W. Stanley Gibson or the pseudonym Margaret Blount in the *New York Ledger* and other papers.

"Hero Strong" and Other Stories provides evidence that some young women who came of age at mid-century were as restless and eager to attain autonomy as young men despite the demands of a society that insisted upon their selflessness. Cohen delivers an astute analysis of the new literary marketplace as an avenue to success at a time when the explosion of reading, secondary co-education, and mobility prompted young people to imagine lives of unfettered happiness. Gibson's tales

from the 1850s are of interest, not so much for their literary quality, but because they enable readers to glimpse into the imaginative world of a young woman captivated by this new ethos, one that coincided with the heyday of the early woman's rights movement. Gibson's protagonists disguise themselves with manly traits to gain the respect they deserve; they often end up alone and unloved but consoled through their efforts at self-making. The wild, mountain girl Hilda—who possessed a "poet soul"—fled to freedom, leaving husband, child, and lover behind. "Hers [was] not the tame existence of some women, who have no idea that is not bounded by four walls, " Gibson explains (p. 86). Others such as "Hero Strong" overcome all odds and achieve that elusive feminist goal of "having it all," wealth, fame, and a loving husband.

Such a happy ending could only be achieved in fiction for Mary Gibson, whose youthful aspirations had expired long before her death in 1906. But thanks to Daniel A. Cohen, her attempt to stake out a place for herself will no longer be forgotten.

MARILYN S. BLACKWELL

Marilyn S. Blackwell, Ph.D. co-authored Frontier Feminist: Clarina Howard Nichols and the Politics of Motherhood *(2010). Her most recent article on women in Vermont's abolitionist movement appeared in* Vermont History 82 *(Winter/Spring 2014).*

The Lamoille Stories II: Willy's Beer Garden and 20 New Tales from Vermont

By Bill Schubart (Hinesburg, Vt.: Magic Hill Press, 2014, pp.132, $15.00, paper).

In *Lamoille Stories Two*, Bill Schubart offers another volume of well-crafted stories of life in rural northern Vermont. The topics range from practical jokes and sexual shenanigans to disability and death and from deeply poignant to laugh-out-loud funny. Schubart's sensitivity to the stresses of cultural change and appreciation of rural character give the stories depth and meaning.

His tales of conflict between locals and newcomers are both amusing and serious. Back-to-the-land hippies are oblivious to generosity that does not fit their naïve worldview. There are "flatlanders" who want the same rules and restrictions they had in suburbia, oblivious to how absurd they can be here or how they might end up creating the world they left behind.

Some stories explore more subtle issues, particularly how the intersections of caring, community, and government have changed over the last half-century. Until the mid-twentieth century, contact with government for rural residents was usually limited to local institutions—town meeting, schools, and road crews. The face of law enforcement was most likely the game warden or county sheriff, who might be your drinking buddy and more interested in keeping you out of trouble than getting you into it. "Jeeter Gets His Buck" reveals various ways—legitimate and not—that road kill fed the poor. In "Heavy Equipment," Pete appropriates "abandoned" property and imposes his own justice when a wealthy urbanite builds a grand house next door that disrupts his view and privacy as the sheriff looks the other way.

The three stories about Lila reveal how the development of social services, no matter how well intentioned, can interfere with love and caring in sickness or death. Regulations do not accommodate traditional self-sufficiency or adjust for a lifetime of caring. For some, it was incomprehensible that caring for your own could be seen as wrong or that burying your own dead could be illegal. But at least for a time, local officials could bend the rules a little.

Schubart's ear for language and dialect make the stories a pleasure to read and some, especially the most humorous ones, great for reading aloud. Several characters are masters of malaprops. Pete gets an old abandoned dozer that was not mentioned in the "last will and testicle" of the owner at "prostate court." Jeeter's father was "a good man, self-defecatin." Jeeter is hilariously befuddled by how to bury his parents, but guided and helped by local officials who know him. Bev and June consider "gays and thespians" coming "outta the cellar."

The book contains twenty-one stories, each a pleasure to read. The settings and some of the characters will be familiar to those who know Lamoille County, but anyone who enjoys rural life and traditional culture in Vermont or beyond will find stories that warm the heart or inspire a good laugh.

DAWN ANDREWS

Dawn Andrews works with non-profit organizations and farms in Cabot.

The St. Albans Raid: Confederate Attack on Vermont

By Michelle Arnosky Sherburne (Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2014, pp. 190, paper, $19.99).

They called themselves Retributors. They had escaped a prison maintained by United States military authorities after being captured as enemy combatants and made their way to Canada. They planned retribution for the "barbarous atrocities," "suffering . . . of [our] kindred," and "depredations that were being carried out [on our] civilian population [and] their private property" by the United States armed forces. Some twenty of them, individually and in small groups, infiltrated the United States, crossing its border with Canada without incident. Their goal was to destroy civilian property and confiscate money for their cause. They arrived separately at the community they planned to attack and easily blended into the local population. At exactly 3:00 P.M. on Wednesday, October 19, they drew their weapons, took hostages, gathered up all the money they could lay their hands on, and started fires intended to burn down the town. They made off with hundreds of thousands of dollars, escaped to Canada, and left behind a "reign of terror" throughout the northern United States along its international border.

The year was 1864, the community was St. Albans, Vermont, and the Retributors were officers and enlisted men of the Provisional Army of the Confederate States of America.

Michelle Arnosky Sherburne separates fact from fiction in her well-organized examination of the St. Albans Raid, the northernmost land action of the Civil War. Her work, bearing that title, examines not only the Raid but also the circumstances preceding it, the international diplomatic and legal maneuvering resulting from it, and its effects on Vermont and the nation. It is a welcome contrast to Hollywood's rendition *The Raid*, released in 1954, in which the commander of the Retributors is promoted from first lieutenant to major and played by Van Heflin. Actually First Lieutenant Bennett Young is a far more dashing and interesting figure than his character in the movie. He was handsome, adventurous, a born leader, and had an almost disarming sense of humor. After his arrest by Canadian authorities he wrote to a local St. Albans newspaper from a Montreal jail apologizing for his inability to be in St. Albans because he was "otherwise engaged." A letter to the proprietor of the St. Albans hotel where he stayed up to October 19 included a five-dollar bank note taken during the raid to pay his bill.

Although there is little new in Sherburne's recounting of the actual raid, she provides background information on the activities planned by the Confederate Secret Service originating in Canada. They included staging a peace conference at Niagara Falls designed to embarrass Lincoln before the presidential election in November, an attack on a prisoner of war compound to free thousands of captured Confederates, and the capture and manning of gunboats on the Great Lakes by freed Confederates to subjugate towns located on the lakeshores. Compared to those plans, Confederate Commissioner to Canada Jacob Thompson thought that the raid would be "mere banditry against a U.S. border town," in the words of Amanda Foreman's *A World on Fire: Britain's Crucial Role in the American Civil War* (2010); but Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon gave Lieutenant Young his blessing to conduct the raid in retaliation for the "total war" Grant's subordinates were waging in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and Georgia. The presence of John Wilkes Booth and John Surratt (the son of Mary Surratt, hanged as a convicted conspirator in the Lincoln assassination plot) in a Montreal hotel within walking distance of the famous Notre Dame Cathedral at Place d'Armes, as noted in a caption to a photograph of the hotel (p. 158), raises some very interesting questions about other potential plans that may never be answered.

The success of the Confederate Secret Service in smuggling documents overland from Richmond to Montreal to prevent extradition of the raiders to Vermont to stand trial for their actions blends in nicely with Sherburne's very competent explanation of the legal proceedings of the three trials challenging the unsuccessful attempts of the United States government to have them tried as common criminals. Her discussion of the application of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 between the United States and Great Britain to those trials adroitly takes the reader through the maze of international law with the skill of a diplomat. The final verdict was, "The attack upon St. Albans must . . . be regarded as a hostile expedition by the Confederate States against the United States and therefore an act of war and not an offense for which extradition could be claimed" (p. 164).

The author does an admirable job of viewing the raid through the lens of people who experienced it, by using their letters advising that they survived the trauma, the media coverage, and the call to arms by Vermont Governor John Gregory Smith, a St. Albans resident, who was in Montpelier at the time of the raid. Lt. Young had planned to burn Smith's home in retaliation for the burning of the home of Virginia's governor. However, it was spared in the raiders' rush to escape to Canada, and they in turn were spared the threat of harm at the hands of the governor's

wife, Ann Eliza Brainerd Smith, who was armed and prepared to defend their property.

Sherburne has well stocked her work with pictures and maps that make it possible to take an afternoon drive over the escape route of the raiders into Canada, where they were arrested by Canadian authorities to prevent both the ire of the United States government and a possible lynching by the posse of St. Albans citizens hot on their trail across the border. However, some discrepancies persist that detract from the otherwise entertaining and informative read. The map identifies the Québec town near the place where one of the raiders was captured as St. Johns without reference to its current name, St-Jean-sur-Richelieu. The use of contractions common in conversation is inappropriate for the scholarly nature of her work. The dynamite that could have been used to blow open the safe in the Missisquoi Bank that was on the raiders' escape route was not available because it would not be invented by Alfred Nobel for another two years. Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox on April 9, not April 12 in 1865, and Canada achieved Dominion status in 1867, not 1868.

But *The St. Albans Raid* shows the stuff that Vermonters were made of, then as now. Within minutes of the raiders' departure, Captain George Conger, formerly commander of Company B of the First Vermont Cavalry (portrayed quite inaccurately by Richard Boone in *The Raid*), organized a posse to capture the raiders and bring them to justice. When Lt. Young, who killed a civilian during the raid, was captured by a Vermont posse, he was almost killed trying to escape. The intervention by a Canadian official who arrived on the scene convinced the angry Vermonters to turn him over to the Canadian authorities to let the law take its course. Although Young was not invited to the 50th-anniversary celebration of the raid in St. Albans in 1904, more than a few of those traumatized during the raid overcame their feelings of anger and not only corresponded with but also met with the current commanding major general of the Kentucky Division of the United Confederate Veterans.

The St. Albans Raid reproduces an illustration in the November 12, 1864, edition of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* showing Cyrus Bishop, a cashier at the St. Albans Bank, being forced to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederate States of America during the raid (p. 106). That event was also depicted in the Hollywood version of *The Raid*. A story that made it into a footnote in *The St. Albans Raiders* by Daniel Rush and E. Gale Pewitt (2008) recounts a meeting between Bishop and Young in Boston in 1908. Bishop told Young, "I took an oath to support the Confederacy and have been unable to make a report about my doings or loyalty to anybody, but today seems a good occasion to report to

you." Young responded with a hearty laugh. Although absent an authoritative source sufficient for Sherburne to include the story in her book, it is a plausible tale of the Vermont character.

CHARLES S. MARTIN

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The Calais Calamity and Other Tales of Wonder and Woe: Writings on Vermont History

By Paul Heller (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014, pp. 260, paper, $15.00).

Paul Heller of Barre ranges far beyond Barre in this third published collection of his newspaper essays and journal articles, mostly written for the *Barre-Montpelier Times Argus*. His *Granite City Tales* (2012) and *More Granite City Tales* (2014) were predecessor volumes. He thus continues a venerable Vermont custom of transforming newspaper columns into book chapters. For example, in 1926 the Charles E. Tuttle Company of Rutland reprinted articles about "Unique Vermonters," previously published in the *Rutland Herald*, in John Parker Lee's volume, *Uncommon Vermont*. Margaret Steele Hard of Manchester published *Footloose in Vermont*, issued by Vermont Books of Middlebury in 1969, containing twenty-two of her *Rutland Herald* columns published in 1939-1940.

Giving history-centered newspaper columns a second life by anthologizing them in books like this one allows readers beyond the circulation area of a Vermont newspaper to access them conveniently. Likewise, two of Heller's twenty-two selections appeared in obscure journals. One about the counterfeiter Christian Meadows, the excellent engraver incarcerated at Windsor Prison, appeared in *Ephemera*; another about the banjo maker Fred Bacon of Brandon and Newfane appeared in *The Old Time Herald*. Two staff members at the Vermont Historical Society (VHS) get recognized by Heller for alerting him to enticing topics: "sometimes the VHS Librarians, Paul Carnahan and Marjorie Strong, pointed me in the direction of scoundrels, disasters, and oddities that were part of the fabric of Vermont's rich history" (p. 4).

A woeful disaster is the source of this book's title: "The Calais Calamity" was the tragic drowning of five Sunday picnickers in 1873. Choosing a localized title for this collection, and embellishing both the front and rear covers with an enlarged map showing the Calais-Woodbury area where

the disaster occurred, may mislead prospective readers into assuming this is not a book that ranges far from where the *Times Argus* delivers newspapers. For Vermont readers living on the west side of the Green Mountains, Simeon Cheney of the Singing Cheney Family of Dorset is here, together with the artist Rockwell Kent, supporting the striking marble workers in Proctor in 1936, the magician Winston Freer of St. Albans, and Welcome Wilson, a commercial poppy grower and opium supply marketer in Monkton Ridge, whom Heller labels a "confidence man" (p. 190) who "met censure and opprobrium wherever he went" (p. 198).

But some annoyances constrain the value of this book. Some of the selections echo essays previously published in *Mischief in the Mountains*, issued by *Vermont Life* magazine in 1970, and Lee Dana Goodman's *Vermont Saints and Sinners: An Impressive Assortment of Geniuses, Nincompoops, Curmudgeons, Scurvy Knaves, and Characters*, issued in 1985. Chester residents dread ongoing retellings of the familiar tale from more than a century ago about Clarence A. Adams, the Chester selectman, legislator, and esteemed citizen who for sixteen years was secretly a thief—a "sticky-fingered phantom," in Goodman's words.

Most frustrating for bibliophiles is Heller's choice not to refer to his sources in footnotes or endnotes. For example, the selection about Melvin Dwinell of East Calais, a Confederate soldier, draws heavily from Harold A. Dwinell's uncited article, "Vermonter in Gray: The Story of Melvin Dwinell," in the July 1962, issue of *Vermont History* (Volume 30, Number 3, pp. 220-237). Additionally, Harold Dwinell is misnamed Howard Dwinell.

Other glitches mar these pieces. The essay about Vermont Congressman Charles A. Plumley of Northfield, recounting his futile red baiting of subversive textbook authors, allegedly corrupting the innocent minds of Vermont schoolchildren, has Admiral George Dewey graduating from Norwich University. Actually, Dewey transferred to the U.S. Naval Academy after two years at Norwich. Zerah Colburn, the math wizard born in Cabot in 1804, could not have gone to Hanover for advice from Dartmouth President Eleazar Wheelock, as asserted, because Wheelock died in 1779.

Avoidable repetitions also sunder the narrative smoothness of these selections. One example in the profile of Thomas Davenport, the "father of the electric car," tells us on page 112 that young Davenport was apprenticed to Enoch Howe, "whose home is now the Williamstown's Ainsworth Public Library." On page 120 we're told a monument to Davenport "stands before the Enoch Howe house, the place where Thomas Davenport served as an apprentice. It is also fitting that the same place is now Williamstown's Ainsworth Public Library."

Heller's *Granite City Tales* contained an index of personal names, as did *More Granite Tales. The Calais Calamity* is not indexed, but this absence is equally true of some prominent volumes in Vermont's historiography, such as Dorothy Canfield Fisher's *Vermont Tradition: The Biography of an Outlook on Life* (1953), Madeleine M. Kunin's *Living a Political Life* (1994), and *The Vermont Encyclopedia* (2003).

CHARLES MORRISSEY

A former director of the Vermont Historical Society, Charles Morrissey has written history-centered columns monthly for The Hardwick Gazette *since 1997.*

Caledonia County

By Delores E. Chamberlain (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2015, pp. 128, paper, $21.99).

It is an old cliché that one picture is worth a thousand words. A tome on any historical topic is greatly enhanced with photographs or illustrations as long as they are accompanied by detailed captions describing the contents. Dolores E. Chamberlain's book, *Caledonia County,* is a rich compendium of photographs, many of them old postcards, which depict a way of life now long gone with enough text to provide the reader with a clear idea of Vermont life at the turn of the last century.

Caledonia County covers an attractive swath of land on the southern edge of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. It ranges from the old manufacturing town of St. Johnsbury to the east to the former granite-processing center of Hardwick to the west, with fifteen other towns in between. Early settlers cleared the once heavily forested land and built a large number of mills and factories along its many surging rivers. Caledonia County is home to Stannard, one of the smallest and most rural towns in the state, as well as to St. Johnsbury, where in 1830 Thaddeus Fairbanks, a storekeeper, invented and patented the world's first platform scale and built a factory to produce them. The factory employed many people for decades before it was sold to Colt Industries, which moved its operation to Beloit, Wisconsin.

Chamberlain is an active local historian and former president of the Sheffield Historical Society. She begins her text with a brief but comprehensive sketch of the history and economic development of Caledonia County. There follow nine chapters, each of which includes photographs from select towns that are geographically proximate. The first

chapter, for example, includes material from Danville, Walden, and Hardwick. There are individual chapters for St. Johnsbury, Lyndonville, and Peacham. Each picture is accompanied by a detailed caption with full explanations as well as the modern history of a building or site, if it is still standing and in use.

The result of this fine work is a detailed portrait of life in Caledonia County from the 1870s through the 1920s. There are scenes of the region's natural beauty, but the focus is on the day-to-day life of Vermonters a century or more ago. We see the massive and rather squalid Ryegate Paper Company in East Ryegate that in 1906 must have polluted the land. We see burnt-out old buildings as well as beautiful structures such as the Fairbanks Museum of Natural History as it looked when presented to St. Johnsbury in 1889. We see men constructing an immense covered bridge in Waterford, a colorful ad for the Ye Olde Brick Tea Shoppe in Lyndon Corner, and children at school. We see the host of the long-gone Thurber Hotel in Danville, the interiors of many general stores, the inside of the South Walden church, men manufacturing butter in East Hardwick, and others cutting and polishing granite in the Woodbury and Hardwick Company sheds.

A careful reading of Chamberlain's *Caledonia County* gives one a very clear and honest portrait of both the beauty of the region as well as the hardships of life at the turn of the last century there. The selection of pictures is excellent. The captions provide ample descriptions of what is shown. The introductory text, while a bit brief, provides sufficient information for any reader not familiar with the region to fully appreciate what the book has to offer. All in all, Chamberlain's work is a noteworthy contribution to the field of Vermont history.

DANIEL A. MÉTRAUX

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From Copperas to Cleanup: The History of the Elizabeth Copper Mine

By Matt Kierstad, (Beacon, N.Y.: Milestone Heritage Consulting, 2014, pp. 64, paper, $18.00).

If you are interested in Vermont's industrial/mining history, this is a book for you. At first glance it seems a coffee-table book: thin, large format, filled with photographs and drawings; yet once into it, the

reader discovers a concise, well-written, and well-organized history of an important chapter of Vermont's history.

The Elizabeth Mine, located in South Strafford just north of White River Junction, operated, off and on, from 1809 to 1958. It was the southernmost of three mines in eastern Vermont that tapped into metal sulfide deposits formed on the ocean floor over 350 million years ago. The ores were created from precipitates spewed from hydrothermal vents at the ocean bottom. These sediments, later metamorphosed by plate tectonics, produced metal sulfide ores of sulfur and many minerals: iron, copper, zinc, lead, gold, and others.

The first surprise: This book is a product of an agreement among the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, and the Vermont Department of Environment Conservation, "to address adverse impacts to historic resources resulting from the cleanup of the Elizabeth Mine Superfund site" (p. 1), as it was designated by the EPA in 2001. Concurrently, the mine was recognized as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A compromise preserved both the ecology and the history.

The second surprise: "Copperas" in the title has nothing to do with copper, but is, in fact, iron sulfate. Copperas is a greenish crystal produced by burning to oxidize the ore, leaching the iron sulfate with water, and evaporating the leachate into crystals. From copperas other chemicals, including sulfuric, nitric, and hydrochloric acids, were produced. It was used for making dyes and inks, red and brown pigments, and blacking wood and leather.

The extraction of copper from the ores paralleled copperas production. While copperas production ceased in 1881, extraction of copper ore increased. Since the concentration of copper in the ore was between 1 and 10 percent, processing facilities were required to concentrate the ore to about 40 percent copper and then it was shipped to smelters in Long Island, New York. In its almost 150 years of existence, the Elizabeth Mine produced over 50,000 tons of copper. By the end of production, the mine consisted of about five miles of tunnels, some as deep as 975 feet below the surface. In 1954-55, production reached 8.5 million tons per year. The mine employed 220 workers and had sales of over $3 million. During these postwar years, the mine was among the top twenty-five copper producers in the U.S. The author does a good job tracing the many companies, leaders, and innovations involved in the mine.

Throughout its history, the waste by-products were disposed of on site. By the time of the final closing, 2.8 million cubic yards of tailing covered a 45-acre area, a quarter of a mile wide along its 150-foot-high

face. Air and rain acting on the sulfides produced sulfuric acid, which, in turn, dissolved metals such as cadmium, cobalt, copper, zinc, and up to 800 pounds of dissolved iron a day, which ran into Copperas Brook. These toxins severely impacted aquatic life in the Ompompanoosuc River, a tributary of the Connecticut River.

In 1980, Congress established the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act to address toxic waste sites throughout America. In 2001, the Elizabeth Mine was listed as a Superfund site. The chapter "Reclaiming the Land" describes the strategies to mitigate the environmental damage. Well-captioned color photographs help the reader understand the measures taken between 2003 and 2010 to clean up the site. The success was evident. By 2013, 99 percent of the iron was removed from the tailings' leachate and the copper in Copperas Brook reduced by 95 percent.

"Recording the History" documents the work of a team of historic resource experts to preserve the history of the Elizabeth Mine at the same time that much of the physical evidence was being destroyed by the clean up. Four pages of line drawings show details of the Vermont Copper Company operations between 1942 and 1958.

One missing element is that there is little detail on the lives of miners and workers in the smelters. Phyl Harmon's documentary video, *Riches & Remains: The Legacy of Vermont Copper Mining* (2013), fills this gap.

Vermont's economic history is more than a story of Merino sheep and dairy cows. Vermont's extractive mining was more than granite and marble. *From Copperas to Cleanup* provides a concise look at another industry, copper mining, important not just to three towns in the Upper Valley, but to industrial America.

ALLEN R. YALE JR.

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CORRECTION

In Tyler Resch's review of *The Vermont Difference* (vol. 83:1), at page 104, line 5, the mention of Lyndon Institute should read Lyndon Teachers College. Our thanks to Beth Kanell for calling this to our attention.

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Recent Additions to the Vermont Historical Society Library

Books

*Budde, William P., *Arlington, Vermont: Its First 250 Years*. Arlington, Vt.: Arlington Townscape Association, 2014. 256p. List: $39.95 (paper).

*Collins, Anne, and Larry Holland, *Bellows Falls, Vermont, through Time, and Surrounding Towns, Villages and Hamlets.* Fonthill Media, 2014. 96p. List: $22.99 (paper).

Fatherley, John A., Vermont Life: *A Retrospective.* Chicopee, Mass.: The author, 2013. 134p. Source: The author, 28 Fredette St., Chicopee, MA 01022. List: Unknown (spiral bound). History of the state magazine.

*French, Susanna H., *Thetford.* Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2014. 127p. List: $21.99 (paper).

*Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, *Lake Champlain.* Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2014. 127p. List: $21.99 (paper).

*Rubin, Edward L., *Vermont: An Outsider's Inside View.* Antioch, Calif.: Fine Arts Press, 2015. 227p. List: $45.00. Photographic portraits of Vermonters.

*Schubart, Bill, *The Lamoille Stories II.* Hinesburg, Vt.: Magic Hill Press, 2014. 132p. List: $15.00 (paper). Stories about rural Vermont characters.

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*Slack, Charles, *Liberty's First Crisis: Adams, Jefferson, and the Misfits who Saved Free Speech*. 340p. List: $26.00. Includes Vermont's Matthew Lyon.

GENEALOGY

Vermont French-Canadian Genealogical Society, comp., *St. Joseph Marriage Repertoire: St. Joseph Co-Cathedral, Burlington, Vermont, 1930-1955*. Burlington, Vt.: Vermont French-Canadian Genealogical Society, 2015. 451p. Source: The publisher, P.O. Box 65128, Burlington, VT 05406-5128. List: $50.00.

ARTICLES

Belcher, Jane, "Elisha, Stephen, Thomas, Isaac, and Samuel: The five probable sons of Elisha Morehouse," *New England Historic Genealogical Register*, 169 (Winter 2015): 16-32. Connecticut and Vermont family.

Fortune, Thomas P., "The Vermont Brigade at Fredericksburg, December 1862," *Fredericksburg History & Biography*, 13 (2014): 9-39.

Hudson, Mark S., "The Great Blizzard of 1888," *Vermont Magazine*, 26, 2 (March/April 2014): 5-6.

_____, "'The Steadfastness of a Free People': Vermont in World War I," *Vermont Magazine*, 27, 3 (July/August 2015): 74-78.

Lertola, Marcia, "How VAST Came To Be," *Snowmobile Vermont* (October/November 2014): 27-34. History of the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers.

*Indicates books available through the Vermont Historical Society Museum Store, www.vermonthistory.org/store.

Letters to the Editor

A Few Lawless Vagabonds

To the Editor:

Ennis Duling, in his review of my book, *A Few Lawless Vagabonds*, takes it that my work is predominantly a biography of Ethan Allen (*Vermont History,* 83: 1 [Winter/Spring 2015]: 89-90). Thus, a few biographical and geographical mistakes are enough to dismiss the book as lacking "the depth of research and the concern for detail necessary to have a major impact."

In reality, the major theme of the book is the unrelenting opposition of Ethan Allen to the power and pretensions of New York, 1770-1784. The culminating episode was the protracted, secret attempt of the Allens in the Haldimand Negotiations to turn Vermont into "a separate Government under the Crown." This is based on exhaustive, detailed research in the Haldimand Papers and is, I believe, the first systematic examination of primary documentation to show that the Allens were utterly serious in their efforts to secure the autonomy of a Greater Vermont. Other contentions are similarly based on primary sources: that Matt B. Jones was quite wrong in his argument that Benning Wentworth's land grants were illegitimate; that the Allens were successful in warding off the enemies of Vermont on all four sides; and that successive Governors of Quebec handled the issue of Vermont and the "Northern Department" with great diplomatic skill and military enterprise. Where Ethan Allen made a mess of things, I say so, in particular that he was not at all a great military commander and that his diplomacy was sometimes arrogant, clumsy, and inept.

None of these aspects of *A Few Lawless Vagabonds* appear in Ennis Duling's review.

David Bennett

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