



America and the State that “Stayed Behind”: An Argument for the National Relevance of Vermont History

The multiple ways in which Vermont has diverged from the national pattern should not be discounted, certainly; Vermont’s peculiarities are, in fact, glaring. For those aspiring to study the state, however, taking an exceptionalist assumption as the point of departure risks losing most of the lessons Vermont can teach the nation about itself.

By PAUL SEARLS

The functioning premise for historians of Vermont should be that understanding Vermont’s story is essential to understanding the larger process that has been United States history. It should be the axiomatic message of Vermont historians that, to come to grips with the mind and soul of America, Vermont must be appreciated both as a place and as an idea. Vermont’s history needs to reach the point where the relevance of its story to America’s general evolution is so obvious and self-evident that it need not be noted. There could be no greater tribute to Tom Bassett, who always saw Vermont in regional and national context.

.....
PAUL M. SEARLS is a visiting assistant professor of history at the University of Vermont. His article “Transition Politics: Vermont, 1940–1952,” with Samuel B. Hand, appeared in *Vermont History* 62 (Winter 1994). He is working on a book about Vermont between 1865 and 1910.

Vermont History 71 (Winter/Spring 2003): 75–87.

© 2003 by the Vermont Historical Society. ISSN: 0042-416; online ISSN: 1544-3043

What is self-evident now for those with a keen interest in Vermont's past, however, is that both scholarly and popular renderings of American development have placed the state on the fringes of the national experience. A tentative hypothesis to begin to explain this disconnection between Vermont's story and the nation's is that historians perceive Vermont as having defied, or even reversed, the process that has been American history. So true is this that the relationship between America and Vermont can be characterized in dialectical terms. As historian Richard Hofstadter famously wrote, America was "born in the country and moved to the city"; Vermont, meanwhile, "stayed behind." America has been about the future; Vermont has been about the past. America has been about what could be; Vermont has been about what was.

For as long as Vermont has had this pre-modern, "unspoiled" image, Vermont historians have been complicit in its construction. They have certainly not been alone. Indeed, the conception of the state as having avoided or reversed national trends has long framed all Vermonters' understanding of themselves as unique. Whether begrudgingly or enthusiastically, Vermonters have drawn much of their sense of horizontal camaraderie—of membership in an imagined community of "Vermonters"—from the state's essential ruralness. The result has been that Vermonters who might disagree about a lot of things have agreed over time, and quite rightly in many ways, that as Ralph Nading Hill put it, Vermont is a state with "a distinctly private flavor."¹ Because Vermont historians and others shaping the state's history and identity have largely emphasized its peculiarities, Vermont's relevance to American history has flowed from its perceived exceptionalism. The multiple ways in which Vermont has diverged from the national pattern should not be discounted, certainly; Vermont's peculiarities are, in fact, glaring. For those aspiring to study the state, however, taking an exceptionalist assumption as the point of departure risks losing most of the lessons Vermont can teach the nation about itself.

Vermont's past argues for relevance on its own behalf. As recent scholarship has continued to erode the exceptionalist paradigm, it has become increasingly clear that Vermont should not be considered marginal to the American story, but instead wholly central to it on the most fundamental levels. The heart of America's move from the country to the city is the story of individuals coping with and responding to capitalist transformation and modernity. Rather than avoiding this experience, Vermont has been comprehensively shaped by it. At the same time, Vermont has been as much an idea as a place. At the state's outset, that idea was that Vermont would be the place where the competing tensions of everyday life, the desire for "Freedom and Unity" simulta-

neously, coexisted comfortably. Because this idea persisted, the meaning various people have attached to Vermont over time has occupied a space at the faultline of the American experience with change.

This argument for greater appreciation of Vermont's intimate relationship with the national experience of becoming modern operates on three levels. First, this appreciation exists in the realm of those outside the state: what outsiders have thought of Vermont, and the meaning they have attached to it. Vermont's national significance also emanates from the actions and ideology of those inside the state, who struggled to construct meaning for the state as a way of understanding their world. Finally, it exists in the dynamic relationship between what various people wanted Vermont to be, and what it actually was.

OUTSIDERS IMAGING VERMONT: THE EQUATION

The argument for the relevance of how Vermont has been seen by outsiders, as an indicator of national evolution, begins with a basic equation. When Americans have been optimistic, their view of Vermont has been pessimistic. Conversely, when America has been a pessimistic nation, popular perceptions of Vermont have grown considerably brighter. This equation is not perfect. It works better for some eras than others, and posits the typical "American" as someone suspiciously likely to be Eastern and middle class. Nevertheless, the equation is an effective organizing principle at widely varied times, including the state's earliest history. The growing feeling in the 1780s among many Eastern gentry that Vermont needed to be politically and religiously "tamed" suggests their retreat from the optimism of the Revolutionary period to the disillusionment and fear of chaos that characterized the Articles of Confederation era. Then, the equation probably becomes confused, as everything else was, during the era of rapid "market revolution."²

Particularly telling for using Vermont to understand America was the transition in how the nation saw Vermont in the Gilded Age and then the Progressive Era. In the Gilded Age, the nation was optimistic—or at least, that can be said about the most "progressive" and modern sections of it, the urban and industrial North. The Civil War seemed to confirm the correctness of the capitalist model for society. The North rushed forward, innovating and changing at a fantastic pace. Though some developments, such as the financial collapse of 1873, severe labor strife, and the onset of segregation, would give Eastern elites reason for pessimism, on the whole the wonders of industrial and scientific development gave Vermont's apparent stagnation comparatively ominous overtones. If not in those exact words, Eastern elites thought, and many

subsequent historians agreed, that Vermont was in a “winter period.”³ The vision of industrious emigrant Vermonters developing the continent, at the head of American progress, made Vermont’s “decline” confounding and troubling. In other parts of the country, being a “Vermont” was widely equated with characteristics most fitted to responding to capitalist imperatives, possessing sobriety, industriousness, reconciliation to time/work discipline, and, not least, the right ethnicity. Colonel W.H. Holabird told the membership of the Pacific Coast Sons of Vermont Club in 1894 that,

In going up and down the State of California, I am proud to say that, wherever I have found a Vermonter, I have found a thrifty man. . . . We were just talking about Vermont before the banquet . . . when we go back there and tell the truth about California, they call us liars. . . . When we talk about a forty thousand acre wheat path . . . some old friends just shake their heads and say, ‘we could hope for better things.’

Holabird concluded by requesting his audience “at the end of this love feast” to write letters inducing resident Vermonters to move to California; anyone doing so “would be doing a good thing for us, and a good thing for his friend.”⁴ Of course, luring away Vermont’s remaining talent was the last thing the resident Vermonters in the audience would have wanted. To the contrary, their chief concern was how to keep the boys at home. That goal was not, however, easily achieved.

The disdain outsiders applied to Vermont’s apparent stagnation made conquering native dissatisfaction no easier. A Chicago newspaper editor and member of the Chicago Sons of Vermont sent Newfane’s 1874 town reunion a letter consoling residents that, while the town had been “too small” and “not wholly the place suited to my aspirations,” they could be “proud of Vermont transplanted to the prairies.”⁵ Emigrants were more ambivalent about those who had stayed behind. The Rev. James Davie Butler, who had emigrated from Rutland to Madison, Wisconsin, said at Rutland’s centennial celebration in 1870 that he foresaw “more and more Rutlanders becoming not only continentals but cosmopolitans, leaving those who will, to sluggardize at home.”⁶ There were many shades of complexity to this outsiders’ belief in where Vermont’s worth lay, and increasingly so as the Gilded Age wore on. The 1893 poem “Sons of Vermont” by Harry C. Shaw was typical of its era in that it reflected the ambivalence felt by those outside the state, about the state. Shaw wrote, “And when a native’s time shall come to die/He longs to go back, and there to lie/Close up where the mountains meet the sky/In little, old Vermont.”⁷ The obvious inference to be drawn from this poem was that Vermont was no place for

healthy, ambitious people to spend the prime productive years of their lives. At the same time, it indicates Americans were developing a more subtle and ambivalent relationship with their own adjustment to mature capitalism. This ambiguity was reflected in the contradictory views harbored by outsiders of Vermont and Vermont residents.

Using Vermont to trace the growth of Gilded Age urban disillusionment with progress requires a word on the designation “Vermonters.” Certainly the historical debate about who was and who was not a Vermonters has often been argued in terms of nativity. Nativity, however, has been only one among a number of ways that Vermonters have defined and argued about the designation. The heart of the matter has always been values. A way to categorize Vermonters in terms other than nativity has been offered by Robert Shalhope in his book *Bennington and the Green Mountain Boys*. Shalhope sees the citizens of Bennington divided into “uphill” and “downhill” factions. These terms can be applied usefully to the whole state, and to eras besides those Shalhope analyzed. The distinction works geographically, but more importantly the differences are ideological and philosophical. Uphill Vermonters are not just rural, but possess a community-oriented way of looking at the world that fosters pre-modern values: informality, parochialism, and an antinomian worldview. Downhill Vermonters, in contrast, possess a modern, systematic, formal, cosmopolitan, atomized way of looking at the world.⁸

Applying this dialectic to how outsiders saw the state yields the observation that, in the Gilded Age, they wanted Vermonters to be downhill, but they wanted Vermont to remain uphill. Ruing the loss of the noble virtues of the agrarian Republic, middle-class Americans wanted to believe that the values and folkways of the old world had somewhere been preserved. Furthermore, many of the most modern-thinking Americans clung to the belief that the virtues and characteristics of the farm were naturally compatible with, and applicable to, the challenges of competing in the modern world. As they grew more pessimistic about their own world, Gilded Age Americans grew more optimistic about Vermont, even if their view of Vermonters was a rather contemptuous vision of decline and enfeeblement.

Significantly, however, the trend of scholarship on rural Vermont paints a quite different portrait from the model of “winter” attached to Gilded Age emigration and rural population diminution. First, those who emigrated from Vermont were not primarily the state’s most “ambitious and climbing stock,” as Lewis Stilwell put it in *Migration from Vermont*.⁹ Instead, they were primarily those most superfluous to the evolving local economy. Second, a range of factors, very much including

the transition to dairying and the nature of the dairying economy, fostered a way of life centered on social harmony and consensus. Some historians, notably Hal Barron, describe it as an authentically “pre-modern” form of social organization in many respects.¹⁰ Third, the cohesiveness and homogeneity of the smallest villages in late-nineteenth-century Vermont were not happenstance. Contrary to contemporary conceptions of rural folk as fraught with “idleness,” rural Vermonters very carefully constructed their communities, imposing a comprehensive set of formal and informal restraints on personal behavior.

The consensus among modernists that there was something gravely wrong with rural Vermont did not go away as the Gilded Age became the Progressive Era. Indeed, in many respects the dour conclusions drawn by middle-class observers grew more insistent as they, in the Progressive spirit, took it upon themselves to remedy rural defects. But in an age of pessimism, urban perceptions of Vermont grew considerably rosier. In the classic interpretation, Progressivism was driven by the anxieties of an increasingly uneasy urban middle class.¹¹ Americans had grown increasingly ambivalent about the efficacy of “progress.” In this context, rural Vermont was appreciated for what it was not. Frank Dillingham, the president of the Pacific Coast Association Native Sons of Vermont, described his birthplace in 1895 as “essentially an American State” because its ethnic homogeneity allowed it to avoid “to a very large degree the disorders too frequent where an inassimilative element is in excess.” Dillingham concluded that Vermont’s value lay in its lesson “that equal rights can best be secured where the little ‘Red School House’ prevails, where their children are taught that this is America and that they are to be good Americans.”¹²

The lesson to be drawn from using Vermont as a barometer of national mood is that the process by which America became modern was fraught with contradictions and confusion experienced by those immersed in the process of modernity. The historical experience has not been *Gemeinschaft* (suggesting an informal, static, rural community) replaced by *Gesellschaft* (suggesting formal, dynamic, urban society) in a linear fashion, as if the modern condition were necessarily a zero-sum game. The two modes of culture can coexist, or even reinforce each other. But even while exalting rural life, modernists have tended to misunderstand it, and even have posed a dire threat to its survival.

VERMONTERS IN MYTH AND REALITY

Vermont’s founders pledged the state to reconciling freedom and unity, the individual and the collective. Over time, Vermonters have applied this search for balance to other contrary aspects of life, such as

preservation and development, or tradition and change. Scholars seeking a historical Vermont in which perfect balance was achieved, however, will be disappointed. They should not be. Vermont's national relevance is found not only in how outsiders imagined it to be pre-modern, but also in how Vermonters struggled with modernity. It is no revelation that Vermont was, in fact, comprehensively shaped by industrialization and capitalist transformation. As T.D.S. Bassett made clear in the 1950s, modernity worked in particular ways in Vermont, but no less profoundly.¹³ The question was never how to avoid modernity, but instead how to negotiate it in a way that best preserved those traditions worth saving. If Gilded Age Vermont was characterized by a vast disconnect between two types of people, the distinction arose not just from two separate bundles of values, but also from two conceptions of the pace at which modernization should take place. No matter how effective they were at constructing their lives as they chose, Gilded Age farmers need to be understood in the context of modernity, as being in close proximity physically, and in ever-closer proximity culturally, politically, and economically, with people who were very unlike them, and with alien institutions.

The mood in the Gilded Age among "forward-thinking" Vermonters was that the logical extension of the typical Vermonters' characteristics, and of Vermont as an idea, was leading the pace of modern progress. This interpretation of Vermont's meaning was drawn logically in their eyes from their reading of Vermont history, and their perception of the achievements of emigrant Vermonters. Because new drilling technology set off "marble mania" in Rutland's marble quarries while so many other Vermont towns languished, optimism boiled over among representatives of Rutland's business interests at the town's 1870 centennial celebration. The celebration concluded with a local minister urging his listeners "to cooperate . . . in promoting the future prosperity of the town, and in making Rutland what her location and great natural resources have designed her to be—one of the most prosperous, thrifty and enterprising inland towns in New England."¹⁴

Gilded Age "downhill" Vermonters considered progress the logical culmination of Vermont as an idea. As a consequence, they generally took an even dimmer view of rural districts than outsiders did. This negative interpretation of rural Vermont was the one adopted by many subsequent historians. What is necessary, however, is almost to start over, and to read rural Vermonters' lives as texts, as stories that they tell about themselves. Doing so casts a considerably different light on rural life nationally, in the context of modernizing forces very close at hand. One representative subject, for instance, is farm implements.

Rural folk did not reject new tools altogether. Instead, they chose the tools they adopted very carefully, adopting only those that did not bring major economic or social disruptions to their communities. The question for rural Vermonters was never to avoid modernity or change, but instead to negotiate it in a way that helped to preserve the characteristics and dynamics of life they valued most.¹⁵

The rural story thus can be interpreted as one of people who were very capable of constructing their own lives as they wished. Other Vermonters, of course, were less sanguine about the choices rural folk made. At the Vermont Dairymen's Association annual banquet in 1891, ex-governor and railroad magnate John Gregory Smith complained to attendees, "There are men in the State, as elsewhere, who continually make efforts to arouse antagonism between the railroads and the farmers, on the ground that one is a grinding monopoly and the other an abused people." Smith offered instead that "relations between the railroads and the farmers should be harmonious," and called agitators "no better than men who seek to break up the domestic relation between man and wife." Smith was articulating a vision of industrial progress reconciled with old virtues preserved in the state, a mutually beneficial, cooperative relationship between tradition and progress. This is also what uphill folk wanted. Yet Smith exhorted them to change their ways in pursuit of that goal, concluding his talk by commanding farmers,

Act like True Vermonters! Arouse within yourselves the energy and force that characterized the Green Mountain boys. Do not waste your time sitting still making complaint of the bad times. Improve your processes. Improve the quality of your animals . . . When you are producing the largest possible amount of butter, from the least possible amount of milk, and are getting a good, rich quality, you may then look for the dawning of a prosperous time.¹⁶

Smith's dream of a modernized countryside was bound to be frustrated, however, if the achievement of that goal entailed changes incompatible with the dynamics of communal life among those with what Hal Barron called "a different, contrary set of values."¹⁷

Tools are a physical example of how Vermont stood at the fault line between the contrary impulses of everyday life. There are other, less tangible ones. Meanwhile, Smith's manipulation of the designation "Vermonters"—his attachment to it of a bundle of values encouraging modernization—is both an old and a contemporary Vermont story. A variety of people have associated the designation "Vermonters" with a way of life more purely American than has been possible to maintain in most other places. When Vermonters debate what they think Vermont should be, they overtly are debating what America could be, in the

same way that outsiders' visions of Vermont are about what their own locale is not.

Americans' general conclusion about what the nation should be, based on the lessons Vermont tells, is that, ultimately, they do not know. As a people, Americans are torn; a deep and abiding ambivalence has been the hallmark of their relationship with progress. As much as studying Vermont in the Gilded Age can yield rich insights into this ambivalence, Vermont's relationship with modernity took on new shades of complexity in the Progressive Era. Even if people like Governor Smith did not reconcile themselves to the choices made by rural folk, there must have been something special about the way of life produced by those choices. After all, Vermonters ideologically similar to Governor Smith were increasingly selling rural life to tourists. As the Progressive Era's middle class grew increasingly uneasy about the benefits of progress, Vermont's apparent backwardness became an asset that more and more could be commodified. Vermont's modernists, determined as they were to make Vermont keep pace with the material progress of the rest of the nation, came to appreciate tourism's possibilities slowly. As it dawned downhill that tourism could help end the state's economic lethargy, cosmopolitan Vermonters, unlike their compatriots outside of the state, became more optimistic. They saw in outsiders' idealization of rural Vermont the path to salvation from the stagnation of "winter." For them, after all, modernization was the logical extension of Vermont as an imagined community. When studied as a story that Vermonters told about themselves, the turn-of-the-century tourism boom entails extraordinary incompatibilities and contradictions. On a basic level, one set of Vermonters was commodifying the "pre-modern" way of life of another set for the consumption of outsiders, in the long-term interest of modernizing the places lauded as "pre-modern." In the same 1895 issue of *The Vermonter* in which Frank Dillingham of the Pacific Coast Sons of Vermont argued that "equal rights can best be secured where the little red School House prevails," Mason S. Stone, state superintendent of education, happily directed his readers to the recent verdict of Rev. Dr. A.E. Winship, editor of the *Journal of Education*, that "No State in the Union has made greater educational progress in the past few years than Vermont."¹⁸

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the notion that Vermont was the location of a successful reconciliation of the competing tensions of life, unsuccessfully achieved elsewhere, grew into sharper focus. Montpelier's Old Home Week brochure for 1901 held an advertisement from a real estate agent which allowed that even "few of our citizens realize . . . the steady and unchecked growth of Montpelier, a

growth that has been and will be steady, constant, sure, a growth that comes not only from Montpelier's importance as a business trading center, offering every inducement to the enterprising merchant and to the manufacturer." Montpelier's promise was the product of it having "every advantage and none of the disadvantages of other places." Among these advantages was that it was "a city of happy homes and a prosperous people, picturesquely located among the green hills of a peaceful, fertile valley, with scenery unequalled in its quiet charm. . . ."19 A promotional brochure published nine years later by the Woodstock Village Improvement Society described a town that "wears still its old-time country dress of living green" and "still clings to the old-time village life," yet had "quietly taken to itself the conveniences and comforts of modern life."²⁰ As some contemporary observers might conclude, in the long run, commodifying tradition to the end of achieving modernity serves to destroy the very thing, the "Vermont way of life," being sold. In the dawning recognition of diminishing returns, Vermont's contemporary identity truly originated. Vermont's relevance to the national story lies in the convergence in Vermont of modernity's consequences and a compelling pre-modern identity.

REVEALING TRUTH, APPRECIATING MYTH: VERMONT AND CURRENT HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PROGRESS

Vermonters' appreciation of diminishing returns, both environmentally and socially, came slowly, with difficulty, and in instructive ways. The urge to balance effectively progress and tradition has unfolded as a process of evolution in Vermont. That process reveals experiences that are central to almost every important way historians seek to understand America. Three areas, in particular, need great exploration.

First, at the heart of Vermont's story, if it is primarily a pursuit of balance, is an understanding of how capitalism has shaped people, and how people have shaped capitalism. Vermont's story illuminates how the historical experience has not been a matter of tradition being replaced by progress, or community replaced by society, in a linear manner. Joseph S. Wood's recent book *The New England Village* explores how Vermonters attempted to reconcile progress with tradition in the ante-bellum years. Dona Brown, in *Inventing New England* is among those who have probed this same reconciliation in a later time. Both would agree, I assume, that those eras, and every other one, can be more deeply investigated to understand how Vermont reflects America's adjustment to modernity. In particular, the New Deal era demands a new book-length analysis to replace Richard Munson Judd's wonderful *New Deal in Vermont*, which is more than twenty years old. To study

Vermont in the New Deal is to probe new ways that normal, everyday people in America “made a new deal” for themselves.²¹

Second, Vermont has many more instructive lessons to share about humanity’s historical relationship with nature. Vermont’s environmental history recently has been probed brilliantly in both regional and national context in Richard W. Judd’s *Common Lands, Common People*. Judd argues that the modern ethic of conservation originated among people in rural communities who sought to balance their use of natural resources. We need to understand better the process that led us to the situation today where large-scale conservation efforts, like the Champion Land Deal, are largely the doing of people outside the affected communities, often disgruntling those inside them. A similarly complex process has been at work in agriculture: in contrast to the 1880s, today’s “uphill” people farm in “downhill” ways (by necessity, scientifically), while “downhill” people farm in “uphill” ways (organically and with an ethos of replenishment and sustainability). By understanding how different Vermonters have historically decided what was wise use of land, the general evolution of America’s relationship with nature can be better understood.²²

Third, Vermont needs to be studied through the lens of recent theories about the nature of frontiers, which depict them not as the edge of civilization, but instead the gray areas between different cultures and competing uses of natural resources. Particularly attractive as a focus for scholars on Vermont as a frontier is the northern, and particularly northwestern, region of Vermont. This Yankee-Quebecois frontier has historically been the site of ambiguous and contested conceptions of identity.²³ Over time, Vermonters as a whole have hotly contested the boundaries of their imagined community, arguing over who has deserved general recognition as “Vermonters.” In trying to better understand the ways the designation “Vermonters” has been interpreted, reinterpreted, manipulated, and contested, we can better learn how identity is constructed not just here, but elsewhere. Ultimately, the distinction between Yankee and non-Yankee was always socially constructed. Deborah Clifford has already probed the “borderland” that was northern Vermont in the 1840s and 1850s through the life of Abby Hemenway. Much more scholarship is needed on Vermont as a cultural and economic frontier.²⁴

CONCLUSION

In a multitude of ways, Vermont’s history has compelling things to say about a fundamental problem all Americans have faced: How can a balance be found between the competing attractions of the past and fu-

ture? As it was fifty or a hundred or two hundred years ago, the aspiration to effectively, or at least for appearance's sake, reconcile progress and tradition is Vermonters' story. Recent promotional literature from the Smuggler's Notch Chamber of Commerce describes the resort as a place where "outstanding natural beauty, great recreational opportunities, and unspoiled Vermont village combine with modern shopping and services, lodging and restaurants . . . to provide visitors a unique experience." To be sure, the authenticity of that description of balance deserves critical analysis. But the higher truth is that, in the end, what the nation wants Vermont to be, and what different kinds of Vermonters want the state to be, are not necessarily contradictory, or even that different. The paths to achieving balance in Vermont can be not only different, but also conflicting. In the end, outsiders have read into Vermont the same experiment that Vermonters have pursued since they committed themselves to "Freedom and Unity." Dorothy Canfield Fisher wrote from a particular perspective, but her statement in *Vermont Tradition* that "Vermont tradition is based on the idea that group life should leave each person as free as possible to arrange his own life" transcends cultural, temporal, and geographic boundaries.²⁵

Vermont, as a place and as an idea, is thus about balancing the contrary impulses of everyday life: one theoretically can have individuality and fulfilling community life simultaneously. One can have the benefits of modernity alongside the benefits of venerable rural splendor, not just visually but in modes of life. One can have progress and tradition, not only simultaneously, but combined in a way that they reinforce each other. Life need not be a zero-sum game. Attempting to reconcile the benefits of change with the community axiom is Vermont's oldest story. In the present as in the past, all Vermonters want the same things: tradition and progress, development and preservation, freedom and unity. Vermont's history is not the story of different goals, but the story of different paths to the same goal. For all the state's failings over time in actualizing that goal, there are in Vermont's history great lessons for the nation on how to begin.

NOTES

¹ Ralph Nading Hill, *Contrary Country: A Chronicle of Vermont* (New York: Rinehart, 1950), 4.

² Historians have argued for the relevance of Vermont's experience to national evolution in the Jacksonian Era better than for any other era. The point still needs to be emphasized, however, that upstate New York and Vermont, particularly its western half were part of a single, coherent experience.

³ The classic text on the "winter thesis" is Harold Fisher Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England: Its Social and Economic History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936).

⁴ *Souvenir of "Vermont Day": California Midwinter International Exposition, San Francisco, March 3, 1894* (San Francisco: G.W. Hopkins, 1894), 20.



⁵ *Centennial Proceedings and Other Historical Facts and Incidents Relating to Newfane, the County Seat of Windham County, Vermont* (Brattleboro: D. Leonard, 1877), 115.

⁶ Chauncy Kilborn Williams, *Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of Rutland, Vermont* (Rutland: Tuttle and Company Printers, 1870), 48.

⁷ Jacob G. Ullery, *Men of Vermont: An Illustrated Biographical History of Vermonters and Sons of Vermont* (Brattleboro: Transcript Publishing Company, 1894), 365.

⁸ Robert Shalhope, *Bennington and the Green Mountain Boys: The Emergence of Liberal Democracy in Vermont, 1760–1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁹ Lewis Stilwell, *Migration from Vermont* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1948), 52.

¹⁰ Hal Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth-Century New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

¹¹ For a recent summary of this analysis of Progressivism, see Lewis Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890–1914* (New York: Longman, 2001).

¹² *The Vermonter*, 1:1 (August 1895), 5.

¹³ Thomas Day Seymour Bassett, “The Urban Penetration of Rural Vermont” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1952).

¹⁴ Williams, *Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of Rutland*, 94.

¹⁵ For an excellent recent work on rural choices about tools, see Allen R. Yale, *While the Sun Shines: Making Hay in Vermont, 1789–1990* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1991).

¹⁶ Vermont Dairymen’s Association, *Report of the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Vermont Dairymen’s Association* (1891), 124–25.

¹⁷ Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind*, 131.

¹⁸ *The Vermonter*, 1:1, 8.

¹⁹ Old Home Week Committee, *Souvenir Program: Old Home Week, Montpelier, Vermont, August 12th to 17th* (1901), 7.

²⁰ *Woodstock, Vermont: A Few Notes, Historical and Other, Concerning the Town and Village* (Woodstock: Elm Tree Press, 1910), 5. Another section of the pamphlet, titled “Modernity Added to Repose,” claimed that, “Modern Woodstock, as it may be called, has kept pace with changing conditions and with advances in comforts and conveniences for country life.”

²¹ Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995); Joseph Sutherland Wood, *The New England Village* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Richard Munson Judd, *The New Deal in Vermont: Its Impact and Aftermath* (New York: Garland Press, 1979).

²² Richard W. Judd, *Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Northern New England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

²³ Looking back on the Civil War era from 1910, a number of the Yankee veterans contributing to Ralph Orson Sturtevant’s *History of the 13th Regiment of Vermont Volunteers*, a preponderantly northern-Vermont unit, remembered the line between Yankee and non-Yankee as having been blurry. Quebec native Peter Bovat, who had moved to the state when young, was described as “what was sometimes called a Yankee Frenchman.” Ralph Orson Sturtevant, *History of the 13th Regiment of Vermont Volunteers* (Montpelier: self-published, 1910), 223.

²⁴ Deborah Pickman Clifford, *The Passion of Abby Hemenway: Memory, Spirit, and the Making of History* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 2001). On the need to apply Benedict Anderson’s construct of “imagined communities” to American regions, see Edward L. Ayers, et al., *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1996).

²⁵ Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *The Vermont Tradition: The Biography of an Outlook on Life* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953), 8.