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PROCEEDINGS  
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*Historical Society*



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From Tunbridge, Vermont, to London, England—

The Journal of James Guild

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old duds. There was sixteen passengers and not a face that I had ever seen. I thought as they were all acquainted, and I a perfect stranger I would form some acquaintance with them when we sat down to eat. I had some very fine wine which sat behind an opposite Gentleman. I very surly accosted him, Sir, said I, will you be so kind as to reach one of those bottles to me? He very abruptly replied, No, call a servant. I very pleasantly replied, there is no need of that I will get it my self. After I got it, I asked him if he would take a glass of wine with me. This mortified his feelings, but he refused and other gentlemen drank, except one who was this Gentlemans friend. He very importantly said he thought it would make good vinegar and put it on his vituals. This was to big an insult to put up with. I kept my temper, and let them know how I felt by sudenly leaving the table. I went up on deck and told the Captain that I should have to bore a hole in that fellows Jacket for insulting me. The Captain informed him of this and he expected a chalinge as soon as we came ashore. This worried him, but I said nothing to him, appeared very indifferent to him, and Independant to all. After a few days had elapsed this young man thought seariously on the subject and asked my pardon, and after that we were good friend.

The fourth day after we had been on board, one of the passengers got drunk and was on deck at supper, and as I had never been sociable with then, and siasick I did not go down, and therefore knew whether he was on deck. After a short time a contention rose. The young man who was drunk said they had cheated him out of his supper and that they never caled him. Here was a division, and some thought he had eat his supper, and others not. An aged Gentleman standing by says here is a Gentleman who knows, and we will leave it to him. Then the question was put to me, and I Says Gentleman, I will take my oth that he was on deck at supper time, and his friend said I take my oath that he was not. This started my dander and, I say then Sir you take a fals oath. This stoped his mouth, and we never spoke that night. He got up the next morning and was very pleasant, and I pased it all over a we were friends. In the course of five days I found every on on board was my best friend. They found by conversing with me that I had been quite a traveler, and when I spoke of any person whom I was acquainted, I would always mention some big caricter to make them think I was respected among respectable people and soon we arived at Newburn, N. C.

### *His Sole Object was to Make Money*

Now my sole object was to make money. I cared not for this society, nor friendship any more than to have them treat me with politeness, and I do the same to them. I commenced my profession and soon found encouragement. I spent 4 months here and in that time I had cleared my expenses and made \$400. All went on peacefully with me I had as much Society as I wanted, the best the place afforded. I became acquainted and intimate in the Clergys family, who of course were respected. Then when I would to leave Town, it so hapened that they went to Washington the same day I wanted to go myself. They introduced me to the first families in that place and immediately my friends were numerous and my business very good. Society was rather broken up and although every prospect of success looked dubious to me, but they entered into the spirit of the thing, and I made money here. As soon as I found my business dull I was off.

In Washing I boarded at one Dr. Telfares, where I had one of the sweetest homes I ever had in my life. His family was modest virtuous and esteemed; they were prudent discreet and reserved with dignity and respected; they were good sensible and indulgent, and were beloved and adored by their friends. Such families as this is rare. They can make a home for a stranger. While I was in this place a Gentleman of great wealth who lived about fifty miles in the Country on my way to Tarborough was so pleased with my miniatures offered to carry me to his house, and from thence when I pleased, if I would go to his house and paint his family. I accepted his offer and went. Here I spent a fortnight in the most agreeable manner. Every day we were sporting with the hounes, hunting rabbits, etc. He was a young Man about my age, (his name Ashly Atkinson,) then I went to Tarborough.

Here I staid about 3 weeks and made a little cash and then I was off from this to Fautville where I spend three weeks. My whole aim was to make money. I did not form any acquaintance but made my business my study. After this, I went to Wilmington. Here I spent about 4 weeks and wound up my business for N. Y. This of all places is one of the worst for a Young man of a weak mind, but a strong mind might learn the weakness and folly of Man. The Young Gentleman appear to be destitute of that society which so much polishes the young mind (I mean the Ladies). Their time is

mostly spent at a nine pin ally and a place of disipation. I took no part in their mode of spending their time. My object was money, and when I had settled up my concerns, I found I had made one Thousand dollars from, Oct, untill June. Now I have surmounted the great difficulty I so long sought. I loved my friends my dear Mother and Sister & but three years had pased, and I had not seen her.

### *He was Thinking of Home*

My whole happiness was in anticipating the pleasure I should receive in visiting them. I engaged my passage for New York. We had a tedious passage of 11 days, the most of the time I was sick, and how sensibly could I then feel what it was to enjoy a home and a fire side. I thought if I could once get a shore I would never venture at sea again, but when interest calls I forget these ideas. I landed safe in N. Y. I had 4 Hundred dollars in the bank and \$1000, which made \$1400. Now I felt as though I could go home and see my friends in the caricter of an independent Gentleman, and something to foot the bill. I always bare in mind, Shoemaker go not above your last. I was now worth about, \$2000, and by good conduct my profession would always furnish me with the best society. I spent eight or ten weeks, in the city to get ready and to receive a little instruction from Mr Rodgers, one of the best miniatures Painters in the City. While in this time I was painting myself and putting what I learnt into practice.

I became very intimate with a young man by the name of Low who was going to see his friend about at Hingston about 70 miles from N Y, after first going to albany with a young Lady whom he was engaged to be married. I made my calculation to go at the same time. We went to Albany together and put up at the house. Here we staid about one week. We ware welcome visitors at this young Ladies. Friends where there was also, a young Gentleman and and two Ladies which mad us one a piece. Their Names ware Anersleys, we spent our time in walking the Streets and the surroung suburbs where they ware filed with beautiful groves. What what pleasant times ware these, I became very much attached to this family, though we had but a short acquaintance. This young man and myself, became so intimate that nothing would do but I must go home with him and stay one week. Although it was going 60 miles out of the way, I consented, and we set off for kingston. When we arived at his

Mothers I found a Mother and three Daughters and a young Lady who was their Cousin, the Mother was one of loveliest women I ever knew. Her daughters were the most amiable, and they received me as cordially as an old friend being friend of her Son.

But the Cousin more particularly took my fancy. Her conversation, like her countenance, is compounded of likeness, sensibility and delicacy. She enlivens without dazzling and entertains without overpowering contented to please. She has no ambition to shine. She has rather a playful gaiety, and I have seldom met with a truer taste of inoffensive wit. I spent one week with them, many pleasant weeks we had together, and learning that she was a going to be in N. Y. on a visit about the time I should return, I anticipated some pleasant walks with her on my return. The daughters were equally amiable in the little family all seemed to be estimable uniform and consistent, but in such a happy circle the time soon passes away, and I took my leave of them and returned to Albany from thence I crossed the green mountains and returned once more to my beloved friends, in Vt.

### *He is Home Again*

I had been absent from them three years, and for two years I had never heard from them nor they from me. I would not write them, because I had failed in business, and unless I could go home in style. I surprised them all very much, for I could go home with my pockets well lined, and of what a happy time I spent with them. I could embrace my dear Mother and Sister with an affectionate kiss, and embrace in my arms, that Mother who watched over my youthful days, and can I Her guardian care forget, nor her my father through bliss or while remembrance shall retain it quiet.

I soon paid my old Master a visit. The family welcomed me with joy. They all seemed pleased to see me, that dear family of, how I love them, four Daughters whom I used to carry in my arms. The oldest, is now about sixteen. Ever since I first left them, she never saw me return to pay them a visit but she would with joy, and when I leave them, She would cry with grief. She has always held the nearest and dearest affections of my heart. With her I had many a sweet and pleasant ride. It used to seem rather odd to see my old Master, go out and tackle my horse and Carriage for me to ride but it was right. I had to tackle his long enough to pay for it. And writing about from one house to another and from town to Town I

spent two months. in the most agreeable maner. How changed the sun seven years before that I was Subject to my masters will, and tied to the hoe and harrow. Now I could write in my carriage, and ask no man, any favors. I had never done any work since I left him, and had become so accustomed to dressing in stile and keeping Stilish company, it seemed very odd to return to my friends who live as I used to with a tow Shirt and frock on with a beard a week old. The young Ladies that I used to think so very nice now look to more like servants Girls. In the stile I had been living and society that I associated with had accustomed me to treat such as was not able to dress in stile at all times and have the title of Ladies and Gentlemen, with indifference, and never thought them companions for me; but when I saw so much harmony existing in their little family circles, the strong attachments they held for each other, how happy they were in, spending their time in industry, contented to please, no ambition to shine, I was ready to exclaim, give me domestic happiness. I could not help but admire them, and stronger attachments I have never seen, neither felt in those circles where they could dress in stile every day After having made my visits to all my friends finding them all well, I began to feel a desire to get back again to N. Y. where I could enjoy my usual occupation and visiting those families who have daughter that play so beautiful on the pianifort, and where there is constantly some new thing to attract the eye and attention.

The country will do for a while but, soon becomes gloomy for an idle man. Now I must part with the dearest friends on earth, a here I went to bid them adieu, the oldest daughter of my Master said she was not going to be so foolish, as to cry this time, but after I got my horse harnised and ready for a start, I found her missing. I found her in the other room, crying, and the little Sisters, accompanied her. Dear objects of my affections, 'tis had to part with friends you love so dear But the best friends must Part.

I bid them an affectionate farewell; then I went to my Mothers and after a short time, I bid them Farewell. While here I had some of the most delightful rides I ever had, with a lovely young Lady, half sister to my Brothers wife. She possessed all the qualities necessary to make a man happy in Her society, But as lovely as she was I must leave her and all the rest of my friends or I should not be able to satisfy my ambition to first visit the south and from thence to Euroup. What seemed surprising to me more than any thing else was the little affection they seemed to show each other. My Brothers and Sister

never seemed to embrace my Mother with an affectionate kifs, and yet in their deportment they Showd the sincerest friendship.

### *He Goes to Boston and New York*

I soon bid them farewll and started for Boston. On my arrival in this City I had letters of introduction in people of respectability who treated me with the greatest politeness and attention. They insisted on my taking my things at their house and make it my home which I did, and and I had many an agreeable walk with a young Lady of the family. They took every pains to show me all the Curiosities of the City, and after spending one week I started by the way of providence to the City of N. Y.

When I returned to N. Y. I met with two of these young whom I had previously visited with, the Brother to one and Cousin to the other. This Cousin and myself had many a pleasant wride, and walks together. She is one of the most inteligent and agreeable Young Ladies I ever met with. An old widower tried to court her for a wife, but as she was completly discusted with such an Idea, and the family where she staid was anxious, for he was a great friend of thers, that, agreeable to her, I would come and take her away and wait on her at all places of amusements. When we mearily wanted to take a walk, we would always substitute some other place, that we would visit. I passed away my time very agreeably. She had friends in green bush, and this afforded me a fine opportunity to enjoy myself.

I took my horse and Chair and went after her. This was about four miles from the City. After visiting around with her friend we took a wride to Gravis and, a fashionable place of resort on the sea shore, with her and many other friends whom I was acquainted. In this way I spent my time untill Oct. when I provided myself with neccessary articles for my profession in Charleston, S. C. This I have started on a cruise to make money, thinking that I should be able to make money enough in course of the winter to take a trip to Euroup.

### *He Goes to Charleston*

Now I enter the ship, for Charleston. We had an astonishing quick passage of 70 hours, distance, 700, miles 60 passengers on board, I was sick all the way and made myself a stranger to them. It was not known to the passengers whether I was a painter or a tinker, but

after I got established in Charleston, they came one after another and to their astonishment they found me to be a fellow passenger. After a short time I found a little more Stile was necessary in order to get in with the more stilish part of the community. I rented three rooms in an Elegan house, we'll furnished one for painting and another to receive company and Exhibited Some of my finest production at the window. For a short time I found I began to have visitors, and by businefs increased very fast.

In order to get businefs from the most wealthy people it becomes necessary to be noticed among them. Being a Stranger I had to do this, by my own merit and genius. To affect this, it becomes necessary to pay great attention to my drefs and address. I let no man ride a better horse than myself, drefs a little better the most of of them. I soon became acquainted and enjoyed myself very well for about 7 months, made \$13,000 and owned my businefs. The Slaves in this City are treated as well as they can be consistently in a Slave holding state. What is most astonishing to me is that the Servants, many of them, are as white as their Masters and no dout many of them are manufactured by them. The country about Charleston is low and marshy and very unhealthy. The best water they have is rain water which is mostly drank. The streets are very narrow and but few of them paved. The inhabitants, many of them, are poor and proud which is a double curse. They are maintained by the income of a few Slaves, and live from hand to mouth.

This is thought by many to be a good place to find a good wife, But my maxim is that a portion in a wife is better than a portion with her. I do not want a Hellin, a St. Cecilia or a Madam Dacur, yit she must be elegant or I should not love her; Sensible or I should not respect her; prudent or I could not confide in Her; well informed or she could not Educate my Children; Well bred or She could not Entertain my friends; Pious or I should not be happy with her, for the delightful hope that she will be a companion for Eternity. Of how much is requisite to make a happy companion; the ornaments which decorate do not support the edifice. Do not indulge romantic idear of super human existence; remember that the fairest creature is a pater creature.

#### *He Sails to Liverpool*

Now then I go on board the ship Edward bound to Liverpool, now all the former pleasures I have spent in the sweet society of my rela-

tives and friends, all hover around my heart while I look and gaze to see the last tints of my native shore, but I am in pursuit of not only fame but fortune. Soon I began to suffer with seasickness, and while rowling and tumbling in my burth I would often grown within myself and wish I had never left my native Shore. Soon the sea began to rowl and tumble her waves together while the tempest lowers. Fearfully the vivid lightnings and the rowing thunder and harrow my sorrow. Oh what would I give to set my foot once more on my native land, but soon, the sun is reversed and a calm ensued. Here in the dead sea without a friend to console me, I would sit and meditate upon my former friends. Soon we caught a porpors which waid about 200 lb. This was a little amusement for a while but soon passed away and my days was anxiously spent. Look with anxiety for freedom from this, lonely birth for unfortunately, when I left Charleston I was under the necessity of taking my passage on board a common, merchant vessel, and unfortunately the Captain was a man of a penurious mind and in about 17 days, we ware out of butter sugar and potatoes. Our living was mostly salt codfish, and I got so tired of it I thought I should almost Starve, in a little compact cabin half fitted with cotton which created a staunch smell. oh how much I under went.

But after a long time of twenty two days we came in sight of the shores of Ireland, and a fish boat came along side with fish, and I had not had any thing that was good for so long a time. I began the Captain to buy some fish. He bough enough for one meal, and I told him that we had not had any thing to eat for so long a time that we must get more, and but long persuading he ofered, a bottle of rum for another another fish. The boat man consented and instead of one brought on board three fine cod, and supposing the Captain would be generous with them, but he being so small refused to give them any more and retired to the cabin. I felt so greatful for the favour that, I wint down and told the Captain I would give them a bottle of my Liquor. The Captain very abruptly said you shant but I will if I like, said I, and after a few words of this sort had pased, I being rather angry, replied, you convince me that I have no wright and I will not, and while I insisted I had a wright to do what I pleased with my own, he insisted that he was the Captain and I had no wright to give them without his permission, and although I bought it for my private use that he had a write to do what he pleased with it. This raised my ambition and I caught hold one my bottles and told

him I would let him know that I had a wright to do what I pleased with my own, said that I would give them two to pay for his insult. I then took two bottles and gave them while he looked on and saw I was very angry and being a little vext, (or a good deal) I told him I would bolt it out of the Cabin windo before he should have it; And out of the windo went a bottle. The Capt found I would not put up with his meannefs and very quietly sat down to dinner and I gave the Boat men two bottles and we had fish for some time.

A tremendous gale sit in and we ware fourteen days before we could get up to Liverpool. I wint ashore and viewd the coal mines, saw the poor people at work, got one of the men one side and learnt from him how hard they had to work for a few Shilling a week; and after much fatiage we arived in town. Here I amused myself for a short time, found the place very agreable, had a letter of introduction to a jew, but instead of his being of service to me, he jewd me out of a few pound. Cut him at once; Visited all the places of curiosity; and started for London.

#### *He Goes to London*

Got an outside scet so as to see the country. Breakfast ready, stage stop, very dilatory in bringing it in. At last in came a cold chicken. Just as the horn blew to be off paid my reckning. Caught a half chickin in my fist; Not agoing to loose my breakfast fir the company quite amused, and away we went. Stopped to dinner, eat very harty, only just change enough to pay my reckning, no sixpence left for the servant; Servant very impotent; No sixpence for me, sir. Do I ow you any thing, Sir; it is devilish hard that I must pay 18 shilling a week for my situation and no body give me any thing. That your business and if you say anything more to me, I will snub your nose, sir, and away we went. The gard man and waiters cost me more than any passage in the stage; drove into London, put up at the Swans two Weeks, found the, faire very high to stay. I soon got my rooms and boarded myself.

#### *He Commences his Profession as an Artist*

I commenced my profession as an artist; I then delivered my letters of introduction; and met with great hospitality, was invited to dine; and became very intimate with Mr Bird. I found him a most

hospitable fellow and had a most amible wife in his family. I spent many an hour very pleasantly. I likewise became acquainted with Mr Cethcart; and immediately became acquainted with the most eminent Artist in the City; I was introduced into a club of artist where they met once a week for the purpose of painting naked figures; for the purpos of learning the human figure; the first subject we had was a young lady, stript to the beef and placed on a pedistal, and we twenty Artists sitting round her drawing her beautiful figure, perfectly naked; Se Sie—————

*[The journal ends with "Se Si" and a dash nearly two inches long. The length of the dash is suggestive of various interpretations, and the editor has a haunted feeling that he should recognize the implication in "Se Sie," but his professional training has inhibited his zest in guessing. Perhaps some reader, free from inhibitions, may be able to finish the tantalizing phrase that expired in the expressive dash. Ten blank pages follow in the journal, and one wishes that Mr. Guild had continued his story, but, aside from the wish, one must recognize the fact that the peddler's wanderings were over. Editor]*

## POSTSCRIPT

There is a sound basis for the assumption that many Vermont peddlers did not remain peddlers, and the various gradations through which Mr. Guild moved on into more lucrative lines of activity can be duplicated in the known history of other Vermont tinkers and peddlers; so the journal becomes, in essence, a type document which reveals the essential outlines of the progression into prosperity or into oblivion of the peddling fraternity.

Such data as I have been able to find with the assistance of Miss Lawson, our librarian and curator, indicates that James Guild was born in 1797, in Halifax, Vermont, the son of Nathaniel Guild and Helen (Larrabee) Guild, who was born in Hatfield, Massachusetts, about 1769. According to Charles Burleigh [*The Genealogy and History of the Guild, Guile, and Gile Family*. By Charles Burleigh. Portland, Me. Brown, Thurston and Company. 1887.], Mr. Guild, the peddler of Tunbridge, won in later years several medals in Europe for superior portrait and miniature painting. We note through the journal his more or less constant reference to periods of ill health; and Mr. Burleigh states that the painter's last years were spent in the West Indies where he evidently sought for the vitality that he could not find in northern climates. Again according to Mr. Burleigh, Mr. Guild died in New York, about 1841, while returning to his home in Springfield, Vermont.

Mr. Guild was married to Maria Phelps, but the date of the marriage is not known. After his death, the widow educated the children in Michigan, returned to Lebanon, New Hampshire, and died at an advanced age.

The information that Mr. Burleigh gives us about the children suggests again the old emphasis on the vigorous, adventuresome stock from which so many of the peddlers and early wanderers came. One of the children, Simon Cornelio, a brilliant scholar, was graduated at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was preparing for the ministry. He enlisted as captain of Company A, 8th Michigan Volunteers, and was killed at James Island, S. C., June 16, 1862. Another son became a jeweler in Oakland, California; another went to Oregon. So as we close the picture, we see once more how far the Tunbridge peddler wandered in his own right and in his kin from the little Vermont village in the "green mountains."

A. W. P.