

History Connections

Vermont Historical Society

News & Notes

Winter 2011 / Volume #5 / Number 2



Vermont Historical Society
60 Washington Street
Barre, Vermont 05641-4209

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1771 Map Shows Vermont's Disputed Origins

The Vermont Historical Society has acquired an important map illustrating the conflict between New York and New Hampshire in the early 1770s over land that would later become Vermont. The map, in clear black ink on vellum, was drawn in 1771 by surveyor Benjamin Stevens to delineate plots of land in the town of Newbrook that had been parceled out to members of the gentry by Lt. Gov. Cadwallader Colden of New York. It is an example of New York's attempts to lay claim to land that was already granted by New Hampshire's governor, actions that eventually led to armed conflict in the disputed territory. (For additional information about early land grants in Vermont, please see the article on page 2 of this newsletter).

The map was purchased with money from the Richard J. Fowle Fund, established over 40 years ago for the purchase of pre-Civil War documents, as well as a generous contribution from VHS Trustee J. Brooks Buxton of Jericho.

Paul Carnahan, librarian of the Vermont Historical Society, says that the map is a beautiful example of 18th-century map-making.



Newbrook, New York, a 'paper town' that included present-day Barre and parts of Berlin and Williamstown.

Because it was rendered on vellum instead of paper, the map has withstood the trials of time. "We have one other map in the collection that shows a New York patent," said Carnahan, "It is an 1851 copy of a 1771 map on paper and is in very poor condition. This is the only map that I know of in Vermont that shows a New York patent with such clarity," he said.

Newbrook encompassed an area that now includes Barre and Berlin, as well as a portion of Williamstown. The newly acquired

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History Connections is published four times a year by the Vermont Historical Society.

The Vermont Historical Society engages both Vermonters and "Vermonters at Heart" in the exploration of our state's rich heritage. Our purpose is to reach a broad audience through our outstanding collections, statewide outreach and dynamic programming. We believe that an understanding of the past changes lives and builds better communities.

Executive Director: Mark S. Hudson
Editor: Julie Nelson
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Vermont History Center
60 Washington Street, Barre, VT
802-479-8500

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Wednesday 9am to 8pm
Second Saturday each month
9am to 4pm
802-479-8509

Library admission:
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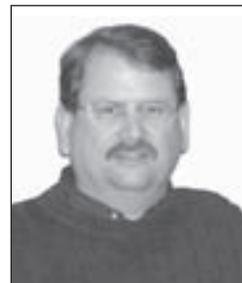
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Students, children, seniors: \$3
Members & children under 6: Free
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vhs-info@state.vt.us

From the Director

Celebrating Vermont's Semiquincentennials



During the next four years, local history will be showcased as towns throughout Vermont celebrate the 250th anniversary of their charters. Over 100 towns will experience their "semiquincentennial" between July 4, 2011 and June 15, 2014. These events will commemorate the actions of Benning Wentworth, the First Royal Governor of New Hampshire, who issued 129 township charters in present-day Vermont between 1749 and 1764. Most were issued during the years 1761–1764, with over half of those during 1761.

Wentworth's New Hampshire charters were disputed by New York, causing King George III in 1764 to decree that the Connecticut River was the eastern boundary of New York. This in effect ended Wentworth's issuing of town charters in the region and opened the door to further disagreements with New York over this disputed territory, as New York began to issue

town charters, including one for the town of Newbrook mentioned in the cover article. Landowners in New Hampshire grant towns defended their claims and resisted the effort of New Yorkers to charter new towns, leading to instances of violence and the rise of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys. As a condition of Vermont's admission as the 14th State in 1791, New York relinquished its claims to the New Hampshire charter towns in Vermont. Although with some name changes and boundary adjustments, most of these towns endure to this day.

In an effort to promote the development of meaningful semiquincentennial commemorations throughout the state, the Vermont Historical Society has partnered with the League of Cities and Towns, the Department of Tourism and Marketing and the Division for Historic Preservation to create the "Semiquincentennial Toolkit." This document provides historical background, a list of the towns with 250th anniversaries during the next four years, over a dozen ideas for celebratory and documentary projects, and tips on marketing events and programs. It also encourages organizations and agencies in each town to cooperate in the planning of commemorations and celebrations, and includes ideas for projects that promote collaboration among towns in a region.

I am pleased that many towns have plans underway, as was in evidence with the many calls received during my January 19 appearance on VPR's Vermont Edition. Countywide planning efforts are taking place as well, including one in Addison County that will promote collaboration among over a dozen towns celebrating their 250th during the next three years.

These events, along with projects commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Vermont's role in the Civil War, are certain to place Vermont history in the spotlight during the next four years. We are pleased that the VHS is playing a leading role in both of these important historical commemorations.

The "Semiquincentennial Toolkit" can be downloaded from the Local History page of the VHS website: www.vermonthistory.org/toolkit.

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Mark S. Hudson
Executive Director

PREPARING FOR THE SESQUICENTENNIAL:



Researching the Civil War from a Vermont Perspective

The Vermont Historical Society is helping to launch the state's four-year commemoration of the Civil War with a workshop on April 30 entitled "Preparing for the Sesquicentennial: Researching the Civil War from a Vermont Perspective." The full-day workshop is intended for intermediate researchers who are interested in learning more about the research process and resources that are available for Civil War research.

The workshop will feature presentations by VHS trustee Grant Reynolds on "Researching Your Town's Civil War History" and by VHS volunteer and Civil War author Paul Zeller on "Research beyond Vermont's Borders." Tom Ledoux, webmaster of the Vermont in the Civil War website, will speak on "Civil War Resources on the Web."

The second half of the workshop will include sessions on a new online resource of digitized Civil War letters from the collections of the University of Vermont's Department of Special Collections and the Vermont Historical Society. Representatives of those institutions will

show participants how to use the site and will talk about how to read Civil War era handwriting. Also on tap will be a roundtable discussion on traditional publishing of Civil War books.

A highlight of the afternoon will be the presentation of a new book of George H. Houghton's Civil War photographs, *A Very Fine Appearance*, compiled by Don Wickman and published by the VHS. The day will conclude with a Civil War book exposition where participants can talk informally with Zeller, Ledoux, Wickman, and other authors about their research on Vermont's role in the Civil War.

Advance registration is required for the workshop, which will include a light lunch; registration will be limited to the first 50 registrants. The fee is \$35 for Vermont Historical Society members and \$45 for non-members. A workshop agenda along with registration information and instructions can be found on the VHS website at www.vermonthistory.org/cwworkshop. Contact Lisa Evans at 802-479-8522 with registration questions. 



Ron York, community benefactor

VHS Receives Generous Bequest

The Vermont Historical Society was honored to receive a generous bequest from the Estate of Ronald J. York. Through this gift Mr. York leaves a legacy that will support our ongoing efforts to preserve and share Vermont's rich heritage. Most of the funds from the bequest will be invested to help VHS continue to deliver meaningful programs and services at the Vermont History Center in Barre. "This support is particularly important now, as we embark upon expanded programming and exhibitions at the History Center," said VHS Executive Director, Mark Hudson.

VHS is one of four organizations in Barre to benefit from this bequest, which also establishes a scholarship fund at Spaulding High School.

Ron York was a well-known and highly respected businessman in the Barre community. His tragic death in a helicopter crash on June 5, 2009 was a tremendous shock to his family, friends, business associates and the community. He was an owner of Bates and Murray Inc., the firm that performed the electrical contracting at the Vermont History Center nearly a decade ago. Ron had a well-deserved reputation for honesty and integrity and was a consistent and dependable supporter of local charitable groups. "We are deeply appreciative to Ronald York for his outstanding civic spirit and his extraordinary support of our work at the Vermont History Center," Hudson concluded. 

Thanks! YOU DID IT!

In our last newsletter, we asked you to help us raise an additional \$5,000 by matching a challenge gift generously donated by Wolfgang and Barbara Mieder. We are very pleased to say that we did indeed meet the challenge, thanks to the generosity of many of our members.

Thank you!

Vermont Women's History Month

In honor of Women's History Month in March, the Vermont Historical Society is teaming up with the Vermont Women's Commission and Vermont VFWs to honor our state's women who have served in the military. On March 23rd, the celebration will start at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier, move on to the State House and wind up at the Montpelier VFW.

The idea started with Brenda Cruikshank, a career military person from Northfield, whose goal is to make sure that women who have served in Vermont understand that they are veterans and are fully entitled to the same benefits as their male counterparts, especially medical benefits. "It wasn't until recent history that women have been recognized as veterans, and many who served in WWII may not know their rights," says Ms. Cruikshank.

VHS is gathering information about women veterans for our online database: the Vermont Women's History Project. We have put out a call for information on women who've served in the military from WWII to the present. This information will be included on the website to document and honor these women.

On Wednesday, March 23rd starting at 9am, veterans and

"It wasn't until recent history that women have been recognized as veterans, and many who served in WWII may not know their rights," says Ms. Cruikshank.

dignitaries are invited to the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier to share stories and hear Adjutant General Dubie speak about their importance to Vermont and our country. In the afternoon, the House of Representatives will hear a resolution read to honor Vermont women veterans, and the day will close in a gathering at the Montpelier VFW. Throughout the day, veterans and their guests will be offered free tours of the Vermont History Museum and the State House.

For more information on this programming, especially if you are or know someone whose information should be included in the Women's History database, please contact Tess Taylor, 802-479-8505 or tess.taylor@state.vt.us.

To see some of the entries, please go to www.vthistory.org/women. 

Civil War: 150th Anniversary

Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War in Vermont!

The Vermont Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission has created a website containing details on upcoming events and programs, resources to support educational programming, and historical content about Vermont's role in the Civil War.

Visit www.vermontcivilwar150.com to learn more.

In Memoriam

We regret to inform you that Mary K. Howland has passed away. Mary served as a trustee and vice president of the Vermont Historical Society from 1975–1985, and was one of only three honorary life trustees.

1771 Map *Continued from page 1—*

map shows four rivers or branches of rivers intersecting in an area that was subdivided into smaller lots as if it were the location of a future town; that area is now Barre City. The map also shows the "Great Road from New England to Canada" passing through the center of the future settlement.

One of the rivers is labeled "Ouinouschick or Onion River." This river is now considered two rivers: the Jail Branch and Gunner Brook. Another river coming from the southeast is labeled "Little Ouinouschick." This is what is now called the Stevens Branch (not named for the New York surveyor who made this map). Berlin Pond, labeled simply "a pond," can be seen in the upper left quadrant of the map.

According to Carnahan, the map is an important artifact of the conflict that eventually led to the birth of Vermont. The creator of this map was a year later apprehended by Ira Allen and Remember Baker further west along the Winooski River. Allen and Baker summarily tossed out the New York surveying party from the territory, burning one man in the ensuing scuffle. This so infuriated New York officials that they issued a bounty for the arrest of Allen and Baker, a bounty that was never collected but which became the opening salvo in what would become Vermont's fight for independence.

Carnahan commented, "It is important this year when so many towns are celebrating the 250th anniversaries of their charters, that we remember that Benning Wentworth wasn't the only guy out there making grants in Vermont." "If things had come out differently," he added, "we could all be living in towns with names like Newbrook and Kingsborough." 

Educational Outreach

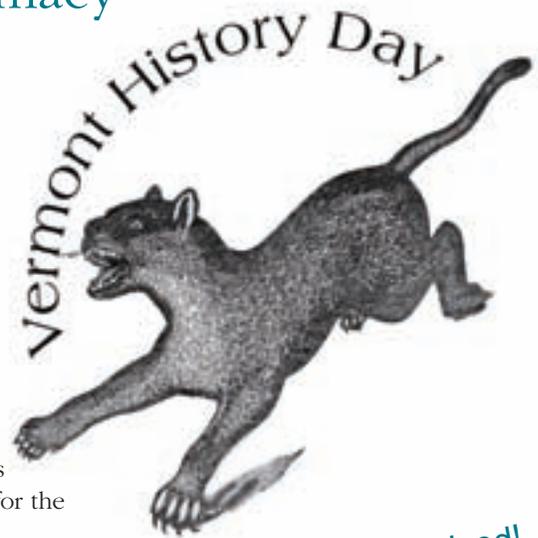
Vermont History Day: Debate & Diplomacy

Vermont History Day, in its 28th year, is a gathering of Vermont students from 5th to 12th grade who work on history projects. Their projects are presented to judges in order to qualify for National History Day. This year's contest is to be held at Spaulding High School in Barre on April 2nd.

The theme for History Day 2011 is *Debate & Diplomacy: Successes, Failures, Consequences*. Students will use the theme as their guide to create displays, websites and documentaries and to perform dramatically or write a paper about a person or an event in history. Generally about 150 students enter the contest from all over the state, either from a school or schooled at home.

History Day enables students to delve into a topic and examine it thoroughly; integrate the arts, sciences, and technology; discover and analyze historical sources; and gain 21st-century college- and career-ready skills, including teamwork, time management, and public speaking.

The Vermont Historical Society reaches out to teachers to let them know of this opportunity for their students. We also look for people interested in being judges for the various categories. For more information about participating as a student, judge or volunteer in this fun event, please contact Kathleen D'Aquila, 802-828-2180 or kathleen.daquila@state.vt.us.



Get your students involved!



"History Day brings together all of the skills that we as teachers strive to present to our students,"

—Vermont History Day teacher

At left, VHS Director Mark Hudson presents one of the teacher awards. At the right, students enjoy history at the National History Day contest.



Are you 70½ or older?

Thanks to the extension of the IRA Charitable Rollover, donors age 70½ or older may again donate up to \$100,000 from certain IRAs and exclude the amount from their taxable income.

This provision is extended through December 31, 2011, and it is also retroactive: the tax benefits apply to any qualified donations made after December 31, 2009. For more information, please contact Jane Campbell at 802-479-8516 or jane.campbell@state.vt.us.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2011



The 2011 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Program celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program. Above, Education and Program Director, Tess Taylor introduces the panel of speakers. At left, Htar Htar Yu from Burma talks about discrimination and civil liberty. Many thanks to our sponsors Robin Lloyd and Rubin, Kidney, Myer & DeWolfe.

A Vermont Carpetbagger's Legacy

After the Civil War, many Vermonters, both veterans and civilians, settled in the South. Historically known as carpetbaggers, one of the most famous was Vermont-raised Marshall Harvey Twitchell. At the end of 2010, objects and documents relating to Twitchell, during and after his life, were donated by his descendants, Anne Twitchell Brown, James Twitchell, Mary Twitchell, and Peggy Twitchell.

Twitchell's life was recounted in his published autobiography, *The Carpetbagger from Vermont*, edited by Ted Tunnel (1989), and his story was told as part of PBS's documentary, *Reconstruction: the Second Civil War* (2003). A courageous and daring Union soldier, Twitchell rose through the ranks from private to captain, barely survived a head wound during the Wilderness campaign, and finally served as an officer of the 109th U.S. Colored Regiment.

When the war ended, he worked for the Freedman's Bureau in Northern Louisiana, helping freed slaves obtain their new Constitutional rights. Eventually Twitchell married a local plantation owner's daughter, purchased his own plantation, and became a successful planter, entrepreneur, and politician. All the while he worked for local African Americans' rights to vote, get paid for their work, and receive an education.

Twitchell persuaded his mother, brother, and his three sisters and their husbands to migrate from Vermont and work with him in Louisiana. Twitchell was elected to the Republican-controlled Louisiana State Senate and was in charge of his parish's educational system. He and his family became targets of white supremacists who violently opposed post-war federally mandated efforts to provide African Americans their civil rights.

In 1874, his brother, two Vermont brothers-in-law, his



wife's brother-in-law, and 20 African Americans, all Republicans, were assassinated at the Coushatta Massacre by the White League, a Ku Klux Klan-like vigilante group. In 1876, Twitchell was shot six times, and his last surviving Vermont brother-in-law was killed. Eventually Twitchell had to have both arms amputated.

By 1877, Reconstruction in the South was coming to an end. The violent struggle to protect and support the millions of freed African Americans was over as Democrats gained control in the South and many civil rights laws were ignored by state governments or overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Marshall Harvey Twitchell left Louisiana but continued to have an active and productive life. After a brief time of recovery in Vermont, he was appointed in 1878 as Counsel of the United States in Kingston, Canada, where he died in 1905.

At the end of his life, Twitchell wrote an autobiography where he chronicled his life and defended his efforts in Louisiana during a time when historians were vilifying the Reconstruction Era and romanticizing the Confederacy.

The Twitchell family gift includes a typewritten copy of the autobiography, a sword given to Twitchell by the men of the 109th U.S. Colored Regiment, photographs, letters, and a scrapbook which contains a handwritten note threatening his assassination. The family's donation of artifacts and documents was accompanied by a generous cash donation to support the processing and care of the collection. Twitchell's amazing story will be part of the VHS future exhibition, *Service and Sacrifice: Vermont's Civil War Generation*. 

Above: Marshall Harvey Twitchell in about 1885. He's wearing artificial limbs to replace his lost arms.

VHS Civil War Quilt in the Spotlight

The Vermont Historical Society's Civil War quilt (Accession #1987.38) is finally getting some of the attention it deserves. The quilt was made by Brandon Ladies Aid Society member Caroline Bowen Fairbanks during the early 1860s. It is a rare survivor, one of 14 quilts known to survive of an estimated 250,000 made for the U.S. Sanitary Commission (the precursor of the American Red Cross) to be handed out to soldiers during the Civil War. Quilt historian Pam Weeks has been working with VHS Registrar Mary Labate Rogstad, researching the quilt and working with the quiltmaker's family to gather clues as to additional bits of its history. This quilt and several others will be included in the upcoming book she is co-authoring with Donald Beld: *Quilts for Union Soldiers, Civil War and Now*. In early December we worked with photographer Paul Rogers as he took detailed photographs of the quilt. The chapter in the book on VHS's quilt will include several of the photographs as well as the quilt's history as best as it can be deduced. 

Between exposures, Pam Weeks and VHS volunteer Matthew MacBruce carefully examine the quilt and take additional condition notes.



Kent Family Papers Organized

The staff and volunteers of the VHS Leahy Library have completed an extensive project to process and catalog the Vermont Historical Society's largest manuscript collection, the Kent Family Papers. The bulk of the collection was donated to the historical society by Kent family descendant Elizabeth Gay in 1979. The collection is now organized in nine series and stored in 39 archival cartons in the vault in the History Center; it can be accessed through a 42-page finding aid. The project took volunteer Marge Garfield over three years to complete.

The history of the Kent family of Calais is in many ways the history of Vermont itself. The patriarch, Remember Kent, was born in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, a year before the American Revolution. When he was 23 years old, he moved to Vermont, settling at a crossroads in Calais that would later bear his family's name. He married a girl from his hometown in Massachusetts, was captain in the militia, held many of the town's offices, and served on the committee which oversaw the building of the Old West Church in 1823.

Over the years, Kents Corner prospered thanks to numerous Kent family pursuits: a general store, tavern, post office, livery stable, shoe shop, brick kiln, sawmill, and starch factory. The family businesses expanded to Craftsbury and Hardwick. Remember Kent's grandson went to commercial college out of state but returned to run the family businesses. His son, Ira "Rich" Kent, went to college in Boston and established a very successful publishing career in that city. He married a member of Boston society who in turn developed her own successful writing career, folding it in with her husband's Vermont heritage. Louise Andrews Kent became "Mrs. Appleyard," author of cookbooks and chronicler of Vermont folkways. She worked to preserve the Kent Tavern and collect Kent family papers.

Although the collection spans the years 1783 to 2000, the bulk is concentrated between 1875 and 1969, in the generations of Rich Kent and his father Leroy "Roy" Abdiel Kent.

The collection offers much on the history of Calais. Local color abounds in stories written by Rich Kent for *The Youth Companion*; Louise Kent's *Mrs. Appleyard* books invoke Calais' rural lifestyle seen through the eyes of an outlander. The researcher may learn about Calais' (and, indeed, Vermont's) economy of the period through the voluminous, detailed correspondence and records regarding management



After three years of volunteer work by Marge Garfield, the Kent Family Papers can now be accessed to gain insight into the early years of Calais. Thank you, Marge!

of farm and other properties, timber management and production, maple syrup production, and local labor resources; entrepreneurial ventures; real estate investments, values, and practices; retail operations; livestock trading; pricing over various periods; and the early years of social change in the 1950s and 60s.

Although the newly processed collection forms the heart of the historical society's Kent holdings, several additional collections at the library contain important Kent material. Most significantly, the library has account books from Abdiel Kent of the second generation for the period 1833 to 1857. Louise Andrews Kent's literary papers form a separate collection and contain manuscripts, typescripts, and galley proofs, as well as materials related to her professional career as an author, such as correspondence, promotional materials, and financial records.

A small exhibit of photographs, account books, and papers from the Kent Family Papers will be on display at the Vermont History Center through May. The complete finding aid for the Kent Family Papers may be found online at www.vermonthistory.org/documents/findaid/kentfamily.pdf. 



Maintaining VHS Facilities is an Important Job

At the left, VHS Facilities Manager Greg Gove is unrecognizable in snow gear, common attire for him in the past month.

Thanks to a grant from Efficiency Vermont, VHS has switched 625 lightbulbs in both the Museum and History Center to energy efficient LED bulbs, saving \$29,750 and providing ongoing savings on utilities. At right, Greg changes bulbs at the Museum in Montpelier.





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Mystery Photo

Surprisingly, no one was able to identify the village scene we published in our last issue (seen here in the oval). We were hoping that with a significant cluster of homes the location would be easily recognizable to someone. Perhaps it is not in Vermont. If you recognize this scene the second time around, please contact us!

The new mystery photograph is this country crossroads scene. A small schoolhouse is to the right under the trees. This is probably located in Franklin County since the photographer, Will Chandler, worked out of St. Albans and spent most of his time in that area. If anyone knows the location of this scene, please contact VHS Librarian Paul Carnahan at paul.carnahan@state.vt.us or 802-479-8508.

Check www.vermonthistory.org for more photographs, articles and library resources!

From last issue . . .



Do you recognize this?

