



# Major Valentine's Swedes

*The story of the state program to recruit Scandinavians to take over available Vermont farms in 1890 has much to say about the political, social, and ethnic dynamics of Vermont in the Gilded Age. Major Valentine's Swedes became Vermonters, sure enough, but not in the way that he had predicted.*

By PAUL SEARLS

**I**n the summer of 1890, fifteen-year-old Charlotte Nyren left her native Swedish village of Glava forever. Leaving might have been harder for her than it was for the two siblings with whom she traveled: her brother Oliver, six, and four-year-old Anna. For them, memories of Glava would fade more quickly. Led by their mother Magdelina, the three Nyren children made their way to Liverpool, England. There they boarded the *British Princess* in late July for the two-week voyage to America. They arrived in Philadelphia on August 5, 1890. The immigration agent in Philadelphia recorded the Nyrens' nationality incorrectly as Norwegian. In the box noting the family's destination, either the agent misunderstood Magdelina Nyren's accent, or Magdelina herself was confused about the name of her new home. The agent recorded their destination as "Fairmount." In fact, they were headed to join two family members who had immigrated earlier in the summer, father August and seventeen-year-old son Carl, in Landgrove, Vermont.<sup>1</sup>

Charlotte Nyren may or may not have known that the process that led to her immigration to Vermont was unlike that of almost any other

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PAUL SEARLS is a professor of history and music at Lyndon State College. He is the author of *Two Vermonts: Geography and Identity, 1865–1910* (2006).

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Swedish immigrant to Vermont in that era. It is doubtful she understood the large controversy that process had provoked in Vermont. Most Swedish immigrants to Vermont in the late 1800s moved to industrial centers, such as the Rutland area, where many were employed by the Vermont Marble Company, or to Brattleboro to work for Estey Organ Company. These and other companies actively recruited Swedes to their workforce, prizing them highly as skilled workers and as the raw material of good citizens. As one historian recently wrote, Scandinavians were valued by employers over the Irish, for example, because employers considered them “most likely to become hard-working, Protestant Vermonters.”<sup>2</sup> The Nyrens were different. They were one of a handful of families recruited to Vermont by its state government, as part of a program that aspired to repopulate Vermont’s “abandoned” farms. The Nyrens were among Major Valentine’s Swedes.

The story of the state program to recruit Scandinavians to take over available Vermont farms in 1890 has been told in brief by a number of recent historians.<sup>3</sup> These narratives generally tell the same story: The state legislature established a new appointed office, Commissioner of Agriculture and Manufacturing Interests, in 1888. Creation of the position was a response to widespread concern among state leaders about the apparent decline of rural Vermont, both in population numbers and in the quality of its inhabitants. The man who occupied this position, Major Alonzo B. Valentine of Bennington, largely devoted his two years in the office to recruiting Scandinavians to settle available farms. Valentine focused on Scandinavians because he considered them superior to the “undesirable” people of French-Canadian heritage who at the time were often the ones settling on these farms. The product of his labors was a handful of Swedes who moved to three Vermont towns in 1890. Those Swedes quickly moved on, however, never establishing the cohesive colonies that Valentine hoped would attract more Scandinavians. The state legislature judged the program to be an expensive failure, and ended both the program and the position of commissioner in the session of 1890. Summing up what I believe to be historians’ consensus on the topic in my book *Two Vermonts*, I called the Swedish recruitment program “a fiasco.”<sup>4</sup>

Historians are interested in the story of Valentine’s Swedes for a number of reasons. The story illustrates the degree to which the state’s Gilded Age elite saw its farming districts as in a state of crisis. Controversy over the program is also evidence of the deep divisions between urban and rural perspectives that characterized Vermont society, manifest in both state politics and in society at large. It suggests the extent to which state leaders did not perceive that the purchase of farmsteads as

summer homes, rather than as working farms, would be to a large extent the future of rural Vermont. It speaks volumes to the extent to which the state's urban-minded leaders profoundly misunderstood the sources and character of the strong communal bonds that knit together the dwellers of small towns. Perhaps most of all, the story illustrates the pervasive anti-Catholic bias of the era, particularly as it applied to immigrants from Québec and their descendants.

Despite historians' interest in the story, a great deal of confusion exists about it. There is uncertainty about how many Swedes came to Vermont as part of the program; recent accounts of the story range from twenty-three to fifty-five families.<sup>5</sup> There is also uncertainty about what happened to them after Valentine's cohesive Swedish colonies failed to materialize. In one account they moved to "industrial centers," while another depicts them as being drawn away to work "in lumber camps, quarries and factories," with only some remaining in Vermont.<sup>6</sup> The best source on the outcome of the scheme is Dorothy Mayo Harvey's article "Swedes in Vermont," which first praises Valentine's program, and then, in a brief section on the program's results, specifically identifies three families as having persisted for a few decades in Weston.<sup>7</sup>

The origins, execution, and consequences of Valentine's Swedish recruitment project are, in fact, complex and fraught with irony. The program, as measured by the lives of Weston's Swedes and their descendants, has much to say about the political, social, and ethnic dynamics of Vermont in the Gilded Age. It illustrates many of the tensions that existed between the state's tradition of local control and the movement toward increased centralization. Analysis of Valentine's immigration program sheds light on the origins of the boom in summer tourism that Vermont experienced in the 1890s. The lives of Valentine's Swedes in the decades after they arrived also make clear in telling ways the absurdities and ironies of the program. It was founded on the premise that Scandinavians would prove themselves superior to many of those who performed Vermont's hardest labor. It was, instead, largely characteristic of Weston's Swedes that they fit right in with that same class of people. The program was also premised on the idea that Scandinavians would be accepted as community members in small towns more quickly than Catholics. They would find it relatively easy to become Vermonters, supporters of the program claimed. Valentine's Swedes became Vermonters, sure enough, but not in the way that Valentine had predicted.

#### THE ORIGINS OF THE PLAN

For all the long-term complexity and irony surrounding the Swedish immigration program, its origins are clear. The era was rife with dolorous

descriptions of the decline of rural Vermont. These fears were not new in 1888, the year of the recruitment scheme's conception. Such fears stretched back more than half a century. The intensification of concerns about Vermont's decline are illustrated by the many papers addressing the subject appearing in the Vermont State Board of Agriculture's reports, such as an 1878 article titled "The Depopulation of Our Rural Districts."<sup>8</sup>

Vermont was, at the same time, coming to occupy an increasingly special place in the American mind. In a nation being transformed by immigration and urbanization, northern New England was increasingly prized for its imagined Yankee purity. As they watched the cities of the East Coast become progressively more industrial and ethnically heterogeneous, successful city dwellers constructed a narrative about the past based on visions of a better, purer "Old New England" free from the poverty, disharmony, and confusion around them.<sup>9</sup>

Both inside and outside Vermont a growing sentiment demanded that the integrity and purity of rural Vermont be saved. For many of the state's leading citizens, this unique place in the American mind was endangered by the fact that Vermont was mainly attracting what they saw as the wrong kind of immigrants. By 1890 about one-third of Vermont's residents were either first- or second-generation French Canadians. Governor William Dillingham, under whose watch the Swedish program was launched, was among those with a strong anti-Catholic bias. Dillingham's inaugural address called for legislation to correct the many social ills that he ascribed to immigrants.<sup>10</sup> He was hardly alone; in an 1889 article titled "Regenerating Vermont," the *Boston Evening Transcript* noted a common complaint in Vermont that "a considerable proportion of the hired men have of late been French Canadians" who had taken up "some of the disused back farms" and occupied "slab shanties which are an eyesore and a menace to the thrifty native farmers." The *Transcript* concluded that, "For a variety of reasons, the Vermonters regard the occupation of the land by French-Canadians and Irishmen as undesirable."<sup>11</sup> In addition to prejudice against various Catholic groups, state leaders also sensed a decline in the quality of the rural Yankee population. In an 1890 letter to the *Deerfield Valley Times* of Wilmington, attorney L.H. Wiler summed up the feelings of many elite Vermonters by writing that emigration had taken away "those with the most energetic push," leaving behind a dissipated population that merely lived off the work of previous generations. Lamenting that no effort had been made to "keep up the grade" of rural Vermonters, Wiler frowned that "cousin has married cousin until the race has about run out."<sup>12</sup> For many observers of rural Vermont, it

was not just the economy that needed to improve, but also the quality of its inhabitants.

In the legislative session of 1888, state Senator Hosea Mann, an ambitious young lawyer from Wilmington, introduced a bill to create a commission to address rural Vermont's ills. The Commission on Agricultural and Manufacturing Interests was given the broad mandate of gathering information on the condition of Vermont, and devising programs that might remedy the shortcomings it discovered. In particular, the commission was given the task of doing what it could to encourage immigration to Vermont, or at least do its best to prevent emigration. The act provided that, should the two-year position prove its worth, a permanent bureau or commissioner of immigration would be established in the 1890 legislative session. Appropriated \$2,000, the office of Commissioner of Agricultural and Manufacturing Interests was ready to do its part to save rural Vermont.<sup>13</sup>

#### THE PROGRAM TAKES SHAPE

Governor Dillingham first offered the position to Hosea Mann, who declined on account of other pressing political obligations. The offer then fell to Major Alonzo B. Valentine, who accepted it in February 1889. Son of a Bennington mill owner, Valentine had gone west in 1852 to try his luck in California's gold fields. Upon his return to Bennington, he went into grist milling. Entering the Union Army as a lieutenant in 1862, Valentine ended his service as a brevet major. After the war he opened a successful knitting mill in Bennington. An ardent advocate of school reform, Valentine was elected to the state senate in 1886. An energetic and confident man, he threw himself into the commissioner's work immediately. Prohibited by the legislature from spending any of his commission's allowance on newspaper advertisements, Valentine had to seek other ways to reverse the declining population of many of Vermont's rural districts.<sup>14</sup>

After hiring his daughter as clerk, Valentine set about gathering data on Vermont. During a lengthy March interview with the *Burlington Free Press*, Valentine produced rough drafts of two surveys to distribute, one to town listers and the other to farmers and manufacturers. Among the information sought by the listers' survey was, "How many abandoned farms and acreage of same" existed in town. Valentine was not the first to use the word "abandoned" to describe some Vermont farms, but for whatever reason he used it incessantly and consciously in the next two years. For both his supporters and detractors, Valentine's description of Vermont as a state full of "abandoned farms" distilled the controversial nature of his work.<sup>15</sup>



*Major Alonzo B.  
Valentine, no date.*

In March, Valentine ambitiously printed 65,000 copies of his first circular, distributing packets of them to listers in each town. These were to be given out to taxpayers, who would list on them the value of any agricultural and manufacturing enterprise in which they were engaged. The circulars were then to be gathered by listers and returned to Valentine by June 1, 1889.<sup>16</sup> To Valentine's disappointment, only about half of the towns returned any circulars at all, and even fewer provided information that he considered of any use. Undeterred, Valentine sent out a second circular in July, but even though this time he included return postage, the response was again, as he wrote later, "very meager" and of "little value."<sup>17</sup>

Even as the circulars continued to trickle back into his office, Valentine had already set his mind upon a course of action: recruiting farmers from Scandinavia. Valentine later wrote that in the course of "extensive" travels in the West, his "attention had been called to the thrift [*sic*], hard-working, honest Scandinavian, especially from Sweden," a place Valentine imagined to resemble Vermont in climate and physical conditions very closely, even though he had never been there. In Valentine's experience, which consisted of western business dealings, Swedes were attractive immigrants because, among other things, they

“Americanize sooner than any other class of immigrants.”<sup>18</sup> In particular, he thought, Swedes would naturally become good Vermonters. In the coming year, he and his supporters continuously attached to Swedes in general such “Vermontish” characteristics as frugality, honesty, industriousness, and patience. Valentine wrote in the magazine *The Quill* in 1890 that he pursued Scandinavians because they were Vermonters’ “cousin[s] with like instincts of freedom, secular and religious.”<sup>19</sup>

Valentine was not the first Vermonter to envision a state program to attract immigrants. In his inaugural speech in 1882, Governor John Barstow requested that the legislature appoint a state officer responsible for attracting the right kind of immigrants to Vermont.<sup>20</sup> There was some discussion among state legislators in 1888 of launching a program to attract farmers from England, but it had gone nowhere.<sup>21</sup> For years, a few Vermont leaders had looked enviously at Maine’s success in establishing New Sweden in 1870, a settlement of Swedish farmers on state land.

As early as March 1889, Valentine was telling newspapers that he had in mind the operations of a Swede in Nebraska with whom he was acquainted. The man was in the business of buying farmland near railroads and selling it to colonies of settlers from his native country. As a means of repopulating rural Vermont, Valentine told the *Free Press*, the idea of pursuing a similar strategy was “a good one.”<sup>22</sup> He first acted on this idea by distributing a new circular at the beginning of August soliciting opinions on the advisability of recruiting Scandinavian farmers. Valentine wrote that he had been corresponding with a Swedish friend, John G. Nordgren, a Nebraska farmer and land speculator who had had success attracting Swedes to his state.<sup>23</sup> Nordgren had agreed to tour Vermont to assess the suitability of its available farms for Swedish immigrants. But according to Valentine, even without having visited the state, Nordgren had assured Valentine that, given the proper funding, he could easily bring fifty families back from Sweden to Vermont.<sup>24</sup> The circular requested from town listers information on the availability and price of land on which Nordgren’s Swedes might settle. It also requested citizens in each town to volunteer to serve as contacts for the potential settlement of Swedes, and more generally for inquiries about land for sale.

As Valentine himself wrote, this new circular “seemed to excite much interest through this and neighboring states.”<sup>25</sup> Reporting on the situation in Vermont, the Troy, New York, *Weekly Budget* described Valentine’s announcement as provoking a “general and spirited discussion.”<sup>26</sup> The *Boston Evening Transcript* called the proposal very interesting and noted that Swedes were “not unlike . . . the people of New England;

they are Protestants, and thrifty and peaceable. Moreover, they assimilate more readily than any other emigrants who come to us.”<sup>27</sup> Like many newspapers, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* focused on the ethnic dimensions of the program, reporting that the Swedes would find the climate congenial and be happy in places “which the Irish and Canadian French invaders have so far spared.”<sup>28</sup> The *Register* of New Haven, Connecticut, guaranteed that, should the first Vermont colonies succeed, other Swedes would flock to the state in large numbers.<sup>29</sup> Newspapers in Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, and Macon, Georgia, among others, also reported on the plan soon after the circular’s appearance.<sup>30</sup> Valentine provoked another wave of publicity by releasing a new circular on August 28 that concluded that the plan to establish colonies of Swedes in rural Vermont was viable. In all of this, Valentine appears to have set his mind on larger goals than just Scandinavian immigrants. In the wake of the late August circular, Valentine told newspapers that agitation on the topic had already resulted in a “boom” for Vermont land sales, and that his office was “flooded” with inquiries from residents of other states.<sup>31</sup> Whether the reaction was good or bad, the Swedes program was certainly bringing Vermont a lot of free publicity.

In mid-September, Valentine hosted a well-publicized tour of the state by Nordgren. By then, Valentine had already settled on Wilmington and Weston as the locations of the first Swedish colonies. This decision was based on tours of the state he had taken during the summer, and on correspondence with leading citizens of those towns. Wilmington possessed a particularly ambitious set of businessmen and lawyers who, already heartened by the completion in 1889 of a new hotel on the shores of the town’s principal lake, were planning a town celebration in the summer of 1890, and were eagerly anticipating the imminent extension of a railroad line to town. Wilmington’s local business community, led by Hosea Mann, assured Valentine that the Swedes would receive the support they needed. The Weston colony was to be comprised of a few farms in the district of town adjacent to the neighboring town of Peru. In his travels during the summer, Valentine had been impressed by the farms available in the towns of Weston, Peru, Landgrove, and Mount Tabor, and he often held up the area as a shining example of where good farms had been “abandoned” and could be had cheaply.<sup>32</sup> By all reports, Nordgren was impressed by the farms, both “unoccupied” and for sale, in both Weston and Wilmington, and also with available farmland in Orange County. He left Vermont assuring Valentine that he would bring back from Sweden a minimum of fifty families.<sup>33</sup>

As the story of the Swedes scheme spread around the country, so did confusion about what exactly was Valentine’s job. A North Dakota



newspaper called him Vermont's "land commissioner," while one in West Virginia gave him the title "State Commissioner of Immigration."<sup>34</sup> But it was clear by the fall of 1889 that word was getting out in the United States about the availability of cheap Vermont farms. Articles in the largest New York City newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, were reprinted around the country.<sup>35</sup> Stories about the colonization plan appeared in newspapers as far away as the *Grey River Argus* of Greymouth, New Zealand, which reported that the Swedish colonies were a response to the "incredibly large" number of "vacant" Vermont farms.<sup>36</sup> The *Bennington Banner* reported in November that Valentine's correspondence had reached "worldwide proportions," specifying a letter of inquiry about Vermont farms received from an officer of the "agricultural department of the British Empire in India."<sup>37</sup> Valentine did not have to pay for this coverage, and if there was one essential message that was getting out, it was that, as the *Boston Daily Journal* reported in October, in Vermont "lands are good and cheap."<sup>38</sup>

Not all of the press coverage outside the state praised the Swedes proposal. The *Telegraph* of Macon, Georgia, commenting on an article about the Swedish program in the *New York Post*, ascribed Vermont's abandoned farms to the high tariffs protecting its manufacturers, concluding that preference was being given to Swedes only because they were accustomed to hard work and poor living.<sup>39</sup> Most articles in that autumn, however, tended either to treat the plan as a curiosity or write about it favorably. Much of this positive coverage seems merely to have derived from the idea's exotic nature, but it was by no means treated as a joke. So seriously was the Swedes idea taken in New Hampshire that, having created its own commissioner of immigration in 1889, the state legislature pondered pursuing a similar program, thereby launching what the *Boston Herald* predicted would be a rivalry between the two states for Scandinavian farmers.<sup>40</sup> The *Boston Evening Transcript* typified the positive press that the scheme was receiving when it commended Valentine on pursuing "judiciously chosen Swedish agriculturalists" who were sure to prove "a class of hardy, thrifty, and Protestant citizens." Valentine's many critics in Vermont, the *Transcript* wrote, were just a bunch of "shouters."<sup>41</sup>

In Vermont, the reaction to the proposal was more deeply divided. There seems to be little pattern to the opposition, with newspapers in both cities and smaller towns in disagreement. Many newspapers were very enthusiastic about it, with the *St. Albans Messenger* and the *Burlington Free Press* among the most supportive. Ludlow's *Vermont Tribune* shared their enthusiasm, reporting that agitation over the colonization project had already resulted in a "boom" that had left Valentine

overrun with inquiries from citizens of other states about farms for sale.<sup>42</sup> But a significant portion of the state's press was either skeptical or hostile. In particular, there was a widespread perception that Valentine's repeated description of Vermont as a place where farmers had simply abandoned land did great harm to the state's reputation. Montpelier's *Argus and Patriot*, which was particularly contemptuous of the program, insisted that there was no good land in the state that had been abandoned.<sup>43</sup> The *West Randolph Herald and News* similarly called talk about abandoned farms "wild" because there was no such thing, only "tracts on steep hill and mountain sides which have been allowed to grow into forest."<sup>44</sup> The Brattleboro, *Vermont Phoenix* complained that Valentine's efforts had given outsiders "false impressions" of the state as a deserted and desolate place.<sup>45</sup> Many years later, the poor impression of the state created by Valentine's emphasis on "deserted" land remained the chief memory of the scheme for many: The *St. Albans Messenger*, recalling in 1921 the "tremendous controversy" over the program, wrote that "the discussion led the press of other states to speak of our commonwealth as a state of abandoned farms, and no end of damage was done as a result."<sup>46</sup>

There were other objections. Many Vermonters wondered why Vermont was pursuing a program that appeared to favor immigrants over native-born Vermonters. Members of the Democratic Party circulated a conspiracy theory that state leaders wanted to attract Swedes because they were certain to vote Republican.<sup>47</sup> The scheme particularly provoked opposition to its premise that Scandinavians would seamlessly blend into rural communities, becoming Vermonters in ways that Catholics could not. The *West Randolph Herald and News* wrote that it did not want "the Swedes or any other foreigners to colonize the state," though it did write that Swedes were "generally admitted to be better than Italians or Bohemians."<sup>48</sup> The president of the state's Dairymen's Association, F.D. Douglas, spoke for many Vermonters in October when he sharply criticized the idea that Vermont could benefit from "calling on the heathen from the old world to come and occupy our so-called deserted lands," which he emphatically denied existed in the first place. "The so-called desertion," Douglas continued, "is but a conversion of the soil to a more rational use." Dismissing Valentine's contention that Swedes were the excellent raw material of state residents, Douglas concluded, "Let Vermonters still occupy Vermont."<sup>49</sup> In this discussion, the fundamental differences of perception between cosmopolitans like Valentine and residents of small towns were laid bare. Where the cosmopolitans saw emigration as abandonment, locals saw natural and rational evolution in the use of local resources. Where

cosmopolitans saw ethnicity as a determining feature of the ease of assimilation, locals rooted the process of joining communities in long-term relationships of interdependence.<sup>50</sup>

Valentine pressed on despite the rising opposition. In October he settled on Vershire as the location for a third Swedish colony, announcing it to the town at a public meeting. In Vershire, as with Wilmington, Valentine's project stimulated the town to act on its own to publicize further its land for sale. After Valentine's announcement, Vershire's town clerk issued a free pamphlet combining a list of available farms with general descriptions of the town's appearance and services.<sup>51</sup> Valentine, meanwhile, moved the process along in November by issuing a new circular for town clerks titled "Schedule Relating to Unoccupied or Abandoned Farms" that requested information on the number, size, and price of farms for sale in towns.<sup>52</sup>

#### PREPARING FOR THE SWEDES

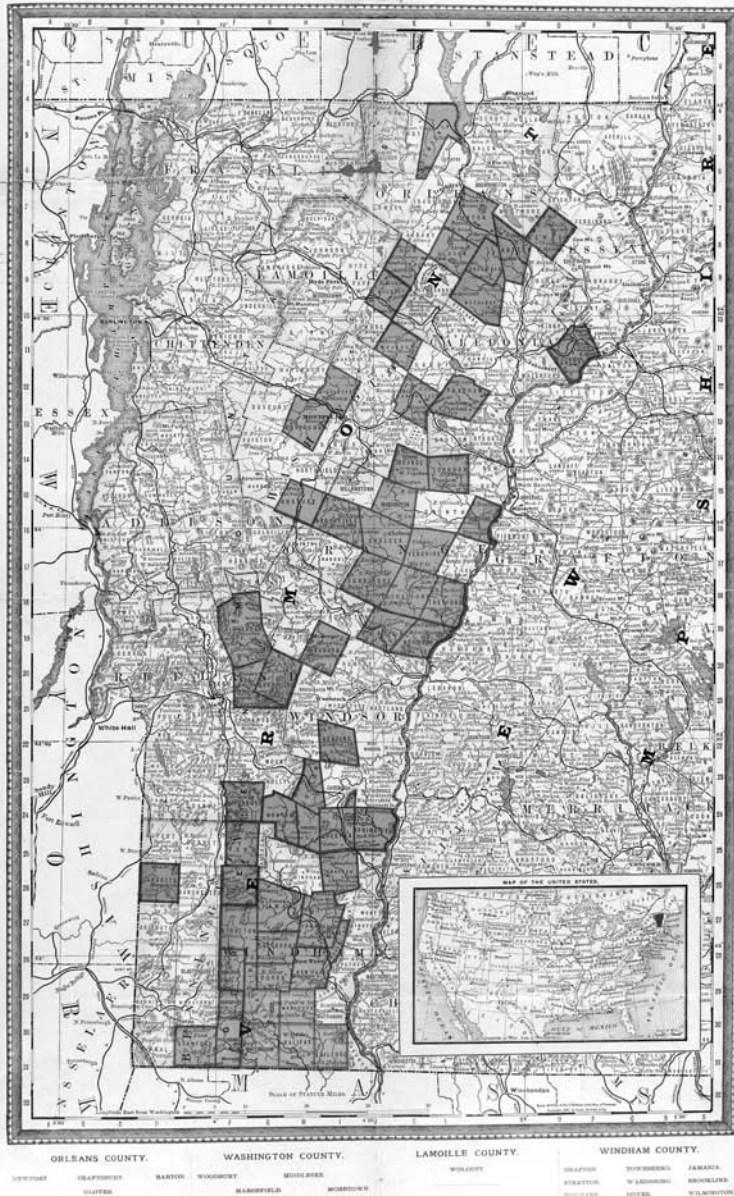
In December 1889, Nordgren sailed for Sweden. He brought with him a map that Valentine had drawn up based on the information he had gathered through his circulars. With text in both English and Swedish, the map specified where cheap farmland was available, and described the natural attractions of Vermont. The map's text promised "Good farms with impeccable buildings," for which "payments are easily done."<sup>53</sup> Armed with the map, Nordgren went to the region where he had grown up, Varmland.<sup>54</sup> According to later reports from Nordgren, he experienced a great deal of resistance in Sweden to his quest, both from Western land agents with whom he was competing, and from government officials and Swedish newspapers. For the consumption of Vermont newspapers, he attributed Swedish resistance to the fear that he was getting the nation's "best blood."<sup>55</sup> Bizarrely, Nordgren had private sector competition in his quest to bring Swedes to Vermont: Nicholas Mannall, a businessman from Springfield, Massachusetts, who was acting as an agent for a Boston land speculator, was at the same time on a tour of Sweden and Norway, searching for people willing to be transplanted to a Scandinavian colony he proposed for the town of Norton, on Vermont's Canadian border. Mannall stated his aim was to bring at least 250 Scandinavian families to Norton.<sup>56</sup>

While waiting for the Swedes to arrive in the winter of 1889–90, Valentine kept busy expanding his list of available farms. In January he released his map to the general public. The domestic version included a list of towns throughout the state where "unoccupied" farms were for sale, and the names of persons in each town to whom inquiries could be made.<sup>57</sup> The map drew yet another round of intense discussion, both

# KARTA ÖFVER VERMONT,

utvisande läget af obrukade farmar, äfvensom brukade landsträckor, hvilka kunna köpas för ungefär samma pris som de obrukade. Goda farmar med oklanderliga byggnader och lömsocker-träd-plantor kunna köpas för ett pris af \$3 till \$5 per acre. Andra med bättre byggnader och nära järnväg eller by kunna köpas för \$5 till \$10 per acre. Intet af dessa land är långt aflägget från en god marknad, och alla lämpa sig väl för mejeri-handtering. Betalning för de goda lätta. Farmarbetare äro mycket efterfrägade och erhålla goda löner. I många sektioner kunna de, som så önska, erhålla arbete vintern igenom med huggning af timmer och ved. Dessa uppgifter äro grundade på officiella rapporter, sammanställda af kommissionären för agrikultur- och manufaktur-intressen.

Adress: BENNINGTON, VERMONT, U. S. A. Den 1 Januari 1890.



“Karte öfver Vermont” [map of Vermont]. Broadside circulated in Sweden to advertise available farmland, January 1890. Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey-Howe Library, University of Vermont.

within and outside the state. Legitimizing the fears of many Vermonters that Valentine's immigration campaign was casting Vermont in a bad light, the *St. Louis Republic* called it a map of Vermont's "desolate regions," and wondered why Swedes would stay on such farms any more than those who had abandoned them. In Vermont, the press reaction was again mixed. The *Burlington Free Press* was among those lavishing praise on the map, calling it "a very happy idea," while the *Argus and Patriot* asserted that it "shows the folly and nonsense of the 'deserted farm' bugaboo."<sup>58</sup>

Whether there was legitimacy to the fears of many Vermonters that Valentine's depiction of rural Vermont as full of "abandoned" farms was giving outsiders the impression that it was a desolate place, Valentine was indisputably bringing attention to the land available in Vermont. The *Providence (Rhode Island) Daily Journal* wrote in early January that Valentine was "sending out maps like a Western land agent," adding that so far there had been little actual agricultural immigration into the state, except for "the cultivation of the summer boarder."<sup>59</sup> As far as Valentine's work was concerned, that might have been just as well. Whether or not it had been Valentine's intention all along, over the previous year he had been carefully building a system to facilitate the sale of Vermont land to summer tourists. Valentine had already undertaken what amounted to the first comprehensive survey of land for sale across the state. In late January, he distributed yet another circular that provided a list of "gentlemen" in a number of Vermont towns to whom communication could be sent about buying land.<sup>60</sup> Combined with the outside attention the Swedes project had received, this information, Valentine believed, was stimulating the sale of Vermont farms. Most of these, apparently, were to people in search of vacation homes.

Whatever success Valentine anticipated the scheme realizing, that winter saw it encounter a great deal of criticism and mockery in Vermont. This was especially true of rural sections of the state. Farmers gave vent to their displeasure at meetings of the Vermont State Board of Agriculture, held in various locations in January and February 1890. The board had long been a political lightning rod, used in turn by Vermont urbanites to attempt to modernize farmers, and by farming interests as a forum to express their grievances.<sup>61</sup> The members of the board in 1890 were themselves divided on the issue: M.W. Davis, a prosperous dairy farmer from Westminster, was adamantly opposed to the project, while William Chapin of Middlesex ardently supported it. Frequent board speaker T.H. Hoskins of Newport, an expert in apple cultivation, hopefully told one meeting that he foresaw the arrival of from 500 to 1,000 immigrants a year from Scandinavia, after which the prices

for farms “will be wonderfully increased.”<sup>62</sup> During the discussion period of meeting after meeting, however, farmers voiced passionate objections to the plan. At a January meeting of the board in West Concord, a Reverend Seitz allowed that Vermont might have abandoned farms, “but they are of more value to grow up to wood again than to populate with Swedes,” and as a result he had “very little faith in the Swedish immigration scheme.” M.W. Davis of the board followed Seitz by saying that “we ask no Swedes to come here; rather have the native stock.” At a board meeting in late January in South Royalton, Fred Morse, a twenty-one-year-old farmer, declared that, “I do not particularly favor the idea of Swedish immigration”; as far as land was concerned, Morse said, the state should “let the native Vermonter have it.” A speaker at a February board meeting in Brandon succinctly called the plan “a humbug.”<sup>63</sup>

Valentine’s defenders, however, could point to something that seemed at the time to be an unexpected ancillary benefit of the colonization project. In February the *New-York Tribune* published an article that was quite typical of many printed by out-of-state newspapers in the winter months. It first noted that Vermont had in past years tried “a number of schemes to supply the farms with farmers, but none of them proved satisfactory.” But now, the *Tribune* wrote, Vermont had decided, “I will advertise,” and the advertisements had generated “several thousand” letters sent to Valentine from every section of the United States, resulting in the sale of many farms. The article made no mention at all of Swedes, nor of the limitations placed by the state legislature on Valentine’s ability to advertise.<sup>64</sup>

In Vermont, Swedes remained very much on the public mind. To keep busy, Valentine issued yet another circular in March requesting listers to send him information related to manufacturing.<sup>65</sup> Mainly, though, he shuttled between Weston, Wilmington, and Vershire finalizing plans for the Swedes’ arrival. In each town a citizens’ committee was established that promised to provide each Swedish family with twenty-five dollars and a cow. Valentine reported receiving word from Nordgren in Sweden that he had secured thirty families, comprising around 150 people.<sup>66</sup> The *New York Herald* described residents of Vershire as “thoroughly in earnest” regarding the colonization proposal, which it reported was bringing fifteen families, composed of seventy-five persons, to the town.<sup>67</sup> Press coverage of the program displayed confusion about exactly how many Swedes were on their way: various reports put the total at 75 persons, 150 persons, fifteen families, and thirty families.<sup>68</sup> It was also reported in March that Mannall was set to return to Vermont with fifty Scandinavian families for his Norton project.<sup>69</sup>

Vermonters were keenly aware that, as the *New York Herald* wrote in March, the Swedish experiment was being “observed with deep and general interest throughout the country.”<sup>70</sup> Apparently, the original curiosity with which the scheme was treated had worn off; by the spring of 1890, out-of-state newspapers were increasingly critical of it. Many newspapers dwelled on estimates of the amount of farm acreage, exclusive of timber land, that was currently unused, variously reported at between 200,000 and 500,000 acres.<sup>71</sup> The *Topeka Capital* of Kansas wrote derisively in February that Valentine was merely “a manufacturer of woolen goods, without any knowledge of farming” whose work had done no more than to “have further strengthened the public impression that these lands are worthless.”<sup>72</sup> The *Providence Journal* of Rhode Island was among those newspapers wondering why, if Yankee farmers had abandoned the farms, Swedes would do any better on them.<sup>73</sup> Other newspapers, however, still predicted success for the program. Summarizing how deeply rooted in ethnocentrism the whole scheme was, the *New York Herald* wrote that “as a class the Swedes are frugal, industrious and patient, and in Vermont colonists ought to flourish.”<sup>74</sup>

#### THE ARRIVAL OF THE SWEDES

It was time for them to try. John Nordgren arrived in Philadelphia aboard the *British Princess* on April 22, 1890, accompanied by a number of Swedes destined for Vermont. It is difficult to ascertain exactly how many of the Swedish passengers on that ship were Nordgren’s. Valentine later put the total number of April immigrants at “representatives of 27 families” comprising fifty-five people. It is possible that other colonists traveled separately, but it is certain that at least four families headed to Weston arrived with Nordgren. Accompanying him were the aforementioned August and Carl Nyren. Also on board were Edwin and Anna Anderson, who brought with them two children; John and Louise Neilson and their three young children; and twenty-five-year-old Carl Westine. Westine and August Nyren listed their occupations as sawmill hands, while Edwin Anderson and John Neilson described themselves as farmers.<sup>75</sup> The Swedes traveled with Nordgren to New York City. They were met there by Valentine, who then chaperoned the group to Vermont.

Upon arrival in Vermont, the Swedish families were divided into three groups. Most Vermont newspapers reported that seven families went to Wilmington, twelve to Weston, and the remaining eight went to Vershire, but even about this there was confusion.<sup>76</sup> Wilmington’s local paper reported that only four families were settled in town.<sup>77</sup> Valentine supplied each colony with a Swedish translator. Dorothy Mayo Harvey

reports that in Weston the Swedes' arrival elicited great local excitement. In Wilmington business leaders fussed over them, temporarily boarding them in their own homes.<sup>78</sup>

Within two weeks, Wilmington's leaders already felt comfortable declaring "Mr. Valentine's colonization scheme" to be "a grand success so far."<sup>79</sup> Valentine, often accompanied by Hosea Mann, continued to check up on his Swedish colonies in the months after their arrival. In mid-May he toured the Wilmington and Weston colonies accompanied by Nordgren and declared the colonists to be "delighted with Vermont." Nordgren claimed that "no immigrants were ever better received or better treated on arriving in America than these Swedish families," and gave assurances that more Swedes were set to join them.<sup>80</sup> In June, Wilmington's local newspaper reported that the Swedes were "doing finely," proving the program so far was "undoubtedly a success in every way."<sup>81</sup> National coverage of the Swedes' arrival, meanwhile, was often characterized by misinformation and exaggeration; the *San Francisco Bulletin*, for example, put the number of Swedes brought to Vermont by Valentine at 350, while the *Chicago Herald* called it "several hundred."<sup>82</sup>

Concerned that the program would be seen as too expensive, Valentine had insisted that the Swedes pay their own way to Vermont. By many reports, though, Swedes in all three colonies were virtually destitute. When criticized later for bringing to Vermont impoverished immigrants, Nordgren insisted that it was necessary that they be poor; if he brought colonists with resources, he argued, "then perhaps the next thing we should find them in Nebraska."<sup>83</sup> The Swedes were given up to five years to pay off the farms on which they had been settled.<sup>84</sup> Their desperate circumstances, however, required them to immediately search for employment. In Wilmington, a group of businessmen led by Mann provided their colonists with a variety of jobs. The Swedes in Weston appear to have immediately entered into employment in lumber mills, particularly the new McIntyre Mill, co-owned by wealthy Vermonter Silas Griffith, which had opened in 1889 in the town of Peru.<sup>85</sup>

Vershire's Swedes, reportedly comprised of one family and another eight individuals, did not receive equivalent support and immediately found themselves in desperate circumstances. Between May and July these colonists dispersed. One individual moved to Weston, while the family moved to Brattleboro. The remaining seven Swedes were lured to Nicholas Mannall's new colony in Norton. Mannall had arrived back in the United States in April, still greatly enthusiastic about his project but now only projecting in the short term twelve families of his own Swedes. Though Mannall promised that at least forty families would be



settled in Norton by June, he had an immediate need for settlers to make the colony he named "New Scandinavia" viable.<sup>86</sup> By May, Mannall's colony was widely reported to be utterly primitive and foundering, with the Scandinavians attracted there only remaining because they could not afford to leave.<sup>87</sup> Rather desperately, Valentine sought to explain the loss of the Vershire colony as evidence of the Swedes' quality and the scheme's success, saying that by leaving Vershire the colonists showed good sense in going to a place where the prospects of their success were more encouraging. They had come to Vershire without money, Valentine said, and were "destined to starve" before their farms became productive enough to support them. Now in Norton they had "every chance to get a living" while they waited for their farms in Vershire to become productive. Anyway, the other two colonies, Valentine reassured, were certain to survive because their Swedes had "proved themselves to be useful and industrious citizens."<sup>88</sup>

Throughout the summer the project's supporters did their best to reinforce the idea that it was a big success. Governor Dillingham accompanied Valentine on a visit to the remaining two colonies in July and described the Swedes in both places to be "contented" and "flourishing."<sup>89</sup> Valentine particularly took pains to win supporters by emphasizing that the Weston settlers had brought with them a Lutheran minister, sure evidence that they intended to stay and were upstanding people. Writing in a Boston newspaper, Hosea Mann described the Wilmington colony as a great success and the Swedes as "frugal, honest and industrious" people.<sup>90</sup> Valentine repeatedly insisted that the colonists had assured him that they would be joined by many of their "friends" from Sweden soon.<sup>91</sup> Much of Vermont's press was compliant in repeating these descriptions of success. The *St. Albans Messenger*, for example, ran an article in July headlined "The Swedes are Happy."<sup>92</sup>

Try as Valentine might to explain it away, the almost immediate failure of the Vershire colony gave ammunition to foes of the program both inside and outside the state. A farmer in Fairfax wondered why, in light of the colony's dispersal, the "deserted farms" had not been turned over to poor native farmhands who could not afford farms of their own.<sup>93</sup> Newspapers in such places as Wichita, Baltimore, and Portland, Oregon, reported the scheme to be, as the *Kansas City Star* called it, an "utter failure."<sup>94</sup> Other reports were much more positive, as if describing a completely different program. The *Daily Advertiser* of Boston reported the colonies to be "flourishing," while Boston's *Daily Journal* called the Swedish colonies "prosperous."<sup>95</sup> Responding to a *Richmond (Virginia) Times* report in July that the project had already failed, the *Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette* allowed that there had been some

“missgoes,” but “upon the whole the Vermonters are greatly encouraged over their adventure.”<sup>96</sup>

What was most important, however, was simply that so much discussion of the Swedish scheme was taking place at all. Both supporters and detractors treated the actual Swedes like a monolithic abstraction, on the one hand all frugal, industrious, and peaceable, on the other merely another set of impoverished immigrants. Whether the program and all its accompanying talk of “abandoned farms” hurt Vermont’s reputation, the concrete result of publicity was the large number of inquiries about the availability of land that Valentine received from both inside and outside the state. The *New York Herald* wrote in July that it was “interesting to note that the importation of these Swedish settlers has directed the attention of some Vermonters to the possibilities of their own state, and led them to purchase certain of the abandoned farms about which there has been so much talk.”<sup>97</sup> The *Boston Evening Journal* noted that the scheme had benefited the state by “attracting public notice to the fact that good farms could be had in Vermont,” and as a consequence some of the “deserted Vermont farms” were being settled by people from other states. Vermont’s problem was not poor soil, the *Evening Journal* concluded, but instead a lack of “sufficient pains to advertise its manifold natural advantages.”<sup>98</sup> In another Boston newspaper, Hosea Mann reported in July that the Swedes themselves were beside the point: The result of Wilmington’s colony had been a boom in Wilmington real estate sales, with many farms in the last year sold to people from other states, and many more inquiries received. Over all, Valentine estimated that more than 100 farms had been sold around the state because of the publicity he had brought to Vermont. “The repopulating of Vermont,” wrote Mann, “is auspiciously begun,” and it was not with Swedes. It was with American buyers of second homes.<sup>99</sup>

The Swedish immigration program was certainly not solely responsible for this development. For years Vermonters had become ever more aware that, as a forestry expert told New Hampshire’s legislature in January 1890, “more and more people want to go where they can see green things.”<sup>100</sup> The sale of Vermont farms as summer homes to middle-class families, and not just to wealthy businessmen like William Seward Webb, was already underway. In the spring of 1890, Burlington’s municipal government paid for the publication of the pamphlet, “Attractions In and About Burlington,” which described the city as “a point of much interest to tourists” that was “a delightful place for a tarry of a few days.”<sup>101</sup> Rather than a distraction from the promotion of summer tourism, the Swedish scheme complemented it. The *Boston Evening Transcript*, for example, in reporting on Valentine and Dillingham’s

visit to the Swedish colonies, not only wrote that the prosperity of the colonies was “assured,” but added that there was another way of redeeming “these deserted farms,” which was “by their purchase by city people for summer homes.” The *Transcript* continued, “A permanent summer home, with scores of acres of woodland and pasture, all to be had for a thousand dollars at the most, often merely for repairs and taxes—there is an inducement for the city man, who is not to be counted as rich and who has dreamed in vain of owning a country home.”<sup>102</sup>

#### THE END OF THE PROGRAM

As the summer months rolled by in 1890, Weston’s Swedes began to settle into the area in which they were placed. Edwin and Louise Anderson quickly began doing their part to repopulate rural Vermont, giving birth to a son, Charles, in 1890.<sup>103</sup> He was the first of six Vermont-born Anderson children. The next year, Carl Westine married fellow Swedish immigrant Anna Svennson in Weston; it is unclear if she was also part of Nordgren’s party that had arrived in April. The Westines’ first child, a daughter named Jennie, was born in Landgrove in 1891.<sup>104</sup>

Valentine did not lose interest in his Swedes, but his concerns were increasingly political. His focus was on submitting a persuasive report to the legislature that would convince lawmakers to fund the continuation of an office that, as Vermont author Frederick Wells wrote in 1904, “had become a virtual real estate agency.”<sup>105</sup> As the legislative session approached, Valentine’s work continued to receive mixed press coverage. The *Boston Daily Journal* wrote in September that the Weston and Wilmington colonies were a “continuous success,” full of “well and happy” Swedes who had sent for their friends. The *Brenham (Texas) Weekly Banner*, on the other hand, wrote that “the attempt to colonize the deserted farms of Vermont with Swedes has resulted in complete failure.”<sup>106</sup> The reality, at least for the Weston Swedes, was somewhere in between. But as long as outsiders were discussing Vermont’s “deserted” farms, Valentine might well have felt that the Swedes’ actual condition was beside the point.

The legislative session in which Valentine and his supporters sought continuation of the immigration scheme was extraordinarily contentious. Farmers and their allies in state government were energized by the establishment in Vermont over the summer of the Farmers’ League, an advocacy organization that had previously been established in other Northeastern states. The State Patrons of Husbandry was also in a particularly activist phase, and its leadership was firmly opposed to Valentine’s work.<sup>107</sup> The business elite, on the other hand, came to Montpelier

determined to achieve some of their long-term goals to modernize the state. In the end, the 1890 legislative session passed the first laws that put the cost of highways and schools on the state; both laws passed only after a great deal of acrimonious debate. The question of extending municipal suffrage to women also stimulated contentious debate. The bill that provoked the most rancor during the session sought to separate the Vermont State Agricultural College from the University of Vermont, an ardent goal of farming interests, and particularly Vermont's state Grange, for more than a decade. (It did not pass.) The result of these and other issues was a legislative session that the *Burlington Free Press* called "notorious" for its bitter politics.<sup>108</sup>

In this atmosphere, Valentine and his supporters sought to see his work continue. At the beginning of September, Valentine submitted his report to the legislature. It began with a summary of the commission's goals, recounted Valentine's first efforts to gather information on the state, gave a brief sketch of the historical conditions and events that had resulted in the "abandoned" farm crisis, and described the Swedish experiment, from its inception to the arrival of the Swedes the next year. Sprinkled throughout the passage, however, are notes by Valentine that his goals were larger than merely the experiment. He described his work as having the bigger goal of capturing the general attention of "those seeking cheap, good farms," and using the position "to impart information which will bring seller and purchaser into business relations."<sup>109</sup> Valentine concluded his discussion of the experiment by calling the Weston and Wilmington colonies a great success, dismissing the significance of the abandonment of Vershire, and calling for the program to continue with the establishment of a permanent commissioner of immigration.

Valentine went on to document some of the information he had gathered on manufacturing, but his conclusion made two things clear. First, that a program must continue that would bring Scandinavians to Vermont's farms, as they were so much more desirable than the "vicious and undesirable classes" who constituted the majority of the state's immigrants. But Valentine also argued that it was no less important for the commission's work to continue because of the many farms that had been sold as a direct result of its labors. The great contribution of his work, wrote Valentine, was that "the press of our large cities and far-away States has echoed the sentiments of the press of Vermont, and the result has been that Vermont's enterprises, her desirable farms and natural advantages, are known throughout the land."<sup>110</sup>

Pleased with the report, the state senate ordered 1,000 copies printed. At the same time, a bill to create a permanent Commission of

Immigration and Industrial Interests was introduced in the senate. In his farewell address to the legislature, Governor Dillingham enthusiastically urged continuation of the commission's work, sentiments echoed by his successor, Carroll Page. The next week, however, a bill was introduced into the house to abolish Valentine's office. The senate, a majority of which favored continuation of the commission, quickly appointed a special joint committee to study the issue.<sup>111</sup>

As the future of the experiment hung in the balance, Valentine came under a great deal of criticism for a variety of reasons in the house, a body dominated by representatives of small towns.<sup>112</sup> The main complaint was the cost of his work: Valentine put the cost of bringing his sixty-eight Swedes to Vermont at \$3,150, including a \$1,250 payment to Nordgren for his work. The whole cost of Valentine's work was not listed in the report, however, which weakened it considerably in the minds of many in the legislature and portions of the state press. Those adding Valentine's clerical, travel, and other expenses generally calculated the total expense of the office at around \$6,000, though estimates went as high as \$10,000 and \$15,000.<sup>113</sup> According to the *Argus and Patriot*, the general feeling of the "people" was that the results of Valentine's work "were not at all commensurate to the cost," and that, reading the report, even the most astute would wonder if he had "accomplished anything worthy of mention."<sup>114</sup> The attempt to repopulate Vermont by the importation of Swedes, concluded the *Argus*, "was a mistake and should never have been attempted." As critics had been arguing since the previous year, opponents of the commission continued to assert that Vermont had no "abandoned" farms in the first place, but rather a combination of farms for sale and land better suited to other purposes. Valentine was also criticized for having hired his daughter as his clerk.

In dismissing the Swedish project, however, the *Argus* had to admit that many farms had been sold to native Vermonters returning from the West as a result of the publicity Valentine bought to the state. Valentine emphasized this same point. As the bill to end his work sat in committee, he issued another circular requesting listers in each town to submit information on all the sales of farms that had taken place as a result of his labors. That circular did him no good. On November 22, the special committee on the bill to abolish the commission reported negatively on it, hoping to perpetuate Valentine's work, but the house had made up its mind. On the final day of the session, the house passed the bill and Valentine's work was over.

Valentine did not give up. In December he was reported to still be showing newspapers examples of the letters of inquiry he had received

about Vermont farms.<sup>115</sup> In January the *Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix* noted a letter from a Missouri resident who was deciding against buying a farm in Vermont because of “his disgust at the act of the legislature in repealing the measures for promoting the growth of the state in wealth and population, so successfully inaugurated under Commissioner Valentine.”<sup>116</sup> But many Vermonters were pleased by the scheme’s apparent failure, agreeing with the *Burlington Clipper* that the whole program had been a “foolish expenditure.”<sup>117</sup> For many in farming towns, the argument that Scandinavians were somehow better candidates to become Vermonters than others was the most preposterous aspect of the whole recruitment program. They knew that a strong community was not the product of ethnicity or religion, but instead derived from shared experiences and interdependence built up over a long time. Addressing a meeting of the Board of Agriculture in January 1891, board member M.W. Davis, from the beginning a staunch opponent of the scheme, declared that “When they talk of populating the State with Swedes, I must say I have no sympathy with it, and never had.” The bottom line for Davis was, “I am a true Vermonter, and I am proud of being a Vermonter. I never could sanction the idea of filling up our homes with foreigners.”<sup>118</sup>

#### MAJOR VALENTINE’S SWEDES BECOME VERMONTERS

Whatever opposition had existed on the Board of Agriculture to Valentine’s Swedish program, its members continued his work. Valentine’s term as commissioner had supplied the board with a reasonably comprehensive list of available farms, and a list of people in many towns who could be contacted by those hoping to buy them. The board chose to continue his work of publicizing Vermont’s available farms, publishing a pamphlet in 1891 titled “The Resources and Attractions of Vermont: With a List of Desirable Homes for Sale.”<sup>119</sup> The board printed the same pamphlet the next year, along with another titled “A List of Desirable Vermont Farms at Low Prices.” With the appointment of Victor Spear to the position of statistical secretary in 1893, the board threw itself even more deeply into promoting tourism. Spear released a study of summer tourism in 1894 that confirmed the growing significance of the industry to Vermont’s economy. As the years went by, the “List of Desirable Vermont Farms” became “The List of Desirable Farms and Summer Homes in Vermont” in 1895, and “Vermont: Its Fertile Fields and Summer Homes” in 1897. By then, the boom in summer tourism was fully underway.<sup>120</sup>

Meanwhile, some of Valentine’s Swedes did not find it as easy to assimilate as he had predicted. The *Boston Daily Globe* reported in April

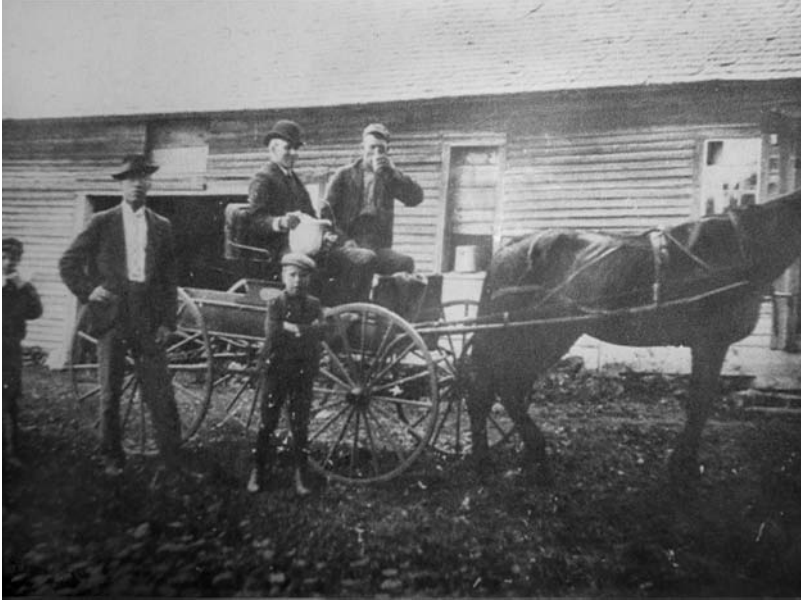
1891 that the Swedes who had moved from Vershire to Norton were “suffering” and making an “earnest plea for aid” so they could leave, while the *St. Albans Messenger* described Norton’s Swedes as “in destitute circumstances.”<sup>121</sup> At the same time, newspapers reported a number of times in 1891 that, ironically, the effect of Valentine’s work was to alert farmers in Québec of farms for sale in Vermont. The *Argus* reported that this consequence of the circulation of Valentine’s map was evidence of “the way in which the money of the State was uselessly squandered by the late Commission of Agriculture.”<sup>122</sup>

Mostly, however, Vermonters lost interest in the Swedish experiment. The *Burlington News* wrote in the summer of 1891 of its relief that the “abandoned farm nonsense is gradually going out of fashion.”<sup>123</sup> Similarly, the *Argus* was relieved to write that “we hear less talk now-a-days as to the so-called ‘abandoned farms’ of Vermont than we did at a time when legislatures were creating and later destroying the commission that was to bring about a ‘grand transformation.’”<sup>124</sup> When people thought of Valentine’s experiment, they often disparaged its memory. The *Bennington Banner* bemoaned in 1891 the “slurs which it is the fashion in some quarters to cast on the work done by the commission.”<sup>125</sup> A writer to another paper called Valentine’s map “a terrible reflection upon the state” that “conveyed a much worse impression than the facts would warrant.”<sup>126</sup>

Some Vermonters, however, saw great, if unexpected, benefits to Valentine’s work. The *Bennington Banner* described it as “very much like a sacrifice hit” in baseball. “Had not this agitation roused the inert press of this state to advertising its resources as they should be,” the *Banner* wrote, the many land sales that had occurred in the last year would not have taken place.<sup>127</sup> The *St. Albans Messenger* credited Valentine with “bringing forward a practical discussion of the many superior advantages of the state and its unimproved opportunities.”<sup>128</sup> Noting that Valentine had “been derided and even abused for advertising” Vermont’s available farms, the *Vermont Phoenix* pointed to the fact that New Hampshire and Massachusetts were pursuing programs to compile and publicize lists of farms for sale, modeled on Valentine’s work.<sup>129</sup> For such observers, his main accomplishment was the compilation of lists of farms for sale, and the extent to which he had been able to make outsiders aware of them. In 1895 the *St. Albans Messenger* reported that in one formerly “deserted” section of the town of Chester, which sits next to Weston, a number of professors from Harvard University and Bowdoin College had purchased local farms as summer homes since 1891.<sup>130</sup>

But as the state turned its attention to tourism and the Swedish program drifted into memory, a strange thing happened that the scheme’s

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*Carl Westine and Carl Nyren drinking hard cider in a wagon in 1906. The young man standing is Charlie Neilson, who drowned in Landgrove in 1914. The children are Alve Neilson and Willie Westine. Courtesy of the Landgrove Historical Society.*

critic M.W. Davis had not foreseen. The Swedes who had been settled in Weston—the Nyrens, Westines, Andersons, and Neilsons—got on with their lives and gradually became Vermonters. Valentine had repeatedly said that cohesive colonies of Swedes would attract more of the same. He was not entirely wrong. In the 1890s, while the Andersons farmed in neighboring Weston, the Nyrens, Westines, and Neilsons lived along the same road in Landgrove, and John Neilson’s brother Axel, who was married to Anna Westine’s sister, moved from Sweden to Landgrove in 1892.<sup>131</sup> Their children were gradually dispersing, but connections between them continued. The census of 1900 found twenty-five-year-old Carl Nyren working in a lumber camp in Mount Tabor; living in the same boardinghouse and working as a servant was sixteen-year-old Anna Neilson.<sup>132</sup> Three years later, when brothers Oliver and Carl Nyren applied for U.S. citizenship, their applications listed John Neilson’s son Charles as their witness.<sup>133</sup>

More important than the connections they maintained may be the fact that Weston’s Swedes began to go their separate ways and blend



into their communities as the 1890s drew to a close. Children continued to arrive. Carl and Anna Westine, for example, had five children between 1891 and 1901.<sup>134</sup> The Nyrens sold their Landgrove farm in 1906 and moved to Pawlet, where patriarch August worked in a sawmill and his son Oliver began working for the Prudential Insurance Company.<sup>135</sup> In 1909, Edwin Anderson died of trichinosis, leaving his widow Emma and eight children to make a go at working their mortgaged farm in Londonderry. Sons Carl and Charles worked in a nearby lumber mill.<sup>136</sup> And as the Swedes jumped from job to job, bought and sold farms, and moved in separate directions, they also began intermarrying with locals. In 1893, seventeen-year-old Charlotte Nyren married Dorset native Edward Tiffit. In 1900, Edward and Charlotte, having produced two children so far, were working a farm next door to the house of Carl and Anna Westine in Landgrove.<sup>137</sup>

#### THE LEGACY OF THE PROGRAM

In the decades to come, press judgments of the Swedish experiment remained as deeply divided as they had been in its heyday. The *Burlington Free Press* wrote in 1897 that Valentine had been “undoubtedly on the right track” before his project had “succumbed in the face of hostile public sentiment.”<sup>138</sup> On the other hand, in 1904 the *Burlington News* called the Swedish experiment “an absolute, unmitigated failure,” to which the *Bennington Banner* responded that it had been a success, “not perhaps in the way it was intended but in attracting attention to Vermont.”<sup>139</sup> But on the whole, as the *Burlington Free Press* summarized public memory of Valentine’s scheme in 1907, “the experiment has been completely lost to view.”<sup>140</sup>

The Swedish colony program illustrates how much Vermont’s business and political leaders misunderstood the nature and dynamics of rural life in a number of ways. As Frederick Wells would once again point out in 1904, it was hard to grasp why Valentine repeatedly referred to farms as “abandoned” if they were, in fact, for sale.<sup>141</sup> There was plenty of merit to farmers’ argument that their local economies were evolving naturally, in a salutary way that bred communal unity and stability. Most of all, supporters of the program had misread the nature of rural communities. They thought that Swedes would naturally become parts of the communities in which they settled more quickly than Irish or Franco Americans could. For rural folk, however, ethnicity was a contributing factor to acceptance, but that alone was no replacement for familiarity, interdependence, shared experiences, and family ties. Weston’s Swedes would become Vermonters, but it would take some time.

Valentine might have been dismayed had he known that, as that process unfolded, the Swedes would in many ways blend in with the very people they were supposed to replace. Anna Nyren, for example, married a paper mill worker of French Canadian heritage, Peter Fountain, in 1904.<sup>142</sup> In the 1920s, her older sister Charlotte did the same. Divorced from Edward Tiftt a few years earlier, in 1926 she married George DeRosia. The son of immigrants from Québec, DeRosia had been the boss of a Peru lumber camp where, in 1920, Edward, Charlotte, and their ten-year-old son Richard lived. Charlotte worked as the camp's cook.<sup>143</sup> The lumber camp was apparently too rough a place for a girl, however: Their daughter Mildred Tiftt, who was eleven, lived with her uncle Oliver and grandparents in Pawlet.<sup>144</sup> That Valentine's Swedes would marry Franco Americans is not the only irony of this story. Though the Swedes had been praised as good replacements for Yankees who, according to L.H. Wiler, were in part dissipated because they married their cousins, Carl and Annie Westine's daughter Jennie married her cousin Julius Westine in 1910.<sup>145</sup>

As the twentieth century unfolded, the memory of the program that brought Swedes to Vermont farms may have faded, but the descendants of Weston's Swedes remained. Many of the Westines, for example, gravitated toward Chester, particularly the children of Carl's son, William.<sup>146</sup> By the 1950s a number of them lived in the Springfield area and worked for machine tool companies such as Jones and Lamson and Fellows Gear Shapers. Most of Edwin and Emma Anderson's children settled in the Brattleboro area. Charles Anderson raised eight children there. His sisters Esther, Ellen, and Hazel also lived in Brattleboro.

For all the ridicule his Scandinavian immigrant program had received, Alonzo Valentine might have found consolation that his scheme to improve Vermont had born some fruit in the course of the Nyren family. Carl moved to Arlington around 1910, where he worked successively for a refrigerator repair company, in a saw mill, and as a mill operator.<sup>147</sup> Oliver worked as an insurance agent for nearly a half century; for many years, his niece Mildred and her husband John Young lived with Oliver in Rutland.<sup>148</sup> Anna Nyren Fountain and her husband Peter raised a number of children while living in Wilder; Peter worked as a janitor at Dartmouth College, while Anna ran a laundry business at home.<sup>149</sup> One son, Leland, owned the business Lee Fountain's Electrical and Refrigeration Service in White River Junction for many years.<sup>150</sup>

The life of Charlotte Nyren perhaps best sums up the bottom line of this story. Brought from Sweden at fourteen, she married a man older than her by a decade three years later. Her first marriage to Edward Tiftt produced five children, over a period during which the family bounced

between farms and lumber camps. Having divorced her first husband, her second died after nineteen years of marriage. When she retired, Lottie Nyren moved to Arlington. There she was surrounded by family. Her son Richard, for example, worked for many years in maintenance at Castleton State College.<sup>151</sup> When Charlotte died in 1976, two days short of her 100th birthday, she had four children, three stepdaughters, ten grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and seven great-great-grandchildren, nearly all of whom lived in Vermont.<sup>152</sup>

That is Valentine's most important legacy. The Swedes program did not have the effect of reversing the "decline" of rural Vermont, repopulating its "abandoned" farms, or stemming the tide of French Canadians entering the state. Neither did it provide the Swedes themselves with the cheap, fertile farms and happy, prosperous lives he guaranteed them. But not only did the Swedes program play a major role in promoting summer tourism, it also gave Vermont good citizens, after all. They paid taxes. They served honorably in the military. They worked for some of Vermont's largest employers. They opened small businesses. They helped to build Vermont. They became Vermonters. Considering that, calling Valentine's scheme a fiasco is unfair.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1883–1945*. Micropublication T840. RG085. Rolls # 1–181. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>2</sup>Elise Guyette, "Immigration to Vermont, 1840–1930," located at [http://www.flowofhistory.org/themes/movement\\_settlement/immigration-.php](http://www.flowofhistory.org/themes/movement_settlement/immigration-.php).

<sup>3</sup>See J. Kevin Graffagnino, *Vermont in the Victorian Age: Continuity and Change in the Green Mountain State, 1850–1900* (Bennington and Shelburne, Vt.: Vermont Heritage Press and Shelburne Museum, 1985), 119–121; Blake Harrison, *The View from Vermont* (Burlington: University of Vermont Press, 2006), 58; John Lund, "Vermont Nativism: William Paul Dillingham and U.S. Immigration Legislation," *Vermont History* 63 (1995): 15–29; Michael Sherman, et al., *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2004), 310.

<sup>4</sup>Paul M. Searls, *Two Vermonts: Geography and Identity* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2006), 72–73.

<sup>5</sup>Andrea Rebeck, "The Selling of Vermont: From Agriculture to Tourism, 1860–1910," *Vermont History* 44 (Winter 1976): 17; Sherman, *Freedom and Unity*, 310.

<sup>6</sup>Sherman, *Freedom and Unity*, 310; Graffagnino, *Vermont in the Victorian Age*, 121.

<sup>7</sup>Dorothy Mayo Harvey, "The Swedes in Vermont," *American Swedish Historical Foundation Yearbook* (1960), 23–43.

<sup>8</sup>J.H. Putnam, "The Depopulation of Our Rural Districts: Cause, and Some Suggestions in Regard to a Remedy," *Report of the Vermont Board of Agriculture* (Montpelier: Freeman Steam Printing House and Bindery, 1878), 132–139. On fears of rural decline, see Richard Judd, *Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Rural New England* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1977), 64–67; Hal Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth-Century New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

<sup>9</sup>Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 139–140; Joseph Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 204.

<sup>10</sup>*Journal of the Vermont Senate* (Montpelier, Vt.: Argus and Patriot Job Printing House, 1888), 349–357.

<sup>11</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 7 August 1889.

<sup>12</sup>*Deerfield Valley Times*, 10 January 1890.

<sup>13</sup>The original senate bill put the number of commissioners at five, but the thrifty house revised that number down to a single commissioner. *Report of the Commissioner of Agricultural and Manufacturing Interests of the State of Vermont* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle Printing Company, 1890), 4 (hereafter, *Report of the Commissioner*); *Journal of the Vermont House* (Montpelier, Vt.: Montpelier, Vt.: Argus and Patriot Job Printing House, 1888), 118; *Burlington Free Press*, 15 March 1889; *Boston Evening Journal*, 30 March 1889; *Boston Evening Transcript*, 11 November 1904.

<sup>14</sup>*St. Albans Messenger*, 24 August 1891; Jacob G. Ullery, comp., *Men of Vermont: An Illustrated Biographical History of Vermonters and Sons of Vermont* (Brattleboro, Vt.: Transcript Publishing Company, 1894), 406–408.

<sup>15</sup>*Burlington Free Press*, 15 and 21 March 1889.

<sup>16</sup>*Boston Daily Journal*, 30 March 1889.

<sup>17</sup>The problem, Valentine believed, was that the commissioner's position was so poorly funded by the penurious state legislature that town listers could not be compensated for accumulating the information Valentine asked of them. *Report of the Commissioner*, 5–6.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 15–16. Among other business endeavors, Valentine was then engaged in an enterprise in Nebraska with Bennington businessman John G. McCullough. Correspondence about this enterprise is held in the collection of Valentine's papers at the Bennington Museum, Bennington, Vermont.

<sup>19</sup>Alonzo B. Valentine, "Swedish immigration," *The Quill* 1 (September 1890): 23–28; *Report of the Commissioner*, 23; Harvey, "The Swedes in Vermont," 40; Graffagnino, *Vermont in the Victorian Age*, 119–121.

<sup>20</sup>*Journal of the Vermont Senate* (Montpelier, Vt.: Argus and Patriot Job Printing House, 1882), 36.

<sup>21</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 7 August 1889.

<sup>22</sup>*Burlington Free Press*, 15 March 1889.

<sup>23</sup>In 1888 Nordgren published an eleven-page pamphlet titled "Nordgren & Bergstrom, hufvudager for Bay State Companiets land i Nebraska och Wyoming." Bibliographical information for this pamphlet is available at [http://books.google.com/books/about/Nordgren\\_Bergstrom\\_hufvudagerter\\_f%C3%B6r\\_Ba.html?id=G3ZwYgEACAAJ](http://books.google.com/books/about/Nordgren_Bergstrom_hufvudagerter_f%C3%B6r_Ba.html?id=G3ZwYgEACAAJ).

<sup>24</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 13 September 1889.

<sup>25</sup>*Report of the Commissioner*, 5.

<sup>26</sup>*Troy Weekly Budget*, 25 August 1889.

<sup>27</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 12 August 1889.

<sup>28</sup>*Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 9 August 1889.

<sup>29</sup>*New Haven Register*, 14 August 1889.

<sup>30</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 7 August 1889; "Vermont Wants to Be Recolonized," *Baltimore Sun*, 10 August 1889; "Vermont Invites Immigration," *Detroit Free Press*, 13 August 1889; *Chicago Herald*, 15 August 1889; *San Francisco Morning Call*, 12 August 1889; *Macon (Georgia) Telegraph*, 18 August 1889.

<sup>31</sup>*Troy Weekly Budget*, 8 September 1889.

<sup>32</sup>*Boston Daily Journal*, 27 September 1889.

<sup>33</sup>*Deerfield Valley Times*, 23 August 1889, and September 20 1889. *Boston Daily Journal*, 27 September 1889. Valentine reported on that day that "arrangements had been completed" for colonies of thirteen families in Wilmington and twelve in Weston, and that the vicinity of Corinth and Vershire might see a colony, as well.

<sup>34</sup>*Grand Forks Herald*, 25 September 1889; *Wheeling Daily Register*, 26 October 1889.

<sup>35</sup>For example, "Swedish Colonists for Vermont," *New York Times*, 29 September 1889.

<sup>36</sup>"The Abandoned Farms of Vermont," *Baltimore Sun*, 15 October 1889; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 30 October 1889; *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, 2 November 1889; *Grey River Argus*, 19 November 1889.

<sup>37</sup>*Bennington Banner*, 19 November 1889.

<sup>38</sup>*Boston Daily Journal*, 18 October 1889.

<sup>39</sup>*Macon (Georgia) Telegraph*, 26 September 1889.

<sup>40</sup>*Deerfield Valley Times*, 27 June 1889; *Dallas Morning News*, 6 November 1889; *St. Albans Messenger*, 10 October and 21 December, 1889.

<sup>41</sup>*Boston Evening Transcript*, 12 October 1889.

<sup>42</sup>*Ludlow (Vermont) Tribune*, 20 September 1890.

<sup>43</sup>*Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, 15 January 1890.

<sup>44</sup>Reprinted in the *St. Albans Messenger*, 22 August 1889.

<sup>45</sup>*Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix*, 8 November 1889.

<sup>46</sup>*St. Albans Messenger*, 21 May 1921.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 25 September 1889.

<sup>48</sup>Quoted in the *Deerfield Valley Times*, 25 October 1889.

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<sup>49</sup> *Montpelier Vermont Watchman*, 21 October 1889. The *Watchman* called the charge of discrimination “sheer nonsense.” *Report of the Vermont Dairymen’s Association*, 4 September 1889.

<sup>50</sup> On the interdependent nature of rural Vermont communities in the Gilded Age, see Searls, *Two Vermons*, 23–28.

<sup>51</sup> *Boston Daily Journal*, 18 October 1889; *Troy Weekly Times*, 31 October and 7 November 1889.

<sup>52</sup> *Report of the Commissioner*, 23–24.

<sup>53</sup> A copy of the map is possessed by the Landgrove Historical Society.

<sup>54</sup> When Nordgren applied for a passport in November 1889 for his recruitment trip, he listed his place of birth as Varmland. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington D.C.; *Passport Applications, 1795–1905*; Collection Number: *ARC Identifier 566612 / MLR Number AI 508*; NARA Series: *MI372*; Roll #: 342.

<sup>55</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 2 May 1890; *Report of the Commissioner*, 25.

<sup>56</sup> *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 30 December 1889; *New York Times*, 15 December 1889.

<sup>57</sup> *Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix*, 17 January 1890.

<sup>58</sup> Reprinted in the *St. Johnsbury Caledonian Record*, 9 January 1890.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in the *Rutland Herald*, 9 January 1890.

<sup>60</sup> *Report of the Commissioner*, 49; *Vermont Phoenix*, 17 January 1890; *Burlington Free Press*, 21 January 1890.

<sup>61</sup> Edwin Rozwenc, *Agricultural Policies in Vermont, 1860–1945* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1981), 35–37.

<sup>62</sup> *Rutland Herald*, 18 January 1890.

<sup>63</sup> *Report of the Vermont State Board of Agriculture* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Association, Printers and Binders, 1890), 32, 36, 44, 54, 108; *Burlington Free Press*, 24 January 1890.

<sup>64</sup> Reprinted in the *Caledonian Record*, 6 February 1889.

<sup>65</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 21 March 1890.

<sup>66</sup> *Boston Morning Journal*, 8 March 1890; *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 10 March 1890.

<sup>67</sup> *New York Herald*, 10 March 1890; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 11 April 1890.

<sup>68</sup> *New York Herald*, 19 April 1890; *Springfield Republican*, 13 April 1890; *Boston Daily Journal*, 23 April 1890.

<sup>69</sup> *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 25 March 1890.

<sup>70</sup> *New York Herald*, 10 March 1890.

<sup>71</sup> *Boston Daily Journal*, 23 April 1890.

<sup>72</sup> *Topeka Capital*, 1 February 1890.

<sup>73</sup> *Providence Journal*, 23 April 1890.

<sup>74</sup> *New York Herald*, 19 April 1890.

<sup>75</sup> Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1883–1945*. Micropublication T840. RG085. Rolls # 1–181. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>76</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 26 April 1890.

<sup>77</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 2 May 1890. The *Times* already had been downplaying local expectations in the spring, reporting in March that Wilmington would receive no more than six families. *Deerfield Valley Times*, 14 March 1890.

<sup>78</sup> Mayo Harvey, “The Swedes in Vermont,” 27; *Deerfield Valley Times*, April 28, 1890.

<sup>79</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 2 May 1890.

<sup>80</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 2 May 1890. *Deerfield Valley Times*, 16 May 1890.

<sup>81</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 13 June 1890.

<sup>82</sup> *San Francisco Bulletin*, 22 July 1890; *Chicago Herald*, 9 August 1890.

<sup>83</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 28 September 1889.

<sup>84</sup> *Fort Worth Weekly Gazette*, 26 September 1889.

<sup>85</sup> The Swedes’ employment at the lumber mill is documented in the archives of the Landgrove Historical Society, and figured prominently in an exhibit it produced about them.

<sup>86</sup> *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 26 April 1890; *St. Johnsbury Caledonian Record*, 26 April 1890.

<sup>87</sup> *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 30 May 1890.

<sup>88</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, 5 August 1890.

<sup>89</sup> *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 24 July 1890; *St. Albans Messenger*, 24 July 1890.

<sup>90</sup> *Boston Daily Journal*, 24 July 1890.

<sup>91</sup> *St. Johnsbury Caledonian Record*, 25 July 1890; *St. Albans Messenger*, 24 July 1890; *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, 26 July 1890. Valentine told the *Messenger* in August that at that very moment three families destined for Weston, three for Wilmington, and two more families were already on their way from Sweden. *St. Albans Messenger*, 1 August 1890.

<sup>92</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 24 July 1890.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 May 1890.

<sup>94</sup> *Kansas City Star*, 24 July 1890; *Morning Oregonian*, 22 July 1890; *Baltimore Sun*, 23 July 1890.

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<sup>95</sup> *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 24 July 1890; *Boston Daily Journal*, 24 July 1890.

<sup>96</sup> *Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette*, 20 July 1890.

<sup>97</sup> *New York Herald*, 28 July 1890.

<sup>98</sup> *Boston Evening Journal*, 12 July 1890.

<sup>99</sup> *Boston Daily Journal*, 24 July 1890.

<sup>100</sup> *St. Johnsbury Caledonian Record*, 20 January 1890.

<sup>101</sup> "Attractions In and Around Burlington" (Glens Falls, N.Y.: C. H. Possons, 1890).

<sup>102</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, 24 Jul 1890.

<sup>103</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Twelfth Census, 1900, Weston, Windsor County, Vermont.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, Landgrove, Bennington County, Vermont.

<sup>105</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, 4 November 1904.

<sup>106</sup> *Brenham (Tx.) Weekly Banner*, 18 September 1890.

<sup>107</sup> Rozwenc, *Agricultural Policies in Vermont*, 68. Grange master Alpha Messer was quoted in a Grange meeting saying that he had "no abiding faith in immigration from Sweden or any other foreign country as a direct means of permanent settlement for these farms." Graffagnino, *Vermont in the Victorian Age*, 120.

<sup>108</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, 26 November 1890.

<sup>109</sup> *Report of the Commissioner*, 25.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 35–39.

<sup>111</sup> The bill, H.49, was submitted by Representative Taylor of Cornwall on October 9. The special committee was established the next day.

<sup>112</sup> Edwin C. Rozwenc, "The Group Basis of Vermont Farm Politics, 1870–1945," *Vermont History* 25 (Fall 1957): 23–37.

<sup>113</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, 1 September 1904.

<sup>114</sup> *Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, 24 September 1890.

<sup>115</sup> *Deerfield Valley Times*, 12 December 1890.

<sup>116</sup> *Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix*, 2 January 1891.

<sup>117</sup> *Burlington Clipper*, 26 January 1891.

<sup>118</sup> Vermont Dairymen's Association, *Report of the Twenty-First Annual Meeting* (Montpelier, Vt.: Press of the Watchman Publishing Co., 1891), 98; Hamilton Child, comp., *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windham County, VT., 1724–1884* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Journal Printing, 1884), 304.

<sup>119</sup> *Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix*, 27 March 1891. "Summer Resorts," *Report of the State Board of Agriculture* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Association, Printers and Binders, 1892), 164–167; Vermont State Board of Agriculture, "The Resources and Attractions of Vermont: With a List of Desirable Homes for Sale," (Montpelier, Vt.: Press of the Watchman Publishing Company, 1891).

<sup>120</sup> These state publications can be found in Special Collections at the University of Vermont. *Boston Evening Transcript*, 4 November 1904.

<sup>121</sup> *Boston Globe*, 3 April 1891; *St. Albans Messenger*, 9 April 1891. The *Messenger* later retracted this statement, writing that an investigation by Governor Page had revealed that Norton's Swedes were "getting along quite well." *St. Albans Messenger*, 21 May 1891.

<sup>122</sup> *Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, 17 December 1891.

<sup>123</sup> *Burlington News*, 8 June 1891.

<sup>124</sup> *Montpelier Argus and Patriot*, 20 May 1891.

<sup>125</sup> *Bennington Banner*, 26 June 1891.

<sup>126</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 24 August 1891.

<sup>127</sup> *Bennington Banner*, 14 July 1891.

<sup>128</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 24 August 1891.

<sup>129</sup> *Brattleboro Vermont Phoenix*, 2 October 1891.

<sup>130</sup> *St. Albans Messenger*, 25 March 1895.

<sup>131</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Twelfth Census, 1900, Landgrove, Bennington County, Vermont.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, Mount Tabor, Rutland County, Vermont.

<sup>133</sup> National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington, D.C.; *Index to New England Naturalization Petitions, 1791–1906 (M1299)*; Microfilm Serial: *M1299*; Microfilm Roll: 98.

<sup>134</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Thirteenth Census, 1910, Landgrove, Bennington County, Vermont.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, Pawlet, Rutland County, Vermont.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, Londonderry, Windham County, Vermont.

<sup>137</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Twelfth Census, 1900, Landgrove, Bennington County, Vermont.

<sup>138</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, 1 August 1897.

<sup>139</sup> *Bennington Banner*, 28 August 1904.

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<sup>140</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, 1 August 1907.

<sup>141</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, 4 November 1904.

<sup>142</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Sixteenth Census, 1940, Hartford, Windsor County, Vermont.

<sup>143</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Fourteenth Census, 1920, Peru, Bennington County, Vermont; Certificate of Marriage, George Joseph Derosia to Lottie Tiff, 13 Jan 1926. Vermont Marriage Records, 1909–2003. Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, Vermont (hereafter VSARA).

<sup>144</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Fourteenth Census, 1920, Pawlet, Rutland County, Vermont.

<sup>145</sup> Certificate of Marriage, Julius Westine to Jennie Westine, 30 January 1910. Vermont Marriage Records, 1909–2003. VSARA.

<sup>146</sup> For a representative example of documentation, see *Manning's Bellows Falls and Springfield Directory* (Springfield, Mass.: H.A. Manning Co., 1952), 371.

<sup>147</sup> See, for example, *Bennington (Vermont) Directory* (Springfield, Mass.: H.A. Manning, Co., 1916), 236; U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Fourteenth Census, 1920, Arlington, Bennington County, Vermont; *Bennington (Vermont) Directory* (Springfield, Mass.: H.A. Manning, Co., 1935), 223.

<sup>148</sup> See, for example, *Manning's Rutland Directory* (Springfield, Mass.: H.A. Manning, Co., 1940), 97, 137.

<sup>149</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Sixteenth Census, 1940, Hartford, Windsor County, Vermont.

<sup>150</sup> *Show Low (Arizona) White Mountain Independent*, 30 August 2007.

<sup>151</sup> Vermont Death Records, 1909–2003. VSARA. 3 December 1997.

<sup>152</sup> *Bennington Banner*, 9 February 1976.