



# Local History and the Vermont Borderlands, 1790-1820

*On the eve of the American Revolution the region that would become Chittenden County consisted of only a few American settlements, which at the outbreak of war were quickly abandoned. The growth of this relatively small region following the American Revolution speaks to the rapid changes that the new American nation was undergoing during its early years.*

BY JACQUELINE B. CARR

**I**n early 1815, at the age of twenty-six, Massachusetts native Joshua Haynes purchased a “Carding Machine and Clothiers works” located at Hubbel’s Falls on the Winooski River in Essex, Vermont. The location was an excellent one, as two saw mills and a grist mill already stood at the falls and a village center had grown up around them. Repair work was needed to get the business fully functioning, but this enterprise had the potential to produce a good living: It provided a needed service to the many residents in Essex and surrounding towns who engaged in the domestic production of cloth. The ambitious Haynes “repaired the Carding Machine” and then added to his “Cloth Dressing” manufactory a “Picking Machine for Picking wool.” During the next five years work at the manufactory grew to the point that he employed four skilled men and added a second “Carding Machine” and a “Shearing . . . & Fulling” machine, bringing his capital investment to \$3,000. Haynes hoped people would “favor him with their Custom,” and the “neatness and dispatch” he spoke of in his advertise-

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ments no doubt helped to bring him the customers he needed to grow and prosper. The “Clothier’s Works” was one of many enterprises being established in the Champlain Valley during the Early Republic. The Chittenden County Agricultural Society strongly encouraged men and women to engage in domestic manufactures, particularly the production of cloth, as this could be fundamentally important to the future of the local economy. The business Haynes operated proved successful, until tragically in 1830 his mill along with all others at Hubbel’s Falls was destroyed in a spring freshet; but while he did not rebuild, others would.<sup>1</sup>

During the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, rapid in-migration, settlement, and development brought Vermont’s northern borderlands into the market economy of the young nation. By the 1820s, the economy of Chittenden County would reflect the nexus between agrarian pre-industrial society and the commercialized market society of the Early Republic. Between 1790 and the early 1820s, new settlers undertook the building of infrastructures and the creation of social and economic foundations in their new towns. Roads were laid, mills erected, schools built, and manufactories established, although farming remained the primary livelihood for the greater percentage of the population. The Champlain Valley would cease to be a frontier by approximately 1830, as the near-constant flow of emigrants who had made their way northward during the previous four decades slowed dramatically; and within a decade the pattern reversed. As T. D. Seymour Bassett notes in *The Growing Edge: Vermont Villages, 1840-1880*, the region then became a supplier of emigrants to New York, Ohio, and the newly opening trans-Mississippi frontiers. However, in the early years of northern Vermont’s development, before this dramatic shift from in-migration to out-migration occurred, a different story was evolving in the northwestern borderlands of the state—one that has not been explored to any great degree. Such is the purpose of this essay through an initial exploration of Chittenden County’s northernmost communities.

#### PATTERNS OF POSTWAR SETTLEMENT

In 1822, an advertiser in Hartford’s *Connecticut Courant* informed the public that he had Vermont land for sale at “about half the price asked for similar lands in the same latitudes in New-York, and much lower than [prices] in Ohio, or Indiana.” The Vermont land was of the same quality as that in New York, Ohio, or Indiana but could be had “on more liberal credit.”<sup>2</sup> This one short excerpt from a Connecticut newspaper in 1822 provides a reminder that during the Early Republic

the northern frontier of New England was no less a part of the great migration of people from the Atlantic seaboard to the interior borderlands than was the trans-Appalachian West.

By the 1790s, affordable high-quality farmland was hard to come by in southern New England and repeated property divisions of family farms meant that sons had no choice but to seek land elsewhere. It was not solely, but predominantly, the young who began leaving the eastern seaboard to push further into the interior of the new nation seeking land, opportunity, a new start, and for some the promise of adventure. Taking advantage of the land that was opening up to settlers following the American Revolution, and secondarily the War of 1812, they headed west across the Alleghenies and north to the thinly settled frontiers of Vermont and Maine. This constant influx of settlers into the Old Northwest, upstate New York, and northern New England rapidly swelled the population of each region. Whatever the reasons for removal, these individuals were part of the larger phenomenon of the bustling activity of a young nation. As one historian has determined, during the 1790s alone the degree of mobility was unprecedented, as an estimated 40 percent of the population relocated every few years. This marked a trend that would not cease for some decades.<sup>3</sup> Between 1790 and 1800 the population in the Ohio Country grew fifteenfold from 3,000 to 45,000 and soon began to spill into Indiana.<sup>4</sup> During the same decade Vermont's population increased from 85,000 in 1791 to approximately 154,000 in 1800, and by 1810 the state had more than 217,000 inhabitants.<sup>5</sup>

The large majority of emigrants who made their way to Vermont during the years following the American Revolution and into the early nineteenth century settled in the northwestern region of the state, specifically in the Champlain Valley.<sup>6</sup> Whether they migrated from southern New England through the Valley of Vermont, or trekked across the old military route, the Crown Point Road, they eventually reached the Champlain Valley. Here in the broad expanse of alluvial lowlands bordering Lake Champlain they found the promise of rich and productive farm lands. During his tour through Vermont in the late spring of 1789, Reverend Nathan Perkins of Connecticut had noted that "Lake Champlain [was] the best sort of land. Not very heavy timbered, or stony or mountainous, [and] well intersected with streams."<sup>7</sup>

Moving from the southern region of the valley northward, the population growth of new settlements points to emigrants often settling the first towns reached. They might end their journey for any number of reasons, including the presence of friends or kin, available and affordable farmland, the need in the community for their artisanal skills, or

just the appeal of a certain town. By 1810 the populations of Shoreham and Middlebury, both in Addison County lying south of Chittenden County, exceeded two thousand persons, making these two towns the first in northern Vermont to outpace the growth of the large towns in southern Vermont. While Shoreham's population eventually peaked, stagnated, and then decreased, Middlebury's growth rate between 1820 and 1830 exceeded 70 percent. By that decade the pattern of an increasing number of emigrants moving farther north to settle in Chittenden County or continuing onward into Franklin County had been well underway for three decades.<sup>8</sup>

By 1820, the population of Burlington in Chittenden County approached that of Middlebury. During the following ten years the lakeside town experienced a growth rate of more than 65 percent. Only one other northern town had a population comparable to Burlington's during the period, the state's new capital of Montpelier, about thirty-five miles east and located in Washington County in the Green Mountains. The 1830 federal census reveals that three towns in Franklin County had populations above 2,000 people: Fairfield, St. Albans, and Swanton. At this point settlers had migrated to within less than twenty miles of the present-day United States-Canadian border.<sup>9</sup>

The settlement of New England's northern frontier was first and foremost a transplanting of single young men and young families from southern New England. This was true for Vermont during the last decade of the eighteenth century, when the census shows "a majority of all . . . residents to be sixteen years of age or younger." During the same period in Chittenden County those under the age of sixteen comprised over 50 percent of the population. Expanding the range to include the sixteen- to twenty-five-year-old age group pushes the percentage of residents under the age of twenty-six to more than 60 percent. In some of the county's townships this reached 75 percent. During the next two decades, 1801-1820, those under the age of sixteen continued to represent a substantial portion of each town's population.<sup>10</sup>

These settlers, whether single or with families, had any number of reasons for leaving home, family, and friends to try their luck elsewhere. We will never know with any sense of exactitude, but patterns exist that define push factors and pull factors in the migration of peoples. Some of those who left southern New England were children whose parents or grandparents had themselves immigrated to the less-settled areas of western Massachusetts, southern New Hampshire, and southern Vermont during the eighteenth century. There were sons of farmers who had little hope of acquiring land and young families who wanted a better life and a brighter future for their children. Some were no doubt

filled with wanderlust and grabbed the opportunity for an adventure. Many men who served in the Continental Army during the American Revolution had for the first time experienced what lay beyond their own circumscribed world. They probably returned home with stories about the vast stretches of seemingly uninhabited land beyond the edges of American settlement. During the 1780s and into the early 1800s, migration to northern Vermont included many of these veterans of the American Revolution.

Archibald Cook, born in 1763 in Southington, Connecticut, enlisted with “Captain Lemuel Clefths Company in Colonel Durkees Regiment of Connecticut Troops” in February 1780 at the age of sixteen. Connecticut emigrants constituted a large percentage of Vermont’s settlers after the American Revolution, and it is likely that Cook heard enticing stories about the northern frontier from people he knew and met in his hometown or during his travels while in the army. Whenever he may have first thought about emigrating or made his final decision is unknown, but it was after he married, and the records suggest that the young couple migrated to Vermont some time in the 1790s. As Cook would state in 1832, when he applied for his army pension in Burlington, Vermont, he had “enlisted in the Continental Army for this”—referring to his “soldiers right” of one hundred acres. By the first decade of the nineteenth century the Cooks and their new daughter were living in Colchester, Vermont, on the one-hundred acre parcel he owned.<sup>11</sup>

Many hundreds of veterans of the American Revolution would settle northern Vermont. More than fifty years after the war’s end, “approximately 40,000 pensioners” were on the U.S. government’s rolls, and that was a mere “22 percent of those who had enlisted for Continental, state, and militia service.” The 1840 federal population census was the first to record the names of living pensioners and the family with whom they resided. In Chittenden County slightly less than one hundred veterans were still alive, the oldest being ninety-four years of age. Like many settlers who relocated at least once after settling in Chittenden County, Archibald Cook and his family would eventually move to a neighboring town, where they remained for twenty years until making one final move northward to Fairfax in Franklin County. It is noteworthy that despite these relocations, Cook never sold his “soldier’s right” of one hundred acres in Colchester. In all probability it had great personal value to him beyond its monetary value as real estate.<sup>12</sup>

The first permanent settlers arrived in Chittenden County during the 1780s following the close of the American Revolution, after all hostilities along the northern borderlands had ceased. Between 1791 and 1820, Chittenden County’s population grew from nearly 4,000 to 14,500



*Chittenden County, 1810. Detail from James Whitelaw, "A correct map of the state of Vermont from actual survey; exhibiting the county and town lines, rivers, lakes, ponds, mountains, meeting houses, mills, public road &c." Published September 1810. Courtesy of Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt.*

residents. In the northern half of the county the towns of Essex and Jericho each grew threefold. The populations of Colchester, Milton, and Underhill increased sixfold, sevenfold, and eightfold, respectively, while the neighboring town of Westford grew at a phenomenal rate: the population was sixteen times larger in 1820 than it had been in 1791. The towns in the southern half of the county had been the first to draw a large number of settlers during the 1780s and 1790s, but while they continued to increase in population during the following two decades, their growth rate slowed between 1800 and 1820. Further north, a few miles

or a few towns away, there was usually the prospect of more available land at cheaper prices. Chittenden County was a microcosm of the larger statewide pattern wherein settlement patterns generally moved from south to north.<sup>13</sup> An initial analysis of the censuses for all towns in Chittenden County for the years 1791, 1800, 1810, and 1820 suggests that there was also internal migration as single men or even those with families relocated from their initial town of settlement to another, perhaps as a consequence of becoming more familiar with the area. Settlers considered multiple factors in the decision-making process about both initial migration and relocation. At a minimum these could have included at least one of the following: marriage, kinship, land, availability of work, and business opportunities.

David Greeley, a New Hampshire emigrant who was probably more peripatetic than most settlers in the region, provides an interesting case study. Greeley relocated at least three times once he reached Chittenden County, moving from one community to another in a little over a decade before permanently settling in Essex Township. Greeley and three of his cousins emigrated from southern New Hampshire during the 1810s. Most likely they emigrated together, as they were from the same community, or at least sequentially within a short span of time. The four of them first appear in the Chittenden County federal census in 1820: the three cousins, Jonathan, Daniel, and Joel in Richmond, a community of approximately seven hundred residents; and David in Burlington, less than ten miles from his family.<sup>14</sup> As a blacksmith it is likely that David found more opportunity in the larger port community of Burlington, with a population exceeding two thousand people and a slowly developing manufacturing and commercial economy in addition to its farming base. Once again, though, Greeley relocated; this time to the town of Colchester, a farming community adjacent to Burlington. After brief residences in Milton and Fairfax, Greeley and his wife Clarissa, now with three children, made a final move in the late 1830s to Hubbel's Falls, a village center located on the Winooski River in the town of Essex. That year David and Clarissa's children, along with the five of Joel Greeley, numbered among the youth attending the school located in the southern part of Essex. David Greeley had relocated three times within approximately a fifteen-year period, or possibly less.

Why Greeley made these moves cannot be known with any certainty unless letters, journals, or other firsthand accounts were to emerge. There are clues, however, that offer suggestions. It is highly likely that these moves were at least in part if not entirely based on decisions to be close to kin. When the family moved to Colchester, it was where Clarissa's parents and brother lived. After their brief relocations to Milton

and Fairfax in Franklin County, the next move to Essex also meant that they had kin in town. David's cousin, Joel, had left Richmond with his wife and children in the late 1820s and settled in Essex near Hubbel's Falls. Extant records suggest that he continued to farm and also worked as a lumberman, perhaps joining other individuals who were clearing the old-growth white pine forests that covered much of the town lands. Within five or six years after David and Clarissa arrived in Essex, he purchased approximately forty acres of undeveloped land in Hubbel's Falls from his father-in-law, who had, it appears from the records, acquired it from land speculators. David Greeley died in 1862, by which time he had expanded his farm to more than one hundred acres, working it with his two sons.<sup>15</sup> Repeated moves and the presence of family are two interwoven threads running through the story of Greeley's first decade or two in Chittenden County, a familiar pattern in the history of emigration along the western and northern borderlands.

The opportunity to settle and perhaps make a better life was not the experience of all who arrived on the northern frontier, particularly the indigent and wandering poor. While some of these men, women, and children found a home, most lived a life of more-or-less constant movement. Rather than finding a place to settle, they found themselves marked as undesirables and pushed from town to town. Pregnant women and those with children but no male partner represented a particular concern to the community. A conservative estimate based on extant warning-out records for towns in Chittenden County between 1802 and 1817 shows at minimum close to 800 people. This number is in fact low, however, because typically the head of household was warned and the count of individual family members not provided. In addition, the absence of records for some years prohibits determining a more precise figure, which likely would be higher.<sup>16</sup>

In 1787 the Vermont General Assembly had legislated "that each town in this State shall take care of, support, and maintain their own poor," defined as those who had legal settlement in a town.<sup>17</sup> This did not include the "transient, idle, and impotent and poor persons" who arrived in a town that was not their legal residence. In taking this action, the assembly affirmed that the two-centuries-old New England practice of warning out, which had its roots in early modern England, was applicable in Vermont. Warning-out records from towns across the state (and New England as a whole) speak to the constant movement of an economic and social underclass that was especially evident in the decades immediately following the American Revolution.

The means of attaining legal residency in a town varied from state to state in New England. In Vermont, prior to 1797, a newcomer could do

so through a vote by the “inhabitants . . . in a legal town meeting.” After that date, an inhabitant or “legal resident” was defined by the state as an individual who met one of the following five criteria: (1) owning, occupying, and improving property for one year; (2) “occupying a tenement of the yearly value of twenty dollars or upwards” for two years; (3) paying town taxes for two years; (4) serving in a public office in said town for two years; or (5) serving an apprenticeship for three years before the age of twenty-one if male or the age of eighteen if female. Children born out of wedlock had residency in the “last legal settlement” of their mother. Reflecting the nature of Vermont’s history of white settlement, the legal place of inhabitancy for a new settler was the first place of residence once he or she arrived in the state.

In a case where neither family nor relatives existed to assist a legal town resident who was “lame, blind, sick” or “not able to maintain themselves,” the assembly ruled that the town government had the responsibility of determining and overseeing care for its own.<sup>18</sup> In Chittenden County the town of Essex, by the 1820s, began to care for its poor through the increasingly popular means of putting out “to the lowest bidder.” This was the case for the “pauper” Amanda King, who was put in the hands of the lowest bidder “to be supported in a comfortable manner with everything necessary to make her comfortable for one year.” The “Boarding and Nursing” of Nancy Cameron was placed in the care of two separate families, as was the “Spensler Boy,” who presumably was orphaned although no specific reason for his being alone is mentioned.<sup>19</sup> While well intentioned, the quality of care and the treatment a person received could be difficult to monitor. At the discretion and compassion of the towns, those warned out might receive some necessary articles of clothing, shoes, and on occasion medical care from “nurses, physicians, and surgeons” before being sent on their way.<sup>20</sup> As historian Ruth Herndon notes, many transients “were of the poorest sort; their labor brought them little beyond the necessities of life” and they had likely initially “moved in search of work, rather than resort to receiving poor relief in their home communities.”<sup>21</sup> Warning out was intended to place responsibility for those in dire need where it belonged, with one’s town of legal inhabitancy, as opposed to creating financial hardship for other communities. Some received assistance but many more did not, except perhaps a pauper’s grave in which they were finally laid to rest.

#### CLAIMING THE LAND

As part of the 129 New Hampshire land grants made by Governor Wentworth in 1763, those that would eventually constitute Chittenden

County towns were tools of patronage and land speculation. Few, if any, of the original proprietors ever saw the land that they had been granted, and the obligations specifically charged in a proprietary grant for the settling and organizing of towns were rarely met.<sup>22</sup> Where the original proprietors were not present it fell to the town to organize itself and move forward with town building. Many of the early settlers in the Champlain Valley came to the region from Connecticut and Massachusetts, where the New England proprietary system had been the means of settling new towns since the seventeenth century. However, by the middle of the eighteenth century “proprietors of the frontier towns were speculative and absentee in character.” They were not residents “responsible for the settlement and development of the community,” so the town assumed a role that under the New England proprietary system was legally the responsibility of the grantee.<sup>23</sup> In a post-Revolutionary and post-Wentworth Vermont, town building fell to the community itself. At minimum, electing town officers, laying out of roads, building a meeting house, settling a minister, establishing a school, and locating “ground . . . for the purpose of burying the dead” needed immediate attention.<sup>24</sup> A critical issue for many towns, as in the case of Essex by the 1790s, was the need to address and clarify the legality of property ownership.

Throughout Vermont during the postwar years, towns created by the New Hampshire Grants faced similar legal complications over land titles and property lines. Conflicting property boundaries and the question of the “legality of their land purchases” was a matter that urgently needed the attention of the Essex town meeting. By 1803, it had become evident to landowners that a resolution of conflicting property boundaries and questions about the “legality of their land purchases” was needed. To further complicate the situation, “settlements and improvements” had been made to a number of these lots. Following legal protocol, that year the town requested that the “Proprietor’s Clerk” for the “Original Proprietors” deliver all records and files “to the Essex town clerk.” No one appeared and nothing was delivered. Most likely these records had long been lost. Pursuant to Vermont state law, under these circumstances neither the clerk nor the original proprietors were permitted to produce the records at a later date as “evidence of any division or allotment” made by the original proprietors. By 1804, Essex began moving ahead to have the six square miles surveyed, which was undertaken in 1806-1807 by Chittenden County Surveyor John Johnson.<sup>25</sup>

By the turn of the nineteenth century, 124 men had purchased a total of 230 parcels of land from the 66 original proprietors of Essex. At least

73 of these men, close to 60 percent, lived in Essex Township at some point between 1786 and 1810; some dwelt there for the entire twenty-four-year period.<sup>26</sup> The total number of 124 buyers purchased varying amounts of land. Families might choose either adjoining parcels or ones within close proximity to each other. More than 50 percent of the men purchasing parcels acquired less than one hundred acres; and of that group the majority owned less than fifty acres. Parcels between 101 and 200 acres were purchased by 35 percent of the buyers, and only 11 percent acquired between 201 and 500 acres. Two individuals purchased more than 800 acres. The Burlington entrepreneur, merchant, and land dealer Thaddeus Tuttle held ninety-three parcels throughout the township, which comprised more than 6,500 acres of land. By comparison, the large majority of men, slightly more than 90 percent, each held their total acreage in anywhere from one to four parcels of land.<sup>27</sup> Tuttle was clearly a land speculator, but so, most likely, were a number of other individuals who held multiple parcels. As had been the case in eighteenth-century New England, frontier land speculation could prove to be a highly lucrative business; between 1791 and 1806 alone, land values increased by 170 percent.<sup>28</sup> Those who arrived first and had the means were able to acquire “the richest and most productive portions of the town, the rich alluvial valleys” of both the Winooski River, which flowed along the southern border of Essex, and the Brown’s River, located in the eastern part of the town.<sup>29</sup>

Typical of eighteenth-century New England towns, Essex settlers dispersed across the entire township within a relatively short period of time. Consequently, during the course of the first decade or so, four village centers emerged within the township: Essex Center, Page’s Corners to its west, Butler’s Corners, and Hubbel’s Falls further south. Each offered multiple services to townsmen and travelers alike, including tanneries, blacksmiths, taverns, mercantile stores, wheelwrights, and by 1805 the town’s first post office, located in Page’s Corners.<sup>30</sup> Butler’s Corners, sitting at an intersection where roads extended to Essex Center, Page’s Corners, and Hubbel’s Falls, was the busiest location in the town during these early years. It was here that townsmen might find the local lawyer, see who was in the town stocks, and peruse the town’s first signpost where notices, warrants, and other matters of importance to the community as a whole were posted.<sup>31</sup>

Well-traveled roads passed through each of these village centers connecting Essex to the neighboring towns of Burlington, Milton, Westford, Jericho, and Williston and beyond. Moving people and goods through and around the community required constant road maintenance, particularly after long winters and spring thaws. It is not surpris-

ing that concerns about road conditions were a repeated topic of discussion. The first town meeting held in Essex in 1786 determined “to raise Twenty Pounds . . . for the purpose of repairing Roads,” which after lengthy discussion were determined to be in extremely poor condition. Those men willing to work on the roads during the month of September received “six shillings a day” and during October, “four shillings a day.” Men able to hire out their “Yoke of Oxen” as needed for the duration of the project would receive “three shillings” from the town. Raising funds for “the making and repairing roads, and building bridges” always fell to the town’s inhabitants after determining in town meetings the amount required to undertake any given job.<sup>32</sup>

In 1823, the completion of the two-hundred-foot covered bridge across the Winooski River replaced a ferry service, thereby allowing easier and quicker travel between Essex and Williston. As such an undertaking was beyond the financial means of either town on its own, to fund the project each requested that the state legislature levy “a tax of four Cents on each acre of land” in each town. In lieu of money, those unable to afford such a cost could pay “in labor, any time in the months of June & July” by applying to the local three-man committee overseeing the project.<sup>33</sup> The completion of Essex-Williston bridge, designed and built by civil engineer and surveyor John Johnson, was an accomplishment celebrated by both towns.

#### EARNING A LIVING

On Christmas Day in 1799 John Johnson, his employees, and the community of Essex celebrated the first step in developing an infrastructure to support the local economy: the completion of a sawmill located at Hubbel’s Falls.<sup>34</sup> Within five years a second sawmill sat at the same location and a decade later a third. Essential in agrarian societies, mills were frequently among the first structures built in newly settled towns with access to a stream or river as settlers cleared forest to create farmland, turning trees into planks for housing, barns, and fences. In colonial America town proprietors had often built both sawmills and gristmills in the early stages of establishing their town in order to attract settlers and meet the needs of local rural economies. They were of no less importance in the nineteenth century. Farmers still needed gristmills to grind their grain for personal use and for the local and regional trade. Since the seventeenth century, sawmills in southern New England had turned lumber into a valuable market commodity that was shipped to Britain. In the early nineteenth century, northern Vermont borderlands now provided tall, straight old-growth white pines that could be transported via Lake Champlain to Montreal for the trans-

Atlantic market. During the course of the next decade Johnson and his men added two gristmills at the same location as the previously constructed sawmill.

Projects that developed the infrastructure of the region such as building mills and constructing bridges also provided an important means of additional income through temporary employment for local men. Johnson employed at least fifty men for the construction of his gristmill in 1805; at least forty-four men on the second gristmill in 1819; and close to forty individuals to build the Essex-Williston covered bridge across the Winooski River. Henry Tichout was the first to work with Johnson on the sawmill in 1799, “getting . . . timber” and doing carpentry; in 1825 he still worked with Johnson, but by this time as a supplier of “timber & sundries.” The gristmills required leasing oxen from farmers and hiring men and their sleds to bring “Millirons from Westford” on sleds in December. Stonemasons, carpenters, and blacksmiths were needed at various times throughout both projects, as well as those with the skills to work “on the Mill & Gears.” Six years later, building the covered bridge required lumbermen, carpenters, ironworkers, mechanics, laborers, and suppliers for a total of more than three dozen individuals.<sup>35</sup>

It is perhaps ironic that seasonal employment, which is neither consistent nor guaranteed, could be the most reliable means of obtaining necessary cash. While men might find work on major projects such as Johnson’s mills and bridges, more commonly income to augment what came from a farmer’s own land and home was earned through seasonal manual farm labor. The probate of the estate of Caleb B. Smith of Williston, who died intestate in December 1818, provides an excellent example of the types of hired work that could pay in cash. Besides making repairs around Smith’s property, hired men did the jobs of reaping, mowing orchards and meadows, raking hay, digging potatoes and getting apples and wood, threshing wheat and “raking oats,” and transporting wheat to the local mill for grinding or to Burlington to sell.

The notations, “[a]t home harvesting” or “Haying,” on the July 1819 project pay records are a reminder that first and foremost the majority of the adult male population farmed for a living. As a primary occupation in Chittenden County, farming engaged more than 80 percent of the working community. Through newspaper advertisements, town records, day journals, probate records, and the agricultural census, a picture emerges of Chittenden County’s farmers growing a wide variety of food products. These included wheat, oats, Indian corn, potatoes, flax, rye, beans, barley, peas, turnips, orchard fruits (primarily apples), and “Indian Hay.” By the early 1790s, farmers were producing a considerable surplus of wheat. Grist mills such as the one built by Johnson at

Hubbel's Falls increased the market value of the grain because flour was a high demand commodity in both the domestic and international markets; a bushel of wheat produced between 25 and 33 pounds of flour. Although farmers faced transport difficulties, wheat rapidly became "Vermont's cash crop" by the turn of the century. The building of the Champlain Canal in 1823, which gave Lake Champlain traffic access to the Hudson River, offered the promise of an even more profitable market for wheat. However, the canal would ultimately shift agricultural production in directions different to those found during the region's formative years.<sup>36</sup>

#### WOMEN IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Women played a critical role in the region's developing economy. Dairying was a significant component of the agricultural market in Vermont, and Chittenden County was no exception. In urban southern New England, "Vermont Butter and Cheese . . . of the first quality" could be purchased. The butter was shipped south in "small Kegs, convenient for families," and cheese could be had in "all sizes."<sup>37</sup> A sampling of more than 350 advertisements appearing in Massachusetts and Rhode Island newspapers between 1800 and 1850 demonstrates that shops in Boston, Salem, Gloucester, and Worcester, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island, sold Vermont dairy products.<sup>38</sup> By 1850, butter was produced on nearly 100 percent of the farms in Essex and cheese on more than 50 percent, clearly suggesting that this was not solely for domestic use.

Butter production was a fundamental part of domestic work for rural farm women, as evidenced by numerous nineteenth-century agricultural journals that "discussed cheese- and butter-making . . . with the clear understanding that such vital work was done by women—and managed by women."<sup>39</sup> Butter had an immediate cash value for acquiring needed household and personal items; in 1822, one merchant in Burlington was paying 15 cents per pound "for good Butter, in exchange for Goods." In her work on mid-Atlantic farm women, Joan Jensen observes that during the early nineteenth century, "the churn came to symbolize . . . the commercial arts of women alert to the demands of the market."<sup>40</sup> This distinctly female occupation, while often a hidden aspect of the rural market economy, was one of the central components of the family economy.

Contrary to myth, early American farms and households were not self-sufficient. Families needed to purchase goods because they could not have possibly grown, made, and produced everything used within the home and around the farm. As one historian has aptly demon-

strated, “self-sufficiency demanded a bewildering number of skills from [family] members” and the “costs of self-sufficiency would have exceeded the resources available to many households.”<sup>41</sup> Families used their excess agricultural produce and domestic-made goods to acquire needed items or pay debts, as cash was always difficult to come by on the frontier. The “country produce” that women grew and harvested in their gardens and orchards provided food for the family but also served as an important commodity. Their products could be traded with shopkeepers and those engaged in manufacturing as an exchange for goods and services such as grinding grain at the local gristmill, or carding wool and preparing cloth.

At the third meeting of the Chittenden County Agricultural Society in late September 1821, judges presented eleven awards in the “domestic manufactures” competition, nine of which went to women for their production of cloth, including linen, ticking, flannel, and “woolen fabric.” Also drawing much attention and excitement was the “bonnet manufactured by Miss *Diana Tyler* of Williston,” which had involved experimentation with a native species of grass “in imitation of Leghorn.”<sup>42</sup> Production using local raw materials proved promising for the development of the county’s manufacturing base. Throughout early nineteenth-century rural New England, farm wives and daughters engaged in the home production of straw Leghorn bonnets, and agricultural society fairs provided a means for the skilled to display their work and earn money through prizes and sales. One straw Leghorn bonnet “manufactured in Vermont” and exhibited in the “female industry” category at the Brighton Agricultural Society annual fair in Massachusetts was praised by the judges as being “finer than any ever imported.” Both its selling price of \$8, being several dollars higher than what was usually received for such domestic manufactured bonnets, and the acclaim by various Massachusetts newspapers for this “beautiful” and fine “specimen from Vermont” supported the opinions of the judges.<sup>43</sup> Merchants and shopkeepers in cities eagerly purchased these locally produced commodities because they could acquire the bonnets for less than Italian or English Leghorns, thus meeting contemporary fashion demands at an affordable price to the customer while still making a profit. In turn, the products of women’s domestic manufacturing provided a ready source of income. The Burlington Agricultural Society was impressed with the entries received in 1821, hoping that the work presented would lead to further recognition of “the importance of domestic manufactures” for Chittenden County, and would therefore “induce still further improvement.”<sup>44</sup>

In eighteenth-century New England, “weaving . . . was an adaptation to an expanding mercantile economy,” asserts one historian, and not

“an artifact of rural poverty” or a “response to frontier exigency,” a statement that would be equally applicable for the early nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> This was the case in Vermont, where homespun output in 1809 reached approximately eleven yards *per capita*. The household inventories of Chittenden County probate records demonstrate the presence of looms, multiple spinning wheels, and flax among numerous other items related to domestic production of cloth. The probate inventory taken for the Perrigo estate in Essex, when the head of household died in 1811, reveals “a quantity of flax in the sheaf . . . 1 Cloth Loom,” a “Lining Wheel,” which would have been used for linen, and “2 Old great wheels” all together in one area or room of the house. The Perrigo household was probably growing flax, too, as indicated by “4 Bushel of flax seed” on the premises.<sup>46</sup>

As with butter and straw hats, the domestic manufacture of cloth undertaken by women provided additional family income, if not in cash, then in exchange for goods at local stores. Women’s work served as an important component of family income and the economic sector as a whole. Vermont’s agricultural products, including those produced by women, could be found in any number of shops in southern New England.<sup>47</sup> Operating as middlemen, local merchants acquired goods from farm families, providing in exchange items otherwise difficult if not impossible for a family to obtain by cash purchase. Through this network households of the Vermont borderlands were connected to the regional, national, and even international economy. The contributions of women to this process meant that the female economy served as a means for not only acquiring additional family income, but also acquiring items to help make family life somewhat more comfortable.

#### MEASURING WEALTH ON THE RURAL FRONTIER

As the 1817 General List for the State of Vermont indicates, there was often relatively little money on hand. A dual system of payment in both goods and cash was a necessity for both sellers and buyers to be able to do business.<sup>48</sup> Essex Township accepted wheat for payment of taxes due in December 1789. Grain and “country goods” were the most frequent forms of exchange found in the Burlington newspapers. If a shopper did not have the cash to buy books, stationery, “European and India Goods,” or “Fancy and English Goods,” he or she could purchase what they wanted with wheat, oats, pork, beeswax, flax seed, butter, oats, goose feathers, or any number of other items that merchants accepted in lieu of cash. Even the publisher of the Burlington *Vermont Centinel* was flexible. When his newspaper became available for home delivery by post rider, customers were welcome to pay for the paper

and the delivery service with either “Cash or Country produce.”<sup>49</sup> Throughout the 1820s, the local economy relied upon the exchange of goods as much as it did cash.

For the majority of settlers, their wealth existed first and foremost in land and livestock. The 1817 Vermont General List demonstrates that every town in the county had hundreds of livestock and draught animals, amounting to more than 8,400 cattle, more than 2,800 horses and mules, and close to 1,700 oxen.<sup>50</sup> Upon the death of her husband in 1811, the court assigned Eunice Lane of Essex her dower right before creditors demanded payment for debts, as was the law. She received the most valuable items in her husband Roger’s estate: “1 horse . . . 10 sheep,” and “3 Cows,” collectively valued in excess of \$100.<sup>51</sup> By comparison, the General List shows relatively few possessions in either of the two categories of House Clocks or Gold Watches; fifty-one of the former and nineteen of the latter in approximately two thousand households. Twenty-six of the house clocks sat in Burlington homes and businesses and fourteen gold watches likewise belonged to Burlington residents. Of course, a greater number of households had “Common Watches,” but out of 270 such items owned in Chittenden County, Burlington households had 210 of them. In this light it is not surprising that “Pleasure Carriages,” an item that publicly displayed wealth, gentility, and status, could be found in thirty-two households in Burlington. Before the 1820s, relatively few merchants and shopkeepers advertised much in the way of genteel goods for their customers, a situation that had dramatically changed by approximately 1830, as evidenced by the Burlington newspapers.

William Hearts of Williston owned 866 acres that he farmed with the help of periodic hired labor. While his farm was valued at close to \$1,400 in his probate inventory, his household and personal items were worth little more than \$170; the most valuable items were “2 Blue & White [comforters]” and “2 Cherry Tables.” Although the house had kitchen items, dining chairs, and such, it contained no excess of luxury items.<sup>52</sup> Few luxury goods were available during the early years of settlement; therefore, immigrants would have treasured the few luxury items they had been able to bring with them. For wives and daughters in particular, a single silver spoon, pieces of fine dishware, a fashionable hat, or a painting to hang on the wall held not only sentimental value, but also a connection to the home they had left behind. But by the 1820s, shopkeepers were offering an ever-increasing quantity of fine, fashionable, and genteel goods. Potential customers could find “an extensive assortment of European Goods,” “Fancy and English Goods,” and “Books and Stationery,” which could be had for cash or barter. A

slow but evident cultural shift was clearly underway on the Vermont frontier, marked by the influence of middle-class gentility and evidenced by what shopkeepers began to stock for the buying public. Certainly not all men and women could afford to purchase luxury goods, but their increasing presence speaks to gradually increasing demand and the desire to create comfortable, if not genteel, lifestyles on the rapidly changing northern frontier. However, these developments were neither fast nor uniform.

#### COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Although farming was the primary livelihood in Chittenden County according to the 1820 federal manufacturing census, there was “good demand” for the services offered by the county’s manufactories. This is not surprising, as they were integrally connected to the farming economy. Demand increased lumbering and potash and pearlsh manufacturing, but most establishments operated on a relatively small scale, though not without regional importance. The 1820 Census of Manufactures, conducted as a means for Congress “to be in a better position to legislate for agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing interests,” provides detailed information gathered by “a team of marshals and assistants” under the direction of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. While “incomplete and far from uniform,” the census does provide useful data about manufacturing enterprises in early Vermont. In particular, the census makes clear “the types of products that were being manufactured.”<sup>53</sup> In 1820, Chittenden County had close to sixty manufacturing establishments. Thirteen existed in Milton alone, which, as noted earlier, was one of the fastest-growing towns in the county. Burlington had nine manufactories; Essex eight; Jericho seven; Hinesburg four; Charlotte, Shelburne, Williston, and Colchester each reported three; Westford two; and the small community of Richmond had one tannery.

The large majority of these enterprises were sawmills, gristmills, and cloth manufacturing mills. Carding and cloth mills constituted seventeen of these businesses, while sawmills and gristmills together numbered fifteen. In Burlington workers manufactured bricks, paper, and oil; in Milton they constructed wagons and sleighs; while a cabinet-maker could be found in Essex. Manufacturing drew on regionally produced raw materials including wool, flax, clay, grain, hides, ashes, red lead, iron ore, grain, and hardwoods from the diminishing forests in the region. The manufactories employed in total dozens of men, children, and to a lesser degree women, some of whom would have possessed highly marketable skills, while unskilled laborers were engaged generally on a short-term, as-needed basis. With a few exceptions, propri-

etors did not have large work forces, as was becoming the standard practice in the larger mills in southern New England; likewise there were relatively few female employees. The paper manufactory in Milton employed three women, along with five men and a boy, but it was primarily in Burlington that women worked in industry. Child labor also appears to have been infrequent. Stephen Skinson's cabinet shop in Essex and Alpheus Mansfield's wagon and sleigh manufactory in Milton each employed a boy. It is highly probable that the boys belonged to local families, as the opportunity for a son to gain such skills would have been highly valued.<sup>54</sup>

Located on the Winooski River and Lamoille Rivers respectively, Essex and Milton had the "extensive water power" responsible for operating more than 50 percent of their manufactories. The natural power of rivers, which drove New England's manufacturing growth during the Early Republic, clearly played a central role in these two newly settled borderland communities. At the mouth of the Winooski River, proprietors in Colchester operated two sawmills. At Hubbel's Falls, expansion continued as residents built new sawmills and gristmills, a hemp mill, and "carding and manufacturing works." In Milton, the Lamoille River powered nine saw, grist, carding, and cloth manufacturing mills. The capital investment required varied considerably. The proprietors of Milton's manufactories in 1820 had capital investments ranging from \$300 to \$2,000, although the majority fell between \$1,000 and \$1,500. James Minor's sawmill and William Watson's sawmill, each in Milton, had capital investments valued at approximately \$2,000. Essex had no less than eight small manufacturers by 1820, with capital investments ranging from \$150 to \$3,000. These included the cloth dressing and carding establishment of Joshua Haynes; Stephen Skinson's cabinetry shop; Alvinza A. Lyon's tannery; two wagon factories run by Henry F. Dolph and Samuel Page; three sawmills each owned by Nathan Blood, Samuel Bliss, and John Johnson; and finally Johnson's gristmill.<sup>55</sup> In all cases, these businesses both served and were supported by the local agricultural and domestic economy.

In Burlington, as an increasing number of men invested capital into commerce and industry, the town became the hub of the county as early as 1830. A decade later the census takers would record that more than 50 percent of Burlington workers made their living in some aspect of manufacturing or commerce, as compared to 30 percent working in agriculture. By contrast, in the towns surrounding Burlington, 80 percent of workingmen engaged in farming and 10 percent engaged in manufacturing or commerce. However, these percentages should not overshadow the importance of small manufactures. While farming contin-

ued to dominate the nineteenth-century Vermont economy, manufacturing retained its central role in serving local towns and farms and showed sustained growth.<sup>56</sup>

### THE PASSING OF THE FRONTIER

During the 1820s, the towns of Chittenden County became increasingly connected to the outside world. The “Old Line of Mail Stages from Boston to Montreal” began regular service connecting northern and southern New England by means of only a three-day journey. The trip took passengers north from Boston to the Vermont state capital of Montpelier, and west through Chittenden County to Williston and finally Burlington. From there passengers could travel “by Steamboat to Montreal,” many of whom did so as holiday travelers exploring the new world around them.<sup>57</sup> By 1823, the Champlain Canal would connect the region to the Atlantic seaboard, allowing the cheaper and quicker modes of canal and river travel between Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. The opening of this canal marked a transformative economic development, as regional agricultural produce, lumber, potash, iron, and certain manufactures could now be readily exported down the Hudson River to points south via Albany. In turn, goods from coastal northeastern cities, both domestic manufactures and imports, were shipped northward in volumes heretofore not experienced during the first decades of settlement. On the eve of the American Revolution, the region that would become Chittenden County consisted of only a few American settlements, which at the outbreak of war were quickly abandoned. The growth of this relatively small region following the American Revolution speaks to the rapid changes that the new American nation was undergoing during its early years.

### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The 1830 spring freshet washed not only his manufactory down the Winooski River but also the adjacent mills belonging to other proprietors. All that remained at Hubbel’s Falls was the “foundation of [his] carding works” and the foundation of one of the grist mills. *Burlington Vermont Centinel*, 16 June 1815, 20 May 1825; United States Manufacturing Census, Chittenden County, Essex, Vermont, 1820.

<sup>2</sup> *Hartford Connecticut Courant*, 12 November 1822.

<sup>3</sup> Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 193.

<sup>4</sup> On emigration to the Ohio Country see for example R. Douglas Hurt, *The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720-1830* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 262; Virginia E. McCormick and Robert W. McCormick, *New Englanders on the Ohio Frontier: Migration and Settlement of Worthington, Ohio* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1998); Andrew R. L. Cayton, *Frontier Indiana* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996). On Virginia’s out-

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migration see David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> *First Report to the Legislature of Vermont of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1857-82*, cited in Lewis D. Stilwell, *Migration from Vermont* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1948; reprint, Rutland, Vt.: Academy Books, 1983), 95.

<sup>6</sup> As a biophysical region Lake Champlain extends north beyond the present-day Canadian border to the St. Lawrence River Valley, south to the Taconic Mountains, and west across the Lake into eastern New York. Major rivers including the Winooski, Lamoille, and Missisquoi, and numerous lesser ones, meander through the valley and empty into Lake Champlain. Vast forests, wetlands, and an alluvial plain that offered rich farmlands defined it as a prime location for settlers. Elizabeth H. Thompson and Eric R. Sorenson, *Wetland, Woodland, Wildland: A Guide to the Natural Communities of Vermont* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2005), 22 (originally published by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Nature Conservancy in 2000).

<sup>7</sup> Nathan Perkins, *A Narrative of a Tour through the State of Vermont from April 27 to June 12 1789* (Woodstock, Vt.: Elm Street Press, 1920), 17.

<sup>8</sup> Bruce L. LaRose, "The Emergence of the Vermont Settlement Pattern, 1609-1830" (Master's thesis, Clark University, 1967), 90-91.

<sup>9</sup> Natural increase partially accounted for population, however, the fact that settlers tended to be young, married young, and had large families did not in and of itself account for the substantial demographic growth seen in northern Vermont. Further research at the local level both in the censuses and vital records has the potential to substantially increase our understanding of the process of growth on Vermont's northwestern frontier.

<sup>10</sup> United States Population Census, Chittenden County: Essex, Colchester, Williston, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830; Michael Sherman, Gene Sessions, and P. Jeffrey Potash, *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2004), 132. Beginning with the 1830 census, there is a slight shift in the demographics as the percentage of people under sixteen years shows a decrease. In Essex, Colchester, and Milton, for example, the decrease is to approximately 40 percent. The major shift comes at mid-century. By 1850, inhabitants over the age of 40 have become the dominant cohort in each town. In the case of Essex, more than 65 percent of the population fell into this category. Also by 1850 it becomes more typical to see households consisting of older parents and adult children. Perhaps this speaks to the mid-century exodus of Vermont's younger population westward. United States Bureau of the Census, Population: Chittenden County, Vermont, Essex, Colchester, Milton, 1830, 1850. On the exodus from Vermont see Stilwell, *Migration from Vermont*, 171-213.

<sup>11</sup> Heman R. Timlow, *Ecclesiastical and Other Sketches of Southington, Connecticut* (Hartford, Ct.: Case, Lockwood and Brainard Co., 1875), 229; Henry P. Johnston, ed., *The Record of Connecticut Men in the Military and Naval Service During the American Revolution, 1775-1783* (Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1889; reprint 1997); U.S. Pension Records for Archibald Cook, CT, Ser. M805, Roll 214, Image 91, File S15781 National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.; *A Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary or Military Service with Their Names, Ages, and Places of Residence* (Washington, D.C.: Blair and Rives, 1841), 61-62; United States Bureau of the Census, Population: Milton, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830; Fairfax 1840, 1850; State of Vermont, Vermont Vital Records through 1870, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts, on-line database *Vermont Vital Records, 1720-1908* (accessed via Ancestry.com).

<sup>12</sup> Constance B. Schulz, "Sources at the National Archives for Genealogical and Local History Research. The Revolutionary War Pension Applications: A Neglected Source for Social and Family History," *Prologue* 15 (1983): 103-114.

<sup>13</sup> United States Bureau of the Census, Population Census for Chittenden County, Vermont, 1791, 1800, 1810, 1820.

<sup>14</sup> George H. Greeley, *Genealogy of the Greeley-Greeley Family* (Boston, Mass.: n.p., 1909); United States Population Census, Chittenden County: Richmond, 1820, 1830; Burlington, 1820.

<sup>15</sup> United States Population Census, Chittenden County: Richmond, 1810, 1820, 1830; Burlington, 1820; Colchester, 1830; Greeley, *Greeley-Greeley Family*; United States Population Census, Chittenden County: Milton, 1820, 1830; Essex, 1830; 1840;

<sup>16</sup> Alden M. Rollins, *Vermont Warnings Out*, Vol. 1: Northern Vermont (Camden, Me.: Picton Press, 1995), 126-149; Essex Town Records, Vol. 1, 16 January 1806; 7 February 1807; March-June 1809.

<sup>17</sup> *Vermont Laws*, February 1799 (Rutland, Vt.: Samuel Williams), *Early American Imprints*, Series I, Evans no. 36614; *Vermont State Papers*, comp. William Slade (Middlebury, Vt.: J. W. Cope-land, printer, 1823), 35, 378-379; *Statutes of Vermont*, 1791, cited in Josiah H. Benton, *Warning Out in New England, 1656-1817* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1911; reprint 1970), 106-108.

<sup>18</sup> *Vermont Laws*, February 1799; *Vermont State Papers*, 35, 378-379.

<sup>19</sup> Essex Town Records, Volume 1, Minutes of town meeting, 28 March 1827, 30 March 1827; Auditor's Report for 1833 (monies paid for 1832), 5 March 1833; Auditor's Report for 1834 (monies paid for 1833), 4 March 1834. The "Spensler Boy" received care for at least two years.



<sup>20</sup> William Slade, Jr. ed., *The Laws of Vermont, of a Public and Permanent Nature: Coming Down To, and Including, the Year 1825* (Windsor, Vt.: Simeon Ide, 1825), 370, cited in Steven R. Hoffbeck, "'Remember the Poor' (Galatians 2:10): Poor Farms in Vermont," *Vermont History* 57(Fall 1989): 227.

<sup>21</sup> Ruth W. Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 5.

<sup>22</sup> See State Charters, vol. 3: 103-106, in *The New Hampshire Grants, Being Transcripts of the Charters of Townships*, ed. Albert S. Batchellor, Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire, vol. 26 (Concord: Edward N. Pearson, printer, 1895), cited in Ruth Wright, *Colchester Vermont from Ice-Cap to Interstate* (Burlington, Vt.: Queen City Printers, 1963), 12; Kathryn Jackson, *The Milton Story* (Essex Junction, Vt.: Essex Publishing Company, 1963), 25.

<sup>23</sup> Florence May Woodard, *The Town Proprietors in Vermont: The New England Town Proprietorship in Decline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 150.

<sup>24</sup> Essex Town Records, Volume 1, 10 March 1786, 6 March 1787, 1788, 1790, 1792, 28 October 1794, 6 July 1795, 3 December 1798, 3 February 1800, 12 March 1801. For details on the responsibilities of officers in the New England town see Samuel Freeman, *The Town Officer: Or the Power and Duty of Selectmen, Town Clerks, Town Treasurers, Overseers of the Poor, Assessors, Constables, Collectors of Taxes, Surveyors of Highways, Surveyors of Lumber, Fence Viewers, Field Drivers, Measurers of Wood, and other Town Offices as Contained in the Laws of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (Boston: J. Buckingham 1608; 7th edition 1808), and Benjamin F. Thomas, *The Town Officer: A Digest of the Laws of Massachusetts in Relation to the Powers, Duties and Liabilities of Towns and of Town Officers* (Worcester, Mass.: Warren Lazell, 1845).

<sup>25</sup> "Essex a Proposed Law: An Act to enable the Proprietors: and Land owners of the town of Essex, to divide their Lands into severalty;" *Vermont Centinel*, 8 December 1803; Survey of Essex, Town of Essex Proprietors Records, Volume 1, 165-172; John Johnson, County Surveyor for Chittenden County, "Correct Map of Essex from actual survey, exhibiting the Town and Lot Lines, Roads, Streams, Mills, Bridges, etc., with the names of the Inhabitants and Owners," John Johnson Collection, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont (UVM), Burlington; Town of Essex Proprietors Records, Volume 1, 6 March 1804; Names of original grantees and land sold [to whom], Town of Essex Proprietors Records, Volume 1, 177; Survey of Essex, Town of Essex Proprietors Records, Volume 1, 165-172.

<sup>26</sup> United States Population Census, Chittenden County, Essex, 1791, 1800, 1810; Essex Town Records, Volume 1, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790; W. S. Rann, ed., *History of Chittenden County* (Syracuse, N.Y.: D. Mason & Co. Publishers, 1886), 573-576.

<sup>27</sup> The information and assessment contained in this paragraph was determined from an analysis of the early land records in the Town of Essex Proprietors Records, Volume 1; extant Chittenden County civil court records concerning land transactions also point to the selling and purchasing of relatively small parcels at less than one hundred acres. Chittenden County Court Records, Superior Court, Chancery Cases, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, UVM.

<sup>28</sup> Christopher M. Klyza and Stephen C. Trombulak, *The Story of Vermont: A Natural and Cultural History* (Hanover N.H.: University Press of New England for Middlebury College Press, 1999), 75.

<sup>29</sup> Rann, *History of Chittenden County*, 568.

<sup>30</sup> In 1794 the town commissioned William Coit to create an "accurate Plan of the Town, and likewise ascertain the Center of Town" for the purpose of determining where to place the meeting-house. Essex Town Records, 28 October 1794.

<sup>31</sup> Rann, *History of Chittenden County*, 574, 578; Essex Town Records, 28 October 1794, 3 February 1800.

<sup>32</sup> See for example Essex Town Records, Volume 1, 10 March 1786, and 3 February 1800.

<sup>33</sup> *Vermont Centinel*, 25 August 1803, 17 March 1820; Robert McCullough, *Crossings: A History of Vermont Bridges* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2005), 12; Elizabeth Heath Howe Diary, 1804, Heath Family Papers and Commonplace Books and Diaries, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>34</sup> Journal of John Johnson, 1795, John Johnson Business Papers, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, UVM.

<sup>35</sup> Expenses for building a mill, 1806-1807; Materials and labor gristmill at Hubbel's Falls, Essex, 1819; Statement of Labor performed on the Gristmill in Essex in the Summer of 1819 and by whom performed; Roll of Labor at Gristmill from 28 June to 21 August 1819; Bill of Expenses of Essex Bridge; all in John Johnson Business Papers. In 1819 some men received boarding. Johnson's architectural drawings for the 1819 mill are also in this collection.

<sup>36</sup> Paul W. Gates, *The Farmer's Age: Agriculture, 1815-1860* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1960) 158-159. On the Champlain Canal and the transformation of the Champlain Valley agricultural economy see Sherman, et al., *Freedom and Unity*, 168-169.

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<sup>37</sup> *Boston Commercial Gazette*, 25 November 1805.

<sup>38</sup> For advertisements for Vermont butter and cheese, see for example: *Boston Gazette*, 5 December 1805; *Providence Patriot*, 5 December 1821; *Norfolk Advertiser* [Dedham, Mass.], 20 February 1836; *National Aegis* [Worcester, Mass.] 1 April 1840; *Newburyport Herald*, 19 December 1845; *Salem Register*, 11 April 1850.

<sup>39</sup> United States Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Census of the United States, 1850, Chittenden County, Essex; John R. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982), 160.

<sup>40</sup> Burlington *American Repertory*, 26 November 1822; Joan M. Jensen, *Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986), xiv. See also chapter five, "The Economics of the Butter Trade."

<sup>41</sup> Carol Shammass, "How Self-Sufficient Was Early America?" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 13(1982): 252, 253.

<sup>42</sup> *American Repertory*, 5 October 1821, 12 October 1821.

<sup>43</sup> T. Greene Fessenden, *The New England Farmer's Almanac*, vol. 1 (Boston: Thomas W. Shepard, 1823), 111; *Hampden Federalist and Public Journal* (Springfield, Mass.), 3 April 1822; *Hampshire Gazette* (Northampton Mass.), 24 April 1822; *Independent Chronicle & Boston Patriot*, 12 October 1822; *Boston Repertory*, 17 October 1822; *Worcester Massachusetts Spy*, 30 October 1822.

<sup>44</sup> *American Repertory*, 5 October 1821, 12 October 1821.

<sup>45</sup> Laurel T. Ulrich, "Wheels, Loom, and the Gender Division of Labor in Eighteenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55(January 1998): 6; "Report of a Committee on Manufactures," in *Journal of the General Assembly of Vermont, 1809*, 127, quoted in Stillwell, *Migration from Vermont*, 101.

<sup>46</sup> Probate of Branson Perrigo, 11 April 1811, Essex, Chittenden District Probate Court Record Books, 1795-1959 (PRO-CHP-002): F-011662 01/01/1811-12/31/1817, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex.

<sup>47</sup> Journal of John Johnson, n.d., [1799]; Agricultural Census of the United States, 1850; Stillwell, *Migration from Vermont*, 98-99; Rann, *History of Chittenden County*, 570, 571; *Massachusetts Spy*, 19 February 1800; *Boston Centinel*, 14 December 1803, 15 February 1808. As early as 1803, Boston newspapers advertised "Vermont Peas for sale." The 1850 federal agricultural census records reveal that at least half of farm households in Essex grew peas and beans, a portion of which were still being shipped to markets outside of Vermont.

<sup>48</sup> "Aggregate of the General list of the State of Vermont, for the year 1817," Vermont Treasurer's Office (Rutland Vt.: Fay, Davison & Burt, 1817), *Early American Imprints*, Series 2, no. 42775 filmed.

<sup>49</sup> Essex Town Records, Volume 1, 8 March 1788; *Vermont Centinel (Northern Sentinel)*, 18 June 1801, 11 November 1808, 10 February 1809; *American Repertory*, 15 October 1822, 7 December 1822, 6 May 1825, 16 December 1825, 23 December 1825; *Northern Sentinel*, 6 May 1825.

<sup>50</sup> "Aggregate of the General list of the State of Vermont, for the year 1817."

<sup>51</sup> "To Eunice Lane & Jasper Griffin administrators on the estate of Roger Lane late of Essex"; Probate Roger Lane, 5 March 1811, Essex, Chittenden District Probate Court Record Books, 1795-1959 (PRO-CHP-002): F-011662 01/01/1811-12/31/1817, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>52</sup> "Aggregate of the General list of the State of Vermont, for the year 1817"; Probate William Hearts Estate, 19 December 1817, Williston, Chittenden District Probate Court Record Books, 1795-1959 (PRO-CHP-002): F-011662 01/01/1817-12/31/1821.

<sup>53</sup> Lee Ann Potter and Wynell Schamel, "The 1820 Census of Manufactures" in *Social Education* 63(September 1999): 5.

<sup>54</sup> United States Manufacturing Census, Chittenden County, 1820: Essex, Milton, Burlington.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Essex, Milton.

<sup>56</sup> United States Manufacturing Census, Chittenden County, 1840.

<sup>57</sup> *Boston Gazette*, 26 September 1821. The *Boston City Directory* regularly listed all of the stage lines.