



“Among the Mountains and Valleys of Vermont”: The Life of Eri L. Barr, Religious Pioneer

Eri Barr was a quintessential Vermonter: born, raised, and residing most of his life in the Green Mountain State. Paradoxically, his life was like that of few Vermonters, because he was Black in Vermont in the antebellum period, and because he had a leading role in founding one of only a dozen or so major Christian churches to originate in America.

By BENJAMIN BAKER

In the last few decades there has been a movement to discover, document, and promote the Black heritage of the state of Vermont. This has not only resulted in several volumes published by academic presses and numerous scholarly articles, but also in the creation of the African American Heritage Trail, a twenty-two-site interpretive historical exhibit spanning the state.¹

This article contributes to this movement by exploring the life of Eri L. Barr (1814–1864), the first minister of color in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The case of Barr is an unusual one, because only recently (2015) was it discovered—or rediscovered—that he was Black.² Barr has therefore not only been resuscitated for a church with a global

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membership currently comprised mostly of people of color, but also for a Vermont public that has a renewed interest in its state's ethnic past.³ In this exploration of Barr's life, I will show that he was a pioneer who played an important role in the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and an individual who influenced the shaping of Vermont as well, and thus should be incorporated into the evolving historiography of Black Vermont and Vermont history generally.

YOUTH

Eri L. Barr was born on May 23, 1814, in Reading, Vermont. His father was William Barr, listed in the census as "Free Colored." Eri's maternity is unknown. His mother's name is not given on his birth record, nor on those of his six siblings. In the 1810 census the Barr household includes six "Free Persons" and one unnamed "Free White Female" aged 26–44, the latter the only resident in William Barr's age bracket. Could this White female have been Eri's mother? In the 1820 and 1830 censuses there is no record of a White woman in the Barr home, only "Free Colored Persons." On October 15, 1831, though, William Barr married Elmira Bixby, and the next census in 1840 lists a White female aged 30–39 in Barr's household.⁴ Perhaps pertinent to the race of Eri's mother is that as adults Eri and his brother Horace would sometimes be identified in censuses as "Mulatto."⁵ This, however, could simply be an instance of the vagaries of nineteenth-century US census taking vis-à-vis race.⁶ Or maybe it wasn't. Although antebellum Vermont never seems to have legally defined the term "race," the Massachusetts Supreme Court did rule about four years before Barr's birth that "a mulatto is a person begotten between a White and Black."⁷ The census that identifies Barr as a Mulatto therefore would have been accurate if his mother was White. Whatever the case, Vermont never criminalized miscegenation, and mixed-race households in the state during the antebellum period were not uncommon.⁸ Eri and several of his siblings would marry interracially, as would their descendants.

Although he first appeared in Vermont in the 1810 census, it is not known when or how William Barr ended up in Vermont, a perennial question for the state's early Black residents. That year he is documented as heading a household of seven. A decade later there were nine Blacks in Barr's home: William; his three daughters, Alva (b. 1804), Phebe (b. 1807), Sebe (b. 1809); his two sons, Eri and Horace (b. 1815); an unnamed male and female; and an older woman, possibly William's mother.⁹ The 1840 census records William and his sons Eri and Horace employed in "manufacturers and trades," probably as mechanics, which later was Eri's recorded profession.¹⁰ Indeed, employment may have

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been William Barr's reason for locating to Vermont, as the same search for work would later see his sons move from place to place within the state.

Apart from earning a living, raising children, and maintaining good health, the most formidable challenge of American life for free Blacks in the antebellum period was negotiating the system of White supremacy. Due to the historical paucity of Blacks in Vermont, notions of racial amicability have largely gone untested, since in many ways Blacks have been an abstraction for Vermonters. Eri Barr's birthplace was no exception to this ethnic dearth. In 1810, the free non-Whites (probably all Black) in Reading tallied 17 out of a populace of 1,565, while Blacks numbered only 14 out of 1,603 in 1820, nine of them under William Barr's roof. In 1830 Reading there were 16 Blacks out of 1,409, and ten years later just six out of 1,363.¹¹ It was the same demographic across Windsor County during Barr's lifetime, with Woodstock consistently boasting the highest Black population, but never above 2 percent of its total.¹² It is hard to know, therefore, the experience of Blacks in Reading because of their scarcity.

A survey of the broader currents in Vermont during Eri Barr's formative and young adult years, however, provides clues to the racial climate in which he was raised. David M. Ludlum in *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791–1850*, discusses Vermonters' intellectual reverence for the Jeffersonian ideal of equality for all, and their corresponding efforts in the 1820–1840s for equality for the marginalized: low-wage workers, prisoners, mentally ill, and impoverished.¹³

From this same sensibility grew a sustained antislavery and abolitionist movement in Vermont. Adult slavery was never officially legal in the state, and Vermont has been commonly held to be the first American polity to outlaw human servitude in its 1777 constitution. Ludlum is quick to point out that this was not totally altruistic; the "socio-physical pattern" of Vermont—mountainous, brutal winters, and no seaports—made the type of slavery practiced in the Southern United States impossible in Vermont. John M. Lovejoy suggests that outlawing slavery "came easily" for Vermont and may have even been viewed by state legislators as "an inevitable, relatively simple move" given the state's small Black population and its lack of preexisting laws that burdened the original thirteen colonies.¹⁴

However, Harvey Amani Whitfield's 2014 book, *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont, 1777–1810*, challenges the long-held assumption that the enslavement of Blacks was outlawed by Vermont in 1777. This eclectic collection of primary sources from the period reveals that slavery did indeed exist in Vermont, albeit in subtler and less overt ways

than in other Northern states. Slavery could legally exist, Whitfield points out, because in 1777 Vermont outlawed only adult slavery—children could remain enslaved, girls to age 18 and boys to age 21—and even this law was not always enforced when it was occasionally violated. While *The Problem of Slavery* is not meant to overthrow Vermont's antislavery reputation, it does show that the Vermont in which Eri Barr was born could be hostile to people of color.¹⁵

Yet some of the substantial movements that helped transform American conceptions of slavery found fertile ground in Vermont, most notably abolition activity under the umbrella of the American, New England, and Vermont Anti-Slavery Societies beginning in the 1830s. The press was employed in Vermont to extraordinary effect to advance the antislavery cause. Native Vermonters such as Orson S. Murray, Ezra Pitt Butler, and Elon Galusha advanced an antislavery agenda in print and politics. Ludlum asserts that by 1846, "the [Vermont] region had been thoroughly impregnated with [antislavery] propaganda" and largely as a result most Vermont churches opposed the enslavement of Blacks, and approximately four-fifths of Vermonters objected to slavery.¹⁶

Just as Whitfield's work complicates the notion of a slave-free Vermont, Vermont's abolitionist movement was also marred by a strong colonization contingent, which held the blatantly racist belief that the Black presence was a blight to America, and enslaved Blacks should be emancipated and shipped to Africa. Vermont was home to the first state-level colonization society in 1818, and its membership included the state's most powerful men, including numerous governors, senators, and ministers.¹⁷ Colonization proponents and antislavery proponents often came to loggerheads and had very public and fierce disagreements. But the colonization society would have been unsettling to a contemporary Black Vermonter, considering the figures in high places who deemed Blacks a cancer in the American body that needed to be excised.

How did these complex currents affect Eri Barr's early life in Reading? First, Reading was a place in antebellum America where generations of Barr men could marry White women with apparent comfort. If Eri's mother was indeed White, then in 1813 Reading was home to one of just a dozen or two interracial households in the entire state, and again when William Barr married Elmira Bixby. The Barrs' interracial partnering suggests tolerance, if not acceptance, of the practice by Readingites, at least on a one-off basis, and an acceptance by the White women they wed, if not the women's families. For the Barr men's part, marrying White women may have been more pragmatic than anything else: As census data show, there were few, if any, eligible Black women in the area; Black men outnumbered Black women in New England; and

White women outnumbered White men, with casualties from the Revolutionary War, and to a lesser extent the War of 1812, compounding the disparity.¹⁸

We also know that Eri and his siblings grew up in Reading without being confiscated by the authorities and enslaved as domestics by a White family, what Kari Winter describes as Vermont's "entrenched practice of exploiting children, especially Black children."¹⁹ In a hideous instance of this, while living in Poultney, Jeffrey and Susannah Dublin Brace had Susannah's two children from a previous marriage legally wrenched from them and bound to two White families in different towns until their son was 21, and their daughter 18 years old, despite the Braces doing all they legally could to prevent it.²⁰ Whether this kind of travesty ever occurred in Reading is unknown, but there is no evidence that it happened to the Barrs.

William Barr's livelihood as a mechanic further suggests a reasonably amicable relationship to the community, as it would have required being hired, contracted, or employed through other types of business transactions. This occupation was often denied Blacks in Vermont. Andrew Harris, one of the first Blacks to attend and graduate from college (University of Vermont, 1838), was perhaps speaking of this when he commented in his historic 1839 speech at New York's Broadway Tabernacle, "If [a Black man] wishes to be useful as a professional man, a merchant or mechanic, he is prevented by the color of his skin, and driven to those menial employments which tend to bring us more and more into disrepute."²¹ Elise Guyette's survey of the occupations of Black Vermonters from 1800 to 1870 largely corroborates Harris's assertion.²²

The Barr family was literate, a mark of privilege in the antebellum period. William Barr was among the signees of an oath in the *Vermont Courier*.²³ Horace Barr wrote letters and subscribed to the Adventist paper *Review and Herald*.²⁴ Eri Barr attended a prestigious preparatory school. Since the Barr household alone made up a large portion of Reading's Black population, the literateness of its occupants may suggest that there were educational opportunities for them in Reading that were often not available to Blacks elsewhere.

Further, Reading did make tangible contributions to the freeing of captive blacks. The Reading of Barr's early years seems to have included at least two White families who gave harbor to fugitive slaves, although verification of the illegal activity is difficult.²⁵ One nineteenth century history of Reading boasts of Reading men valiantly fighting on the side of the Union and claims that "it is a fact that almost every regiment or part of a regiment that was organized and sent from Vermont

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during the course of the [Civil] war had some Reading volunteers in its ranks.”²⁶ In fact, Vermont was required to meet a draft quota, but the number of volunteers from Reading suggests the probability of a strong antislavery sentiment.

That Readingites held antislavery sentiments, however, does not in any way mean that they supported anything near equality of the races. Salient here is Randolph A. Roth’s discussion of religion and social order in Vermont’s Connecticut River Valley, which may serve as a corrective to Ludlum’s generalizations. When discussing the Christian revivals that swept through the valley during Barr’s youth, Roth allows that for a time they “sparked new moral passion in the valley’s Christians and inspired them to think seriously about the ideals of ‘brotherhood’” and take up abolition and racial uplift. But this effect was ephemeral. There was “no decisive move by Christians to break through barriers to equality posed by sex, age, and race,” and the purported “freedom-loving Vermonter[s]” who professed Christianity did not unanimously support abolition and in fact “often had little sympathy” for Blacks. This hypocrisy caused Blacks to resent Christians and kept “nearly all the valley’s Black men” from joining churches.²⁷ For the paltry number of Blacks in Vermont’s Connecticut River Valley, Roth observes that “it was not easy to live in a sea of White Vermonters who perceived Afro-Americans largely in symbolic terms.” While some Whites treated Blacks well, their regard was largely disingenuous, either “paternal or designed to make a point, and it was far overshadowed by the malicious attentions of other White Vermonters” toward Blacks. As evidence, Roth cites abuse of Black servants; inequities in bank lending and land ownership; employment injustice; racial terrorism; racist legislation; and other injustices that caused many Blacks to depart Vermont for New England cities with better opportunities.²⁸

Another indicator of Vermonters’ low view of Blacks noted by Roth is the state’s minstrel heritage, which was especially rich in Barr’s Reading. Davis’s *History of Reading* features an extensive section on the town’s Blackface performers.²⁹ Eleazer Dexter, born in Reading just months before Eri Barr, popularized a Blackface act called “Jump Jim Crow” in the 1840s, and mentored aspiring minstrels Hank White and George M. Clark. White, a longtime Reading resident, “was always upright and manly, scorning to do a mean act,” according to the writer, yet could imitate to perfection “the old negro, Dr. Brattle, broad-nosed Packard, Uncle Joe Dick, or any other human freak.” The author is quick to assure readers that “Hank [White]’s negro was not the conventional burnt cork darkey of the minstrel show, but the real article sui generis.”³⁰ White partnered with fellow Readingites Osceola Whitmore and Clark

to form Whitmore & Clark's Minstrels, a Blackface troupe that toured the nation for decades. Considering its smallness, a surprising number of other Reading natives had careers in Blackface. "The spirit of music and minstrelsy may be said to have hovered over" Reading, the author asserts.³¹

Eri Barr's adult life may provide additional clues to the impact of race on his youth in Reading, although their meaning is open to interpretation. First, in dozens of letters and articles with his byline, Barr only mentions the race of an individual once, and this was almost certainly done by his coauthor. In all of Barr's other articles, there is nothing about race: not the color of his converts, not slavery, not abolition, not the Civil War. On the other hand, Barr's color was never referred to in print by others; the discovery that Barr was Black did not come from contemporary papers, but from an aside on Barr in a reminiscence long after he had died. For a Black person during his era, this is unheard of—a conundrum. Did Barr not have a racial consciousness? Was he indeed the product of an interracial union and so light-skinned that he could "pass"? Did growing up in White Reading preclude the development of a Black consciousness or cause him to be unwitting or even ashamed of his color?

A second element in Barr's adult life that may provide a clue to growing up Black in Reading is the theme of alienation in his writings. Throughout his career Barr alludes to being isolated and scattered among Vermont's undulant geography much more than other itinerant ministers and Adventist pioneers, and even oftener than Charles Bowles, a Black minister who spent years itinerating in Vermont before Barr. Admittedly, this could be due to other factors: Barr's travels took him away from his family; there were very few people of like religious faith in Vermont; and Barr was often alone in rugged wilderness settings. But just as compelling an explanation is that Barr's childhood fostered in him a feeling of otherness that racially isolated Blacks often had in antebellum America.

Barr's alienation could have also partly stemmed from the losses he endured in his youth. Eri had a brother, Norman, who died at age two a year before Eri was born, most likely from the spotted fever epidemic devastating the town at the time.³² Another brother, William Jr., died the day Eri was born, a month and a half shy of three years old, probably another victim of spotted fever.³³ Also, whatever his maternity, Eri lost a mother figure while an adolescent. In 1823, in a tragedy that no doubt devastated the eight-year-old Eri, his sisters Alva and Sebe died while in

their teens.³⁴ Finally, 1840 is the last time Eri's father appears on the US census, indicating that he died when Eri was in his twenties or thirties.

The Barr family was likely Methodist, as evidenced, among other things, by Eri Barr's choice of school. In 1836 he left Reading and traveled 125 miles south to attend Wesleyan Academy, a preparatory school in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, a small community bordering Springfield. Wesleyan was founded by Methodist ministers in New Hampshire in 1817. Although later connected with a seminary, the academy in Barr's day offered a liberal arts curriculum with no religious courses, *per se*. Women were admitted as students from the school's inception, and there does not ever seem to have been any restrictive racial admission policies. At least two African Americans attended Wesleyan Academy before Barr: Charles Bennet Ray, noted abolitionist, journalist, and minister, from 1830–1832; and John W. Lewis, a minister, abolitionist, educator, and author, from 1831–1833.³⁵ Other Blacks would follow.³⁶

Barr had an option to study Classics or English and chose the latter. His courses included speech, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and history. A full school year was divided into four terms, corresponding with the seasons, and Eri studied at Wesleyan for a full year, rooming in the seminary building on campus. Since Wesleyan was roughly equivalent to today's high school, Barr may have attended school back home and only needed a year to finish the requirements, or, as was often the case in the early nineteenth century, he attended school practically, as needed. Financial constraints could also have been a factor. The minimum tuition he would have paid for the full year was \$12; the maximum, \$20. The board was \$1.50 per week. Barr's age of 21–22 was about average among students.³⁷ The year he matriculated, there were 864 students, the second highest enrollment up to that point.³⁸

As in the larger Methodist church, the dominant issue at Wesleyan in the year Barr attended was slavery. An official history of the school states that the debate over slavery "invaded the Academy," with "trustees, teachers and students. . . stirred by the new impulse, either favorably or unfavorably." It is intriguing to consider how Barr, certainly one of only a handful of Black students (if even that many), reacted as "the young men caught it up in the debating club" and "made the negro and his wrongs the subjects of composition" and "thrust incendiary papers into the reading room." The students from the South participated, "as often in favor of abolition as against it." Meanwhile, the school trustees and faculty tried to stifle the debate over "the one topic sure to strike fire" in order to maintain the patronage of Wesleyan's Southern benefactors. The board prohibited instructors from broaching the topic in

class and the library and student societies from subscribing to abolitionist papers. Debate of slavery was outlawed. But, states the school history, the board “could make no headway against a sea which was breaking over the continent...the waves rolled over trustees and faculty.” In the end, “the ideas of New England on personal liberty obtained complete sway in the institution, and Southern patronage was, as a matter of course, entirely withdrawn.”³⁹

CAREER

After his year at Wesleyan, Eri Barr returned to Reading and rejoined his father’s household, which consisted of his stepmother Almira and brother Horace. Barr worked as a mechanic with his father and brother for a couple of years. He apparently ventured ten miles northeast to Woodstock and found love. Lori Zerviah Harvey was born to Nathan and Zerviah (née Paddock) Harvey in Woodstock on October 2, 1821, joining a brother, Oren. Both White Vermonters, Nathan was a shoemaker by trade, and Zerviah, a housemaker. On December 7, 1842, Eri and Lori were married in Reading by a Methodist minister named A. K. Howard. In a marriage lasting sixteen years, the Barrs had one child, Emma, in 1844.⁴⁰

The year 1844 was pivotal for Barr, for he expected the world to end then. In the early 1840s he became a follower of William Miller (1782–1849), one of the most well-known millennialists in American history. In the early 1830s Miller began preaching that Christ was returning to earth around 1843 to deliver the righteous, destroy the wicked, cleanse the earth with fire, and inaugurate the millennium. Operating from his farm in Hampton, New York, Miller’s influence was largely regional until 1839, when an enterprising minister in Boston named Joshua Himes transformed Millerism into a large-scale movement. At its peak in the early 1840s, Millerites and their sympathizers numbered in the hundreds of thousands, had a sizeable following in several nations, and were ubiquitous in contemporary newspapers, although the reportage was largely negative. After a couple of failed predictions for the second coming by Millerite preachers, and the most notorious failed date of October 22, 1844, Millerites either abandoned their beliefs or joined one of the groups that emerged from the original movement.

Millerism had a strong appeal for Blacks, both free and unfree. For the enslaved, an imminent second coming would shortly terminate the dreaded institution of slavery and see slave masters judged by God for their crimes. For free Blacks, the advent would usher in a new world without racial oppression. Apart from the doctrine itself, each Millerite leader of note was an active abolitionist, many with leadership positions

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in antislavery societies. Black abolitionists such as Sojourner Truth, William Still, and William Watkins were Millerites, as were numerous Black congregations in major US and Canadian cities. There was also a following among enslaved Blacks throughout the South.⁴¹

Millerism has a significant connection with Vermont. Not only was William Miller's farm on the New York-Vermont border, but he married a Vermonter named Lucy Smith and moved across the Hudson River to her hometown of Poultney in 1803. The Millers would have just missed encountering Jeffrey and Susannah Brace, purportedly Poultney's first Black citizens, who left the town when neighbors threatened to force the children they had together into indentured servitude.⁴² For his part, Miller thrived in Poultney, variously holding the offices of county sheriff, justice of the peace, and constable. Vermont governor Jonas Galusha—whose son Elon would become a prominent Millerite leader—commissioned Miller to serve as a lieutenant in the Vermont militia. Importantly, the *Vermont Telegraph* was where Miller first published his novel views of the end of the world and effectively launched his career as a minister in 1832. Miller's early itinerating took place in small towns in Vermont in the Champlain lowlands.⁴³ In the first years of the 1840s, Millerism began to take hold in Vermont, especially among Baptists and Methodists, and its success made it a source of controversy, division, and among many, ridicule.⁴⁴

The ultraism that was the Millerite movement was certainly nothing new in Vermont. Rather it was just part of "a constant reiteration" of millennialism in the state in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁵ David Ludlum outlines two types of Vermont millennialism, religious and economic, "mutually hostile" to each other, but both concerned with the perfection of Vermont and its people. In an indication of the underlying closeness of these two approaches, P. Jeffrey Potash in *Vermont's Burned-Over District* seeks to mediate the lengthy scholarly dispute of whether the leading factor in Vermont revivals up to 1850 was spiritual or economic interests. Potash sees merits in both sides.⁴⁶ Eri Barr, contemporaneous with John Humphrey Noyes—perhaps Vermont's most notorious millennialist—was one of the state's many Methodists who embraced Millerism but sought to bring about the millennium solely by religious means. As will be noted below, in his Millerite period Barr moved from place to place to earn money, and one wonders if at least a partial explanation for his joining two millennial movements was for a divine release from his economic straits.

Barr's experience as a Millerite is hard to know, as there are no extant sources from him in the years before October 22, 1844. However, three of his letters appeared in Millerite papers in late 1844 and 1846. These

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reveal his whereabouts and a burgeoning pastoral persona. Just over a month after the divine no-show, a letter by Barr appeared in *The Voice of Truth*, written from Bridgewater, Vermont, a town about six miles north of his birthplace. This is the first instance of the hortatory, pastoral style that Barr would maintain in his public communications over the next fifteen years, full of allusions and admonitions from the Bible, and steeped in eschatological sentiment. There is also the first occurrence of a leitmotif in Barr's writings: that of the scatteredness and isolation of his coreligionists. He writes to "the saints scattered abroad" to keep their faith in a near second coming.⁴⁷ His next letter, dated February 10, 1846, also written from Bridgewater, is for "those isolated brothers and sisters [to] continue to speak to each other through *The Voice of Truth*, as it appears to be the only way they can do it."⁴⁸ Barr's other extant letter of September 9, 1846, reveals that he moved from Bridgewater about eighty miles north to Greensboro, Vermont. He had been "so much confined to business, in order to provide for my household," that he had not had time to see if there were any Millerites in the area. When he did have time, however, he would discover his isolation: "There is not a single individual in this town of precious faith, nor ever has been, as I have been able to learn."⁴⁹

The household that Barr was then busy providing for consisted of his wife Lori, daughter Emma, mother-in-law Zerviah Harvey, and brother Horace. The 1850 census finds them living in Goshen Gore (today Stannard), a farming community with a population of 183, Eri and Horace Barr being the only Blacks there. Eri was also the only mechanic, which may have been the reason he moved to Goshen Gore, and Horace is listed as a laborer, probably helping his brother or working on a farm.⁵⁰ Barr's movements were undoubtedly necessitated by the job crunch in Vermont, much worse for the state's Blacks, who "found themselves edged almost completely out of the economy" when unemployed Whites demanded previously undesirable jobs.⁵¹

On the first of July 1852, Eri Barr wrote from Goshen Gore to Adventist leader James White, "I turn aside from the press of business, for a moment, to just say, that the cause of truth is moving onward in spite of all the powers of darkness combined."⁵² James White, 30, and his wife Ellen Gould White, 24, were then a financially strapped couple from Maine with two sons, earnestly organizing a movement that would become the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They were joined in this effort by a retired mariner and social reformer named Joseph Bates, at 59 respected as the senior figure of the cause. Each was, like Barr, a former Millerite.

In 1852 their movement consisted of approximately 2,000 adherents

concentrated in New England and New York known as Sabbatarian Adventists.⁵³ Years earlier the Whites and Bates had convened about two dozen conferences in which those who could attend reached a consensus on five doctrines that would define Sabbatarians: the imminent return of Christ; an obligation for humankind to observe the Saturday Sabbath; the mortality of the human soul (i.e., when humans die they do not immediately transition to an afterlife but remain dead in the grave until awakened at the second advent); a heavenly sanctuary modeled after the earthly Hebrew tabernacle in the Torah; and the presence of prophets in the church, of which Ellen White was a manifestation. Significantly for Barr's career as a movement minister, Adventists strongly held that they possessed a mandate from the Bible to attempt to convince literally every human on the planet of their teachings. Sabbatarians owned few church buildings, had little formal organization or regular clergy, and had no tithing system, and so were only informally united by the bi-weekly paper *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald (Review)* that James White began publishing in 1849. This paper contained doctrinal and devotional articles, updates from itinerant ministers, announcements and reports of meetings and conferences, letters from adherents, and business and other items of interest to Sabbatarians.⁵⁴ Featuring dozens of letters and articles from Barr, the *Review* serves as a primary source for the remaining twelve years of his life.

There were few Blacks in the fledgling movement in the 1850s. In fact, Barr was not only the first Black Sabbatarian minister, but he was also one of the first Blacks to join the movement. Like Barr, when Blacks became Adventists they tended to be religiously active. John West, born into slavery in Baltimore in 1816, early developed kyphosis and was referred to as a "little hunchback slave." Sold to a buyer from Louisiana, in New Orleans, West became a Methodist and was licensed to preach in 1851. Two years later Gerrit Smith, a wealthy abolitionist and Sabbatarian Adventist in Peterboro, New York, purchased West's freedom, and arranged for him to live on his estate. Shortly after West arrived, he also became a Sabbatarian and worked part time as a minister, with duties in a church Smith had built in Peterboro. A beloved figure, West was dubbed "the Dominie" (Latin for minister) by his parishioners.⁵⁵ In the predominately White world of Sabbatarian Adventism, John West and Eri Barr were the first Adventist ministers of color and the only ones for decades to come.

A few Blacks were leaders of Sabbatarians in their areas. Not long after Eri converted he persuaded his brother Horace to join the movement. For years Horace Barr was the point person for the Sabbatarian groups in Andover and Jamaica, Vermont, the latter town at one time

hosting the largest Adventist congregation in Vermont.⁵⁶ Elias and Henrietta Platt, who became associated with the Adventists around the same time as Eri Barr, were outspoken abolitionists who took a leadership role among Sabbatarians in Bath, New York, and provided substantial support to movement leaders.⁵⁷ William Hardy, the first Black man elected to public office in Michigan, became an Adventist in 1857 and was the pillar of Adventism in Kent County, Michigan, while supporting the larger Sabbatarian movement with his considerable means.⁵⁸ The other Black Adventists were families and individuals in the Northeast and Midwest that had learned of the movement's teachings from publications, friends and neighbors, or travelling ministers, and made known their fealty in the pages of the *Review*, or at least subscribed to the Sabbatarian organ.

Like the Millerite movement from which it sprang, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was a very American and very Vermonter phenomenon. Roth's *The Democratic Dilemma* documents the cornucopia of sects, revivals, communities, orders, and reforms that dominated life in Vermont from 1791 to 1850, a dynamic that Thomas L. Altherr memorably characterizes in a reflection on the Rutland, Vermont, Free Convention of 1858 as "a crazy-quilt paradigm of...reforms afoot."⁵⁹ The conversion of Barr and members of his family to Adventism is an individualization of this larger statewide phenomenon, and it may be said that the very sensibilities that caused Barr to join the Adventists were developed from this unique reform milieu in Vermont.

Eri Barr was appointed a full-time minister in a matter of months, if that long, after he joined the Adventists, a fast track that was not uncommon in the still informal and inchoate organization of the movement, and may also indicate that he had prior ministerial experience, perhaps as a Millerite. For the next eight years he would maintain a dizzying itinerary of pastoral work in dozens of towns and settlements in Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, with brief forays into Canada, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and New York. Barr would partner with eight of approximately two dozen itinerant Sabbatarian ministers with a similar work ethic. His rapid assumption of leadership in the sect bears out Nathan O. Hatch's characterization of the Second Great Awakening as the "democratization of American Christianity," a time in which Blacks, women, and other marginalized groups took to the pulpit.⁶⁰ Like many of the Protestant ministers of the Second Great Awakening and proselytizers who plied the so-called "burned-over district," however, Barr's frenetic pace would be a factor in the ruin of his marriage and personal health.⁶¹

Barr's modus operandi for his eight-year Adventist ministerial career

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mostly followed this pattern. He partnered with one of the aforementioned two dozen ministers whom he complemented well or was just willing and available.⁶² They received a request from one or more Sabbatarians to evangelize and/or provide pastoral services for Adventists in their vicinity. Sometimes Barr went to places of his own choosing or that were nearby his original destination; other times a leader such as James White or Joseph Bates asked him to visit. Barr spent anywhere from a few days to a month in a location. The Sabbatarians rented a hall or meetinghouse in the town or erected a tent on a rented lot or coreligionist's property to hold religious meetings. Townspeople were invited to the meetings via flyer, newspaper notice, and word of mouth. Barr and his partner would speak to the attendees on classic Christian doctrines from the Bible, but mostly on distinctive Adventist teachings, to which almost no Christians at the time adhered. These meetings were held on weekends or over the course of weeks, sometimes twice a day, or sometimes just in the evening. Another facet of Barr's job in each town was to develop evangelistic plans for the area, which he did in concert with local and regional Adventists. Fellow Sabbatarians provided Barr lodging, while he provided them spiritual direction, encouragement, counseling, and doctrinal instruction. Transportation for the peripatetic minister consisted of his feet, wagon, railroad, and occasionally boat. A financial system to salary ministers was not instituted until late in Barr's career, so he was mostly supported by moonlighting, selling literature, and the occasional donation from a Sabbatarian. This remuneration arrangement was notoriously unreliable and inadequate, a primary cause for the high burnout and turnover rate among Barr's fellow ministers. Barr's eight-year stint itinerating was actually longer than that of the average Adventist minister.⁶³

Eri Barr's ministerial itineracy in Vermont and New England conformed to socioeconomic patterns of the time. Barr sought out people and went where they were, and the people were increasingly in cities and towns, and less in rural areas than they had been in previous decades. In *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont*, Michael Sherman, Gene Sessions, and P. Jeffrey Potash trace the concomitant decline of the agricultural sector and rural living with the rise of manufacturing and urban living. As Barr began itinerating in the early 1850s, Vermonters were already leaving the fields for the cities and the unprecedented growth experienced by urban areas continued through the Civil War and beyond, permanently transforming the state.⁶⁴ This population shift centralized Barr's ministerial efforts and made people more easily reachable than they had ever been. The new jobs that urban living provided his converts ultimately financed Barr's ministry.

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Barr had not been a minister long before he impressed the leaders of the Sabbatarians, whose imprimatur he needed to have viability in the movement. He first met James and Ellen White in early September 1852, in Wolcott, a town in northern Vermont with approximately 900 people. Barr and his partner Alfred Hutchins, who had also joined the movement that year, were holding religious meetings in a 400-seat tent adjoining the house of a Sabbatarian named Seth Peck. James White observed Barr in action and reported in the *Review* that Barr spoke of his “present faith, hopes and joys” and overall the programs were “harmonious, refreshing, and some of them very powerful,” and “more than realized” his expectations.⁶⁵ They would reunite a few weeks later twenty miles southwest in Waterbury, where the Whites again heard Barr speak. Recounting their first meeting six years later, James White remarked that Barr was “much beloved” and a “firm friend of the cause and devoted laborer.”⁶⁶ For her part, Ellen White claimed to have received a vision in which God told her that Barr and three other ministers “were men to be depended upon.”⁶⁷ In a movement that derived profound meaning and direction from White’s charisma, this pronouncement was a key endorsement for Barr.

It is not known when Barr first met the movement’s third leader, Joseph Bates, but by May 1855 they had become ministerial partners. This was a consequential partnership. The caliber and magnitude of Bates’s efforts and leadership in 1850s Sabbatarianism were what caused Adventists to deem him one of the founders of the church. That Barr worked alongside Bates during such founding efforts attests that in his own right Barr had a noteworthy role in the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thus, this partnership should be explored.

When Joseph Bates teamed up with Barr in May 1855, Bates was 62 years old and had a lifetime of antislavery activism behind him. Ideologically, Bates initially advocated colonization for Black slaves, but by 1835 he had discarded this for Garrisonian abolitionism or immediatism, vowing that he would “support Mr. G. in all his efforts to disenthral and elevate the colored race.”⁶⁸ Just two months later Bates was referred to in Garrison’s *Liberator* as “our zealous fellow-laborer, Capt. Joseph Bates.”⁶⁹ In 1835–1836 Bates was instrumental in the founding in Massachusetts of the Fairhaven Anti-Slavery Society (FASS) and the Bristol County Anti-Slavery Society, while his wife, Prudence, cofounded the Fairhaven Ladies Anti-Slavery Society. Bates helped to coordinate the Massachusetts Christian Conference on Slavery in 1836, a large gathering of members of the Christian Connection that formally condemned all Christian churches that supported slavery. Elected president of the FASS in 1839, Bates organized numerous petitions against slavery and

racist laws that were sent to the Massachusetts State Legislature and the US Congress and Senate. In particular for our purposes here, Joseph Bates spearheaded a petition among the men of his community to repeal miscegenation laws in Massachusetts; in 1842 his petition was read in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, but the law was narrowly upheld. The next year it was repealed.⁷⁰

Each of Barr's eight ministerial partners was certainly antislavery, as were probably most Adventists. But were his partners sympathetic to his interracial marriage? Bates was, and the man that played his part in making it legal in a powerful state would probably have won Barr's high regard on that basis alone. Bates and Barr conducted religious meetings together in Maine, where interracial marriage was illegal, albeit lightly enforced. Although Lori Barr did not travel with her husband, the illegality of his marriage in several states where he preached may have weighed on Eri's mind. Whatever the case, when Bates and Barr held meetings in Springfield, Massachusetts, Barr could theoretically rest easier on the marriage legality issue, thanks in part to the efforts of Bates and others like him.

Puzzlingly, the only article in the *Review* written by Barr that mentions race is one coauthored with Bates. The two preachers were conducting evangelistic meetings in Berlin, Connecticut, in August 1855, when, as they report, on Sunday, August 12, "a colored preacher from Upper Canada attended." Upon talking to the Black man from Toronto, the two learned that he was "lecturing in the State of Connecticut, to obtain means to ameliorate the condition of our oppressed countrymen, escaped from the slave power of our boasted land of freedom, who have found a refuge from their cruel bondage in the British dominions."⁷¹ This is undeniably Bates's language and sentiment, almost identical to his diatribes against the hypocrisies of the American republic in abolitionist and religious papers. The shrewd Bates was also informing *Review* readers in barely concealed language that this Black Canadian was an Underground Railroad agent, and this was just the sort of contact that the abolitionist Bates would have cultivated and utilized in his efforts to destroy slavery. Equally important to both Bates and Barr was the Canadian's assurance that he was going to start observing the Saturday Sabbath and teach others to do so. They provided him with some Adventist literature and the man indicated that he would visit the *Review* office in Rochester, New York, on his way back to Canada. Bates, who had proselytized among enslaved Blacks as a Millerite minister on Maryland's Eastern Shore in 1843 and therefore knew how the slave system could obstruct the practice of religious beliefs, wrapped up his account of the Canadian by remarking, "Thank the Lord, that he is qualifying teachers

who have influence with this class of our fellow men who are now free, and have the privilege to keep the weekly Sabbath of the Bible when they hear it taught.”⁷²

Bates and Barr undertook from twelve to twenty meetings together in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut in 1855. The venues ranged from city halls, to tents, to houses. The meetings featured the two ministers delivering doctrinal talks to Adventists and those in the community whom they could persuade to attend. In those days visitors to small towns were newsworthy, and a White man in his sixties with a Black man in his thirties preaching strange doctrines was a draw. In Canaan, Maine, for instance, a tent was erected in the front yard of a Sabbatarian named Robert Barnes and a crowd of roughly 500 attended.⁷³ They often travelled with a tent, or at least in concert with one. Joseph Bates wrote of one tour that “the Tent has been transported by land and water about 1100 miles, at an expense of \$43.28, averaging less than four dollars per meeting.”⁷⁴ The primary object of the tent was as a vehicle to persuade people to become Sabbatharians, and Bates and Barr seemed to have as good success at this as any other pair. Two representative reports are of seven baptized in East Unity, New Hampshire, in July 1855, and three baptized in Berlin, Connecticut, the next month.⁷⁵ Bates and Barr also participated in the planning sessions together, advising local Adventists on how to get their message out and convince people to adopt it.

Since becoming a Sabbatarian, Barr seldom let up his frenetic pace of travel, lecturing, canvassing, and ministering. Sabbatarian ministers mostly itinerated two-by-two, so as the only itinerant Black minister in the movement, Barr was always paired with a White counterpart, forming interracial ministerial partnerships that would not be known again in Adventism for years to come—especially after the church’s official founding in the midst of the Civil War and its growing pains during Reconstruction and Jim Crow, when race relations were said to be at their nadir.⁷⁶ Having a forte for small-town evangelism, in eight years Barr held religious meetings in at least 11 towns Vermont, 21 in Maine, 14 in Massachusetts, seven in New Hampshire, eight in Connecticut, three in Pennsylvania, and four in New York. Barr conducted meetings in a number of these locales multiple times. He also met with Sabbatharians and held meetings in three settlements in Québec in the fall of 1854. In total, Barr conducted hundreds of religious meetings ranging from two days to two weeks from 1852 to 1860. Incredibly, in his extensive itinerating, Barr reported no instances of racism.

Vital to the Sabbatarian project were “accessions,” people joining the

movement, which would confirm what they held to be their divine mandate to win people, and in turn generated money that funded the growing movement's needs, expanded the community of adherents, provided more political power, and granted overall viability to the movement. Judging by his reports in the *Review*, Barr, like many ministers during the Second Great Awakening era, seemed to be preoccupied with conversions and baptisms. Significantly, in any given year he was one of two dozen Sabbatarian ministers with the authority to baptize. Barr dutifully reported his accessions in straightforward ways, and in line with ministerial rhetoric, was sure to give the glory to God. Although it is impossible to be certain, I estimate that Barr, working with a partner or alone, was responsible for between 150 to 300 people becoming Sabbatarian Adventists. Since the total number of adherents in the late 1850s is estimated to be between 2,000 and 3,000, Barr's efforts were substantial.

Eri Barr facilitated the expansion of the movement in another way, one that demonstrates his significance as a Sabbatarian leader. He organized and chaired numerous general conferences, two- or three-day business meetings for strategizing and mobilizing Sabbatharians for evangelism in an area. In his first such meeting in June 1856, Barr chaired a conference that overrode "some leading Brn. [brethren, i.e., Sabbatarian leaders]" about where one of the movement's only tents used for religious meetings should go, and appointed the men who would staff it and serve as "tent treasurers."⁷⁷ As a secretary of the New England Conference in Boston, January 1857, Barr co-led proceedings that established a fund and a manager to disperse Adventist publications, and appointed tent committees and charter members for three states, allotting Sabbatharians' monetary offerings for its function.⁷⁸ He chaired a pivotal meeting in early September 1857 in which it was decided that five general conferences would take place that fall, indicating the time and location of each, with ten resolutions on spiritual preparations of Sabbatharians for the conferences. Barr was chosen to provide leadership at each of these state meetings.⁷⁹ In what was probably his final major meeting, Barr was appointed chair of a business meeting in Roosevelt, New York, in June 1859, where it was decided that a new tithing system would be implemented in the region; \$400 was pledged to operate the "New York tent" and an invitation and appointment of two ministers to work with the tent enterprise was tendered; and the appointment of a five-member committee for periodical circulation was made.⁸⁰ Again, Barr's leadership on these committees was integral to the growth of the movement, and was more remarkable in that he did so as a Black

man in antebellum New England. In the 1850s, the acceptability of a Black man preaching to Whites was far from universal, even in New England. A Black leader of Whites in a predominately White movement would have been even more controversial.

Critically, Eri Barr ordained individuals to the Sabbatarian ministry. There is direct evidence of at least one person Barr ordained, but there were undoubtedly more. Augustin C. Bourdeau, a French Canadian who converted to Adventism in 1855, was ordained by Barr the next year in Bakersfield, Vermont.⁸¹ As in almost every other Protestant communion, Sabbatarians only granted the authority to ordain to those whom they recognized as vetted and vested leaders, and the fact that Barr could ordain is another confirmation of his standing and authority in the movement and its racial egalitarianism.

CLEAR, FORCIBLE, AND MUCH BELOVED

What was Eri Barr's preaching and interpersonal style like? This is an essential question in an era when such things were often paramount for success. Unfortunately, there are only a few vague descriptions in the *Review*, and none in general newspapers, as far as can be determined. One Sabbatarian stated that in a lecture, Barr "clearly and forcibly set forth the reasons of our hope, and very minutely dwelt upon every point."⁸² James White characterized a meeting in which Barr spoke as "very powerful." At a funeral service an attendee said that Barr "preached a short but very appropriate and comforting discourse" and "our sorrowing hearts were comforted."⁸³ One convert described Barr's lectures as "so clear."⁸⁴ The large crowds that often came to hear Barr may also be an indicator of his effectiveness as a communicator. At a meeting conducted by Barr in Wolcott, Vermont, in 1852, hundreds filled a 400-seat tent, many travelling from Eastern Canada to attend.⁸⁵ At a gathering in New Hampshire in the summer of 1855, Barr reported that "some hundreds of people came in from the surrounding country and appeared to listen with a strong desire to understand the truth."⁸⁶ An Adventist from Catlin, New York, wrote that a conference put on by Barr and two other ministers was the "best that we ever had" in the town.⁸⁷ At times when Barr could not physically be present at a meeting, he would be asked to draft a letter to be read to the attendees. At one such conference in New England, it was reported that "we were favored with a letter from Bro. E. L. Barr, just in time to read before the business meeting, filled with comforting words, and stirring exhortations to the church."⁸⁸

Another compelling bit of evidence about Barr's effectiveness as a minister is in the way he was regarded by his parishioners. He was con-

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sistently referred to by Sabbatarians in the *Review* in terms of endearment: “our beloved brother Barr,” “much beloved,” “dear Bro. Barr.” When meetings were called, Barr was “particularly invited.” When word reached Adventists that Barr would be visiting, their response was often, “his coming is a matter of rejoicing to us.” Barr once stayed at the home of a retired sea captain named Samuel Warner in Providence, Rhode Island, a man whom he probably baptized. Warner wrote of his brief time with Barr: “I really had an interesting season with him, in love and blessed converse” on doctrinal subjects, and “I should be pleased to have the privilege of enjoying more of his company.”⁸⁹ Also telling is the number of invitations Barr received to eulogize parishioners in the *Review* and at memorial services, a sign of high regard.

Barr’s entire persona seemed to be fashioned after the Christian archetype of pastor as shepherd, the *Review* readers being his flock. Functioning as miniature sermons, his letters contain constant exhortations to Christian holiness and steadfastness, in line with the Sabbatarian entrenchment in the Wesleyan tradition of sanctification. These exhortations were worded in biblical phraseology and were almost always framed eschatologically, a sensibility that dated back to Barr’s time as a Millerite. Despite the passage of time, for Barr the end was always just about to occur, and he never missed a hortatory opportunity to emphasize this to parishioners to induce personal holiness. Of course, as an Adventist minister, Barr was certainly not unique in this. But the frequency with which he infused apocalyptic urgency into even brief items in the *Review* was remarkable, if tedious to present sensibilities.

For all of Barr’s salutary traits, however, a personality prone to extremes emerges, a bleak worldview dominated by notions of alienation and doctrinal severity. The perceived alienation was no doubt partly due to the Adventist conceit that they comprised God’s remnant, the final strand of true believers who would soon be turned on and persecuted by the entire world.⁹⁰ Indeed, there was only a paltry number of Sabbatarians in Vermont, and in toto, for that matter. As previously theorized though, for this Black Vermonter the sense of alienation seemed to have a particular resonance. In his first appearance in the *Review*, Barr likened his proselytization efforts to “honest souls [that] are being made to rejoice, after a long, gloomy night of sadness.”⁹¹ Barr would characterize those whom he convinced to join the Sabbatarians in Johnson as “the remnant in Northern Vermont.”⁹² A group of infirmed Sabbatarian women that he was asked to comfort were described as “these afflicted daughters of Abraham, separated as they are, far away from those of like precious faith, and wasting away under the withering hand of disease.”⁹³ Another lonely lament comes from Roxbury, Vermont, from January

1857, when Barr reflected, “One year has elapsed since I last mingled in the society of the afflicted people of God scattered among the mountains and valleys of Vermont.” Things were not the same since he had last been there: “Here I find many vacant places caused by the dear saints’ removing to the far West,” while “others have been laid away in the silent grave.” In short, “the changes of the past year have made this world more dark and dreary.”⁹⁴ This gloominess had not dissipated by August, when Barr at his most doleful pronounced that “New England lay before me a dark picture.” He observed that when the Vermonters previously referenced—again he characterizes them as “scattered among [the] mountains and valleys”—had moved west, “many were sorely afflicted like myself, and felt as though we were left desolate and forsaken.” These Adventists were facing “the large number of Sabbath haters and truth fighters [who] now began to look like a formidable foe.” Barr was so depressed that he admitted, perhaps a bit hyperbolically, that like the Old Testament seer Elijah, he felt like asking God to take his life. In the end, he resisted such impulses and grandly proclaimed to his audience, “As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.”⁹⁵

Another extreme in Barr’s personality was his doctrinal severity, notable even for an era and a movement tending to religious extremes. In the above letter in which he admitted to entertaining asking God to end his life, Barr cautioned readers to “Remember that death stares us in the face every moment we remain lukewarm [not spiritually committed].”⁹⁶ The next month he ended a report by stating that Sabbatarians should rescue their neighbors’ “dear souls...from error’s dark, destructive way, and the awful pains of the second death.”⁹⁷ Weeks later he concluded an update with “Arise and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before it is too late, and all is lost forever.”⁹⁸ In early 1858 Barr warned his coreligionists that there was “no time to backslide now, no time to gratify self, no time to be idle. Remember we are now having our last chance to get ready for the return of the King of glory, and if this time is not rightly improved, all is lost for ever.”⁹⁹ Barr’s extremes would directly or indirectly cause three developments that would place a shadow on the last years of his life.

The first development was his marriage. Barr had been touring non-stop for eight years, half of his marriage, when his wife Lori had had enough. A week and a half before Christmas of 1858 she obtained a divorce from Barr for the cause of “willing absence.”¹⁰⁰ In truth, there is no evidence that Barr ever took Lori and their daughter Emma with him in his travels, and indeed one is unable to find breaks in his schedule when he could have stopped to spend any appreciable time with them at their home in Stannard. Sadly, it seems that Emma never lived with her

mother or father again after the divorce: The 1860 census records her living with a White farming family called the Herseys in Williamstown, Vermont.¹⁰¹ It is not known what became of Lori Barr after the divorce. It seems that Barr's divorce did not have an adverse impact on his standing as a Sabbatarian minister because it was initiated by his wife.

The second development would come from Ellen White, who at the time of Barr's divorce was the most powerful figure in Sabbatarianism. White was regarded by most Adventists as a bona fide prophet, with regular divine visions and the "testimonies," or personal messages to Sabbatarians, that issued from them. These testimonies were spiritually authoritative for the 2,000 to 3,000 Adventists, often probing into their personal lives, and containing reprimands and exhortations to more righteous living. In September 1859 White issued one such testimony to three Sabbatarian brothers, William Henry, Bruce, and Andrew Graham, from Berlin, Connecticut, whom she charged with religious extremism in the form of ominous worship services that featured "shrieks" and "a pressing of individuals to confess" their sins, all of which resulted in "a fear [coming] over the church" members.¹⁰² White admonished seven other people in the Berlin church in the testimony, then closed with a statement on Barr. Barr, she charged, had "a wrong spirit" which "led him astray." Instead of setting right the extreme behavior of the Berlin Adventists, as a leader he supported them and was thus "more to be blamed" than the church members. White claimed that God showed her that Barr would have been better off "working with his hands"—a reference to his former occupation as a mechanic—"than exerting this wrong influence in the church."¹⁰³

Twelve days later White wrote a letter centering on Barr to Mary Ann Chamberlain, a Sabbatarian in the Berlin church. After White had visited Berlin the previous year she found "things in the utmost confusion" among the Adventists and claimed to have received two visions from God afterward on the situation there. White pronounced that Barr had a "hurried, fanatical spirit" demonstrated by behavior in Berlin in which he would join others in identifying those whom they deemed did not meet their spiritual standards and ostracized them. More concretely, Barr encouraged the Sabbatarians to burn the daguerreotype photographs that they owned, judging them a waste of money that could have gone to spreading the gospel. White alludes to some type of confiscation of these items, though its exact nature is not known. At the time, a daguerreotype and its case could cost roughly two or three days' salary of an average worker.¹⁰⁴ White herself was against such extravagances, holding that Sabbatarians could better employ their money. However, she rebuked Barr because he was destroying property that was not his

and, at the least, was not exchanging the valuable items for something more useful. At the same time as his wife's letter, James White in the *Review* had publicly castigated Adventist ministers who had "run from place to place on the cars, encouraging a fanatical spirit in burning daguerreotypes &c., worse than wasting their Lord's money, and leaving the brethren in distraction."¹⁰⁵ Ellen White saw Barr's actions as so egregious that she issued a total indictment of his leadership, stating that "it would be of no use" for him to itinerate among Adventists any longer because "he could not do them good." "He had better be laboring in a humble way, working with his hands," she wrote, because "he possessed too much dignity," a phrase she used to indicate arrogance.¹⁰⁶ For his part, Barr duly humbled himself, issuing apologies to Sabbatharians in New England and a public mea culpa in the *Review* much later in June 1862.¹⁰⁷

Barr's bout with extremism probably had its roots in his childhood in Vermont, a millennial hotbed touched on earlier. David Ludlum points out that one of the dominant social movements in the region during Barr's formative years was what he terms the "Puritan Counter-Reformation," which was marked by an ultraism exemplified by prominent Vermont reformer Orson Murray campaigning to rid towns of erotic images and inveighing against lax moral standards.¹⁰⁸ P. Jeffrey Potash observes that this ultraism thrived amid "visions of the second coming," which seems to capture the impetus behind Barr's proscriptions.¹⁰⁹

Whatever the case, Ellen White's chastisement undermined Barr's Sabbatarian career, especially in Connecticut; but it did not end it. Perhaps sensing that it was time to move on from New England, Barr had begun ministering in New York around June 1859 and chaired the aforementioned conference in Roosevelt months before White's missives about him became public. In September of that year he had delivered messages that were "refreshing and strengthening" to a crowd of 100 in Ulysses, Pennsylvania, a *Review* correspondent affirming that "Bro. Barr will labor for a while here."¹¹⁰ Barr held several religious meetings with some of his old partners in small towns in the region of southwestern New York-northern Pennsylvania throughout 1859 and 1860. Most significantly, he led in organizing the Niles Hill Church in Alma, New York, which featured an edifice that was the meeting place for scores of early Adventists' general meetings. Niles Hill became a vital center for the movement, the lifeblood of its region and beyond.¹¹¹ Interestingly, Eri Barr is found on two censuses of 1860. The first, taken on June 14, has him residing in Willing, a small settlement in southwestern New York on the Pennsylvania border, in the home of Josiah and Mary Witter, a farming couple, with their two teenage daughters and two male

domestics, all White. Barr's profession: "Advent Clergyman."¹¹² The second census from September 6 records him in Ulysses Township, about fifteen miles southeast in Pennsylvania, living with another White farming family, Horace and Polly Hopkins, and their two sons and two daughters. Barr's profession: "Clergyman and Advent."¹¹³

The final development that shadowed Barr's last years was an illness that has been a scourge of humanity throughout history, though called by different names: tuberculosis. Barr contracted "consumption" in early 1860, stating in a letter published in the *Review* in April 1861 that he almost died from it. He presciently wrote that the readers would probably not hear from him again, and indeed his final piece in the *Review* was his apology letter in 1862. Several of Barr's Sabbatarian colleagues also contracted fatal cases of tuberculosis, most famously John Nevins Andrews.

As Barr's body was deteriorating, the nation embarked on a protracted struggle that would determine the fate of those of Barr's race and of the Union itself. The Adventists were largely caught off-balance by the conflict, scrambling to formulate a conscientious objector position. In 1860 the movement had adopted the name "Seventh-day Adventist," but official incorporation and acknowledgment by the US government would not come until May 1863 at the Adventists' inaugural General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan.¹¹⁴ By that time, Adventism had begun the shift from New England to the new West, with their headquarters in Battle Creek, Michigan, and were metaphorically and literally leaving behind in the East many pioneers like Barr. In June 1862 Adventists in Barr's home state organized into the Vermont Conference, a church governance unit that was the fourth established, comprised of 45 people, a portion of whom Barr had brought into the church. Ellen White's statement that "In no state have the brethren been truer to the cause than in old Vermont" was a validation of much of Barr's work.¹¹⁵

Eri L. Barr spent the final days of his life at Nile Hill in the care of a White Sabbatarian farming couple, Daniel and Esther Oviatt. He died on May 16, 1864, just a week before his fiftieth birthday. According to a former ministerial partner, "his mind was calm, and he felt that death would be a sweet rest."¹¹⁶

LEGACY AND PLACE

To grapple with the significance of Eri Barr's life and place in Vermont's history, a comparative element is necessary. The nearest analog to Barr is not Lemuel Haynes or Alexander Twilight, but the aforementioned Charles Bowles. Born in 1761 in Boston, Bowles had an eventful early life as a Revolutionary soldier and sailor, but switched career paths

in his middle years and itinerated first in Massachusetts for eight years, and then in Vermont as a Free Will Baptist minister from 1816 to 1836, a period roughly spanning Eri Barr's birth to his attendance at Wesleyan.¹¹⁷ As a dark-skinned Black man ministering in Vermont in the period that historians have designated the Second Great Awakening, Bowles had remarkable success among his all-White subjects, baptizing many hundreds and founding churches in Huntington, Enosburgh, Hinesburg, Duxbury, Starksboro, Stowe, Jericho, Berkshire, Franklin, Shelburne, and several other towns.¹¹⁸

There are numerous similarities in the Vermont itinerancies of Bowles and Barr. Both were Black men in the antebellum era pastoring and leading Whites, partnering with White ministers, and staying in Whites' homes. They were peripatetically driven with roughly the same proselytizing *modus operandi*. Both had marriage troubles, ultimately separating from their spouses.¹¹⁹ Both were pioneers of fledgling churches whose reputations were not established in Vermont, but through their dedication seemed to have moved the needle to greater acceptance of their sects.

The divergences between Bowles and Barr are just as interesting, and many of them may be due to the different eras in which they operated. Bowles was not educated, although he was literate.¹²⁰ Barr, on the other hand, was educated at an elite school and communicated heavily through writing. Correspondingly, Barr employed a more doctrine-based preaching method, while Bowles' was exhortation-based, relying on power and emotion.¹²¹ Bowles' ministerial career spanned from 1808 to his death in 1843; Barr's was considerably shorter. The lengths of their lives paralleled this: Bowles died about age 81, Barr 49.

But the most striking discrepancy between Bowles and Barr is their reports of racism. For Barr, there is no evidence that he experienced any racism in his all-White ministry in Vermont. Whether Barr met with discrimination but preferred to not mention it to his *Review* readers seems more probable than him not encountering it at all. Whatever the case, the record is silent. Bowles, on the other hand, reports of particularly abhorrent racial prejudice in his travels. In his biography of Bowles (1852), John W. Lewis states that Bowles "awaken[ed] much cruel and bitter opposition" due to his race, and that there was "a deep-rooted prejudice against the mere complexion" of the Black man. Some Whites held that Blacks should only preach to Blacks, and others "aver[red] that they 'will not hear a *nigger* preach'" (emphasis in text).¹²² The attitude in the quotation manifested itself on several occasions documented by Bowles in his journal. In Huntington or Hinesburg, a mob plotted to abduct

Bowles from a meeting, strap him to a wooden horse, and throw him in a pool to drown.¹²³ In another instance in 1818 a woman surnamed Clark from Hinesburg chided her neighbors for “going to hear the Nigger preach.”¹²⁴ A Wesleyan minister once asked Bowles publicly if he regretted being Black.¹²⁵

Perhaps though, a shrewd if very antiquated assessment from Lewis on Bowles, is true for Barr’s years in Vermont, as well:

Although Elder Bowles was a colored man, his manly bearing, his noble spirit, and his amiable christian character, so greatly endeared him to the people of Vermont, he was warmly recognized as a brother. And as Vermont as a State, is identified with the American confederacy, in the great political and ecclesiastical interest of the American nation, God only knows, how far the influence of that man has been felt in revolutionizing the public sentiment of the State, against the abomination of American slavery. But I cannot doubt that it has been, and still has an influence in destroying prejudice against color. . . . Said one brother, to hear Elder Bowles preach, and brother Jeffrey Brace talk, was enough to make abolitionists of a whole community.¹²⁶

This theory of influence presents these Black ministers as not powerless subjects of a White Vermont, but influencers. Unfortunately, influence can be exceedingly hard to reify or quantify, but it is a very real thing, and Bowles and Barr wielded it. To go beyond Lewis’s scope, though, the two Black ministers would not only have influenced Vermont toward abolitionism, but toward a general betterment of race relations altogether, moving the state toward the eclipsed American ideal of democracy and equality for all.

Ultimately, Eri Barr was a quintessential Vermonter, being born, raised, and residing most of his life in the Green Mountain State. Paradoxically, though, his life was like that of few Vermonters, first because he was Black in Vermont in the antebellum period; and second because he had a leading role in founding one of only a dozen or so major Christian churches to originate in America. Today as we are reexamining and recasting Vermont’s past, Barr’s life should not be excluded because it does not fit snugly into previous notions of the state’s history and people, but instead used to expand who and what Vermonters were and are. The current studies that show Vermont to be among the least diverse and least religious states in America ironically make Barr an even more compelling figure. His leadership in early Adventism demonstrates the capacity of antebellum Vermont to provide a place for such a racially enlightened dynamic for the time, with Barr as facilitator. That Barr helped found a new Christian church suggests the capacity of early Vermont for religious tolerance and even flourishing. Barr’s character faults

also reflect on the state and the country, with all their contradictions and extremes. Perhaps as Barr embodied the diversity that would one day characterize the church he helped found, so he embodies the diversity of the developing Vermont historiography. Certainly, he is one of the millions who shaped Vermont.

NOTES

¹ For volumes from academic presses, see Jane C. Beck, *Daisy Turner's Kin: An African American Family Saga* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Elise A. Guyette, *Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh, 1790–1890* (Burlington: University of Vermont Press, 2010); Kari Winter, ed., Jeffrey Brace, *The Blind African Slave* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004); John Saillant, *Black Puritan, Black Republican: The Life and Thought of Lemuel Haynes, 1753–1833* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). For scholarly articles, see Jane Williamson, “African Americans in Addison County, Charlotte, and Hinesburgh, Vermont, 1790–1860,” *Vermont History* 78, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2010): 15–42; Harvey Amani Whitfield, “African Americans in Burlington, Vermont, 1880–1900,” *Vermont History* 75, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2007): 101–23; Kari J. Winter, “Bordering Freedom but Unable to Cross into the Promised Land: Africans in Early Vermont,” *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 473–92; David Work, “The Buffalo Soldiers in Vermont, 1909–1913,” *Vermont History* 73, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2005): 63–75. For a popular press study see Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, *Mr. and Mrs. Prince: How an Extraordinary Eighteenth-Century Family Moved out of Slavery and into Legend* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).

² Stanley D. Hickerson made this discovery and published his findings: “Was Eri L. Barr the First Black Adventist Minister?” *Adventist Review*, 6 April 2015 (<https://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story2511-was-eri-l.-barr-the-first-Black-adventist-minister>).

³ In 2020 the Seventh-day Adventist Church reported a global membership of 21,723,992. Roughly ten million members reside in Sub-Saharan Africa, 400,000 Black Adventists in North America, and hundreds of thousands more members of African descent throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, and Europe. See Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, *2021 Annual Statistical Report*, Volume 3 (Silver Spring, MD: Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2021).

⁴ Elmira Bixby and William Barr, Marriage Certificate, October 15, 1831, Vermont Vital Records, 1871–1908. Census and genealogical records from Vermont cited in these notes are from the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston, Massachusetts.

⁵ Birth Certificate, E. L. Barr, May 23, 1814, Vermont Vital Records 1720–1908; 1810, 1820, and 1850 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor County, Vermont.

⁶ See Paul Schor, *Counting Americans: How the US Census Classified the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Kenneth Prewitt, *What Is Your Race? The Census and Our Flawed Efforts to Classify Americans* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

⁷ *Inhabitants of Medway v. Inhabitants of Natick*, 7 Mass. 88, 6 Tyng 88 (1810), Caselaw Access Project: Harvard Law School (<https://cite.case.law/mass/7/88/>).

⁸ See Elise Guyette, “Black Lives and White Racism in Vermont, 1760–1870,” MA thesis, University of Vermont, 1992, 12.

⁹ 1820 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont.

¹⁰ 1840 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont.

¹¹ 1810 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont; 1820 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont; 1830 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont; 1840 U.S. Census, Reading, Windsor, Vermont.

¹² 1820 U.S. Census, Windsor, Windsor, Vermont; 1830 U.S. Windsor, Windsor, Vermont.

¹³ David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1790–1850* (New York: AMS Press, 1966): 199–237.

¹⁴ John M. Lovejoy, “Racism in Antebellum Vermont,” *Vermont History* 69, Symposium Supplement (Winter 2001): 48–49.

¹⁵ Harvey Amani Whitfield, *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont, 1777–1810* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2014).

¹⁶ Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont*, 166.

- ¹⁷ See Lovejoy, "Racism in Antebellum Vermont," 51–54.
- ¹⁸ See William D. Pierson, *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 87–95.
- ¹⁹ See Winter in Jeffrey Brace, *The Blind African Slave*, 58–59.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.
- ²¹ Kevin Pierce Thornton, "Andrew Harris, Vermont's Forgotten Abolitionist," *Vermont History* 83, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2015): 137.
- ²² Elise A. Guyette, "The Working Lives of African Vermonters in Census and Literature, 1790–1870," *Vermont History* 61, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 69–84. Whitfield's research on Afro-Burlingtonians suggests the accuracy of Harris's observation, as well, even half a century later (Whitfield, "African Americans in Burlington, 1880–1900," 110–13). There were other exceptions, besides Reading, however. See Jane Williamson, "African Americans in Addison County," 26.
- ²³ *Vermont Courier*, 4 October 1833, 3.
- ²⁴ E.g., Horace Barr, "Obituary Notices," *Review and Herald*, 29 December 1863, 39.
- ²⁵ See Raymond Paul Zirblis, "Friends of Freedom: The Vermont Underground Railroad Survey Report" (The State of Vermont, Vermont Department of State Buildings and Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, 1996): 41, 45, 60, 61, 66, 68; and Gilbert Asa Davis, *History of Reading, Windsor County, Vermont*, Volume 2 (Windsor, VT: Gilbert A. Davis, 1903): 141–42.
- ²⁶ See Lewis Cass Aldrich and Frank R. Holmes, *History of Windsor County Vermont* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., Publishers, 1891), 386–87.
- ²⁷ Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 208, 214.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 272–73.
- ²⁹ See Davis, "History of Reading," 311–42.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 313–14.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 322.
- ³² Death certificate, Norman L. Barr, April 16, 1813, State of Vermont, vital records through 1870.
- ³³ Death certificate, William Barr, May 23, 1814, State of Vermont, vital records through 1870. See Zadok Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil and Statistical* (Burlington, VT: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842), 148.
- ³⁴ "Died," *American Repertory and Advertiser*, 11 February 1823, 3.
- ³⁵ David E. Swift, *Black Prophets of Justice: Activist Clergy Before the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 79.
- ³⁶ E.g., the three children of Thomas Day and John Jefferson Smallwood. See Patricia Phillips Marshall and Jo Ramsay Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day: Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 48; Mary E. C. Drew, *Divine Will, Restless Heart* (USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2010), 56–8.
- ³⁷ Wesleyan Academy, Catalogue of the Corporation, Officers, and Students, Summer and Fall Terms, 1836 (Springfield, MA: G. and C. Merriam, 1836), 7.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 7. For the history of Wesleyan Academy, see Rev. David Sherman, *History of Wilbraham Academy, at Wilbraham, Mass. 1817–1890* (Boston: McDonald & Gill Company, 1893).
- ³⁹ Sherman, *History of Wilbraham Academy*, 224–26.
- ⁴⁰ Marriage certificate, Eri L. Barr and Lori Z. Harvey, December 7, 1842, Vermont Vital Records.
- ⁴¹ Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 139–52; Sojourner Truth, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth, A Northern Slave* (Boston: Sojourner Truth, 1850), 106–20; William Still, *Still's Underground Rail Road Records*, revised edition (Philadelphia: William Still, 1886), xi; William Watkins, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Watkins," *The Advent Herald and Signs of the Times Reporter*, 18 December 1844, 151.
- ⁴² Previously, Susannah Brace's children were indentured. See Brace, *The Blind African Slave*, 59–60.
- ⁴³ David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 124–27; Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont*, 250–57.

⁴⁴ See Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 22–45. Michael Sherman, Gene Sessions, and P. Jeffrey Potash touch on Millerism in Vermont in *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2004), 203–5.

⁴⁵ Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont*, 238.

⁴⁶ P. Jeffrey Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District: Patterns of Community Development and Religious Activity, 1761–1850* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 184–85. Thomas D. Seymour Bassett engages this debate in a more recent work, *The Gods of the Hills: Piety and Society in Nineteenth-Century Vermont* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2000).

⁴⁷ E. L. Barr, "Letter from E. L. Burr [sic]," *The Voice of Truth*, 11 December 1844, 184.

⁴⁸ E. L. Barr, "Bro. E. L. Barr," *ibid.*, 11 March 1846, 88.

⁴⁹ Eri L. Barr, "Letter from Bro. Barr," *Bible Advocate*, 3 October 1846, 104.

⁵⁰ 1850 U.S. Census, Goshen Gore, Caledonia County, Vermont.

⁵¹ Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma*, 272.

⁵² Eri L. Barr, "Dear Bro. White," *Review and Herald*, 5 August 1852, 55–56.

⁵³ In this article Sabbatarian Adventists will be referred to variously as Sabbatarians and Adventists.

⁵⁴ For the most accessible histories on Sabbatarian Adventists, see George R. Knight's volumes, *A Brief History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1999) and *Organizing for Mission and Growth: The Development of Adventist Church Structure* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2006).

⁵⁵ See Kevin M. Burton, "Born a Slave, Died a Freeman," *Adventist Review*, 3 April 2019 (<https://www.adventistreview.org/1904-52>).

⁵⁶ Mrs. O. A. Codding, "Barr," *Review and Herald*, 1 February 1887, 79.

⁵⁷ See James White's words on his time with the Platt family in "Our Tour West," *Review and Herald*, 17 February 1852, 93.

⁵⁸ See Lawrence W. Onsager and James R. Nix, "Adventism's First Black Family," *Adventist Review*, 23 February 2011 (<https://www.adventistreview.org/2011-1506-18>).

⁵⁹ Thomas L. Altherr, "A Convention of 'Moral Lunatics': The Rutland, Vermont, Free Convention of 1858," *Vermont History* 69, Symposium Supplement (Winter 2001): 102.

⁶⁰ Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

⁶¹ Whitney Cross first popularized the term "burned-over district" to characterize the thoroughly evangelized area of western New York State (*The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950). P. Jeffrey Potash similarly characterizes Addison County Vermont (Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District*).

⁶² Sometimes I will refer to Barr and his partner as just "Barr" in this article.

⁶³ For accessible volumes on the Sabbatarian Adventist ministry see George R. Knight, *Joseph Bates: The Real Founder of Seventh-day Adventism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2004); Gerald Wheeler, *James White: Innovator and Overcomer* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2003); and Gary Land, ed., *Adventism in America*, revised edition (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998).

⁶⁴ Sherman, et al., *Freedom and Unity*, 239–41.

⁶⁵ James White, "Eastern Tour," *Review and Herald*, 16 September 1852, 80.

⁶⁶ James White, "A Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Present Truth," *Review and Herald*, 14 January 1858, 77.

⁶⁷ James White to Leonard Hastings, September 1852, 1, correspondence number: 28331, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, Maryland.

⁶⁸ This section draws from Kevin Burton, "Joseph Bates and Adventism's Radical Roots," *Adventist Review*, 3 March 2020 (<https://www.adventistreview.org/2002-32>).

⁶⁹ S. J. May, "Rev. Mr. May's Tour," *The Liberator*, 2 May 1835, 70.

⁷⁰ Richard Archer provides an excellent overview of interracial marriages in the antebellum North in *Jim Crow North: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Antebellum New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017): 133–66.

⁷¹ Joseph Bates and E. L. Barr, "Tent Meetings," *Review and Herald*, 4 December 1855, 36.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷³ Joseph Bates, "Tent Meetings," *ibid.*, 10 July 1855, 4.

⁷⁴ Joseph Bates, "Tent Meetings," *ibid.*, 2 October 1855, 54.

⁷⁵ Joseph Bates, "Tent Meetings," *ibid.*, 7 August 1855, 20–21.

⁷⁶ See Rayford Logan's characterization in *The Negro in American Life and Thought: The Nadir, 1877–1901* (New York: Dial Press, 1954).

⁷⁷ E. L. Barr, "Canaan, Me., Conference," *Review and Herald*, 19 June 1856, 64.

⁷⁸ S. Pierce and E. L. Barr, "Report of Conferences," *ibid.*, 12 March 1857, 152.

⁷⁹ E. L. Barr and S. Pierce, "From Brn. Pierce and Barr," *ibid.*, 17 September 1857, 160.

⁸⁰ F. Wheeler, "Conference in Roosevelt, N.Y.," *ibid.*, 30 June 1859, 48.

⁸¹ Augustin C. Bourdeau, Personal Information Form, General Conference Archives, Box WH 2511, 2. I am indebted to Dr. Douglas Morgan for sharing this information with me.

⁸² J. C. Day, "Letter from Bro. Day," *Review and Herald*, 28 August 1853, 61.

⁸³ J. Y. Wilcox, "Obituary," *ibid.*, 28 February 1856, 176.

⁸⁴ Betsey Morse, "From Sister Morse," *ibid.*, 1 May 1856, 23.

⁸⁵ James White, "Eastern Tour," *ibid.*, 16 September 1852, 80.

⁸⁶ E. L. Barr, "Tent Meetings," *ibid.*, 7 August 1855, 20–21.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 12 April 1860, 167.

⁸⁸ O. Davis, "Business Proceedings of the N. E. Conference," *ibid.*, 28 July 1859, 80.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 11 August 1859, 95.

⁹⁰ See Stefan Hoschele, "The Remnant Concept in Early Adventism: From Apocalyptic Anti-sectarianism to an Eschatological Denominational Ecclesiology," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 51, no. 2 (2013): 267–300.

⁹¹ Eri L. Barr, "From Bro. Barr," *Review and Herald*, 5 August 1852, 55.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 17 February 1853, 159.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 7 July 1853, 31.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8 January 1857, 78.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13 August 1857, 118.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ E. L. Barr, "Meeting at West Wilton, N. H.," *ibid.*, 24 September 1857, 166. Sabbatarian Adventists were annihilationist, so Barr's reference to the second death would have meant hellfire that brought about a permanent death.

⁹⁸ E. L. Barr, "Conference at Berlin, Ct.," *ibid.*, 29 October 1857, 205.

⁹⁹ E. L. Barr, "From Bro. Barr," *ibid.*, 3 February 1858, 102.

¹⁰⁰ Record of divorce, Eri L. Barr and Lori Z. Barr, December 7, 1842, State of Vermont. Vermont Vital Records, 1871–1908. New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

¹⁰¹ 1860 U.S. Census, Williamstown, Orange, Vermont.

¹⁰² E. G. White to "Brethren Graham," Letter 7, 1859, 24 September 1859, 1, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring MD.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁰⁴ For a fine overview of the daguerreotype in Barr's time see M. Susan Barger and William B. White, *The Daguerreotype: Nineteenth-Century Technology and Modern Science* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁵ James White, "New Fields," *Review and Herald*, 6 October 1859, 156.

¹⁰⁶ E. G. White to Mary Ann Chamberlain, Letter 19, 1859, 4 October 1859, 1, Ellen G. White Estate.

¹⁰⁷ E. L. Barr, "From Bro. Barr," *Review and Herald*, 24 June 1862, 80.

¹⁰⁸ Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont*, 25–62.

¹⁰⁹ Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District*, 184.

¹¹⁰ R. F. Cottrell, "Conference in Ulysses, Pa.," *Review and Herald*, 29 September 1859, 152.

¹¹¹ D. B. Oviatt, "New York," *ibid.*, 13 October 1885, 635.

¹¹² 1860 U.S. Census, Willing, Allegany, New York, New York State Archives, Albany, New York.

¹¹³ 1860 U.S. Census, Ulysses, Potter, Pennsylvania, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁴ Note that this was the first General Conference, in caps, as opposed to the general conferences. The General Conference session was originally an annual gathering of Adventists to attend to church business and spiritual renewal. Today it occurs quinquennially and is attended by tens of thousands of Adventists from around the world. This is not to be confused with the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the world headquarters located in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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¹¹⁵ E. G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 181. For an exploration of Adventism in Vermont, see Floyd Greenleaf, *Nearly Forgotten: Seventh-day Adventists in Jamaica, Vermont, and Their Place in Vermont History* (USA: Teach Services, Inc., 2017).

¹¹⁶ Nathan Fuller, "Obituary Notices," *Review and Herald*, 15 December 1864, 23.

¹¹⁷ The source from which most information about Charles Bowles stems is a biography by John W. Lewis, *The Life, Labor, and Travels of Elder Charles Bowles* (Watertown, MA: Ingalls & Stowell's Steam Press, 1852), 14.

¹¹⁸ See Rev. Henry Crocker, *History of the Baptists in Vermont* (Bellows Falls, VT: The P. H. Gobie Press, 1918), 610; Rev. G. A. Burgess and Rev. J. T. Ward, *Free Baptist Cyclopaedia* (Chicago: Free Baptist Cyclopaedia Co., 1889), 63; and H. P. Smith, ed., *History of Addison County Vermont* (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1886), 639.

¹¹⁹ Lewis, *Life of Charles Bowles*, 56–57.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 116.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 22–24.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 62–63.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 147–48.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 190.