"The Marlboro Medley": A Vermont Song from 1787

Despite the gaps in what can be known, such as about its author and the occasion for its composition, "The Marlboro Medley" is a singular record of a place and time, engaging the imagination and drawing admiration.

By Patience Young

"The Marlboro Medley" is a remarkable song-poem, preserved in an historic document rediscovered in the mid-twentieth century. In the format of a 'list song'[1] it conveys, without much description or narrative, an eighteenth-century frontier community's extensive activity in bartering commodities. Old songs are rare that reveal such social and commercial history in coeval voice rather than as nostalgic reminiscence, with their original tune known, and traceable to their probable author. This article introduces readers to an authentic cultural artifact that has been little examined and deserves to be more widely known.

Coming to Light

"The Marlboro Medley" was penned in legible longhand on sheets of paper now held by the Vermont Folklife Archive in Middlebury. The heading on the first sheet cites the date 1787 and identifies the tune as "Black Joke." Four decades later, Stephen Greenleaf of Brattleboro sent these sheets with his cover note, identifying the poem's author only as

Patience Young is an art historian, retired curator for education and academic engagement, and singer of songs from American and British traditions. She edited Dick Holdstock's book *Again With One Voice: British Songs of Political Reform, 1768-1868* (Loomis House Press, 2021) and authored "Picturing Protest: Prints to Accompany Political Songs" for *Thirsty Work and Other Legacies of Folk Song* (The Ballad Partners, 2022).

Vermont History Vol. 92, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 2024): 1-23.
© 2024 by the Vermont Historical Society. ISSN: 0042-4161; on-line ISSN: 1544-3043

Greenleaf's brother, to the Rev. Ephraim Holland Newton in nearby Marlboro, who was gathering information for a history of that town. The song was not included in the compilation of Newton's records that was eventually published by the Vermont Historical Society in its definitive edition of 1930: *The History of the Town of Marlborough, Windham County, Vermont.*[2] But the lyrics were tucked away in a trunk, where they stayed until the 1950s, when Newton's descendant Elsie Newton Howe discovered and showed them to family friend, Margaret MacArthur.

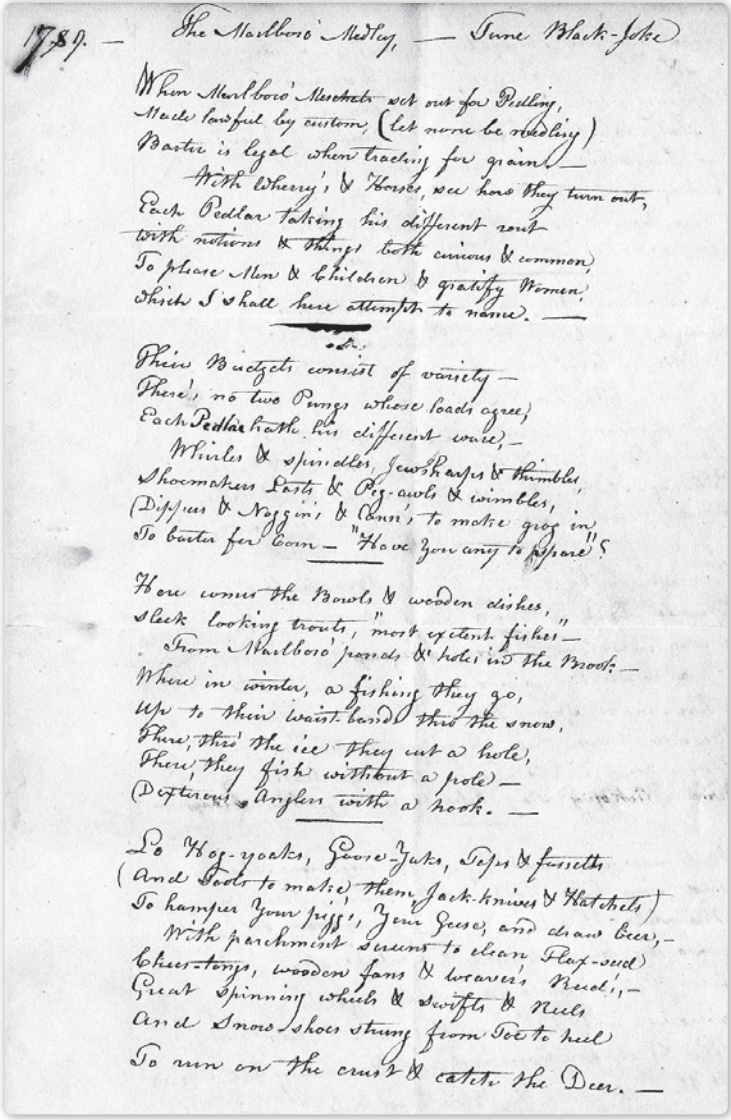
MacArthur was a singer, teacher, and song collector.[3] She and her husband John moved to Newfane, Vermont, in 1948, when he took a teaching position in physics at the newly established Marlboro College, and in 1951 they bought and rescued an early nineteenth-century home in Marlboro that became a hub for friendly musicians from near and far. A major influence on Margaret was the state's first doyenne of traditional song and pioneering song-collector, Helen Hartness Flanders of Springfield.[4] Her book *Country Songs of Vermont*[5] provided MacArthur her first entry into the state's rich heritage of old music. The two became friends, both seeking out old songs that endured and relating regional variants to those collected elsewhere by others.

MacArthur became a familiar figure with her trusty Wollensak tape recorder, mountain dulcimer, distinctive harp-zither, and clear singing voice. Her reputation grew, and in 1962 her first album, *Folksongs of Vermont,* including "The Marlboro Medley," was recorded in her kitchen and issued by Folkways Records (now Smithsonian Folkways). She recorded it again on her own label, Whetstone Records, in 1989.[6] To my knowledge, these are the only two published recordings of this song.

In 1975, MacArthur wrote the cover note for "The Marlboro Medley" lyrics and tune that were printed in the journal *Green Mountain Whittlin's.*[7] Her transcription is nearly the same as mine, below; she updated some spellings that I have kept original.

1787—The Marlboro' Medley, — Tune Black-Joke

When Marlboro Merchants set out for Pedling,
Made lawful by custom, (let none be meddling)
Barter is legal when trading for grain. —
With Wherry's & Horses, see how they turn out,
Each Pedlar taking his different rout
With notions & things both curious & common,
To please Men & Children & gratify Women,
Which I shall here attempt to name. —



1789. — The Marlboro' Medley, — Tune Black-Joke

When Marlboro' Merchants set out for Peddling,
Made lawful by custom, (let none be meddling)
Barter is legal when trucking for grain —
With Wherry's & Horses, see how they turn out,
Each Pedlar taking his different rout
With notions & things both curious & common
To please Men & Children & gratify Women,
Which I shall here attempt to name. —

Their Budgets consist of variety —
There's no two Pungs whose loads agree,
Each Pedlar hath his different ware, —
Whirls & spindles, Jewsharps & thimbles,
Shoemakers Lasts & Peg-awls & wimbles,
(Dippers & Noggins & Cann's to make grog in
To barter for corn — "Have you any to spare"?

How comes the Bowls & wooden dishes,
Sleek looking trouts, "most excellent fishes" —
From Marlboro' ponds & holes in the Woods —
Where in winter, a fishing they go,
Up to their waist band thro' the snow,
There, thro' the ice they cut a hole,
There, they fish without a pole) —
(Dexterous Anglers with a hook. —

To Hog-yoaks, Goose-Jaks, Traps & fusrets
(And Tools to make them, Jack-knives & Hatchets)
To hamper your pigs, Tame Geese, and draw Beer, —
With parchment screens to clean Flax-seed)
Chees-tongs, wooden fans & weaver's Reed, —
Great Spinning wheels & Swifts & Reels
And Snow-shoes strung from Toe to heel
To run on the crust & catch the Deer. —

"The Marlboro Medley," *1787. Courtesy of the Vermont Folklife Archive, Middlebury, Vermont.*

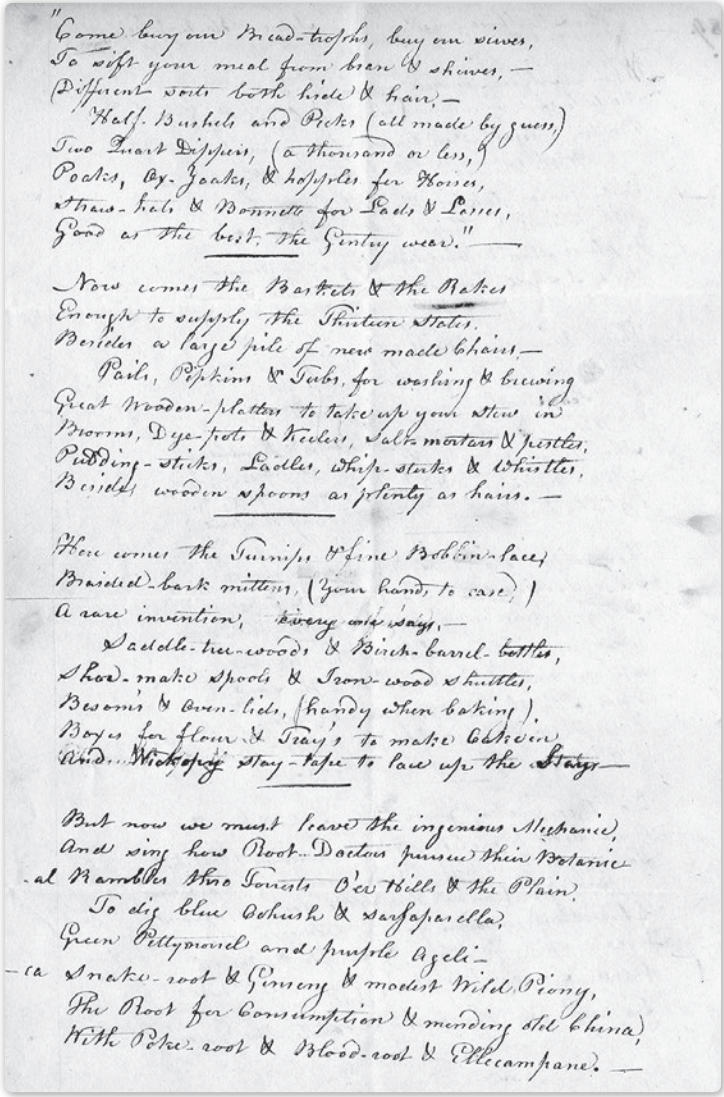
Here comes the Bowls & wooden dishes,
Sleek looking trouts, "most exelent fishes"—
From Marlboro' ponds & holes in the Brook —
Where in winter, a fishing they go,
Up to their waist-bands thro the snow,
There, thro' the ice they cut a hole,
Then, they fish without a pole—
Dexterous Anglers with a hook. —

Lo Hog-yoaks, Goose-Y[o]aks, Taps & fassets
(And Tools to make them, Jack-knives and Hatchets)
To hamper Your piggs, Your Geese, and draw beer, —
With parchment screens to clean Flax-seed
Chees-tongs, wooden fans & weaver's Reed', —
Great spinning wheels & Swifts & Reels
And Snow-shoes strung from Toe to heel
To run on the crust & catch the Deer.—

"Come buy our Bread-trophs, buy our sieves,
To sift your meal from bran & shives, —
Different sorts both hide & hair,—
Half-Bushels and Pecks (all made by guess,)
Two Quart Dippers, (a thousand or less,)
Poaks, Ox-Yoaks, & hopples for Horses,
Straw-hats & Bonnetts for Lads & Lasses,
Good as the best, the Gentry wear." —

Now comes the Baskets & the Rakes
Enough to supply the Thirteen States
Besides a large pile of new made Chairs. —
Pails, Pipkins & Tubs, for washing & brewing
Great wooden-platters to take up your stew in
Brooms, Dye-pots & Keelers, salt-mortars, & pestles,
Pudding-sticks, Ladles, whip-stocks & whistles,
Beside, wooden spoons as plenty as hairs. —

Here comes the Turnips & fine Bobbin-lace,
Braided-bark mittens, (your hands to case,)
A rare invention, every one says, —
Saddle-tree-woods & Birch-barrel-bottles,
Shoe-make[rs] spools & Iron-wood shuttles,
Besoms & oven-lids, (handy when baking).
Boxes for flour & Tray's to make Cake in
And Wickopy stay-tape to lace up the Stays—



"Come buy our Bread-troughs, buy our sieves,
To sift your meal from bran & shives, —
Different sorts both hide & hair, —
Half Bushels and Pecks (all made by guess,)
Two Quart Dippers, (a thousand or less,)
Ducks, Gy-Goaks, & hoppples for Horses,
Straw-hats & Bonnets for Lads & Lasses,
Good as the best. The Gentry wear." —

Now comes the Baskets & the Rakes
Enough to supply the Thirteen States,
Besides a large pile of new made chairs, —
Pails, Piggins & Tubs, for washing & brewing
Great Wooden-platters to take up your stew in
Brooms, Dye-pots & Reelers, Salt-mortars & pestles,
Pudding-sticks, Ladles, Whip-stocks & Whistles,
Besides wooden spoons as plenty as hairs. —

Here comes the Turnips & fine Bobbin-laces,
Braided-bark mittens, (your hands to ease,)
A rare invention, every one says, —
Saddle-tree-woods & Birch-barrel-bottles,
Shoe-make spools & Iron-wood shuttles,
Besom's & Oven-lids, (handy when baking).
Boxes for flour & Trays to make Cheese,
And Wickerjig Stay-tape to lace up the Stays —

But now we must leave the ingenious Mechanic,
And sing how Root-Doctors pursue their Botanic-
-al Rambles thro Forrests o'er Hills & the Plain.
To dig blue Cohosh & sarsaparilla,
Green Pettymorrel and purple a[n]geli-
-ca Snake-root & Ginseng & modest Wild Piony,
The Root for Consumption & mending old China,
With Poke-root & Blood-root & Ellecampane. —

"The Marlboro Medley," 1787. Courtesy of the Vermont Folklife Archive, Middlebury, Vermont.

In early setling the Town, one Year
They'd no luck in hunting the Bear or the Deer,
No Bread to be had, Potatoes were scarce: —
Then had the Small-pox with all its infection
Have pass'd through the Town in every direction,
It could not have touched such dioted Men,
Where dozens could breakfast on Robin or Wren —
Disease disappointed must sneak from the place. —

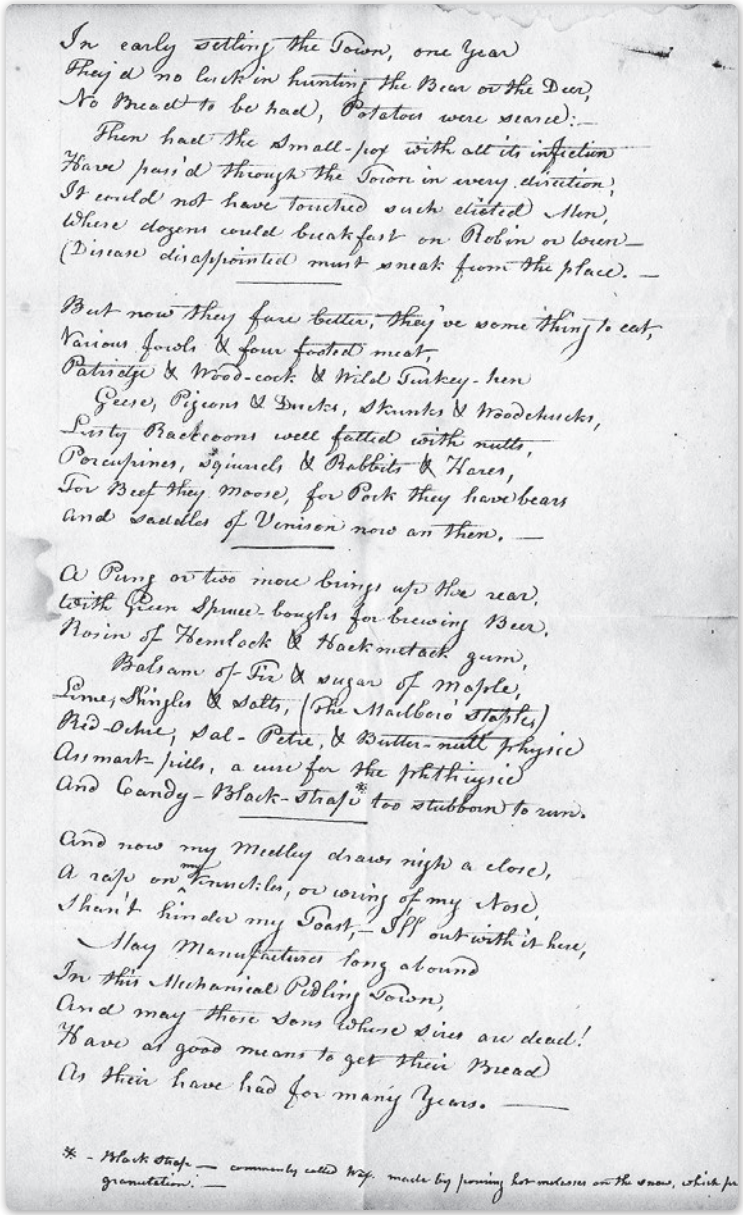
But now they fare better, they've some thing to eat,
Various fowls & four footed meat,
Pa[r]tridge & Wood-cock & Wild Turkey-hen
Geese, Pigeons & Ducks, Skunks & Woodchucks,
Lusty Rackcoons well fatted with nutts,
Porcupines, squirrels & Rabbits & Hares,
For Beef they [have] moose, for Pork they have bears
And saddles of Venison now an then. —

A Pung or two more brings up the rear,
With Green Spruce-boughs for brewing Beer,
Rosin of Hemlock & Hack metack gum,
Balsam of Fir & sugar of maple,
Lime, Shingles and Salts, (The Marlboro' staples)
Red-ochre, Sal-Petre, & Butter-nutt physic
Assmart-pills, a cure for the phthiysic
And Candy — Black-Strap* too stubborn to run.[8]

And now my Medley draws nigh a close,
A rap on $\overset{\text{my}}{\wedge}$ knuckles, or wring of my Nose,
Shan't hinder my Toast, — I'll out with it here,
May Manufacturers long abound
In this Mechanical Pedling Town,
And may those Sons whose Sires are dead !
Have as good means to get their Bread
As their [ ] have had for many years.

In the true spirit of the folk process, MacArthur put her own decisive mark on the song. The final line as written (or mis-copied from an earlier page?) did not include the word "fathers." It's quite an omission. The word is implied; it is needed for the meter and meaning, and we are thankful to Margaret for inserting it. She also turned "*for many years*" into "this many a year," and gave the closing toast its new emphatic ending:

As their Fathers have had this many a year.



In early settling the Town, one year
They'd no luck in hunting the Bear or the Deer,
No Bread to be had, Potatoes were scarce:—
Then had the Small-pox with all its infection
Have pass'd through the Town in every direction;
It could not have touched such elected Men,
Where dozens could breakfast on Robin or Wren—
(Disease disappointed must sneak from the place. —

But now they fare better, they've some thing to eat,
Various foods & four footed meat,
Patridge & Wood-cock & Wild Turkey-hen
Geese, Pigeons & Ducks, Skunks & Woodchucks,
Forty Racoons well fatted with nutts,
Porcupines, Squirrels & Rabbits & Hares,
For Beef they Moose, for Pork they have bears
And Saddles of Venison now an then. —

A Pung or two more brings up the rear,
With Green Spruce-boughs for brewing Beer,
Rosin of Hemlock & Hackmetack gum,
Balsam of Fir & sugar of Maple,
Lime, Shingles & Salts, (The Marlboro Stables)
Red-Ochre, Sal-Petre, & Butter-nutt physic
Ass mark-pills, a cure for the phthisic
And Candy-Black-Strap* too stubborn to run.

And now my Medley draws nigh a close,
A rasp on Fennicles, or coring of my Nose,
Shan't hinder my Toast,— I'll out with it here,
May Manufactures long abound
In this Mechanical Pidling Town,
And may those Sons whose Sires are dead!
Have as good means to get their Bread
As their have had for many Years. —

* - Black Strap — commonly called Wax. made by pouring Molasses on the snow, which pa
granulation. —

"The Marlboro Medley," 1787. Courtesy of the Vermont Folklife Archive, Middlebury, Vermont.

The Tune

"Black Joke" is an English dance jig that became popular in 1729 when featured in *The Beggar's Wedding: A New Opera*, staged that year in Dublin and in London.[9] It's hard to imagine this song being written without the distinctive 6/8 meter of the tune in mind. The dactyl, a poet's metrical foot of long-short-short, drives these lyrics; a horse's canter is a three-beat gait. Although peddlers' horses would not be cantering, the jig jogs along, mimicking the rhythms of a peddler's rig over rough roads.

Greenleaf's citation of the tune reminds us that popular music surely fueled workday spirits in the forest, field, and mill. By unknown paths, tunes and lyrics crossed an ocean and migrated from urban to rural areas, acquiring variations in melodies and words. Finding old lyrics with their tune identified on the sheet is striking historic gold.

The Goods, *both curious & common*

(Readers, please note: goods and phrases from the song lyrics—such as *both curious & common*—are set in italics in this text.)

A peddler or *pedlar*—a chapman, packman, cheapjack, hawker, higler, huckster, monger, colporteur, *merchant*—is a door-to-door, travelling vendor of goods. The venerable tradition of the Yankee Peddler was foundational to New England colonial economies (as it was also in Britain) and spread westward with the growing nation through the late nineteenth century, when it was phased out by railroads and modern commerce.[10] *Their Budgets* refers to their inventory. The song does not tell us how many peddlers from Marlboro were making the rounds, how far afield they traveled, how long their season, where these many types of goods came from or who fashioned them. The picture painted by these lyrics seems mighty grand for this small though industrious town.

According to the song, barter was customary. In 1787, when Greenleaf wrote of *the Baskets & the Rakes Enough to supply the Thirteen States*, Vermont was not yet a state in the union and answered to no higher governmental authority for its financial dealings.[11] There was no banking in Vermont at the time, coinage was short, and paper currency issued elsewhere was not stable.[12] However, *corn* (in the English sense referring to any grain) was substantive; private stores were replenished with each successful harvest. Hence: *Barter is legal when trading for grain.* Some debts were paid in lumber. Noncash transactions were the norm.

Some terms in the lyrics have dropped out of common usage. The word *wherry* usually describes a flat-bottomed cargo boat or barge, but also refers to a cargo wagon with flat sides set on wheels. A *Pung,* a

sleigh or sled on runners, is more efficient than wheels in snow, especially where roads are not established.[13] A *wimble* is an augur, a hand-cranked tool for boring into wood, used for tapping sugar maples.[14] A *Noggin*, slang for the human head, is a handled drinking cup carved from wood. A *Swift* is an adjustable reel for holding a skein of silk or wool.[15] *Shives* are the woody parts removed when processing fiber or grain. *Poaks* may refer to sacks ("a pig in a poke"). A *Pipkin* is a small earthenware or metal pot for simmering sauces and melting butter. *Keelers* are broad shallow tubs for washing. *Pudding-sticks* are for stirring thick mixtures, with a wide oval blade on a long, narrow handle. A *saddle tree* is the flexing wood frame that supports and shapes a saddle's leather. *Wickopee* is an Abenaki term[16] for "tying bark here."[17]

Marlboro's first industry was in timber and its by-products, yielding many of the goods cited in this song. *Iron-wood* refers to any hardwood, and also to a particular tree whose dense and resilient wood makes it ideal for tool handles and longbows. *Balsam of fir*, resin extracted from the tree's bark, has long had medicinal value.[18] *Sugar of maple*, reduced from tree sap, endures as a primary and beloved industry in the state. *Rosin of hemlock* is tarry pitch. *Hackmatack* comes from an Abenaki word for 'wood used for snowshoes.' It's tamarack, a larch tree; the gum made from the tree's sap is chewed for relief from indigestion. *Braided bark mittens* must have been devised by necessity, a rare but not enduring invention. "The extract obtained from the bark of the *butternut*. . . is a very good cathartic."[19]

Herbal medicines were a big part of the peddling trade. Some plants were known from the old world; others, not. Knowledge of western herbals must have been shared by natives to newcomers, elsewhere, earlier. Nearly all the herbals mentioned in the eighth stanza are native to North America; "cohosh," used by Native Americans and later by European herbologists and midwives to treat 'female disorders' and to induce labor, is an Algonquian word meaning "rough."[20] Two exceptions to New World plants are Elecampane (*Ellecampane*),[21] found across Eurasia, and *modest Wild Piony*, not native in the western hemisphere but brought here in early years of colonization.[22] Was it joking or true that wild peony is both *The Root for Consumption & mending old China*?

The ninth stanza alludes to a memorably hard year *in early settling* of short provisions, and offers some dubious medical lore in the subjunctive: *had the smallpox. . . . passed through the Town. . . . it could not have touched such dioted Men . . . Disease disappointed must sneak from the place.* In 1777, when Marlboro had forty families, the black

fever took more than twenty lives within weeks.[23] Disease was, like starvation, a serious threat.

Marlboro's waterways yielded quantities of *trout* (*"most exelent fishes"*) for some decades before their abundance was fished out. The tenth stanza names all sorts of wild game. The song suggests that these comestibles were marketed by peddlers.

Marlboro Merchants [24]

The town of Marlboro [25] is located in Windham County (previously contested as part of Cumberland County, New York, and, before that, of the New Hampshire Grants), eleven miles west of Brattleboro, which was a gateway for shipping goods on the Connecticut River. Its terrain of six by six miles was surveyed into sixty-four equal parcels, or "rights," just twenty-five years before this song was written. Until roads were cleared, cross-country navigation was guided by marked trees. In the spring of 1763, Marlboro's first two English families, the Stockwells and the Whitmores, arrived in its wilderness.[26]

Newton's town history relates that "(t)he inhabitants of Marlborough have been and still are principally farmers and mechanics."[27] The song implies that this little town was particularly notable for its peddling strength and, by inference, its ingenuity. Many townspeople grew, raised, and produced provisions and equipment for their own use, and also vended or bartered goods for income. The *merchants* in our song may not have been known by their neighbors primarily as peddlers, but as men who augmented their farming with industry and trade. Others bartered for provisions essential to their own enterprise. *Each Pedlar hath his different ware.*

Here is my attempt to reassemble in part a contextual record of those who contributed to Marlboro's peddling community over its early decades. Much historic information was collected only years later by Ephraim Newton and others, with the best intentions but relying on incomplete data and selective memories. Among the many residents who produced or hawked goods were:

The Stockwell family[28]—Abel, his wife Sarah, with their sons Abel Jr. and Perez—came from West Springfield, Massachusetts, and settled just beyond the Brattleboro border, where the road would later come through; Abel established a tavern. He would have relied upon *Cann's to make grog in*, *Taps & fassets* (faucets), and *Green Spruce-boughs*, among other goods for brewing beer and running a tavern. The Stockwells were no longer in town when our song was written.[29]

Francis and Elizabeth Hale Whitmore, with their young daughter Philene,[30] arrived from Connecticut into the Marlboro woods with a

pair of oxen, a horse, and possibly a cow. According to family legend they travelled on foot with no vehicle.[31] Francis Whitmore is identified in Newton's history as a tinker—strictly defined as a mender of pots and pans, but generally a peddler with various talents—and therefore was an itinerant tradesman. He anchors my reconstruction of this peddling community, which must have grown rapidly to inspire our song.[32]

Elizabeth Hale Whitmore was a skilled midwife and nurse. By family accounts she brought to Vermont her birthing chair, essential equipment for a midwife.[33] Back in Connecticut, she had learned about medicinal plants, according to family legend, from a visitor who "had traveled extensively in the Orient and had a considerable amount of eastern medical knowledge." She also had a second cousin who practiced medicine and surgery in Connecticut.[34] For some years Elizabeth was the only medical practitioner in town. She would have been a local expert on *Botanicals* peddled a quarter century later.[35]

William Williams[36] arrived in 1769 with his family from Northboro, Massachusetts. He built the town's first sawmill—prior to that time, any construction was in unmilled or hand-trimmed logs—and with milled lumber built the town's first barn and his own substantial frame house, which still stands today (expanded) as the Colonel Williams Inn.[37]

Brothers Nathaniel and Samuel (Jr.) Whitney, encouraged by Williams to visit Marlboro in 1769, returned the next year to purchase land from Charles Phelps (see below) and build their first homes before bringing wives to live in them. The Whitney brothers were famed for their skills at hunting, trapping, and angling, and known for adventures in tracking bears. While the song describes ice *fishing* and alludes to *hunting* in general, it implicitly references the local legends of these brothers.

Nathaniel[38] made *Chairs* "plain and fancy"[39] for many years with his son Solomon (b.1781). Did they peddle those chairs themselves? Samuel Whitney (Jr.),[40] ten years Nathaniel's senior, was issued a license for a public house in 1772 and ran a "farm and tavern stand" through his life. Samuel, like Abel Stockwell, would have needed equipment and supplies for brewing beer.

Other Whitney brothers arrived.[41] Jonas ["Deacon"] Whitney built and became innkeeper of the Whetstone Inn, a substantial framed five-bay building, with two chimneys and central Palladian window, which still stands and operates as an inn. A building of this size and style indicates that the town of Marlboro had acquired not only resources but also cultural sophistication. Jonas's tavern was down the hill from the Congregational Church, where he was elected a deacon in 1775. Reminiscences describe the routines of Sunday churchgoers at midday: Men

retired to the tavern to drink mugs of toddy and debate the morning's sermon; women and children retired to the minister's home with their lunches for conversation with his wife. Then all returned to church for the afternoon service.[42]

Joseph Winchester,[43] a cooper**,** arrived from Grafton, Massachusetts, in 1773. He built barrels to hold all sorts of goods, dry or liquid, as well as wooden *Pails, Tubs,* and *Keelers*.

Timothy Mather Jr.[44] arrived in 1773 at age sixteen to build the house where he settled with his family in 1774, and started up his longstanding business as a tanner, currier, and shoemaker. He and his brother Phinehas,[45] industrious young men, obtained rights to cut a sluice-gated canal for some distance from a local pond to an elevation drop on their land, establishing the best mill site in town. "Here at successive periods they erected a saw mill, grist mill, clothiers' works, and a carding machine, and it became a central point of business known as 'Mathers' Mills.'" [46] Supplies for or from Timothy's tannery could have included *Shoemakers Lasts & Peg-awls*, *Saddle-tree-woods*, *Shoe-make*[rs] *spools*, *Lime*, and *Red-ochre.* Other items in the song relate to the work of clothiers and fiber carders.

David Miller,[47] a blacksmith, came from West Springfield, Massachusetts, with his wife Anna in March 1779. He shoed horses, an essential service for peddlers; he may also have made *Jack-knives & Hatchets* and shaped plows or tempered blades for scythes and sickles—large tools not mentioned in the song but essential for farmers, perhaps custom ordered rather than peddled.

Isaiah Smith,[48] a carpenter and joiner as well as a farmer, arrived from near Granville, Massachusetts, with his wife Susannah in or around 1780.

Daniel Higley[49] relocated with his family in 1782 from Simsbury, Connecticut. He "was esteemed for his virtuous, industrious, habits as a pioneer in clearing his new farm, and in the occupation of a farmer, tanner, and turner of wooden ware."[50] Turned woodenware includes items such as *spindles* and *wooden dishes.*

Charles Phelps[51] was neither merchant nor tradesman, although he had been a bricklayer before turning lawyer. He may have been Marlboro's most conspicuous consumer, and he was a town founder who drew considerable attention well beyond its borders. Much has been written about him.[52] Phelps left Hadley, Massachusetts, in 1764 and settled onto his estate in Marlboro, where he built and lived in, but never quite completed, a massive log house intended to evolve into a college—one of his many ambitions that were not realized. The song item that brings Charles Phelps to mind is *fine Bobbin-lace.* In 1787 he

was seventy years old, bitter and broken. But his second wife, Austis Kneeland Phelps,[53] was still a fairly young woman for whom lace may have been a nice gift.

*

Marlboro grew. Town meetings were held, officers appointed, its first church (Congregational) was founded, its first pastor recruited. Men fought at Bennington and participated in statehood deliberations. Schools were instituted. Its population in 1790 was 629 and would peak at around 1,300 by the 1820s. The town became a stepping stone for many, as the west opened up and new frontiers offered fresh opportunities. In some respects, the waning vigor of Marlboro paralleled that of the itinerant peddler. Nevertheless, Marlboro has survived, still rural and largely forested.

Marlboro's First Historian

The pivotal figure in this article, generations younger than the earliest settlers, is Ephraim Holland Newton,[54] author of *The History of the Town of Marlborough, Windham County, Vermont* (see note 2). He was born in Newfane, the shire town north of Marlboro, the year that our song was written. His father was a Newfane blacksmith and a trader, who would return from trips to Boston with books for his children. Ephraim pursued all educational opportunities afforded him, taught school briefly in Marlboro before earning a degree in theology, and returned in 1814 to serve as Marlboro's second pastor of its Congregational Church, an institution central to town life.[55] He was not only pastor but also town clerk for several years, involved in many aspects of the community, and was perhaps the most influential person in Marlboro for two decades before moving on to positions elsewhere. According to Hemenway (whose text was largely but not entirely derived from Newton's own records), "He was always an active laborer in the cause of education, a devotee to natural science, and earnest in his endeavor to win men to godliness."[56]

Newton kept extensive notes on town history, gathered over many years, and returned to Marlboro in his retirement to complete his manuscript; it would not be published in its entirety until 1930, long after his death in 1864. His compilation of genealogies is mostly of births, marriages, and deaths, often without any details; sometimes there are no dates for a family at all. But he was as precise as limited information allowed, stating tangled relationships as clearly as possible. His recollections gleaned from many dozens of families comprise an invaluable historical record spanning nearly a century.[57]

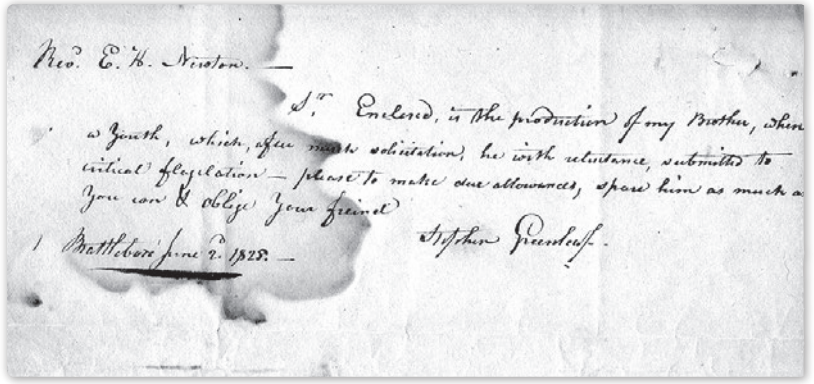
The Brattleboro Connection[58]

Back to the song's journey and its mysteries. Who was its author?

"Maj." Stephen Greenleaf, Jr., who sent his brother's lyrics to Newton, was a carpenter and wheelwright, Brattleboro's town clerk for forty-five years, and a leading citizen of that town.[59] His father, Stephen Greenleaf Sr., an early but not founding settler in Brattleboro, brought his family in the autumn of 1771 from Boston, where he had been an importing merchant.[60] Stephen Jr. was an avid reader, adept at math, and largely self-taught, although he had the benefit of attending the North School in Boston before moving at age twelve to Brattleboro,[61] where public schools were not established until 1782.[62] He was known for his clear penmanship and for his "quiet humor."[63]

In 1825, Stephen Jr. sent the sheets of lyrics for "The Marlboro Medley" to Ephraim Newton with this cover note:

> Sr. Enclosed, is the production of my Brother, when a Youth, which after much solicitation, he with reluctance, submitted to critical flagelation — please to make due allowances, spare him as much as you can & oblige your friend
>
> Stephen Greenleaf
>
> Brattleboro June 2. 1825 [64]


Rev. E. H. Newton. —

Sr. Enclosed, is the production of my Brother, when a Youth, which, after much solicitation, he with reluctance, submitted to critical flagelation — please to make due allowances, spare him as much as you can & oblige your friend

Brattleboro June 2. 1825. —

Stephen Greenleaf.

Courtesy of the Vermont Folklife Archive, Middlebury, Vermont

The lyrics sheets and the cover note appear to display the same fine, even hand of Stephen Greenleaf. Were the stanzas written on these sheets back in 1787, as noted on the page corner, or were the lines recopied onto these sheets in 1825 to be given to Newton? Did Stephen write down the original for his brother? Did he transcribe the sheets we see from his brother's earlier original?[65]

Most tantalizing: The cover note does not identify which brother of Stephen's was the author. What did Stephen mean when he wrote to Newton of "critical flagelation"? "Please to make due allowances"? "Spare him" from what? Stephen's note conveys that his brother was somehow to be sheltered. A savant? A misfit? An aging man distant from the bright young composer of these lines? A deeply modest or shy person? Was the song a collaboration of siblings? The note suggests a humility in both brothers. Stephen Greenleaf was nearly thirty years older than Newton; they were neighboring town clerks. Is "your friend" a courtesy closing or did it reflect true friendship?

Stephen was the eldest of several brothers. Although I've found no trace of other writing by Daniel, second son of Stephen Sr., I believe that he wrote our song at the age of twenty-three.[66] According to a relative, Daniel "had a talent for writing verses."[67]

Daniel came as a child of seven to Brattleboro, a town with no public school. He was not of age to fight in one war and too old for the next one, so had no military record or title. He was named as a head of family in the 1790 census. His wife was Hulda Hopkins; their first son Jeremiah was born in Brattleboro in 1791. Eight years later Daniel purchased a small plot on either side of the highway in Guilford, the then larger town south of Brattleboro, where his blacksmith shop would be registered.[68] His son described Daniel as over six feet tall and strong (characteristic of all the Greenleaf men). It seems that he had a gift for rhymes that was never acknowledged widely in his lifetime, or at least in documents available to us.

Daniel's son Jeremiah[69] became an acclaimed wordsmith, teacher, and publisher. Jeremiah's *Grammar Simplified, an Ocular Analysis of the English Language* was first published in 1819.[70] His *Self-Taught Latinist* was published in 1825;[71] his *Labor Saving Grammar* came out in 1855.[72] Jeremiah is also noted as a cartographer. In 1840 he published his *New Universal Atlas*.[73] He contributed demonstrably to his family's mostly unrecorded pursuit of knowledge. Did he get his love of learning from his father, Daniel? From his Uncle Stephen? From his mother, Hulda Hopkins, of whom we know nothing? From public schooling?

Whether or not Daniel Greenleaf is its author, this well-crafted poem manifests an early familial legacy of astute writing rooted in Brattleboro. Many writers, some famous, have lived or stopped there over time. The town has been a center for writing, papermaking, printing, and publishing for over two hundred years, but extant records of the eighteenth century are sketchy.[74]

The Art of This Song

"Their Budgets consist of variety" describes the Medley itself. The narrator identifies all sorts of useful and pleasing goods and then toasts their merchants. The song has integrity. Every word counts. Poetry of the time tended to be florid and contrived; these lyrics are spare and straightforward. The rhyme scheme (AA B CC DD B) is dictated by the tune; the many crambos, or near rhymes, may irk a critical listener but allow the language to flow naturally. Clever internal rhymes help to drive the verses along; alliteration and repetition abound. A witty shuffle in stanza 4 requires us to connect the parts on the fly: *Lo Hog-yoaks* and *Goose-Yoaks* will *hamper Your piggs* and *Your Geese,* whereas *Taps & fassets* are used to *draw beer.*

Behind this playful facility with words was a sensitive poet who recognized the value of *gratify*ing the isolated homemaker needing tools and supplies to keep her household going. Women clothed and fed their families from scratch, tended fires, did the milking and made cheese, cared for their sick, and managed countless other tasks; they depended on many things cited in these lyrics. The song can be read as much a tribute to women's unrecorded labors as well as to the men who sold them the goods.

*

Many questions remain, for which the song does not yield clues. Can we assume that Daniel Greenleaf authored the song? Is the voice of its narrator actually his own? How were the Greenleafs of Brattleboro engaged with the peddling trade from Marlboro? Was the song written for an occasion, an event celebrating local enterprise,[75] in tribute to unnamed persons reflected in the final toast, or perhaps as amusement for a family circle? What kept this poem alive in memory for Stephen Jr. to offer it to Newton forty years after it was written—was he, for unknown reason, going through his brother's papers in 1825? Was Marlboro's peddling community in 1787 as robust as the song suggests?

Despite the gaps in what can be known, "The Marlboro Medley" is a singular record of a place and time, engaging the imagination and drawing admiration. It applauds a kind of prosperity that was possible in this northern corner of the emerging west where, like frontiers anywhere, success depended on the resources of determined, energetic people and of the land itself. Sing on!

Notes

[1] "Roger Renwick suggests that a third traditional song genre, besides ballads and lyric songs, is the catalog song. I focus on catalog songs in a pure form, here termed list songs, where the number of items is maximized, the exposition on each is minimized, and their presentation is in no natural order. . . If ballads and lyric songs appeal to the emotions, many list songs are for the imagination." (Barry O'Neill, "The Art of List Songs," Traditional Song Forum Online Meeting 58, November 19, 2023, (Barry O'Neill, "The Art of List Songs," Traditional Song Forum Online Meeting 58, November 19, 2023: https://www.youtube.com/@traditionalsongforum/ videos, site last consulted February 1, 2024.)

I thank O'Neill for introducing me to this song some years ago, and for his insights shared over time about its content, structure, and associations.

My illustrated presentation on "The Marlboro Medley," given for the TSF Online Meeting 56 on September 3, 2023, can also be found at the site link above.

[2] Ephraim H[olland] Newton, *The History of the Town of Marlborough, Windham County, Vermont* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1930) is the primary reference for Marlboro's first century. Much of the data on Marlboro residents found in this article, and in other earlier publications that repeated Newton's words verbatim (e.g., Hemenway, Thompson, Child*), rests on his compilation of first-hand reports and of family or community lore. My intent is to put forward reliable information and to identify legend as legend, with appreciation for Newton's extensive and dedicated investigation and his contribution to history.

*Abby Maria Hemenway: *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer,* vol. 5, part 2 (Brandon, VT: Carrie E. H. Page, 1891), 441-53. See footnote 56.

Zadock Thompson, *A Gazetteer of the State of Vermont* (Montpelier, VT: E. P. Walton, Printer, 1824).

Hamilton Child: *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windham County* (Syracuse, NY: The Journal Office, 1884).

[3] Margaret MacArthur (b. May 7, 1928, Chicago, IL; d. May 23, 2006, Marlboro, VT). See: Nora Rodes, "A Place to Be: Margaret MacArthur's Gift to Vermont Traditional Music," *Country Dance and Song Society News* (Winter 2019): 18-19.

[4] Helen Hartness Flanders (b. May 19, 1890, Springfield, VT; d. May 23, 1972, Springfield, VT). The Helen Hartness Flanders Ballad Collection is held at the Davis Family Library, Middlebury College.

[5] Helen Hartness Flanders, *Country Songs of Vermont* (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1937).

[6] *Folksongs of Vermont Sung by Margaret MacArthur* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways Records FH 5314, 1962); *Margaret MacArthur: Vermont Ballads & Broadsides* (Marlboro, VT: Whetstone Records 01, 1989).

[7] *Green Mountain Whittlin's* (Burlington, VT: Green Mountain Folklore Society, 1975), 27: 63-67.

[8] Footnote written on the song sheet:

**Black Strap — commonly called W__* [Wip?] *made by pouring hot molasses on the snow, which prevents*[?] *granulation.*

[9] Various lyrics have attached to this tune over time. Its title was a vulgar term that has nothing to do with this song. A bawdy version of "Black Joke" was referenced visually and verbally in Plate 3, "The Tavern Scene," of William Hogarth's series *A Rake's Progress* (engraving, c. 1735). *See*: https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Black_Joke_(1)_, site last consulted January 13, 2024.

[10] This song is all the more significant as a cultural artifact because it reflects activities not captured in visual media at the time. The era for depicting such labor visually in America would be in the next century, when peddling, like so many aspects of American life, was viewed with nostalgia. A later oil painting that exemplifies sentiment for the peddling trade is *The Yankee Pedlar* (1872) by Thomas Waterman Wood (b. 1823, Montpelier, VT; d. 1903, New York, NY), now held by the Terra Foundation for American Art (1998.3). "In an era of evolving, complex economic relations and competitive commercialism, *The Yankee Peddler* personified ideals of thrift, hard work, and plain dealing associated with a simpler time and a vanishing way of life." (Multiple contributors: *Conversations with the Collection, A Terra Foundation Collection Handbook,* https://conversations.terraamericanart.org/artworks/the-yankee-pedlar/), site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[11] Vermont became the fourteenth state in the U.S.A. in 1791. Although it had been ceded to the States when the Canadian-American border was drawn in 1783, Vermont was formally neither a state of the United States of America nor in the British Empire; both had vied for its allegiance, its territory and resources, and its strategic location adjacent to Canada. See: Edward Brynn, "Vermont and the British Emporium," *Vermont History* 45 (Winter 1977): 13-18.

[12] In January 1787, the year of this song, Marlboro town leaders voted unanimously that the freemen (statewide?) not establish a Bank of Paper Money. (Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 93).

[13] Ice fishing, *Pungs, Snow-shoes, Braided-bark mittens*: peddling seems to have been practiced year-round, including the farmers' off-season after the harvest was in.

[14] Related to *wimble*? "The Whummil Bore" (Child Ballad #27 in Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1882; Roud Folk Song Index #3722, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, Cecil Sharp House, Camden, London) refers to a hole made in wood by a gimlet or drilling tool, through which the narrator of that enigmatic song peeked to see the king's daughter being dressed.

[15] The term *swift* also describes a cooper's tool; see illustration in John Seymour, *The Forgotten Arts & Crafts* (New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2001), 96. This book is a generous introduction to the ingenuities of country living and is a joy to peruse.

[16] Abenaki terms are mentioned in this paper. Southern Vermont is ancestral home of the Sokoki, an Abenaki tribe of the Algonquin peoples. Although settlers feared raids, I found no record for Marlboro of any direct contact with native peoples, who had been migrating northward for some time. There is scant physical evidence of the long Abenaki presence other than petroglyphs in possibly sacred locations that have puzzled later viewers, but vestiges of language linger. See Colin G. Calloway, "Green Mountain Diaspora: Indian Population Movements in Vermont, c. 1600-1800*," Vermont History* 54, no. 4 (Fall 1986): 197-228.

[17] Kate Phillips, Vermont Historical Society, email message to author, July 28, 2023.

"Wicopy" is a name for leatherwood (*Dirca palustris)*, a deciduous shrub, and also for certain willows with flexible bark. The song indicates that *Wickopy stay-tape* was used for lacing corsets ("*stays*"). Today the term "stay tape," a sewing *notion*, is a cloth tape that is sewn into seams of knitted fabric to prevent stretching.

Other spellings: "Wicopee Hill" appears on a late nineteenth-century map of Marlboro (just east of North Pond), and there is mention of "Wickopee" in nearby Dummerston. "Wiccopee*"* refers to an Algonquin tribe that is identified historically with Fishkill, Dutchess County, New York.

[18] "The balsam obtained from the bark of the fir tree, *pinus balsamea*, which abounds on our mountains, possesses healing virtues, which, we believe, have not been duly appreciated by physicians generally, in this part of the country. " Zadock Thompson, *Gazetteer*, 27.

[19] Ibid. (butternut: *juglans cinerea*)

[20] Native to North America:

Blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides)*-
Wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis)*
Green petty morel, a common name for several plants
Purple anjelica *(Angelica atropurpurea)*
(Black) Snake root, *a.k.a*. Black Cohosh *(Cimicifuga racemosa* or *Actaea racemosa)*
(American) ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius)*
Poke root (*Phytolacca americana*), though toxic, was a folk medicine used in poultices for skin diseases and rheumatism.
Blood root (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

Abundant and disparate information on these medicinal plants can be found from a wide range of proclaimed authorities.

[21] Elecampane (*Inula helenium)*, a.k.a. horse-heal and elfdock, is native to Eurasia and is apparently good for respiration and digestion. It was known in antiquity, and appears in English Mummers' plays to revive the dead.

[22] Zadock Thompson indicates that *Paeonia officina* (common name: Peony) was used medicinally. (Thompson, *Gazetteer*, 23).

Dr. Samuel Stearns, *The American Herbal, or material medica* (Walpole, NH[?]: Printed by David Carlisle, for Thomas & Thomas, and the Author, 1801) includes a listing for Peony (*Paenia).* He identified uses for its seeds and roots, but also stated that he did not find them beneficial in his

own practice. "I believe they are now justly expunged from the London Pharmacopoeia" (Stearns, 260). Peony, already widely known in England, was brought to North America in earlier days.

For more on Stearns, see footnote 60.

Perhaps "*modest Wild Piony"* is a different plant altogether.

[23] "Black fever" is now thought to have been akin to Rocky Mountain spotted fever, which was not identified as such until the late nineteenth century. There was, of course, no definitive diagnosis at the time.

[24] Setting this scene are the opening pages of Ralph W. Putnam, "Vermont's Part in Industry," *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society* 8 (December 1940): 357-373.

[25] The town was first chartered as New Marlborough in 1751 and again, when wars subsided, in 1761, and a third time in 1764. "New" was soon dropped. At some time "borough" became "boro."

[26] The Stockwells, from the east, and the Whitmores, from the south, arrived within days of each other and settled a few miles apart. According to local lore, each was unaware of the other family's presence for several months; Abel and Francis met by happenstance while out hunting.

[27] Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 59.

[28] The four Stockwells arriving in 1763 were:

Abel Pritchard Stockwell Sr. (b. September 23, 1710, Suffield, Hartford County, CT; d. September 7, 1777, Marlboro, VT); Sarah Selden Stockwell (b. June [or July?] 29, 1709, Hadley, MA; d. January 9, 1785, Marlboro, VT); "Deacon" Abel Stockwell Jr. (b. March 24, 1744, West Springfield, MA; d. November 11, 1805, Chesterfield, NH); Perez Stockwell (b. 1747, Springfield, MA; d. 1777, Marlboro, VT).

Within a few years, both sons married. According to Newton, the first child born in town was Aaron, son of Abel Jr. and Patience (*née* Thomas), on July 9, 1768; Perez and his wife Dinah (*née* Fay) married in 1771 and had four sons. In 1777, the black fever took Abel Sr., his son Perez, and one or two of Perez's four young sons; Abel Jr., who had twelve children born between 1768 and 1790, also lost daughters Sarah and Patience that year.

[29] The Stockwells' absence in Newton's time may account for the paucity of details and stories of this family. They were essential to town history but did not provide much to its record of commerce.

[30] The three Whitmores arriving in 1763 were; Francis Whitmore (b. January 17, 1727, Middletown, CT; d. May 31, 1790, Marlboro, VT); Elizabeth Hale Whitmore (b. January 29, 1729, Middletown, CT; d. May 24, 1814, Brattleboro, VT).

Philene Whitmore (b. November 8, 1755, Wallingford Township, CT; d. February 14, 1817, Brattleboro, VT).

Their second daughter, Sabra (or Saborah), reputedly the first female child born in Marlboro, was born July 11, 1769 and died in 1821 in Brattleboro.

[31] The family history by Whitmore descendant Priscilla Smith Botti in her paper "Elizabeth Whitmore: Midwife of Marlboro," *Vermont History* 39 (Spring 1971): 98-100 does not always agree with other sources. According to Botti, the cattle (oxen and perhaps a cow) were acquired en route in Halifax, so not in the party from Connecticut. Were the Whitmores able to carry, on their backs and that of their horse, the belongings and supplies needed to set up a household from scratch, as well as a tinker's tools? In the absence of firm records, this author prefers to envision that Francis had a trade wagon, a vehicle that brought family possessions from Connecticut (and that they may have walked alongside) and on which they would have lived while building first shelter in the forest. Perhaps new findings will correct or confirm this hunch.

[32] Francis Whitmore served the town well as one of its founders. He was appointed captain of Marlboro's first militia, served as moderator of some town meetings, and was a delegate to Vermont's first general assemblies, 1776 in Dorset and 1777 in Windsor.

[33]Botti, "Elizabeth Whitmore: Midwife," 99.

[34]*https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/38356395/elizabeth-whitmore* (entry authored by Sabra's 5th great granddaughter [Elizabeth's 6th], unnamed on this website), site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[35] Elizabeth Whitmore was legendary, sustaining the family homestead through hard winters while Francis made his tinker's distant rounds. Stories relate Elizabeth trekking for miles on *snowshoes* to reach neighbors. She epitomized the profile of hearty pioneering stock.

Several sources repeat that Elizabeth Whitmore as midwife oversaw some 2,000 births; this seems unlikely. Botti wrote: "Spring brought more settlers to the Marlboro area and many of the women

were pregnant. In those first few years in the Vermont wilderness it was Elizabeth's profession of midwifery which financially sustained the Whitmores" (99). By contrast, Newton, gleaning records and recollections of town residents decades later, claimed that the first baby born in town was Aaron Stockwell in 1768, the second was Elizabeth's daughter Sabra in 1769, and the third was Luther Winchester, in 1774. Actual births in town were largely unrecorded. See: John W. King and Caroline R. King. "Early Women Physicians in Vermont" in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 25 (September-October, 1951): 429.

[36] (Col.) William Williams (b. 17-- ?, Massachusetts; d. 1823, Lower Canada). He was "thought to be as active and useful in the settlement of the town as any other man of his day," (Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 36). He encouraged the Whitney brothers and others to settle in Marlboro. He also brought from Northboro a family friend, Dinah Fay, who would marry Perez Stockwell. Williams led a regiment at the Battle of Bennington. By 1777 he had moved on to Wilmington, VT.

[37] Find an unauthored description of the Georgian Colonial house that Williams built on page 5 of "The Colonial Williams Inn c. 1769: A Short History," *"https://www.thecolonelwilliamsinn.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ColWilliamsInnHistory.pdf,* site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[38] (Capt.) Nathaniel Whitney (b. May 30, 1749, Shrewsbury, MA; d. June 6(?J, 1829, Marlboro, VT) and his wife Mary Houghton (b. 1751, Lancaster, MA) married in Lancaster in 1770 and bore thirteen children, twelve in Marlboro. Their daughter Rhoda was born the year of our song. He fought at the Battle of Bennington.

[39] Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 58.

[40] Samuel Whitney (b. September 23, 1739, Weston, MA; d. February 1, 1811, Marlboro, VT) brought his wife (*née* Phebe Harrington; married 1762) and four children from Shrewsbury in 1772; that year he was licensed to run a tavern. Newton described him as "enterprising, laborious, and persevering, bold, resolute, and fearless, bravely surmounting the trials of a pioneer". (Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 261).

[41] ("Deacon") Jonas Whitney (b. June 14, 1751, Shrewsbury, MA; d. 28 April 28, 1842, Strongsville, OH) moved to Marlboro after marrying Tamar Houghton (b. 1754, Lancaster, MA; sister of Nathaniel's wife Mary) in Shrewsbury, MA in 1773. Town meetings were held at Jonas's home (the inn?). Jonas served as town treasurer in 1785 and 1786. Eliphalet Whitney (b. May 4, 1757 Shrewsbury, MA; d. September 10, 1832, Morristown, VT) married a third Houghton sister, Lois. He acquired land in Marlboro from his brother Nathaniel. His occupation is not specified, so presumably he was a farmer.

[42] "The Deacon [Jonas Whitney] kept the tavern down the hill in Marlboro, where the good fathers used to go on Sunday during the intermission between the morning and afternoon service. Clubs of four would call for a 'mug of toddy' to moisten their bread and cheese. The Deacon mixed it, for who could make such excellent tody [*sic*] as he? The large glass, holding a quart, two-thirds full of water, was well seasoned with loaf sugar, when it was filled up with 'old Jamaica rum,' and well mixed by an adept use of the 'toddy stick,' receiving its finishing touch with a sprinkling of grated nutmeg. The four drank out of the same glass, 'passing it around.' If there was more than they needed they passed it to others, for they were prudent and temperate in all things. A 'half mug' served for two, and it was seldom that anyone drank alone. As a rule, each one paid his share, the business of treating not being popular in the church. This harmless social habit is scouted now, though drunkenness at that time was almost unknown. If a young man got so far under the influence of strong drink as to lose the proper control of his limbs or his tongue, it brought a stigma upon him in the community, from which he rarely recovered." Robert L. Ward and the Whitney Research Group: Family: Whitney, Jonas. https://wiki.whitneygen.org/wrg/index.php?title=Family:Whitney,_Jonas_(1751-1842), site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[43] Joseph Winchester (b. 1830, Framingham, MA; d. December 29, 1803, Marlboro, VT) was attracted to Marlboro by the Whitney brothers. Active on the town committee, he was serving as town constable when this song was written.

[44] (Maj.) Timothy Mather (Jr.) (b. March 1, 1757 Suffield, CT; d. March 18, 1818, Marlboro, VT).

[45] (Lieut.) Phinehas Mather (b. Jan. 15, 1751, Suffield, CT; d. March 30, 1838, Marlboro, VT).

[46] Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 210.

[47] David Miller (b. March or April 10, 1736, Springfield, MA; d. May 7, 1808, Marlboro, VT).

[48] Isaiah Smith (b. ?, Granville, MA?; d. Sept. 30, 1815, Marlboro, VT). One of his several sons, Paul (an identical twin of Silas, both b. August 6, 1781), would also become a carpenter and joiner. Widowed early, Isaiah Smith married Austis Kneeland, widow of Charles Phelps, in 1790.

[49] (Lieut.) Daniel Higley (b. c.1736/1738, Simsbury, CT; d. March 15, 1812, Marlboro, VT) had been active in several military conflicts and earned his commission from the Connecticut militia. An extensive, warm, and speculative family reminiscence written by George T. Higley, Esq., of Ashland, MA, can be found at: https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Higley-438, site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[50] Newton, *History of Marlborough*, 183. Newton gives Daniel Higley's death date as April 23, 1812.

[51] Charles Phelps (b. August 1, 1717, Northampton, MA; d. April 17, 1789, Marlboro, VT).

[52] Phelps's opinions threatened Vermont's identity; he referred to it as a "pretended state" and persistently argued to seats of power against its independence. While lauded by some, he was reputed to be long-winded, devious, untrustworthy, pompous, and a sartorial peacock for public occasions though apparently slovenly at home. For a modern overview of Phelps, including family details from a descendant, see James Lincoln Huntington's paper, "The Honorable Charles Phelps," presented to the Colonial Society of Massachusetts meeting of February 1937, followed by "Remarks on Dr. Huntington's Paper" by George Pomeroy Anderson: https://www.colonialsociety.org/node/496, site last consulted January 8, 2024. See also: J. Kevin Graffagnino, "Vermonters Unmasked": Charles Phelps and the Patterns of Dissent in Revolutionary Vermont," *Vermont History* 57 (Summer 1989): 133-61.

[53] Austis Kneeland Phelps (b. ? Boston, MA?; d. September 22, 1813, Marlboro, VT), as a young widow, married Charles Phelps in Boston in 1778. Widowed a second time, in 1789, she married Isaiah Smith (see footnote 48), a Marlboro carpenter and joiner.

[54] See note 2. (Rev.) Ephraim Holland Newton (b. June 13, 1787, Newfane, VT; d. October 26, 1864, Coila [Cambridge], Washington County, NY**).**

[55] Newton's home, built in the town center in 1814, now houses the Marlboro Historical Society. In 1820 his congregation erected its landmark (and second) meeting house. The 1820 building burned in 1931 but soon afterwards was rebuilt to nearly its original dimensions, as it now stands.

[56] Hemenway, *Gazetteer*, 4:2, 449. Hemenway's compilations from other sources are irregular; she gives two consecutive entries on E. H. Newton (with and without "D.D."), as though for two different men (and both misspell Ephraim as Ephriam).

[57] Newton's entry for his own genealogical and biographical note is more thorough than others', recording his lineage and that of his wife (here, in part):

> "Newton, Ephraim-Holland, was the son of Marshall, of Newfane, who was the s. of Marshall, of Shrewsbury, Mass., who was the s. of Obadiah, b. 1702, who was the s. of Thomas b. 1674, who was the s. of John, b. Aug. 20, 1641, who was the s. of Richard and Anna, who came from England to America about the year 1635. He was a graduate of Middlebury College, 1810, and of the Andover Theological Seminary, 1813. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Haverhill Association, April 14, 1813, and was ordained the second pastor of the Congregational Church in this town, March 16, 1814. He m. Huldah, dau. of Maj. Gen. Timothy-F. Chipman, of Shoreham, Jan. 29, 1815, a descendant of John Howland, one of the Pilgrims of the Mayflower, who landed on Plymouth Rock, Dec. 22, 1620" (Newton, *History of Marlborough,* 222-23).

[58] "Brattleborough was at an early period a flourishing settlement, and prosperity has at all times subsequent characterized its condition." Benjamin H. Hall, *History of Eastern Vermont from Its Earliest Settlement to the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1858**),** 105.

[59] (Maj.) Stephen Greenleaf Jr. (b. January 31, 1759, Boston, MA; d. March 5, 1850, Brattleboro, VT). Two Greenleaf family genealogies, one issued soon after Stephen's death and the second four decades later, give glimpses of the man's work and character:

> "Mr. Greenleaf served for a short time in the war of the Revolution, having been drafted when at the age of 18, and was present at the surrender of Burgoyne. He was bred a carpenter and wheelwright, and many of the first buildings in Brattleboro were erected by his hands. In the year 1799 he was elected Town Clerk of Brattleboro', and was reelected to the office for forty-five years in succession, declining it but a few years previous to his death." *Jonathan Greenleaf, Genealogy of the Greenleaf Family* (New York: Edward O. Jenkins, 1854), 81.

> "Many of the first buildings in Brattleboro were erected by his hands. . . Mr. Greenleaf was a man of mild, benevolent, and charitable disposition; he was amiable and bland in his manners; courteous and accommodating to all; gentle and agreeable in his family; a pleasant neighbor, and an honest and upright man. In the social circle and the public gathering he was always ready with pleasantry and wit to contribute his full share of innocent amusement and pleasure. He was a true Christian, showing the strength and purity of his faith by his good works," James Edward Greenleaf*, Genealogy of the Greenleaf Family* (Boston: Frank Wood, Printer, 1896), 113.

[60] (Esq.) Stephen Greenleaf Sr. (b. October 15, 1735, Bolton, MA; d. June 8, 1802, Brattleboro, VT). In Brattleboro, he acquired land, established the town's first sawmill—sending lumber to Boston to settle debts there—and gristmill, was licensed to run a tavern, and is reported to have opened the first store in Vermont (which by all accounts was modest). He was appointed a justice of the peace in 1772, commissioned under the British province of New York, and served as the last town clerk under New York authority, from 1776 to 1783. See: James Edward Greenleaf*, Genealogy*, 93.

A possible connection to herbal medicinals listed in the song's eighth stanza is "the famous Dr. Stearns"—Samuel Stearns, noted for his almanacs among other things, who was an old friend of Stephen Greenleaf Sr. from their boyhood days in Bolton. Stearns had a home in Brattleboro and returned there briefly in mid-1787. He had started working on his *Medical Dispensary* (incomplete when he died in 1810), and his medical compendium *American Herbal* would be published in 1801. Might Greenleaf sons have engaged in discourse with their father's friend about medicinal plants when he was in town? Might this have crept into these lyrics?

[61] Writing schools in Boston provided sons of businessmen with basic skills in penmanship and math, to prepare them to follow in footsteps; Stephen Jr. acquired fundamentals in letters and numbers at North School, Boston, and continued to study and excel on his own. Beyond his carpentry skills, he became a math tutor and was appreciated for his handwriting, keeping legible records as town clerk for decades (1799-1844). Three autograph manuscripts by young Stephen Greenleaf ("Honour," 1768; "Vive la plume," 1769; and "Religion," undated) are housed in the Houghton Library, Harvard, in the collection "Specimens of penmanship from writing schools in Boston" and are available digitally online.

[62] See: Mary R. Cabot, *Annals of Brattleboro, 1681-1895* (Brattleboro, VT: E. L. Hildreth & Co., 1921), 161.

[63] An amusing ditty by Stephen Jr., "ON THE 6th MAY THE CITY KEPT FAST, 1781," can be found in: Cabot, *Annals,* 198-9.

[64] Margaret MacArthur's transcription published in *Green Mountain Whittlin's* states the year as 1828. The digit on the page resembles a 5 rather than an 8. One of us is correct.

[65] The manuscript displays the modern double S *(fassetts),* although the old long S slips in with *sarfaparilla*. (The "S" transition started in the late eighteenth century.) On the written pages, some words have been changed or corrected, with smudges beneath. They now read:

Stanza 2, line 3: *Pedlar*

Stanza 7, line 3: *every one says*

Stanza 7, line 8: *And Wickopy*

Stanza 7, line 8: *Stays*

When these changes were made, and why, are not known. See *Wicopy* in footnote 17, above.

[66] Daniel Greenleaf (b. January 16, 1764, Boston, MA; d. December 30, 1845, Guilford, VT). There are scant trails for the next brothers, Samuel (b. 1765) and James (b.1770)—nothing suggesting linguistic facility—and the following several brothers were too young to have written this accomplished poem in 1787. See: Jonathan Greenleaf, *A Genealogy* (1854), 82-84.

[67] Joe Rivers, Brattleboro Historical Society, email message to author, August 19, 2023.

[68] *Official History of Guilford, Vermont, 1678-1961* (Brattleboro: Vermont Printing Company, 1961), 354 and 128.

[69] (Lieut.) Jeremiah Greenleaf (b. December 7, 1791, Brattleboro, VT; d. April 4, 1864, Guilford, VT).

[70] Jeremiah Greenleaf, *Grammar Simplified, an Ocular Analysis of the English Language* (20th edition published in Brattleboro, VT: Holbrook and Fessenden, 1828). He exchanged correspondence regarding this book with Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. "It was acknowledged the best treatise ever produced on that subject" (Cabot, *Annals*, 199).

[71] Jeremiah Greenleaf, *The Self-Taught Latinist. or: Latin Made Easy, designed as a brief introduction to the Latin tongue, for the use of schools and for private learners* (Printed by D. Fanshaw for the author, 1825).

[72] Jeremiah Greenleaf: *The Labor Saving Grammar: Designed for Schools, Families and Private Learners* (4th edition Brattleboro, VT: O. H. Platt, 1855).

[73] *A New Universal Atlas; Comprising Separate Maps Of all the Principal Empires, Kingdoms & States Throughout the World: and forming a distinct Atlas Of The United States. Carefully Compiled from the best Authorities Extant by Jeremiah Greenleaf.* (Brattleboro, VT: G. R. French, 1840).

It's not evident that Jeremiah ever traveled beyond the eastern seaboard, but he made much from others' surveying, a common practice. "Many of his maps are reformatted versions of his contemporary David Burr's much admired cartographic works. Greenleaf's maps are extremely rare and admired for their stunningly vivid pastel color washes." Geographicus Rare Antique Maps, https://www.geographicus.com/P/ctgy&Category_Code=greenleaf, site last consulted January 8, 2024.

[74] This heritage is celebrated in the Brattleboro Words Project: *Print Town: Brattleboro's Legacy of Words* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2020).

[75] For example, John Godfrey Saxe wrote and read his poem, later set to music as "The Vermont Farmers Song," for a public sheep shearing at Hyde's Hotel in Sudbury around 1850.