

VOL. XXXV No. 1

Price 1 Dollar

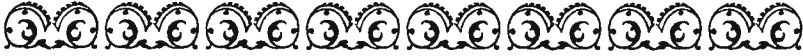
# VERMONT *History*



January 1967

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*The* PROCEEDINGS *of the*  
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Vermont's Early Lotteries

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**B**EGINNING in the year 1779 and ending in 1804, the State of Vermont authorized 42 lotteries. Often several years elapsed before the managers of any one of them either raised the money to which they were entitled or, after raising a part or even none of the authorized avails, decided to give up the struggle. Lacking evidence that the 1804 grant was ever implemented, it appears the last activity in any of Vermont's lotteries had halted by that year. And then, as year after year passed without any further authorizations by successive legislatures, it must have dawned upon most everyone at the time, contrary to the continuing flood of new grants elsewhere in the country, that in Vermont the lottery era had ended for good.

By 1825 a full score of years had come and gone since Vermont's last grant had been made. But then out of a clear sky several of the old lotteries startlingly rose from the ashes, the first of them appropriately renamed the *Phoenix Lottery*, and for the next several years they cumulatively offered more tickets for sale and held more drawings than in any equivalent earlier period in the State's history.

Vermont's early lotteries, including this totally unforeseen resurrection of several of the grants, cannot be appreciated by limiting ourselves to them alone. While they have numerous fascinating features, their combined relatively brief span commenced when the pristine period of American lotteries had begun to fade and it ended before the enormities in them had developed. To place Vermont's ventures in this field in the proper perspective, it is necessary to glance at the background of American lotteries in general.

Thirteen of Vermont's early lotteries through 1787 were authorized by legislative resolves, which were not printed at the time, and later, when the lotteries were authorized by acts, regarded as private acts, for some years only the titles were included in the printed session laws. The texts of most of the grants, then, cited below, have been taken from either (1) the printed *Journals and Proceedings of the General Assembly of Vermont*, issued in 4 volumes (or parts) of v. 3 of the *State Papers of Vermont*; or (2) the bound original manuscript acts in the State House. In my notes, the former source is identified as *J and P* and the latter as *Bound ms. acts*. Some other references are to the contemporaneously printed legislative journals and laws and to newspapers of the period, especially the *Vermont Journal* printed at Windsor and the *Vermont Gazette* at Bennington.

## I

Here and there in the American colonies, early in the 18th century, innumerable small lotteries including those termed raffles had sprung up like weeds in the garden to dispose of small real estate holdings or merchandise. As long as they remained small, the authorities generally looked the other way. But in 1744 a radically different kind of lottery was established on American soil. Late that year, for the first time, a lottery was *authorized* by an American colonial legislature. It was granted by Rhode Island to rebuild a bridge in the heart of Providence. Also, and of equal significance, this Rhode Island enterprise was a *cash* lottery, certainly the first American cash lottery to be run openly and of sufficient size to make a stir. It was also the first run for a public or institutional improvement rather than to fatten the purse of a private person. And it set in motion the stream of this commonest type of American lottery that flowed on for generations.

The grant was quickly followed by a much larger one, the *Massachusetts Government Lottery*, by an act passed in January 1744/45 (1745). This in turn had two firsts to its credit. (1) It beat the Rhode Island lottery to the drawing and thus became the first authorized American cash lottery to be completed. And (2) the beneficiary was a colonial government itself. Then followed the *New York Publick Lottery* authorized by an act passed in 1746, again for the direct benefit of a colonial public treasury.

If the Rhode Island affair had been regarded as an anomaly, it could hardly have been doubted that the advent of legal American cash lotteries had begun when the two influential colonies of Massachusetts and New York followed Rhode Island's lead. And if any doubt lingered, it must have evaporated when New York authorized its second lottery in December 1746, the first of a series to raise money to found King's College, the present Columbia, and when Connecticut in May 1747 authorized its first lottery, to help Yale.

Any figures concerning the total numbers of lotteries in the respective colonies and states must be handled most circumspectly. They should include not only those lotteries that received legislative authorization but hundreds of others run before authorizations were required, especially in colonial Maryland and Virginia. And also some scores of technically illegal lotteries should be included, which were virtually authorized by influential public opinion, as for instance two in Philadelphia launched by Benjamin Franklin. Any statistics, then, of practical significance should include all lotteries run aboveboard whether authorized or not. And of equal importance, it must never be forgotten that one huge lottery might be larger than dozens of others put together.

With these precautions kept in mind, then, of the grand total of about 2000 lotteries, the four top jurisdictions rank as follows: Maryland, 337 with possibly several others; Rhode Island, 233; Virginia, 208 with probably a few others (many issues of Virginia's early newspapers are missing); and Pennsylvania, 159. During the quarter century when Vermont's 42 were launched, and these were all authorized, its total was exceeded only by Rhode Island, Virginia, Connecticut and Maryland in that order, and to the contrary Vermont's total exceeded those of New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey or Pennsylvania along with many others.

Of the grand total, the largest category is those for religious purposes, adding up to close to 401. For reasons I feel sure are of no significance, none in this category were authorized by Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Road lotteries add up to 151, of which 10 were for Vermont, while city and town street lotteries total 86. There were 192 bridge lotteries with exactly half of Vermont's total in this category. River and canal—internal navigation lotteries come to 148 and those for coastal improvements to 46. Other categories include those for Masonic lodges, lighthouses and monuments, war expenses, general state revenue, libraries, domestic industries, health, schools and academies, colleges and those for the relief of deserving individuals. Some of Vermont's most interesting lotteries are in this last category.

Finally, among the most important, are the lotteries for public buildings including help toward erecting or improving 7 state houses, Federal Hall where Washington was first inaugurated and where the Congress under our present form of government first sat, and one of the two end buildings in the Independence Hall group of three.

It is important to emphasize the almost unanimous approval of lotteries during the colonial years and for some years thereafter. Many Americans have only the haziest notion of the widespread approval and use of this means of raising money in our early history. They are amazed and shocked to learn of the multitude of church lotteries and the frequent appeal of the managers to buy tickets to promote religion and morality and for the glory of God.

Of the so-called Ivy Group colleges, Cornell is the only one for whose benefit no lottery was ever launched, and the reason, of course, is that by the time it was founded in 1865, this method of raising money had long since sunk from its former high repute. In addition to the other seven, namely Brown, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania and Yale, other colleges (several yet on the preparatory school level) that benefited from lotteries include Dickinson, Hampden-Sydney, Rutgers, St. John's (at Annapolis), Union, the Uni-

versity of Delaware, the University of Maryland, Williams and William and Mary.

It so happens that a great preponderance of the men who took the most prominent parts in the events leading to the American Revolution, in the War itself, in the adoption of the Declaration, in the establishment of the Federal government under the Constitution, and in the early years of the state governments—at one time or another during their lives are known to have bought tickets, served as lottery managers or otherwise signified their approval. Immensely significant, contrasted to the hundreds of separate fragments indicating approval of one lottery or another by the Founding Fathers, hardly a trace exists of disapproval.

My objective in these remarks as to the high repute lotteries once enjoyed is not to prove they are “innocent,” as a minister of the Gospel termed one he wanted to run back in colonial days, but it is to dispel some of the hocus-pocus that has been spread concerning them in the last century and a half, as if they are intrinsically evil and always have led to poverty if not worse. If history is not to be sterile and embalmed, certainly a function of historical writing is not only to set the record straight but to keep it so, and since this nonsense concerning lotteries continues to the present day, at least one glaring recent example should be cited.

*The Old Farmer's Almanac* for 1966 contains a reprinted article<sup>1</sup> on New Hampshire's current lottery, doubtless seen by many readers of this quarterly, by a person identified as “Coordinator of Information of the U. S. House of Representatives.” The statement is made therein that “Throughout the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, every legal lottery in America foundered at last in corruption, grand larceny, or paralyzing political scandals.” This is a most sweeping condemnation admitting of not a single exception. But it is preposterous. As a matter of fact, hundreds of legal old American lotteries can be listed in which not a shadow of a trace exists of any corruption, larceny or scandal.

We are informed in the article that “As early as 1783 George Washington was moved to brand legalized gambling as ‘the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief.’” If the author's job was to coordinate information, why didn't he cite Washington's record concerning lotteries? Not a hint is given. Besides conducting the drawing of a lottery on one occasion and signing a batch of tickets on another, many times Washington bought tickets as private speculations or to help the end in view, acts no more dissonant to his habits than the occasions

1. The article, by Lawrence Sullivan, was printed originally in the periodical *Christian Economics*, Feb. 9, 1965.

when he set up the crowd to a bowl of punch at an overnight hostelry or gave money to charity, or played cards or paid his pew rent. Washington's lottery activities were spread out over a span of more than 30 years and none of them represented an isolated quirk or strange interlude in his life.

And for the sake of the record, the author quotes a blast of Jefferson's against gambling. As the case with Washington, not a hint is given concerning the long treatise of Jefferson's upholding the lottery method, nor the lottery authorization granted to him, through his prompting, to forestall the forced sale of Monticello. The projected "Jefferson Lottery" would "injure no man," he wrote.

Indisputably, lottery adventuring is a type of gambling. But up into the 1790's it was garbed in its best attire. The useful purposes for which lotteries were run were right before the eyes of the adventurers. Those who drew blanks, as often suggested by the managers, had the consolation of knowing their money went to a good cause. Even when paid for their services, the managers were amateurs in the sense that their main income was derived from some other source.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that when the demand for tickets exceeded the supply, they were sold as quickly as could be reasonably expected, the process of drawing the thousands of ticket numbers from one wheel simultaneously with the slips representing the blanks and prizes from another rarely took more than a week, and short of an embezzlement (no rarer than in banks today) or other catastrophe, any group of amateur managers endowed with average business sense would make an assured profit close to the theoretical limit.

But even during the colonial period, competing lotteries produced several bad gluts of unsold tickets and many of the ventures fell by the wayside. Then came the Revolution and its wake. Owing to the daily dread of what might happen on the morrow, the vortex of depreciation encompassing the Continental paper money, and the continuing financial stringency and stagnation lasting till the establishment of the Federal government, only a few promising lotteries during these years of upheaval could eke out even a small fraction of their authorized profits. Others were abandoned or remained dormant. And before lotteries are condemned because so many faltered, it should not be forgotten that ordinarily they were utilized only as a last resort when extra taxation was deemed inexpedient or when subscriptions had failed.

An outburst of lottery speculation in Massachusetts in 1790-91 ended in an inevitable glut of unsold tickets, which did not let up but spread

from state to state and became permanent. It might have been imagined that as the burgeoning Republic gathered strength, lotteries would prosper as never before. But for the most part, they were choked by a surfeit of tickets. People clamored for lottery grants. Each state legislature with its sovereign residual rights authorized such lotteries as it chose, oblivious to those being authorized elsewhere and despite the growing facility with which tickets in the major lotteries were being transported and sold across state lines.

True enough, New York authorized only one lottery in the five-year period of 1791-95, but the other states authorized 116 besides the 46 set on foot in Maryland without authorization. True enough, New Jersey authorized only one lottery during the following 15 years of 1796-1810, but the other states authorized 448. But this is only a part of the story because some of the managers, vying with one another to attract adventurers, launched huge schemes any one of which operating alone might well have absorbed for a few months the country-wide demand for invitations from the goddess of fortune. Drawings, when not cancelled, were commenced with large numbers of unsold tickets, continued for months and even years and ended with little profit or sometimes with paralyzing losses. New York's lotteries, run by the state, finally squeezed out maximum profits, but as for the others, it was a case of the devil taking the hindmost.

With considerable tickets unsold, the profits in each typical drawing were greatly whittled down and so, to make the full profit permitted, many more separate drawings or "classes" in any one lottery would be held to raise a given sum than formerly. Instead of a lottery being run off in one or two classes, five to ten or more would be run. Obviously, then, the total number of tickets thrown on the market by any one lottery might be doubled or multiplied ten fold or more. Hence, automatically, the glut became far worse. A vicious circle had developed: the more tickets thrown on the market, the worse the glut; the worse the glut, the less profit; the less profit, the more tickets would have to be offered for sale.

Meanwhile, numerous abuses fastened themselves upon the lottery system. Owing to the competition, the managers commonly had to commence the drawings despite large proportions of the tickets remaining unsold. They relied upon the excitement as the prizes were gradually drawn to generate speculative enthusiasm. And when satisfactory sales failed to materialize, they stretched out the drawings for months or even years.

Then, to make matters worse, the adventurers, instead of waiting per-

haps several months to learn the fate of their tickets, simply rented tickets from dealers for a single day's drawing and placed bets with the dealers as to whether the tickets would or would not be drawn on that day. This so-called policy game was undisguised gambling. Instead of contributing to the objectives of the lottery it siphoned money away. The ramifications of the business had become too great and risky for amateurs. Professional contractors took their places, primarily interested in making a profit for themselves.

Beginning in the early 1820's, to avert the prolonged drawings, a new system was introduced by means of which the fate of many thousands of tickets could be determined in five minutes. But once more the heavy hand of competition from rival contractors in turn forced a radical alteration which again revolutionized the business. Gradually, these rival contractors realized that in the long run they could take business from their competitors and make more profit for themselves by holding more and more frequent drawings even though fewer and fewer tickets, down to a tiny fraction, were sold in each scheme.

It might seem like a crazy way to run a business. But the reason is quickly seen. If a certain contractor ran a drawing once a month, would habitual adventurers wait a month when drawings in other lotteries run by other reliable contractors were being held in between? No, they would not. They would buy tickets in the next drawing that came along.

Under pressure of competition, the contractors continued to draw more and more frequently till drawings in the same lottery were held once a week, then once each weekday and then twice each weekday, meanwhile with the percentage of tickets sold in each scheme dropping to one or two percent or less. Finally this procedure, intrinsically abnormal, was taken for granted and embraced as normal.

By this time, adventurers long since had lost all interest in the beneficiaries and often had no idea for what purpose the numerous "consolidated" and "state" lotteries were being run and cared less, if that were possible. No longer could the pretense be kept up that lottery speculation was other than barefaced gambling.

The widespread hostility to the lottery system sprang out of the convergence of two overruling trends: (1) its transformation, as the competition between lotteries increased and as the country grew, from a potentially quick and successful method of raising money for local causes and managed by local persons interested in these causes, into a cumbersome and wasteful method run by private contractors with an eye to their own profit; and in which the element of gambling stood out as its most prominent function. And (2) the mounting pressure of the rapidly growing re-



form movement, which identified and denounced this gambling, even the occasional purchase of a lottery ticket by a man who could well afford it, as a cardinal sin in its very essence.

## II

We now come to Vermont's lotteries. Before describing them one by one, some explanations are necessary concerning what were uniformly termed their schemes, how the latter were employed in raising money, and my system in identifying the lotteries and outlining the schemes.

If the name of the lottery is known, as printed on the tickets, with an official prize list or in an advertisement of the scheme, it is enclosed in quotation marks. In certain cases one or more additional names are given that were commonly used at one time or another during the life of the lottery. When quotation marks are not used, the titles are merely my own descriptive names.

At the start of the indented summary, below the name of each lottery, is its chronological number in reference to Vermont's total of 42. The month and year is then given of the opening of the legislative session in which the lottery was authorized, followed by a colon and a number which indicates the chronological order of the particular grant in that session. Thus, *4.Oct. 1783:2* simply means the lottery was the fourth authorized by Vermont and the second in the legislative session commencing in October 1783. It might be added that in my history of American lotteries in progress, the abbreviation for the state is added and this lottery, for example, will carry the descriptive symbol identifying it from all others, *Vt. Oct. 1783:2*.

The sum to be raised is given next and is expressed in dollars or pounds according to the original grant. Before the American decimal system of coinage was established in 1792, the term *dollar* referred to the silver Spanish milled dollar, the commonest standard coin in circulation in the country at the time, and which remained in circulation as de facto American currency till well into the 19th century with the same value as the American silver dollar.

If the sum to be raised was expressed in pounds, this unit of currency did not refer to the British pound but to the pound, of lower value, then current in New England and Virginia, where £3 were equivalent to \$10. (The dollar sign, though not commonly in use till near the end of the 18th century, is used in this article for convenience.) In other groups of colonies and states the pound had different valuations in terms of dollars, all lower than the British pound.

The term *scheme* refers to the combined data concerning the number of tickets in a drawing, their price, the number of prizes of each de-

nomination, and the deduction. When known, each scheme is given in the indented summaries in abridged form. *T* stands for tickets and *D* for deduction. Contrary to the current New Hampshire Sweepstakes, in the early American lotteries the number of tickets in each scheme was always fixed in advance. It will be noticed that the ratio of prizes to tickets in the old lotteries, often about a third, was far higher than in the New Hampshire lottery. Of course, the great majority were of low denomination, not much more than the cost of a ticket, but at the time it was deemed best to distribute a great many prizes on the premise that even a small one would encourage an adventurer to renewed efforts.

The deduction as given in the scheme was the sum to be raised for the beneficiary. Usually in the earlier American lotteries up to the late 18th century, including most of those authorized in Vermont, it was understood the sum to be raised *as stated in the grant* included not only the revenue of the lottery for the beneficiary, but all expenses and possible losses in the drawing. And so, the amount of the deduction *as stated in the scheme* exactly equaled the sum to be raised as stated in the grant.

But as the drawings became less and less productive owing to the glut of tickets in competing lotteries, the managers more and more proceeded as if the sum authorized to be raised was the net sum for the beneficiary alone, permitting them to add an increment to the deduction as stated in the scheme to cover estimated costs.

It must also be borne in mind that the managers might decide from expediency to raise the authorized sum in two or more schemes instead of one. Each scheme or drawing was usually termed a class, which meant simply a division of the lottery.

Based upon the size of the grant, the managers constructed their scheme or schemes large enough so that by far the greater part of the ticket money could be returned in prizes. It was unthinkable to them, as in the current New Hampshire lottery, that such a small percentage of the ticket proceeds, so far less than 40%, should be returned in prizes. In the early American cash lotteries, from 80% to 87½%, usually 85%, was so returned. And most positively, the prime obligation of the managers was to pay the announced prizes in full despite whatever loss occurred from failure to sell all of the tickets.

Owing to what might appear as a discrepancy, it is necessary to explain one further detail regarding the deduction. Let us assume a legislature authorized a lottery to raise \$1500 for a bridge. The managers, then, might decide upon an appropriate scheme of 5000 tickets to sell for \$2 each, totaling \$10,000, of which 85% would return to the ticket holders with 15% for the deduction. Here, the managers had a choice. According to their whim, they might deduct the 15% or \$1500

at once from the \$10,000 leaving \$8500 in *net prizes*, or they might arrange to have \$10,000 in gross prizes each subject to 15% deduction. In the course of time the latter method became uniform. It enabled the managers to announce prizes of higher value, with the 15% deduction or whatever it was tucked away in the advertisements in an inconspicuous place. But one way or the other, the winners received the same total of prize money.

#### Vermont State Lottery

1. Feb. 1779:1 to raise \$30,000 (in the then rapidly depreciating Continental paper currency) in 2 integrated classes. Schemes: *Class 1*, 10,000 T @ \$10 for 3448 pr. from 1 to \$3000, contingent 15% D; *Class 2*, 5000 T @ \$20 for 1518 pr. from 1 of \$4000, 15% D.<sup>2</sup>

This lottery has special interest for several reasons. Not only was it Vermont's first, not only were two of Vermont's most distinguished citizens involved in it, not only are the several known surviving tickets important Americana items, but it was the only one of Vermont's lotteries with any intended direct national benefit.

It was authorized on February 25, 1779, in the beautiful old meeting-house in Bennington. What the legislators did was to adopt a report prepared by a committee, one of whom was among Vermont's leading Founding Fathers—Matthew Lyon. The report stated that

“Whereas the frontier situation of this State to the enemies of this and the United States of America, render it absolutely necessary for its inhabitants to keep constant guards not only for the immediate defence of this but the several other States to which this is a frontier.

“And whereas the inhabitants of this State have been so much distressed for two years past, that it is become very difficult for them to advance such sums of money by taxes as is necessary to support such guards.

“Therefore” the scheme of the lottery devised by the committee was accepted. It was divided into two classes, arranged in such a way that the prizes in the second class would not be paid immediately after the drawing but would be borrowed by the state till February 25, 1781, which money meanwhile would be used to support the guards. Among the managers appointed in the act was another of Vermont's leading Founding Fathers—Moses Robinson.<sup>3</sup>

2. *J and P*, Feb. 24, 25, 26, 1779; March 16, Nov. 8, 1780; April 16, June 27, 1781.

3. Thomas Chittenden played a dominant role in the establishment of Vermont as an independent state, was elected governor upon its organization in 1778 and held the office except for one year till his death in 1797. The state constitution of 1793 gave the power of veto to the governors. During his remaining years in office, with this power, he approved five lottery acts.

But as the case with numerous other lotteries run during the Revolution, this one had two strikes against it from the start. For one thing the scheme was much too large for the time and place, but a more potent deterrent to any speculative urge lay in the continuing depreciation of the Continental currency, which shriveled the prospects of any value future prizes might retain. The drawing of the first class was completed by early July 1780.<sup>4</sup> After hanging on till November of that year, the second class was cancelled. Some money seems to have been made out of the affair but its failure to produce the anticipated profit is no reflection upon Vermont. The *United States Lottery*, authorized by the Continental Congress in November 1776 and run during most of the Revolution, was also planned on too vast a scale with the profits shrunk by the depreciation to dwarf size.

The tickets were printed on the venerable press, now in the Society's headquarters in Montpelier, during its brief stay at Hanover, N. H., when Hanover had become Dresden and belonged part of the time to Vermont and for a while to no state at all. Hence, the surviving tickets, both as relics of Vermont's first lottery and as scarce examples of the output of the Dresden Press, would rank high in any list of the Ten Most Wanted or The Ten Most Interesting in this special field of collectable Americana.

“Rockingham and Springfield Bridge Lottery”

2. Feb. 1783:1 to raise \$840.<sup>5</sup> Scheme: 4000 T @ \$1 less \$840 D leaves \$3160 for 1302 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>6</sup>

Colonel John Barret and 30 others on February 12, 1781, petitioned the General Assembly for a lottery to build a bridge across the Black River in Springfield and another across the Williams River in Rockingham, both along the road from Westminster to Windsor.<sup>7</sup> A joint committee on April 11<sup>8</sup> reported that in its opinion to grant lotteries in such cases would “be disadvantageous as there are a number of large streams in this State that are needed to be bridged that if a lottery should be granted on said petition many more would take encouragement thereby which if granted would make State tickets as plenty [plentiful] as Continental money was in the height of its flood and they [then?] possibly depreciate as fast.”

This was a pretty sentiment and for the time being the legislators abided by it, but two years later a second petition bore fruit and the act

4. *Conn. Courant*, July 4, 11, 18, 25, 1780.

5. *Vermont acts and laws*, session begun Feb. 1783, under Feb. 27.

6. *Vt. Journal*, June 30, 1784.

7. *J and P*.

8. *Same*.

granting the lottery was passed on February 27, 1783. The managers as named in the grant were Simon Stevens, Stephen Jacob, Col. Elijah Robinson, Capt. Elias Olcott and Oliver Lovel ["Lovewell" elsewhere]. On June 30 of the following year they announced they would accept grain for the tickets and would begin the bridges when half of the tickets were sold.<sup>9</sup>

Late that year, December 14, 1784, they announced the Rockingham bridge was completed, that preparations had begun to build the other as fast as possible, and that the drawing would commence the following January 19.<sup>10</sup> It probably did since it was completed by February 1.<sup>11</sup> Here, as in so many other Vermont lotteries, nothing definite is known concerning the profit, then commonly termed the avails. We are limited to conjectures based on circumstantial evidence.

"Vermont Paper Mill Lottery"

"Bennington Paper-Mill Lottery"

3. Oct. 1783:1 to raise £200 (\$666 2/3).<sup>12</sup> Schemes: *Original*, 3000 T @ \$1 in silver less \$727 D for 868 pr. from 1 of \$200;<sup>13</sup> *Revised*, 3000 T @ \$2 in paper currency less \$1454 D leaves \$4546 for 868 pr. from 1 of \$400.<sup>14</sup>

Anthony Haswell moved to Bennington in 1783 where, beginning that year and continuing through 1805, either in partnership or alone, he published the *Vermont Gazette*. He and his partner, David Russell, began erecting a paper mill perhaps in June 1783. On October 20 of that year this lottery was granted to help them complete it.

Ten days later, along with the original scheme as cited above, the partners presented to the public a brief homily on economics. The most prevalent complaint of the time, they said, seemed to be the great scarcity of hard money, owing to the large amount paid out for the manufactures of other states, which, "on account of this State's being destitute of articles of export, never returns." Hundreds of pounds in hard cash were annually drained away for the bare purpose of procuring paper and paying for printing jobs, which amount would be greatly lessened upon the completion of their mill.

Disappointed in the "sanguine expectations" that "a sensible people"

9. *Vt. Journal*.

10. *Same*.

11. *Same*, Feb. 1, 1785. Full prize list in Feb. 8 and 15 issues.

12. *J and P*, Oct. 16, 21, 17.

13. *Vt. Gazette*, Oct. 30, 1783.

14. *Same*, Dec. 13, 1784.

would patronize their scheme, after much difficulty they completed the mill a year later without the aid of the lottery. They had offered the tickets only for silver. Now, still intending to go ahead with the lottery, they announced, in altering the scheme, that they would accept Vermont paper currency. But I have not found any evidence the lottery was ever drawn. It might have been. Usually the prize lists were printed in the regular four-page newspapers of the period, but occasionally they were printed on supplementary sheets or on handbills, both far more ephemeral than the regular issues. In any case, it was a bad time everywhere for lotteries and many in far more populated sections faltered or collapsed.

“Pownal Lottery”

“Pownal Dug Way Lottery”

4. Oct. 1783:2 to raise £110 (\$366 2/3).<sup>15</sup> Scheme: 1200 T @ \$1 less \$367 D leaves \$833 for 320 pr. from 1 of \$60.<sup>16</sup>

Back in 1783 the best route into southwestern Vermont from Massachusetts and New York was impeded by a piece of the highway in the town of Pownal known as the dug-way, which could not be traversed without danger. This lottery was granted to the town’s selectmen “For building and wharfing said Way.” The drawing after postponement was to have commenced on October 27, 1784,<sup>17</sup> and well may have been, but I have not found any evidence that it was.

“Royalton Lottery”

“Royalton-Bridge-Lottery”

5. Feb. 1784:1 to raise £140 (\$466 2/3).<sup>18</sup> Scheme: 2500 T @ one bushel of wheat, computed at 5s per bu., less 560 bu. (\$466 2/3) D leaves 1940 bu. for 712 pr. from 1 of 200 bu.<sup>19</sup>

Acting upon a petition from the selectmen of the town of Royalton, namely Comfort Sever, Calvin Parkhurst and Zebulon Lyon, this lottery was granted on March 2, 1784, to erect a bridge over the White River, in the town, about 20 rods below a place commonly called Handy Fordway.

In September of that year, when the managers first advertised the scheme in the *Vermont Journal*, they announced that owing to the scarcity of cash, they would sell the tickets for wheat “or other grain equivalent.” But a scarcity of wheat necessitated a postponement till the next

15. *J and P*, Oct. 16, 21, 1783.

16. *Vt. Gazette*, Jan. 18, 1784.

17. *Same*, Oct. 18, 1784.

18. *J and P*, March 2, 1784.

19. *Vt. Journal*, Sept. 22, 1784.

harvest.<sup>20</sup> From efforts of the managers a year later to liquidate the notes given for tickets, it appears the lottery was drawn late in 1785 or early in 1786.<sup>21</sup>

“West River Bridge Lottery”

6. Feb. 1784:2 to raise £300 (\$1000).<sup>22</sup>

Micah Townshend, Benjamin Butterfield, Samuel Warriner, Col. John Sergeants and Josiah Armes (variant spellings elsewhere), all of Brattleboro, were granted liberty on March 2, 1784, to run this lottery to erect a bridge over the West River in the town. The prize list was published on May 22, 1786.<sup>23</sup>

“Rutland Lottery”

7. Oct. 1784:1 to raise £250 (\$833 1/3).<sup>24</sup> Scheme: 4000 T @ \$1 less \$892 D leaves \$3108 for 1276 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>25</sup>

This lottery was granted on October 26, 1784, “for the purpose of building two Bridges, the first over Otter-Creek near Brown’s Camp the other over Leicester river.” The only clue I have as to the location of Brown’s Camp, seemingly an obsolete place name, is that it may well have been in Rutland County, owing to the name of the lottery and a notice of the managers, dated at Rutland September 12, 1786, announcing both the completion of the Otter Creek bridge and their intention to commence drawing the lottery at Rutland.<sup>26</sup> The full prize list in three sections was published in the *Vermont Gazette* on May 15, 21 and 28, respectively, 1787, along with a notice to prize winners that since the tickets had been sold for grain or grain notes, the prizes would be similarly paid.

20. *Same*, Feb. 1, 1785.

21. *Same*, March 7, 1786.

22. *J and P*, March 2, 1784.

23. *Vt. Gazette*.

24. *J and P*, Oct. 26, 1784. While the petition for the lottery stated the objective to be “a bridge over Otter Creek at Browns Camp &c.,” the resolve passed a week later does not mention either bridge, but explains the grant was “for the purpose of laying out and making a road to the northerly part of this state.” It might seem that an omission or other blunder had occurred in entering the original items or in copying them for the printed edition, but without question the resolve, no matter what was said concerning the road, was for the bridges, as stated explicitly in the heading of the prize lists. And furthermore, the five men to whom the resolve for the road was granted, namely Samuel Williams, Jonathan Carpenter, Benjamin Garfield, Reuben Fuller and James Evans, signed the published scheme for the bridges. My guess as to the apparent discrepancy is that the bridges were regarded as parts of the road, and since the lack of them formed the greatest hazard to traversing it at the time, the immediate aim of the managers was to get the bridges built. I am very much indebted to Col. John Williams, Mr. Charles T. Morrissey and Mr. Lawrence J. Turgeon for searching and checking the records.

25. *Vt. Gazette*, Nov. 15, 1784, and as corrected in Nov. 22 issue.

26. *Same*, Oct. 30, 1786.

“Westriver Bridge Lottery”

“West-River Bridge Lottery”

8. Oct. 1786:1 to raise £280 (\$933 1/3).<sup>27</sup>

The managers of the *West River Bridge Lottery* (no. 6 above), with a replacement and alterations in the spelling of their names, were granted liberty by this resolve to raise the above additional sum to complete the bridge under construction at Brattleboro. Here their names are given as Benjamin Butterfield, Col. John Sargeants, Josiah Arms, Joseph Clark and Micah Townsend. After a delay of nearly three years, the drawing was held as seen by the publication of the prize list in August and September 1789.<sup>28</sup>

Windsor Causeway Lottery

9. Oct. 1786:2 to raise £300 (\$1000).<sup>29</sup>

This resolve gave leave to Col. Nathan Stone, Elijah Paine, Stephen Jacob and Bryant Brown, all of Windsor, to raise the above sum “for the purpose of making passable in time of freshets the sunken grounds through which the river road” in Windsor ran. But before starting their own sale of tickets, the managers had to wait till less than 200 remained unsold in the above second *West-River Bridge Lottery*, which was not drawn till about mid-1789. I have found nothing further concerning this one.

Arlington Bridge Lottery

10. Oct. 1786:3 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>30</sup>

The legislature granted to Gideon Olin, John White and Elnathan Merwin the privilege of running a lottery to raise the above sum to build a bridge over the Roaring Branch in Arlington (this flows into the Batten Kill) “and making a road on the side hill between said River and the dwelling house of Widow Abigail Hawley.” Apparently the lottery was not drawn nor the bridge built, for an October 19, 1790, the legislature dismissed a lottery petition to build what appears to have been the same projected bridge.

Hoosic River Bridge Lottery

11. Feb. 1787:1 to raise £450 (\$1500).<sup>31</sup> Schemes: 3 integrated classes. *Class 1*, 2000 T @ \$2 less \$499 D leaves \$3501 for 719

27. *J and P*, Oct. 16, 1786.

28. *Vt. Gazette*, Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 14, 1789; *Vt. Journal*, Sept. 2, 1789.

29. *J and P*, Oct. 23, 1786.

30. *Same*, Oct. 26, 1786.

31. *Same*, Feb. 26, 1787.



pr. from 1 of \$300; *Class 2*, 2000 T @ \$3 less \$700 D leaves \$5300 for 730 pr. from 1 of \$600; *Class 3*, 2000 T @ \$4 less \$300 D leaves \$7700 for 548 pr. from 1 of \$1000. The prizes in the first class to be paid in T in the second class and the prizes in that class to be paid in T in the third class.<sup>32</sup>

This relatively large Vermont lottery was authorized February 26, 1787, to build a bridge over the Hoosic River near Schaghticoke, across the New York State line, to accommodate Vermont farmers in carrying their produce to the "New City," now a northern section of Troy. Of particular interest, one of Vermont's foremost Founding Fathers for the second time was appointed to serve as a lottery manager, namely the Hon. Moses Robinson. The lottery may have been drawn, but I have not found any evidence it was.

#### Hartland Bridge Lottery

12. Feb. 1787:2 to raise £250 (\$833 1/3).<sup>33</sup>

Liberty was granted on February 27, 1787, to run this lottery for erecting a bridge over the Ottauquechee River near its confluence with the Connecticut, in the vicinity of North Hartland. I have not located anything further concerning the affair.

#### Otter Creek Bridge Lottery

13. Oct. 1787:1 to raise £120 (\$400).<sup>34</sup>

Authorized on October 15, 1787, here is another lottery which, if it were not for the record of the grant, would be lost in the shades of time. Its objective was to rebuild the bridge over Otter Creek at a place then called New-Haven Falls, in Addison County.

#### Rutland Lottery

14. Oct. 1787:2 to raise £125 (\$146 2/3).<sup>35</sup>

One of the bridges mentioned in the first *Rutland Lottery* (no. 7) was to be erected over Otter Creek at a place then known as Brown's Camp. Three years later, on October 25, 1787, the managers were given liberty to raise this additional sum to complete the bridge.<sup>36</sup> I have no record of

32. *Vt. Gazette*, March 5, 1787.

33. *J and P*, Feb. 27, 1787.

34. *Same*, Oct. 15, 1787.

35. *Same*, Oct. 25, 1787.

36. The managers had stated the previous year that the bridge had been completed as seen in text of the *Rutland Lottery* (no. 7). They may have meant then that the bridge was passable or perhaps in the intervening year it had been damaged by freshets.

37. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 230.

any attempt to utilize the grant, but some of these small lotteries may well have been run without any newspaper advertising.

“Furnace Lottery”

15. Oct. 1788:1 to borrow ticket money and repay in ironware.<sup>37</sup> Scheme: 1050 T @ £1 less £50 D leaves £1000 (\$3333 1/3) with the equivalent in ironware for 249 pr. from 1 valued at £100.<sup>38</sup>

Matthew Lyon in September 1788 informed the public that he had gotten the nail business going with vigor at his “Fairhaven Iron Works,” and besides nails, had anvils, chains and most sorts of farming tools for sale. He proposed, he continued, to erect in the following year a furnace to cast hollow ware and pig iron, “without which we cannot have a compleat or Independent set of Iron Works in Vermont.”<sup>39</sup>

On the 15th of the following month he obtained this lottery grant to erect the furnace. In need of much more money than could be raised from the ordinary small deduction in a cash lottery, he proposed to “borrow” all the money paid for tickets except the £50 deducted for expenses, which remaining sum, if all the tickets were sold, would amount to \$3333 1/3 net, and then, three months after the drawing, pay the prizes in the hollow ware he meanwhile would cast.

Conducted with “the greatest propriety, care, candour, and to the satisfaction even of the unfortunate,” the drawing took place at Fair Haven on February 2 and 3, 1790. The top prize valued at \$333 1/3 fell to Mr. William Griswold of Bennington.<sup>40</sup>

“Windsor County Grammar Schoolhouse Lottery”

16. Oct. 1788:2 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>41</sup> Scheme: \$1500 T @ 2 bushels of wheat in notes less 600 bu. leaves 2400 bu. for 507 pr. from 1 of 100 bu.<sup>42</sup>

Authorized on October 21, 1788, the purpose of this venture was to complete a new schoolhouse in Norwich and to use the residue for books. The school had been granted a charter in 1785. It removed to Royalton in 1807. Owing to the scarcity of cash, the lottery managers right from the start sold the tickets for wheat notes and paid the prizes in the same. The prize list was published on June 22, 1789,<sup>43</sup> very prompt for a lottery at that time.

38. *Vt. Gazette*, Nov. 24, 1788.

39. *Same*, Sept. 22.

40. *Same*, Feb. 15, 1790.

41. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 244.

42. *Vt. Journal*, Dec. 2, 1788.

43. *Same*.

“Weathersfield Lottery”  
“Weathersfield Brewery Lottery”

17. Oct. 1789:1 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>44</sup> Scheme: 2200 T @ \$1 less \$500 D leaves \$1700 for 713 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>45</sup>

It may be a question whether prohibitionists and persons convinced that all lotteries are pernicious would consider it more reprehensible or less for a lottery to be run for a brewery rather than a church. At any rate, Weathersfield has the distinction of having its name linked to the only two known sets of American lottery tickets carrying the word “brewery.”

Joseph Hubbard of Weathersfield was granted the first of these lotteries on October 26, 1789 for “erecting a Malthouse & Brewery” in that town. In advertising the scheme, the managers stated the enterprise was designed “for the purpose of manufacturing Strong Beer, a liquor more healthy, and much cheaper than the imported spirits and distilled liquors; an undertaking that promises much advantage to the public, and great benefit to individuals.” Adventurers had the option of paying cash for their tickets or wheat at 4s a bushel, rye at 3s or Indian corn at 2s 4d. Also, notes would be acceptable for any of these articles.

Lacking proof, it may be implied the drawing was held, in view of a legislative entry referring to a second lottery for the same objective (no. 22 below) as “the second class of the brewery lottery.”<sup>46</sup>

“Cavendish Lottery”  
“Cavendish Great-Road Lottery”

18. Oct. 1789:2 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>47</sup> Scheme: 2200 T @ \$1 less \$500 D leaves \$1700 for 713 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>48</sup>

This lottery with the one for the brewery just above were both authorized on the same day, October 26, 1789. Each was privileged to raise the same sum and each was launched with exactly the same scheme in terms of dollars. Each carried the same option concerning grains and notes acceptable for tickets, the only difference being that here the valuation of rye is given as 3s 4d a bushel and of corn as 2s 8d.

The proceeds were to be used in repairing the great road in Windsor County “between Chester and black River in Cavendish & completing the repair of said road through Ludlow which may remain after the

44. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 307.

45. *Vt. Journal*, Feb. 24, 1790.

46. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 456.

47. *Same*, v. 2, p. 306.

48. *Vt. Journal*, Jan. 13, 1790.

grant of one penny per acre on the land in said Ludlow is laid out with some repairs in Jacksons Gore so called." On May 3, 1791, the full prize list was published.<sup>49</sup>

"Deerfield River Bridge Lottery"

19. Oct. 1790:1 to raise £200 (\$666 2/3).<sup>50</sup> Scheme (partial):  
2000 T with a top prize of 1 of \$250.

Authorized on October 28, 1790, the purpose here was to build "a bridge over Deerfield River near where the road leading from Brattleboro' to Bennington now crosses said river," any surplusage to be expended on the road leading from the bridge to Bennington. Since lottery no. 23 below was authorized to build a bridge over the Deerfield River at Wilmington, my guess is that this one was to be located at or near where the present state route 9 again crosses the river, a little east of Searsburg. I have not found the scheme, but the full prize list was published on June 13, 1791.<sup>51</sup>

Killington Lottery"

"Killington Great Road Lottery"

"Vermont Lottery"

"Vermont State Lottery"

20. Oct. 1791:1 to raise £300 (\$1000).<sup>52</sup> Schemes: *Class 1*, 1500 T @ \$2 less \$300 D leaves \$2700 for 497 pr. from 1 of \$300; *Class 2*, 675 T @ \$4 less \$700 D leaves \$2000 for 226 pr. from 1 of \$300.<sup>53</sup> Further schemes commencing in 1827.

This is Vermont's first authorized lottery after the state entered the Union. The act was concurred by Council on October 27, 1791. Its objective was to make and repair the public road between Rutland and Woodstock, doubtless in general the present U. S. route 4. Up to the year 1800 Sherburne, along the route near Killington Peak, was known as Killington and hence the earlier names of the lottery.

The full prize list of Class 1 was published on May 15, 1792, quickly followed by that of Class 2 on June 12.<sup>54</sup> After more than a quarter of a century passed, anyone then would surely have assumed that the lottery had left the stage for good, but we shall see what happened.

49. *Same*.

50. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 344.

51. *Vt. Gazette*.

52. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 384.

53. *Vt. Journal*, Jan. 10, 1792. The number of prizes in Class 1 altered from 500 to 497, as announced in Jan. 24 issue.

54. *Same*.

“Royalton Lottery”

“Royalton Great-Bridge Lottery”

21. Oct. 1791:2 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>55</sup> Scheme: 2200 T @ \$1 less \$500 D leaves \$1700 for 713 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>56</sup>

Enacted into law on October 28, 1791, this lottery permitted the inhabitants of the town of Royalton to raise the authorized avails to repair “the great bridge on the great road leading from Newhampshire and the Eastern part of this State to the northern part of the same and to Canada.”

Tickets could be purchased for cash, or wheat at 3s a bushel, or for cattle if a large number of tickets were purchased, or for notes covering either of these then prevalent mediums of exchange. The prize list was published on October 22, 1792.<sup>57</sup>

“Weathersfield Brewery Lottery”

22. Oct. 1791:3 to raise £200 (\$666 2/3).<sup>58</sup> Scheme: 4000 T @ \$1.50 for 1254 pr. from 1 of \$800 less 12½% D.<sup>59</sup>

Continuing the objective of the former brewery lottery (no. 17) this one, authorized on November 3, 1791, was to complete the combined malthouse and brewery. For some unexplained reason, more than three years passed before the tickets were put on sale. At this time, the managers spoke of the “happy prospect” of completing the works, termed “a copious Manufactory of strong Beer.” The prize list was published in two sections, on September 23 and October 14, 1796.<sup>60</sup>

“Green Mountain Lottery”

23. Oct. 1791:4 to raise £500 (\$1666 2/3).<sup>61</sup> Schemes: *Class 1*, 2000 T @ \$2 less \$666 D leaves \$3334 for 671 pr. from 1 of \$500;<sup>62</sup> *Class 2*, 3000 T @ \$2 less \$1000 leaves \$5000 for 908 pr. from 1 of \$500.<sup>63</sup>

In describing the *Deerfield River Bridge Lottery* above (no. 19), a later lottery was mentioned for a bridge over the Deerfield River at Wilmington. This is it. Authorized on November 3, 1791, its objective was not only to complete the bridge at that point, but to repair the road from

55. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, pp. 385–6.

56. *Vt. Journal*, Nov. 8, 1791.

57. *Same*.

58. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 420.

59. *Vt. Journal*, Jan. 19, 1795.

60. *Same*.

61. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 421.

62. *Va. Gazette*, Dec. 19, 1791.

63. *Same*, July 13, 1792.

Wilmington across the Green Mountains to Bennington, being the principal road from New Hampshire across Vermont to Albany and the western territories.

In their opening advertisement, the managers referred to the obvious public utility in rendering the road passable for carriages and expressed their "highest confidence, that the lottery will obtain the patronage of every person who has the public interest at heart, in this and the adjacent states."

The prize list of Class 1 was published on July 13, 1792, and that of Class 2 on April 11, 1794.<sup>64</sup>

"Bethel Lottery"

24. Oct. 1791:5 to raise £550 (\$1833 1/3).<sup>65</sup> Scheme: 4000 T @ \$2 less \$1834 D leaves \$6166 for 1190 pr. from 1 of \$500.<sup>66</sup>

Here is another bridge lottery. This one, granted on November 3, 1791, permitted the town of Bethel to raise the authorized sum for a bridge across the White River at or near the mouth of the Third Branch, along the road leading from Windsor to Onion River. The prize list was published on February 2, 1795.<sup>67</sup>

The managers had offered the tickets for wheat notes payable at the end of the drawing. It was a normal practice then and had been for a long time for people to conduct their affairs on credit, including the purchase of lottery tickets, and it was commonplace for the lottery managers to cajole and threaten for years to collect what was owed to them. In this instance, the managers issued a notice dated January 1, 1799,<sup>68</sup> nearly four years after the drawing, calling upon all persons indebted to pay good wheat for their notes or find the latter turned over to an attorney, for they were determined to close their lottery accounts quickly.

"Shrewsbury Great Road Lottery"

25. Oct. 1791:6 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>69</sup> Scheme: 2250 T @ \$1 less \$500 D leaves \$1750 for 556 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>70</sup>

This is the sixth and last lottery grant in the October 1791 legislative session and with six more the following year, the 12 form the high tide of Vermont's authorizations. Granted on November 3, 1791, its objective

64. Class 1, *Same*; Class 2, *Same*, Supplement of April 11 issue, and also in *Vt. Journal*, April 21, 1794.

65. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 423.

66. *Vt. Journal*, Nov. 12, 1792.

67. *Same*.

68. *Same*, Jan. 15, 1799.

69. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 428.

70. *Vt. Gazette*, March 12, 1792.

was to cut a new road through Shrewsbury into Rutland. The managers asserted they "hope for and in fact have a right to expect the aid and generous encouragement of every good citizen of the commonwealth of Vermont."

As so frequent at this time, tickets could be purchased for wheat (at 4s a bu.) or other grain equivalent, with prizes paid in the same. The drawing was scheduled to commence at the inn of Capt. Nathan Finney in Shrewsbury on Christmas Day 1792<sup>71</sup> and it must have or soon after, for the full prize list appears in the following January 25 issue of the *Vermont Gazette*.

#### "Rutland State House Lottery"

26. Oct. 1792:1 to raise £160 (\$533 1/3).<sup>72</sup> Scheme: 1800 T @ \$2 less \$433 1/3 D leaves \$3066 2/3 for 678 pr. from 1 of \$400.<sup>73</sup>

Vermont's illustrious Nathaniel Chipman, in the course of his life a chief justice of the state and a United States senator, petitioned for and served as one of the managers of this lottery.

Rutland for the first time played host to the legislators in 1784, the year in which it also was chosen as the county seat. The inadequate gambrel roofed frame dwelling that served as the first courthouse and state house in the town, now one of Vermont's oldest buildings, was replaced for these purposes in 1792 by a more commodious edifice erected on contract by Chipman and three associates. Located on Main Street, it was destroyed by fire April 3, 1868.

The purpose of this lottery, granted October 25, 1792, was "to make up a deficiency in a sum raised by subscription" to cover the contract. Following the drawing scheduled to commence on March 20, 1794, the prize list was published on April 9.<sup>74</sup> Any small part of the authorized sum that was raised seemingly fell considerably short of the goal, in view of the fact that in 1826 a resolve was introduced in the Assembly to revive the lottery. It failed to pass.<sup>75</sup>

#### "Printing Office Lottery"

27. Oct. 1792:2 to raise £200 (\$666 2/3).<sup>76</sup> Scheme: 2000 T @ \$2 less \$636 D leaves \$3364 for 669 pr. from 1 of \$300.<sup>77</sup>

71. *Same*, Dec. 28, 1792, notice dated Dec. 10.

72. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 439.

73. *Farmers' Library*, Dec. 30, 1793.

74. *Same*, Feb. 24, April 9, 1794.

75. *Leg. Journal* for session begun Oct. 1826, under Nov. 15.

76. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 445.

77. *Vt. Gazette*, Nov. 23, 1792.

Anthony Haswell, as we have seen, apparently did not make out well with his *Vermont Paper Mill Lottery* (no. 3) back in 1783–85. Nor apparently did he with this second lottery, authorized October 31, 1792, to rebuild his printing office in Rutland destroyed by fire the previous September 17, less than three months after he had established there his second paper, the short-lived *Herald of Vermont*. Nathaniel Chipman, a manager in the above *State House Lottery*, served in that capacity in this one, too.

The drawing had not been held up to October 26, 1795, when the legislature put a time limit of one more year on the enterprise. I have no evidence it was subsequently drawn.

“Reparation Lottery”

“Vermont Consolidated Lottery”

28. Oct. 1792:3 to raise £1200 (\$4000).<sup>78</sup> Schemes: *Class 1*, 3000 T @ \$2 less \$1600 D leaves \$4400 for 517 pr. from 1 of \$1000.<sup>79</sup> Further schemes commencing in 1826.

Jabez Rogers of Middlebury sustained a paralyzing loss in 1792 when his brewery and distillery were consumed by fire. The legislature came to his rescue, granting him this interesting lottery on October 31, 1792, upon condition the proceeds be appropriated to replace the burned buildings.

In the advertisement of the first of the two projected classes, the managers represented that inasmuch as the motives of the Assembly in granting the lottery “have arisen from their patriotic desire to encourage the beneficial manufacture of brandies, strong beer, &c. in this state, as well as to raise up a distressed, unfortunate, worthy fellow citizen,” they felt sure “that those who love their country, as well as those who love to succour the distressed, will join to promote a rapid sale of the tickets.” In which case, they continued, “may the blessing of him who is ready to perish fall upon them.”

It had been intended to raise the amount of the grant in two classes, in which the 350 prizes of \$4 each in the first class would be paid in tickets in the second. But Class 2 was not even advertised, the reason being that the drawing of Class 1, commenced not earlier than January 20, 1794, and completed on the following February 7.<sup>80</sup> not only failed to produce a profit but resulted in a disastrous loss to Rogers of about

78. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 446.

79. *Vt. Gazette*, Feb. 8, 1793; also in handbill dated Oct. 31, 1792, at Vt. H. S., Dartmouth College and New York Public Library.

80. *Vt. Gazette*, Jan. 10, Feb. 28, 1794; *Vt. Journal*, Feb. 24, 1794; *Farmers' Library*, Feb. 24, 1794.



\$1200.<sup>81</sup> Since the beneficiary of a lottery was not responsible for any direct loss in the drawing, the most probable conjecture is that Rogers, to enable the lottery to be drawn without risk to the managers, bought a great number of unsold tickets which failed to realize anything like their proportion of the prize money.

In any case, the lottery passed into a dormant state to be revived, as we shall see, in a mutated form more than 30 years later.

“White River Bridge Lottery”  
“Hartford Lottery”

29. Oct. 1792:4 to raise £500 (\$1666 2/3).<sup>82</sup> Scheme: 3500 T @ \$2 less \$1668 D leaves \$5332 for 1047 pr. from 1 of \$100.<sup>83</sup> Wheat notes @ 3s a bu. accepted for tickets. Further schemes commencing in 1826.

The legislature on November 8, 1792, gave leave to Joshua Hazen, John Gillet and Daniel Marsh to run this lottery to build a bridge over the often turbulent White River at Hartford, within several miles of the presently named White River Junction. But in June 1795, nearly two and a half years after the first advertisement of the affair, the managers announced they had found it impracticable to pursue the lottery any further on account of “the objection to the Scheme, and the general prejudice of the public against Lotteries.” Therefore, all persons holding tickets were urged to return them and get their money or wheat notes. Furthermore, the managers continued, at a meeting of some of the principal persons in that section, it had been “generally agreed, that the most eligible way” to raise the money was by subscription.<sup>84</sup>

After waiting so long for the bridge the decision to open a subscription seemed to make sense. But what happened? It failed as well as the lottery.<sup>85</sup> What of the bridge? Up to at least the opening of 1827 it had not been built.<sup>86</sup> As for the objection to the scheme, if an adverturer had paid cash for his ticket and won a good prize, he might receive it largely in wheat notes. And finally, what of the “general prejudice” against lotteries? Surely some existed, but if it were so “general” as might be implied, how did it happen that the Vermont legislators, representing the people, authorized three lotteries late the following year?

After a long sleep, the lottery awakened late in 1826 with an advertise-

81. Statement in large poster of *Vermont Consolidated Lottery* dated July 6, 1826, at Sheldon Museum, Middlebury, Vermont.

82. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 479.

83. *Vt. Journal*, Dec. 24, 1792.

84. *Same*, June 15, 1795.

85. *Leg. Journal* for session begun Oct. 1795, under Oct. 23, 1795.

86. *Vt. Journal*, Jan. 5, 1827.

ment signed by two of the original managers, Gillet and Marsh. They announced a new scheme along with the admonition in capital letters, "THE BRIDGE IS NOW WANTED."<sup>87</sup>

"Milton Bridge Lottery"

30. Oct. 1792:5 to raise £300 (\$1000).<sup>88</sup>

Almost nothing is known of this enterprise beyond the bare authorization. It was granted on November 8, 1792, to the town of Milton, in Chittenden County, to defray the estimated cost of building a bridge over the Lamoille River "at or below the lower falls." Tickets were on sale a year later at the office of *The Eagle*, printed at Hanover, New Hampshire.<sup>89</sup>

"Readsborough Bridge Lottery"

31. Oct. 1792:6 to raise £150 (\$500).<sup>90</sup> Scheme: 1500 T, top prize 1 of \$200.

Here is another lottery to bridge the Deerfield River. The location of the structure was to be at Readsboro at a point perhaps two to three miles from the Massachusetts border. Authorized on November 8, 1792, I have not found the scheme, but the prize list was published on December 26, 1794.<sup>91</sup>

"Connecticut River Lottery"

32. Oct. 1793:1 to raise \$2500.<sup>92</sup> Scheme: 10,000 T @ \$2 for 3312 pr. from 1 of \$1000 less 12½% D.<sup>93</sup>

The original objective of this lottery, authorized October 26, 1793, was to clear the channel of the Connecticut River from Lebanon Falls to the Massachusetts line, a section badly obstructed by rocks, logs, sand bars, etc. In anticipation of the avails, the managers proceeded with some of the work. But then on February 18, 1797, an act was passed diverting the balance of the expected proceeds to improve parts of the post road, now apparently U. S. Route 5, between Newbury, more than halfway up the state, and the Massachusetts line.<sup>94</sup>

The same act directed the drawing should be completed by March 6, 1798, or voided. I lack any evidence one way or the other.

87. *Same*.

88. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 480.

89. *The Eagle*, Nov. 11, 1793.

90. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 2, p. 480.

91. *Vt. Gazette*.

92. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, p. 37.

93. *Vt. Journal*, Dec. 23, 1793.

94. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, pp. 318-9.

### Fairfax Bridge Lottery

33. Oct. 1793:2 to raise \$500.<sup>95</sup>

The objective of this lottery, granted on October 30, 1793, to the town of Fairfax, then in Chittenden County but now a little over the border in Franklin, was to build a bridge over the Lamoille River in Fairfax. In an additional act passed exactly a year after the original one,<sup>96</sup> the location was specified as "just above the present ford-way on the main road from Westford, to said Fairfax, and a few rods below the mouth of governor's brook. (*Governor's Brook* in the manuscript act)." I lack the scheme or evidence as to any drawing.

In Vermont and elsewhere, right along through the years, large numbers of petitions for lotteries were turned down. While a residual flow of these petitions regularly flowed on, now and then spurts of them, like freshets in a stream, deluged the legislative bodies. On such occasions the legislators sometimes overcame the surfeit of petitions simply by rejecting all of them in one swoop.

There appears to have been no logical reason why the legislators here and there alternately blew hot and cold. In the latter instances, in rejecting all petitions, they gave reasons that appeared sound enough, but then several sessions later they authorized lotteries right and left. In any case, it would have been folly to grant every petition that came along no matter how worthy. As it was, all over the country, far too many lotteries were authorized for the good of any and all of them.

In Vermont, omitting only 1785, the legislators passed at least one grant each year from 1783 to 1793, including, as we have seen, six in 1791, six in 1792 and two in 1793. Combined, there is sufficient evidence they produced a glut of tickets, even without including those sent into the state issued in big lotteries running elsewhere.

In the 1794 session, the Lottery Committee reported it had "taken under consideration the following petitions, viz. The petition of the society and church of Brandon. The petition from Dummerston. The petition of Thomas Butterfield. Petition of Sandgate. Petition from the inhabitants of Stockbridge. Petition from the inhabitants of Bridgwater. Petition from Ludlow. Petition of Seth Putnam and others.—Petition of the selectmen of Manchester.—And the bill from the town of Arlington, inclosed within, and after full hearing of the petitioners and the facts stated therein, your committee are of opinion, that each petitioner has an equal claim upon the public, and that your committee cannot make

95. *Same*, v. 3, p. v. 3, p. 42.

96. *Same*, v. 3, p. 164; *Acts and Laws* at session begun Oct. 1794, act passed Oct. 30, 1794.

any discrimination; that the prayers of all ought to be granted or rejected: And on that consideration, your committee are unanimous, except Mr. Lyon, in their opinion, that it will not be beneficial to the public, and that the prayers thereof ought not to be granted."<sup>97</sup>

The report, signed by six of the seven members, was read and accepted. Three years elapsed before the next grant.

At this juncture it is opportune to mention two of the more interesting earlier petitions that failed to pass. In the session commenced in October 1792, a petition was submitted from inhabitants of Hartford and Norwich, joined with another from inhabitants of Hanover, New Hampshire, praying for a lottery to raise £2000 (\$6666 2/3) to enable Aaron Storrs, at the time representative from Norwich, to build a bridge across the Connecticut near the "Dartmouth College ferry-place."<sup>98</sup> If this petition as it stood had been granted, the lottery would have been Vermont's largest in reference to the sum to be raised, with possible exception of the first, in which the figures were based on the greatly depreciated Continental currency.

There was also an interesting petition, this one in the 1793 session, from subscribers hopeful of incorporating the Vermont Manufacturing Society, urging a lottery to raise \$500 annually for seven years to increase its capital.<sup>99</sup>

"Castleton and Hubbardton Road Lottery"

"Hubbardton and Castleton Road Lottery"

34. Oct. 1796:1 to raise \$500.<sup>100</sup> Scheme: 4000 T, top prize 1 of \$500.

Authorized on November 7, 1796, the proceeds of this lottery were to be used in improving seemingly that part of the present State Route 30 lying between the present Castleton Corners and Sudbury, passing through Hubbardton. The enterprise was beset with trouble. Nathan Rumsey, one of the managers, "sold a large number of the tickets, and absconded to parts unknown."<sup>101</sup> And counterfeit tickets, the only ones I recall in any early American lottery, were circulated.<sup>102</sup>

I have not located the scheme, but the prize list was published in two sections on June 19 and 26, 1804.<sup>103</sup> This was a period of stagnation for

97. *Leg. Journal* for session begun Oct. 1794, under Oct. 24.

98. *Same* for session begun Oct. 1792, under Oct. 13.

99. *Same* for session begun Oct. 1793, under Oct. 15.

100. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, p. 310.

101. *Leg. Journal* for session begun Oct. 1800, under Oct. 17.

102. *Same* for session begun Oct. 1803.

103. *Vt. Gazette*.

numerous competing lotteries in far more populated sections of the country, some of them abandoned and several ending with staggering losses.

“White River Bridge Lottery”

35. Oct. 1796:2 to raise equivalent of \$400 in wheat notes.<sup>104</sup>

Scheme: (expressed in dollar valuations of wheat at 4s a bu.)

1,200 T @ \$1 less \$400 leaves \$800 for 312 pr. from 1 of \$50.<sup>105</sup>

Here is a lottery based on wheat notes and run off quickly, seemingly without a hitch. It was authorized on November 8, 1796, for the purpose of building a bridge over the White River in the town of Stockbridge. The prize list was published on July 14, 1797.<sup>106</sup>

“Green Mountain Road Lottery”

36. Oct. 1796:3 to raise \$500.<sup>107</sup> Scheme: 3000 T @ \$2 for 922

pr. from 1 of \$500 less 12% D.<sup>108</sup>

In terms of present names, the objective of this enterprise was to lay out the avails in improving a section of the road, probably the present State Route 11, between Manchester Depot and Peru. The act, passed November 8, 1796, states the section was “a road through the north-westerly part of Winhall to Bromley it being where the old road goes, distance of near four miles.” I have been kindly informed by Mr. Alfred C. Benjamin that Peru, up to 1804, was called Bromley, the same name as a nearby mountain, and Winhall, not shown on any auto maps I have seen, is a town in the easterly part of Bennington County. So it would seem that the objective of the lottery was to improve nearly four miles of the road just west of Peru.

The prize list was not published till June 5, 1804,<sup>109</sup> owing to a prolonged delay in commencing the drawing.<sup>110</sup>

“Woodstock Bridge Lottery”

37. Feb. 1797:1 to raise \$500.<sup>111</sup>

Authorized on March 7, 1797, the objective here was to erect a bridge over the Ottauquechee at Woodstock. This is one of the few instances in which the legislators sensibly put a time limitation upon the drawing, in

104. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, pp. 310–1.

105. *Vt. Journal*, Jan. 27, 1797.

106. *Same*.

107. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, pp. 311–2.

108. *Vt. Gazette*, Dec. 29, 1796.

109. *Same*.

110. *Acts and Laws* at session begun Jan. 1804, ch. 25 passed Feb. 3.

111. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 3, p. 341.

this case March 1 of the following year for its commencement. Since nothing more seems to be known of the affair, the assumption is that time ran out before the managers had sold a sufficient number of the tickets to insure them against a possible loss.

“John Wood’s Lottery”

“Wood’s Lottery, Assigned to Col. Lyon”

38. Feb. 1797:2 to raise \$500.<sup>112</sup> Schemes: *Original*, 6750 T @ \$2 less \$850 D leaves \$12,650 for 2266 pr. from 1 of \$1000;<sup>113</sup> *Revised*, 7000 T @ \$2 less \$1000 D leaves \$13,000 for 2348 pr. from 1 of \$1000;<sup>114</sup> *New*, in 3 integrated classes: *Class 1*, 4000 T @ \$1 less \$480 D leaves \$3520 for 811 pr. from 1 of \$1000; *Class 2*, 3000 T @ \$2 less \$580 D leaves \$5420 for 728 pr. from 1 of \$1500; *Class 3*, 2000 T @ \$3 less \$560 D leaves \$5440 for 443 pr. from 1 of \$2000. Certain low prizes to be paid in T of succeeding class.<sup>115</sup>

This complicated lottery, authorized on March 9, 1797, was granted to Captain John Wood, one of the leading participants in the sequel of the Westminster Massacre. He had never received compensation for his services in that affray and had since slipped into indigence.<sup>116</sup>

In the opening advertisement of his scheme he declared, “Whoever recollects the horrors of the scenes exhibited in Westminster . . . on the 13th of March 1775, when the lives and liberties of the citizens of this state were invaded, will approve the patriotism of the heroes who put their lives in jeopardy to secure the rights of man, and the independence of Vermont, and embrace a scheme of retribution to the principal sufferer, with avidity.”

After this moving peroration, one would hope to learn that the full permitted sum was raised with dispatch. But it was not to be. About half a year later in 1797, along with a slightly revised scheme, Wood heightened the fervency of his appeal. The old settlers, he assured the public, “will feel again the animating glow and lend the needed aid,” while their offspring, fired with spirit, “will adventure freely, on beholding so liberal a scheme, calculated to promote so generous an end.”

More than a year later, the *Vermont Gazette* carried a lengthy notice of Wood’s covering nearly two columns.<sup>117</sup> It was dated November 28,

112. *Same*, v. 3, p. 345.

113. *Rutland Herald*, March 13, 1797.

114. *Same*, Oct. 9, 1797.

115. *Vt. Gazette*, Jan. 10, 1799.

116. *Bound ms. petitions*, v. marked “4” and “1797-99.”

117. *Vt. Gazette*, Jan. 10, 1799.

1798, at a point near Lake George in New York State. He explained that he had inadvertently failed to procure a sufficient bond for the faithful performance of his trust, which neglect had made the scheme illegal and thus would not be drawn. And then, in announcing he had transferred his grant to Col. Matthew Lyon, there followed a new scheme, divided into three classes, to be managed by Major Elias Buell. The prize list of the first class was published on August 8, 1799.<sup>118</sup> I do not know if the remaining classes were drawn.

“Philanthropic Lottery”

39. Oct. 1798:1 to raise \$2000.<sup>119</sup> Schemes: *Class 1*, 16,000 T @ \$3 for 5334 pr. from 1 of \$5000 less 15% D;<sup>120</sup> *Class 2*, 12,000 T @ \$3 for pr. ranging from 1 of \$3000 down to 3575 of \$4, less 15% D.<sup>121</sup>

Joseph Hawkins of Alburg, in the northwestern corner of Vermont, in 1792 when about 20 years old, took the advice then commonly dispensed to young men to go south to seek their fortunes. At Charleston, South Carolina, the following year he accepted the position of supercargo on a slave trader. The 400-ton ship sailed on December 1 to a small island off the African coast where the captain sought information from factors in the slave trade who resided there. He was informed of a recent bitterly fought war on the mainland between the Ebo and Galla tribes, in which the Ebo king captured some hundreds of the enemy and was holding them shackled. The captain, to ascertain if he could conduct friendly trade, directed Hawkins to proceed with an interpreter through the jungle to the Ebo land. Though the young man protested he was not hired for that kind of work, he was given no choice.

Only one of the novel experiences that befell Hawkins can be told here. After he was introduced to the Ebo King's 17 wives, his majesty presented him with six for himself. In this dilemma Hawkins explained he already was a married man, but the king seemed surprised at the nature of his objection, for, said he, he also was married and yet took other wives. In this “delicate predicament,” Hawkins, to let him tell the story, “resolved to accomodate myself to my situation with as good grace as possible. Judging one wife sufficient for any reasonable man, I resolved not to be burthened with six; but thinking I must in some degree sacrifice to custom I resolved to take two.”

His dramatic adventures during the remainder of the journey in-

118. *Same*.

119. *Acts and Laws* at session begun Oct. 1798, ch. 123.

120. *Rutland Herald*, Dec. 24, 1798; *Boston Columbian Centinel*, Jan. 4, 1800.

121. *Col. Centinel*, April 30, 1800.

cluded his subsequent barter for several hundreds of the king's prisoners and his two attempts to escape from the ship just before it began the return voyage. It was about then that an inflammatory fever broke out among the slaves. The disorder attacked him and before the ship reached America, in his 23rd year he had totally lost his eye sight.

He had written the account of his experiences which went to three editions.<sup>122</sup> But despite any profit from this source and from generous donations, he exhausted his resources in visiting eminent physicians and surgeons in most parts of the country. On October 30, 1798, he obtained the grant of this lottery with the hope he might take the long contemplated voyage to Europe in search of a cure.

Massachusetts permitted the lottery to be drawn within its borders. The drawing of Class 1 commenced late in March 1800 and was completed about a month later.<sup>123</sup> Class 2 commenced drawing, also at Boston, on August 28 of that year,<sup>124</sup> but ran into difficulties from an excess of unsold tickets. I am not sure it was completed.

“Benevolent Lottery”

“Friendly Lottery”

“Vermont Lottery”

40. Oct. 1799:1 to raise \$1000.<sup>125</sup> Schemes: *Original*, 4000 T @ \$3 for 1231 pr. from 1 of \$1000 less 12½ % D;<sup>126</sup> *Revived*, 4000 T @ \$2 for 1310 pr. from 1 of \$600 less 12½ % D.<sup>127</sup> Further schemes commencing in 1826.

In the late 1790's and early 1800's, even in the cities with much more “loose money” than in farming communities getting along largely on barter, it was the rare lottery that did not run into trouble and this one is no exception.

Horatio Knight, son of the Hon. Samuel Knight, former chief justice of the state, had lost a leg, denying this “worthy and reputable young man,” as described in the opening advertisement of the scheme, the power to support himself by any common employment. To enable him to qualify for a profession, the legislature on October 31, 1799, granted him this lottery.

This *Benevolent Lottery*, as the affair was first called, was scheduled to

122. *A history of a voyage to the coast of Africa, and travels into the interior of that country*. (Philadelphia, 1797). See also *Leg. Journal* for session begun Oct. 1798, and *Col. Centinel*, Sept. 28, 1799.

123. *Col. Centinel*, March 26, 1800. The drawing must have been completed by April 30, when the scheme of Class 2 was advertised.

124. *Same*, Sept. 3, 1800.

125. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 4, p. 316.

126. *Federal Galaxy*, Dec. 2, 1799.

127. *The Reporter*, Aug. 29, 1803; also in *Vt. Journal*, Sept. 6, 1803.



commence drawing by July 1, 1800. It did not. Then, in a notice dated November 1, the managers announced they would accept "Butter, Cheese, Salts of Lye, Flax Seed, & c." in payment of the tickets, and stated the drawing would commence on the 10th. So it did. But within a week it was suspended, with the explanation that "prudence dictated a short delay," a euphemistic way of saying that the necessary rush for tickets had failed to materialize.<sup>128</sup>

With the lottery remaining undrawn, nearly two years later the legislature reactivated it under a new manager who altered its name to the *Friendly Lottery*.<sup>129</sup> But, as explained in still another act, passed in 1806,<sup>130</sup> it continued to remain undrawn and "through want of sale of the tickets," could not be with any prospect of success. With no time limit to the grant, we shall see what happened later.

"Charitable Lottery"  
"Phoenix Lottery"

41. Oct. 1800:1 to raise \$4000.<sup>131</sup> Schemes: *Original Class 1*, 5000 T @ \$5 for 1316 pr. from 1 of \$5000 less 12½% D;<sup>132</sup> *Revised Class 1*, 2000 T @ \$2 for 459 pr. from 1 of \$1000, less 12½% D;<sup>133</sup> *Class 2*, 3000 T @ \$3 for 1024 pr. from 1 of \$1500, less 12½% D;<sup>134</sup> *Class 3*, 3000 T @ \$3 for 1041 pr. from 1 of \$1000, less 12½% D;<sup>135</sup> *Class 4*, scheme is lacking. Further schemes commencing in 1825.

In an hour, Stephen Conant of Windsor was reduced from prosperity to indigence. An all-consuming fire in January 1800 destroyed his "elegant and specious Dwelling-House and Store, together with Saddler's Ware, Tools, &c." with heavy loss. Known as an industrious and worthy citizen, the legislature on November 1, 1800, granted him this lottery.

Owing to too large a scheme for the prevailing conditions, the opening class could not be drawn with safety and was replaced two years later by a new first class of less than a fifth the size. Three others soon followed. The prize lists of the first two classes to be drawn were published, respectively, on March 22, 1803, and on November 29 of the same year.<sup>136</sup> Class 3 was advertised on the latter date. Proof it was drawn is seen in a

128. *Federal Galaxy*, Nov. 8, 15, 1800.

129. *Bound ms. acts*, v. 4, p. 430.

130. *Acts and Laws* at session begun Oct. 1806, ch. 73.

131. *Same* at session begun Oct. 1800.

132. *Vt. Journal*, Dec. 8, 1800.

133. *Same*, Nov. 9, 1802.

134. *Same*, March 1, 1803.

135. *Same*, Nov. 29, 1803.

136. *Same*.

receipt for some tickets in Class 4 to be sold and accounted for by May 1, 1804.<sup>137</sup> At about this point the enterprise ground to a halt after having raised only about \$600 of the permitted \$4000.<sup>138</sup> But many years later it arose from the ashes of futility like the fabled bird, in a new garb and with a new name, the *Phoenix Lottery*.

“Vergennes Bridge Lottery”

42. Oct. 1804:1 to raise \$2500.<sup>139</sup>

The grant was given to the common council of Vergennes on November 8, 1804, to build a bridge over Otter Creek in the city. The lottery was not to be drawn till the bridge was fully completed and in any case the drawing had to be concluded by May 1, 1807. Late in October 1806 the legislature extended the time limit of the lottery to May 1, 1810.<sup>140</sup> I know nothing further concerning it or the bridge.

With the final lottery grant, Vermont, as it turned out, became the first of the old “lottery states” to put an enduring stop to them—even before more than half of the old American lotteries had as yet been authorized. But stopping the grants is not to say stopping the drawings. Elsewhere in the country, here and there, contractors held on to their grants as if they were perpetual, till finally the United States Supreme Court altered its opinion as to the contractual sanctity of the grants and ruled them to be mere privileges to be stamped out by the states when expedient.

### III

Several times I have more than hinted at a surprising sequel to the Vermont lotteries long after the original drawings had ended. Here it is.<sup>141</sup>

Early in the 19th century Vermont had its school support problem. According to the report of a legislative committee on education made on October 29, 1825, many of the common schools languished. The stability and permanency of free institutions, it stated, depended upon the education of the middle and lower classes, which were, as the committee quoted, the “‘strength and sinews of the nation.’” But the institution of lotteries, it continued, promised the only available means of creating a school fund. Since the evils of the system were already experienced by

137. Marcus A McCorison, *Vermont Imprints 1778-1820*, entry #753.

138. *Vt. Journal*, Dec. 12, 1825.

139. *Acts and Laws* at session begun Oct. 1804, ch. 98.

140. *Same* at session begun Oct. 1806, ch. 34 passed Oct. 29.

141. The sources of all the legislative proceedings cited in connection with this sequel, except where otherwise noted, are to be found in the *Legislative Journals* of the sessions commencing Oct. 1825, Oct. 1826 and Oct. 1827.

the influx of tickets from other states, it was the dictate of wisdom, the committee urged, to reverse "these thousand little streams which flow away from us." Convinced the evils in the system would be minimized by state management, the committee recommended a state lottery.

Meanwhile, the same year, several offers to run a school fund lottery had been received. A joint committee, while concluding it would be inexpedient for the *state* to run such an affair, recommended, on November 11, that one of the offers from a private contractor should be accepted. The closest any of them came was one made by Anderson G. Dana of Vermont, but a resolution made in the assembly to give him leave to bring in a bill was defeated three days later 92 to 78.

In his opening speech to the legislature nearly a year later, on October 13, 1826, Governor Ezra Butler declared the state had uniformly for more than 20 years disapproved raising money by lottery for any purpose whatsoever and if it were to reverse its policy, "the principles of morality in Vermont must suffer a sad decline." The opponents of lotteries gathered strength. When, on the following November 3, a vote was taken to dismiss a bill to grant a lottery for the benefit of the common schools, it passed 118 to 67. And several other attempts at this time to institute or revive lotteries for other purposes all failed.

But now the chickens came home to roost. The state had failed to put a time limit on many of the old grants and, assuming after many years had passed that such lotteries as were dormant would never revive, had failed on non-user grounds to extinguish such as still had life in them.

One of them was the *Charitable Lottery*, no. 41 above, authorized in 1800. Surely, by 1825, the memory of it had gathered dust. Earlier in the article it was explained that beginning in the early 1820's a new system of drawing lotteries had been introduced by means of which the fate of many thousands of tickets could be determined in a few minutes. The leading lottery firm in the country at the time, Yates & McIntyre, after introducing the new system, proceeded to prove there was money in the snappy, quickly drawn schemes.

In that year, 1825, with one person after another petitioning the Vermont assembly for a school fund lottery grant, an enterprising man named E. R. Campbell, instead of hopefully competing with the other petitioners, and aware the *Charitable* grant legally remained in a state of suspended animation, prevailed upon the Windsor County judges, as they had a right to do, to appoint him the new manager. Under the appropriate name *Phoenix Lottery* he revived the grant, dating his first advertisement November 10, which happened to precede by less than a week the rejection of most or all of the school fund applications.

Campbell's Class 1 in the new series, drawn on February 9, 1826, thus

inaugurated Vermont's new lottery era. The fifth class in the new series was advertised in March of the following year. Yates & McIntyre, though not the inventors of the so-called ternary system of drawing, held an exclusive right to it, and rather than deal with them, Campbell, as did others, utilized rival systems, though not so speedy and flexible as the ternary. By a dozen years, however, through legal developments, the ternary system had become commonplace throughout the country. In fact, it was used in Vermont by 1828.

Meanwhile, other persons scanned the landscape for sleeping grants. The old *Benevolent Lottery* that had been altered to the *Friendly Lottery*, no. 40 above, was now revived in June 1826 as the *Vermont Lottery*, under which name several dozen classes were drawn into 1829. The old *Reparation* grant, no. 28 above, was revived in 1826 as the *Vermont Consolidated Lottery* with at least three classes. The old *White River Bridge Lottery*, also known originally as the *Hartford Lottery*, no. 29 above, resumed late in 1826 retaining both names. And the *Killington Lottery*, authorized way back in 1791, no. 20 above, transformed indifferently as the *Vermont Lottery* and the *Vermont State Lottery*, was drawn in a score or so of classes in 1827-28. The latest Vermont drawing I know of, as seen from the single surviving ticket, is in the *Consolidated Grand State Lottery*. Dated 1831 at Brattleboro, it is presumably a ticket in the old *Benevolent* grant above, but I am not satisfied the lottery was running legally that late.

After refusing to authorize a school fund lottery, the legislature could hardly be expected to avert its eyes from this development. Governor Butler in his opening address at the October 1826 session, cited above, remarked it was "a little surprising" and, wondering where the business would stop, suggested a legal decision should be obtained as to the validity of the grants.

Later that month, on the 25th, the committee that had been appointed to consider this part of the governor's message, ruefully reported: "The evils complained of, arising from acts of former legislatures, undoubtedly dictated by the purest motives of humanity and benevolence, admit . . . of no safer or more certain remedy than patient endurance, until the sums authorized by such grants shall have been raised."

What cannot be done directly can sometimes be accomplished backhandedly. To make the best of a bad situation, the legislature on November 15 passed an act laying an annual license fee of \$500 upon anyone selling tickets in lotteries operating in the state, the collections to go into the school fund.<sup>142</sup> When it was seen a year later, in 1827, that some

142. *Acts and Laws* at session begun Oct. 1826, ch. 15 passed Nov. 15.

of the dealers were willing to absorb the cost, the fee was doubled.<sup>143</sup> In recommending the increase, a legislative committee felt the step would "ultimately amount to an annihilation of lotteries in this state."

If the question is asked as to when Vermont abolished lotteries, by no means could the answer refer to the random purchase of tickets in lotteries operating outside the state, long ago or right up to today. If what is meant is the last legislative authorization, then the answer, of course, is 1804. But such a date, registering intent, may and often has been misconstrued. Omitting a camouflaged grant or two, New York authorized its last lottery in 1820 and Pennsylvania in 1821, but the backlog of legal drawings in both states kept up till the end of 1833. So this date, in both of these states, is certainly as of much or more importance than the date of the last grant, or the date of any legislative or constitutional prohibition, which usually, back then, excepted such lotteries as still had rights.

It all depends upon what is meant. And so, in Vermont, the answer is 1804 for the last authorization. But for the last openly conducted drawing in any of Vermont's 42 lotteries, the answer must be, owing to lack of time limits in some of the grants, probably 1829, but possibly, so far as yet determined, 1831.

#### IV

At least one example must be given of the humorous and sometimes brilliant lottery advertising over the years. An advertisement in the *New-York Evening Post* of October 13, 1826, identified the *Vermont Consolidated Lottery*, no. 28 above, as the *Vermont (or Joe Strickland's) Lottery*. Joe was a lucky bumpkin conjured up at the period, and for a while he became the range as did Kilroy ("Kilroy was here") of the 1940's. At least several lottery dealers utilized him in their ads, including P. T. Barnum when only 19 years old. Another was George W. Arnold with an office in New York City.

One of Arnold's puffs consists of an ostensible letter Joe sent to his "Uncle Ben" following his arrival in New York City. It was alleged to have been originally published in the *Vermont Recorder*.<sup>144</sup> Dated at New York July 7, 1825, and, commencing "Deer Unk," part of it reads: "Next day arter I got here, I was goin down one of the longest roads they have got here, and jist as I got a little below the horse spittle, I cum plump on to Arnold's lotry office, and there I see the darndest curiausest, wheel,

143. *Same* at session begun Oct. 1827, ch. 9 passed Nov. 13.

144. The letter I quote is in a 32-page fragment of some New York City publication, such as a directory, consisting of nothing but advertisements, the latest of which is dated Jan. 1826. The fragment, now in my lottery collection, is rubber stamped, "Library of Hannibal Hamlin."

that hes got in his winder, that ever I see. . . . I thort I'de find out howt went so I see a little, sry man coming down the road, with a flat hat on, and says I, you dont no of nobody, that dont live no where round here, that dont no nothen, that cant tell me how that wheel goes, cant you?" Well, it looked like a lucky place, so in Joe popped, bought a ticket in the "fillydelphy" lottery, and "never was so Darnation scart" in his life when the next day he learned he had won a prize of \$250.