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James Taylor's Progressive Vision: The Green Mountain Parkway

For Taylor, the parkway was synonymous with progress. It would open Vermont to the outside, literally as well as figuratively.

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In a 1936 referendum Vermonters rejected a bond issue intended to provide funding for the Green Mountain Parkway. The parkway would have traveled the length of Vermont, following the spine of the Green Mountains, passing near the top of every major peak in the state, including Killington, Pico, Camel's Hump, Mansfield, and Jay. During the three years prior to the referendum, the parkway issue divided Vermonters along lines that violated the traditional social, economic, and political patterns that had come to define Vermont decisionmaking by the early twentieth century.

The proposal served as a lightning rod for many of the concerns Vermonters had about the future of their state. For many, the parkway proposal reflected all too sharply the atmosphere of uncertainty and change within Vermont. The arguments for and against it referenced a different relationship with the outside world in the future. The parkway promised greater federal involvement in the state, meaning more funds but also, perhaps, Vermonters' loss of control over their economic destiny. The

parkway was premised on the economic boon the state's scenery would provide and was thus a harbinger of a Vermont less reliant on agriculture and industry and more dependent on tourism. The parkway forced Vermonters to ask themselves who they were, what they valued, how they valued it, and where their state was headed. It asked them to do so while undergoing the stresses of the Great Depression.

If the parkway raised questions about what Vermont's future would look like, it also raised anew many of the chronic, deep-seated worries that had plagued Vermont during the previous century. Continuously forced to respond to the demands of a rapidly changing world, Vermonters no sooner adapted to these demands than they changed again. Solutions to Vermont's economic problems always had to take into account the limitations of its location and landscape. As people adapted their economic future to the geography, landscape came to be seen as an important component in their social development as well. To people living within and outside the state, Vermont's landscape, and especially its mountains, came to have a strong identifying value, molding the character of Vermonters themselves.

This aspect was not lost on Vermont's progressive reformers, who sought to improve the lives of rural Vermonters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, it is not surprising that landscape is featured so prominently in that showcase of their efforts, the Vermont Commission on Country Life. The commission's report, *Rural Vermont* (1931), includes a photograph and two-page description of a relief map of the state, encouraging every school in Vermont to purchase one.

The Committee on Topography and Climate explained the prominence of the relief map at the very beginning of its report:

Of all the methods of presenting a region comprehensively to the eye none, the Committee feels, equals that of the relief model. For here can be depicted so that, without training in interpretation or much stretch of the imagination, "he who runs may read" the topography of a region in its true areal relationships, the trends of the mountains and valleys, the relative positions of uplands and lowlands, the courses of the streams, the positions of the lakes and minor features. The vertical distances are of necessity exaggerated but even this can be done in such moderation that no undue distortion is produced.¹

Displaying a vertical scale of four to one, the relief map portrays Vermont as a collection of jagged, forbidding peaks with only a small proportion of flat land. It resembles Tibet far more than it does Vermont and is unrecognizable to anyone who has ever flown over the state's rolling countryside. The assumptions implicit in the committee's easy acceptance of such a skewed view of Vermont's topography is significant. How rugged

and mountainous did the commission members really believe Vermont was? Did the exaggerated relief map reflect the exaggerated importance Vermont's mountains played in the minds of its people? Opinions about what that landscape stood for and who should use and benefit from it varied greatly. The discourse of the main combatants in the parkway debate resonates with these conflicts.

“CONTENT TO BE A VALLEY PEOPLE”

The parkway project was first proposed by William J. Wilgus in 1933. Wilgus, a renowned civil engineer, believed that the parkway (“Vermont’s opportunity,” as he called it) was the only project capable of qualifying for funds under the recently passed National Industrial Recovery Act. Wilgus asserted that Vermont would receive \$10 million in direct funds for a project that would employ 6,000 to 8,000 people and bring with it a host of other tangible and intangible benefits for the state.²

Working very closely with Wilgus in promoting the plan was the Vermont Chamber of Commerce and its executive secretary, James Paddock Taylor.³ Taylor had originated the idea of the Long Trail and founded the Green Mountain Club (GMC). As executive secretary of the chamber, he led an unceasing, often behind-the-scenes campaign on behalf of the parkway project during the three years it was under consideration in Vermont. In a two-year period, Taylor and Wilgus exchanged some sixty-three letters. It might seem odd that the man responsible for the Long Trail would work so hard on a project that many believed would destroy the trail and that GMC leaders vehemently opposed. But if we look at the reasoning behind Taylor’s original efforts to create the Long Trail, we see that his focus was not on nature nor even on enjoyment of the mountains for their own sake. Instead, he was drawn to the mountains’ usefulness in promoting his progressive program for Vermont’s citizens.

Born in New York State on September 9, 1872, Taylor, the son of a Colgate math professor, attended Colgate Academy and Colgate University, graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1895. After graduate work at Harvard and Columbia and travel to Germany, he returned to Colgate Academy to teach. In 1908 he moved to Vermont to assume the position of assistant principal at the Vermont Academy in Saxton’s River.⁴

Taylor’s interest in hiking trails grew out of his experiences at Vermont Academy. He strongly believed that outdoor activities were important to the physical and spiritual development of his charges. Taylor wrote a manuscript entitled “Outdoor Life and Sports for High Schools—A System for Vermont.” One reason for the program, according to Taylor, was that a “proper state policy for Vermont is to do something new and differ-



James Paddock Taylor, about 1931-1933. Photograph by William Chandler, St. Albans.

ent and to do it first." Taylor further believed that "a Vermonter is not a genuine Vermonter, a citizen of the Green Mountain State until he really knows through personal observation and experience the Vermont landscape [*sic*], valley and mountains."⁵

Taylor also developed a program for the "non-athletic boy—a boy whose physique or whose temperament prevented him from entering or make him unwilling to enter the competitive social games." The advantages of outdoor sports (and by this he had in mind walking, mountain climbing, skiing, and snowshoeing) were, in order: (1) "almost no equipment"; (2) "always in open air, summer and winter"; (3) "all pitted, not against each other, but against time and space"; (4) "the sport is attractive in itself, and for its own merit and joys"; (5) "to learn these sports is needed part of culture, since we need them in later life"; (6) "the associated value connected with these activities"; (7) "not so much danger from overdoing"; (8) "no danger of professionalism"; and (9) "associated values with these activities: connected with nature study, enjoyment of scenery, study of humanity and history."⁶ As this eclectic list indicates, Taylor attached numerous social values to his proposal. For example, people do not hike solely for hiking's sake; the main concern should be how hiking will further socially redeeming values. It is significant that Taylor placed "nature study" at the bottom of the list and then only as a subcategory of "associated values."

At the same time, Taylor was grappling in his own mind with the effect of Vermont's geography on the formation of its people's character. In an essay written in 1910 (the year of the GMC's founding), Taylor began with the presumption that "every true Vermonter is a mountaineer." He then cataloged each city and large village that had "its own local mountain deity." The state's nickname, the Green Mountain State,

suggests not only geography, but also history. The mountains have bisected the life of the people, giving a special significance to the term, "East" and "West" as used by the politician and tradesman, and associating in the mind of the traveller and engineer the phrase "Over the mountain" with the difficult and the impossible. The mountains have also cultivated that passion for freedom and independence, that integrity and energy which characterize the "Green Mountain Boys" in war and in peace. The state seal has mountains in the background, for the genius of the state is the spirit of the mountains.⁷

In this analysis Taylor recites themes common to the congratulatory rhetoric of Vermonters from Ethan Allen onward.

But Taylor was beginning to wrestle with a more complex ideology of the mountains. In 1911 he spoke at a University of Vermont dinner in Boston on the topic of Vermont's mountains. In several pages that he omitted when he delivered the speech but retained in the manuscript,

Taylor wrote that the Green Mountains had always been perceived as a barrier. He imagined that a visitor to Vermont would note that the Green Mountain Boys had disappeared and that “the present citizens of this state wish the mountains could disappear too, and this with good reason.” Taylor thought the visitor would be right, for

the mountains have not proved to be blessings, through our effort to make them play a beneficent part in the life of the people, they have inevitably been a hindrance to the State of Vermont. Unclimbed, they have made a commonwealth of valley-dwellers, complacent and provincial. Undeveloped, they have fostered local conservatism and narrowness of interest. Unrevered, they have cultivated in us all an excess of individuality. And so the mountains have had their revenge on us. We have misinterpreted our mountains. Shadowed and hidden by our ranges, we have stayed close in the valley, content to be a valley people, each feeling that his mountain-fringed plot is a world.⁸

Of course many would argue that the very “conservatism” and “excess of individuality” Taylor decried in his speech were what made Vermonters special.

Taylor’s solution to meeting the challenge of the mountains was contained in the GMC’s constitution of 1910, in which the organization dedicated itself to making “the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people.” The constitution further stipulated that “the object of the club shall be to make trails and roads.”⁹ This was the focus of the part of the speech Taylor *did* deliver: trails *and* roads—and with them, mountaintop development.

The speech Taylor made began, “There is but one public road to a Vermont mountain top, and that road does not approach Mount Mansfield from the direction of the State metropolis. The road to Killington along which years ago consumptives from the western and southern states were hurried to safety and health, looks now like the stony bed of a mountain torrent. Such mountains as Jay Peak and Camel’s Hump, Equinox and Stratton, are inaccessible save to the pedestrian.” Taylor detailed the lack of summit hotels, with the one exception on top of Mount Mansfield, and described the wreck of a hotel on Killington, “which contains but one room that is now habitable, and that only for very uncritical campers” who are exposed to a nightly “contentious symposium” of squealing porcupines. “And such, alas is our present mountain hospitality.” Trails, too, were in short supply: “The Green Mountains have not been humanized. They have not been covered with a lace work of intricate trails.” Taylor complained that there were no trails “from height to height, even where we have the opportunity to form such splendid mountain parks as could be made near Burlington and Rutland.”¹⁰

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Taylor kept scrapbooks of clippings pertaining to subjects that interested him, often annotating the articles with a thick red marker. In his scrapbook for August–December 1911, Taylor made the following entry:

Spiel the New Vermont Its Features

Unity of the State, No Longer overemphasis on Freedom

Positive, No Longer A Negative Attitude Toward Life

Energy, No Longer Lassitude

Hospitality, No Longer Indifference to Public

A Scientific, No Longer A Sentimental State

Suggestions

New Vermont, not so much a new state, as a new state of mind.¹¹

We can see in these marginalia the grab-bag of progressive ideas that constituted Taylor's thinking. The emphasis on unity as opposed to freedom (and by this one assumes Taylor means individuality) is a classic progressive credo, as is the emphasis on optimism and science as opposed to negativity and sentiment. His reference to hospitality, though rooted in Vermont's attempts to cultivate the tourist trade, can also be seen as a desire to create an increasingly connected society in which Vermonters are more community oriented, less insular. In short, as he notes at the end of his list, what Taylor wanted was a new way of thinking about the world.

Taylor hoped to win this new view by reintroducing Vermonters to their mountains. If only Vermonters would climb to the tops of the Green Mountains, he argued, they would be able to see the wider world around them.¹² It followed that the development of Vermont's mountains would open Vermont to the outside world, and open Vermont minds to a different way of thinking.

Because Taylor was not much of a hiker or trail builder himself, his main contribution to the GMC and the Long Trail was their conception. Taylor left the work to others, most notably Clarence P. Cowles. He occasionally joined an afternoon outing of the GMC, but he directed his attention to other projects and began to spend considerably more time driving around the state in his Ford, which he called his "chariot of freedom."¹³

Taylor left Vermont Academy in 1912 for a job as secretary of the Greater Vermont Association. In 1922 the association became the Vermont State Chamber of Commerce. Taylor served as the chamber's executive secretary until his death in 1949.¹⁴ In this capacity Taylor brought his commitment and energy to a crusade for paved roads and roadside beautification. In a speech before the Lions Club in October 1930, he spoke on "cities cemented together." "If Vermont is a vital contemporaneous part of the America of today," he said, "these architectural gems of Burlington and Montpelier either are, or are soon to be, chained together by road-

side parkways which will give aid and comfort to the eye and the spirit, just as does the ribbon of cement give aid and comfort to our physical selves."¹⁵ Later that year, in a December radio speech in St. Albans entitled "240 Miles from Paradise," Taylor explained how economic development could be stimulated by road building: "to meet unemployment needs as well as development needs, Vermont should do what other states are doing, speed up her own public works. And our public works are highways."¹⁶

Road construction had to be accompanied by roadside beautification projects. In a 1931 speech Taylor noted that the "busiest men in the United States are proving to be Landscape Engineers, new and old, in the Highway Departments of the States."¹⁷ Taylor cited "seven roadside sins": (1) "dead trees and lifeless branches," (2) "drunken tipsy fence posts," (3) "no man's land triangles at highway intersections," (4) "raw slopes," (5) "mechanical cadavers," (6) "bad sign placement," and (7) "gaunt vacant uninteresting barren stretches of roadside," where "entertaining pictures should be painted with trees and shrubs and flowers and ferns." According to Taylor, "wonderful pavement through wonderful country is to receive what it deserves, wonderful handling of the seven roadside sins, together with the restoration and perfecting of the most attractive roadside and nearby scenery in Vermont."¹⁸

Taylor expounded on similar motifs (for similar motives) in discussing paved roads. These roads would link together the people of the state and link Vermont to the rest of the country, ushering in a modern age and—he hoped—a new way of thinking. Here Taylor again stressed the use of roads to serve the interests of unity so important to him. But he also believed roads would impress outsiders. Taylor wanted Vermont to be more like the rest of the United States, more "contemporaneous." Vermont should do "what other states are doing."

"WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH"¹⁹

Given Taylor's attitudes and goals, it becomes easier to understand why he embraced Wilgus's parkway project with such enthusiasm. For Taylor, the parkway was synonymous with progress. It would open Vermont to the outside, literally as well as figuratively. A year before Wilgus proposed his plan, Taylor had written to William Beardsley, the president of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. "If more and more Vermonters later from their own initiative and in their own way study the villages and cities and the highways and parkways of Westchester County, there will seep into Vermont consciousness more and more the ideas and tastes and desires that we need to inculcate in order to keep things going along the way in which they have been started."²⁰ After the parkway had been pro-

posed, Taylor explained that it would inspire others to pay more attention to secondary roads. In a letter to William Hazlett Upson, a contributor to the *Saturday Evening Post* and a parkway supporter, Taylor wrote that the project would have “a tremendous effect in toning up to Parkway standards a lot of our valley roads, so that they will become voluntary parkways.”²¹ The parkway had become a vehicle for the advancement of Taylor’s other goals for Vermont in a concrete sense, by furthering road improvement and roadside beautification; more abstractly, it tied Vermonters into a modern, national mental outlook—“a new state of mind.”²²

Taylor saw federal involvement as a positive development for Vermont. It was important for him that the rest of the country look favorably on Vermont. On occasion Taylor seemed to fawn on the opinions of others. Recognition worked both ways. Acceptance by Washington implied (indeed, seemed to require) Vermont’s acceptance of the federal project.²³ He was thus dismayed at the attitude of some Vermonters who felt that federal involvement in the state was to be avoided. “Why man, it was the intervention by the Federal Bureau of Public Roads through State Chamber initiative that helped set up our highway system back in ’26 and ’27. In my mind and experience that incident is the great fact about federal relations, and a fact to thank heaven for.”²⁴ Taylor was cheered to learn that Wilgus had secured the favorable disposition of a “high Washington official”: “I feel that the new day and the new deal for Vermont are right upon us.”²⁵

But as the project became bogged down in controversy, Taylor worried that Vermont was being left behind while other states jumped on the New Deal bandwagon. Parkways were being built in the South, New York and New Hampshire were planning parkways, and national parks were being created in the West. If other states were participating in the New Deal, why not Vermont?²⁶ Taylor glorified the National Recovery Administration: “There have been many interpretations of the letters NRA. Here is one invented in your honor and apropos to this occasion. It is applicable to every citizen in the United States Now Recreation Attainable.”²⁷

Taylor saw the parkway as another step in the perfection of the Vermont character. This progression depended first on trails and then on roads, as “dust and washboard roads were not the final word in Vermont’s highways.” After the Long Trail came better roads; now it was time for the parkway.²⁸ Noting that it had taken five years to get his “better roads crusade” going, Taylor wrote that “we will need some time to penetrate into every nook and corner of Vermont.”²⁹

It was not merely penetration into every “nook and corner” of Vermont that Taylor sought but the penetration of “modern” ideas into the minds of Vermonters. “The Parkway is a part of that program to get Vermont

out of her valley-mindedness into the big view of things which should be expected from a mountain people."³⁰ In an earlier letter to Boston landscape architect John Nolen, Taylor wrote, "My opinion of the proposed survey for the Green Mountain Parkway is that not merely in itself and for itself, but also in all its connotations and implications along planning and state designing lines this survey will be one of the most significant and influential things which ever happened in Vermont."³¹ Speaking more generally of the project, Taylor wrote Wilgus, "I am more and more convinced that the Parkway project and all that goes with it in related ideas and setups is a supremely important thing for Vermont."³²

Taylor's projects, from the Long Trail to paved roads and finally the parkway, were held together by the idea of using Vermont's landscape as an instrument of progress. In a letter to Wilgus, Taylor explained that years before he had looked at the Green Mountain range and wondered whether a footpath would extend over the summit of the mountains from one side of the state to the other. "That was twenty-four years ago. Now the Parkway idea fits right into the mental niche which was once the locus of the pathway dream and hope."³³

"THE STAGE HAS BEEN SET AND OUR MINDS PREPARED"

Taylor's belief that the parkway was a godsend for Vermont led him to conclude that opposition could only be the result of ignorance about the project's real attributes and merits. Given his background as a pedagogue, it is not surprising that he stressed the need to educate people. Once Vermonters became educated about the true merits of the project, Taylor was confident that they would be nearly unanimous in accepting it. "The difficulty is that people do not understand this language and are not aware of such a lot of things. How are we to make them aware?"³⁴ Adding to the problem of educating Vermonters was what Taylor saw as their instinctive conservatism. "It takes time to sift the truth from the false through the sieve of popular reactions. Then, Vermont sieves slowly anyway."³⁵ And the proponents did not think that they had much time. On June 15, 1934, the Chamber of Commerce decided to create a Parkway Committee, which would focus its energies on obtaining approval of the project.³⁶ Corresponding with Upson, who was later named chairman of the Parkway Committee's publicity subcommittee, Taylor regretted the speed with which the idea had to be communicated to the people: "It is too bad this whole game had to be played out so rapidly, because ordinarily a long educational period must precede the acceptance of any new idea in Vermont."³⁷ As a result, he spent much of his time devising with Wilgus and others ways to educate Vermonters and others about the project—an approach made all the more necessary given what the two men

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saw as a relentless campaign of disinformation being waged by the anti-New Deal *Rutland Herald* as well as Taylor's own Green Mountain Club.

In language that reflected a typically progressive mixture of impatience and presumptuousness, Taylor often told Wilgus and others of the grave difficulties they faced in trying to educate Vermonters about the parkway—or about anything for that matter. The problem was that Vermonters saw themselves as a special people, a view that did not jibe with Taylor's desire to make Vermont like the rest of the country. "We must realize that we are dealing with a people who feel that in some ways they are 'different' and wish to remain 'different.'"³⁸ Commenting on how "parks and parkways and publicity must ride into every county in the state," an exasperated Taylor told Wilgus, "Ye Gods, what effort and effort it takes to snaggle a mob of people into an idea or a procedure."³⁹

Writing to John Thomas, vice president of the National Life Insurance Company and president of the Parkway Committee, Taylor commented on "the fundamentalists [*sic*] letter from Isle La Motte which is passionate to have Vermont remain 'unspoiled' assuming that a Parkway means tin cans and garbage along the right of way. Oh Lord, how long, how long?"⁴⁰

Seeking information about national parks, Taylor explained to the director of the National Park Service that "we are anxious to secure data on the development of the National Park System, which will help orient Vermonters in the National Park world." Vermonters "need to know what has been happening, what it means and why an opportunity to enter into and share the move would be a blessing for Vermont. They need to get the national viewpoint about all this business and see things in the large."⁴¹

In Taylor's mind it was not just ordinary people who needed educating. Taylor was prepared to challenge what he saw as misperceptions by a host of experts as well. When the Vermont House of Representatives first defeated a bill to fund the state portion of the parkway, Taylor characterized the vote as "careless."⁴² Writing to Nolen on difficulties with Vermonters, he stated, "Some of them are far from realizing it, and object to having anything other than the Long Trail pathway through the Green Mountains. We are engaged in the interesting task of trying to persuade some that Vermont really needs something and that this is it. Some job!"⁴³

In selling the project, Wilgus served as front man, tirelessly pursuing a course of speaking engagements before civic and social organizations. In addition Wilgus used his contacts in Washington to gain the ear of members of the administration of Franklin Roosevelt, primarily through the president's nephew, Frederic A. Delano, chairman of the Advisory Committee of National Planning, and Colonel E. M. Waite, the deputy ad-

ministrator of Public Works. Wilgus wrote Taylor that he had asked Delano for an appointment with Roosevelt, "whom I should hope to win to the project."⁴⁴

Taylor, for his part, used his knowledge of the Vermont political scene to advise Wilgus and others on the campaign.⁴⁵ He also applied his brand of chamber-of-commerce boosterism to the project, which consisted mainly of getting as many influential people on board as possible, reflecting the extraordinary importance he placed on their opinions, particularly if they were from outside Vermont.

He quickly contacted Nolen and another Boston-based landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. Nolen, who had given a speech at the annual meeting of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce in Burlington in 1930, was a wholehearted supporter of the project.⁴⁶ Olmsted was not. In response to a letter from Taylor, Olmsted admitted that he was not sufficiently familiar with the territory involved "to form a confident and thoroughly well grounded opinion" but believed the project to be "of very doubtful expediency and possibly very wasteful and unwise." Olmsted referred to a negative editorial in the *Boston Herald* on the parkway project. He acknowledged the bias of the editor against road extension into wilderness areas but thought the editor's points against the project (especially on economic grounds) were probably valid. As Olmsted saw it, the project paralleled the Mulholland Drive project in Los Angeles, which he had studied as part of recommendations he had prepared for a system of parks and parkways for Los Angeles County. The drive followed the crest of the Santa Monica Mountains, first on one side then on the other, with scenic views through undeveloped country. Lateral roads connected population centers through the passes. Though the drive offered scenic views, it was little used, even by tourists, who preferred more direct routes between population centers. The road had been expensive to build and expensive to maintain. Taxpayers were unwilling to pay for the maintenance of a road that was "of no direct commercial value and . . . inconveniently remote from their places of residence and business." Olmsted concluded that "there is little doubt now that the Mulholland road was a wasteful piece of extravagance."⁴⁷

Given Olmsted's stature and the disturbing similarities between the Mulholland project and the parkway plan, Taylor found his comments threatening and dismissed Olmsted's opinion. Referring to Nolen's support and Olmsted's opposition, Taylor wrote Wilgus that doctors "will disagree and sometimes the layman's judgment ought to count some as between conflicting doctors."⁴⁸ Notwithstanding a clumsy attempt by Wilgus to tempt him with the job of landscape architect for the project, Olmsted never spoke out in favor of the parkway. When the time came

to appoint a consulting landscape architect for the initial survey, Nolen got the position.⁴⁹

Taylor spent a great deal of time and effort trying to prove that the parkway was not a new idea. To detractors as well as supporters, he often sent a copy of the GMC's constitution, pointing out that the club's object was to build trails *and* roads.⁵⁰ Writing to Thomas, Taylor explained that the GMC's constitution was "'vague' but the road element in that constitution is invaluable now."⁵¹

He placed supreme importance on Thomas's 1916 report as president of Middlebury College. In the report Thomas noted Joseph Battell's 1915 gift to the college of 25,000 acres of mountain land and an additional devise to the United States for a national park. Thomas proposed that the lands be joined, additional land purchased for the park, and a road built along a strip from approximately the Lincoln Gap south to the Brandon Gap, a distance of some 25 miles: "I have in mind the crest of the ridge, extending down the mountains on either side sufficiently to allow the construction of a scenic highway along its entire length."⁵² Taylor noted that the Committee on Summer Residents and Tourists had also proposed a scenic highway. In its report to the Vermont Commission on Country Life in 1931, the committee had advocated construction of a road "well up on the slopes of the Green Mountains, on either side of this range, constructed in semi-permanent form."⁵³ Taylor took every opportunity to explain to the public the evolution of the mountain road idea in his own speeches and press releases.⁵⁴

Earlier precedents (none of which was ever built, with the exception of the Smuggler's Notch road) would seem to have no bearing on the Green Mountain Parkway project. But Taylor wanted to emphasize that others had discussed mountain roads before the Wilgus proposal came along because he believed that Vermonters had to have time to digest an idea. Earlier talk of mountain roads had, he believed, given them that time. Taylor told Thomas that the Middlebury report would be useful: "the object is to make your early proposition loom in the mind of the public as a precedent for the plan which is now engaging so much popular attention."⁵⁵ Writing to Wilgus about Theodore Vail's 1912 comment about the need for "millions of dollars [to be] spent on mountain roads,"⁵⁶ Taylor explained that "it shows that the idea of mountain roads has been at least voiced a number of times so that the conservative Vermonter really need not feel that he is being rushed into something that had never even vaguely referred to years and years ago. Psychology is harder than rocks and heavier than lead. Would that we could find some philosopher's stone to work transmutation."⁵⁷ According to Taylor, the mountain road precedent meant that "the stage has been set and our minds prepared" for the Wilgus park-

way.⁵⁸ Taylor thought he understood the psychology of Vermonters and tailored his message accordingly.

Both Taylor and Wilgus also understood the importance of newspapers in the debate, not only inside but also outside the state. Wilgus worked the newspapers from the front, appearing at functions the press would cover and addressing the Vermont Press Association.⁵⁹ Taylor worked behind the scenes, monitoring the local papers and repeatedly sending summaries of the editorial stances of local papers to Wilgus and Governor Stanley C. Wilson.⁶⁰ He issued chamber press releases such as Wilgus's parkway prospectus, "Vermont's Opportunity," which was fed to papers throughout the state and nation.⁶¹ The chamber also printed copies of an address by William Hazlett Upson, reprinted a summary of the 1934 federal survey of the route, and distributed an informational broadside.⁶² Wilgus early on acknowledged Taylor's excellent contacts with the papers.⁶³ In September 1934 Taylor had copies of a report on the initial survey of the parkway by the parkway's resident engineer, Laurie D. Cox, mailed to 125 newspapers in New England, New York, and New Jersey. "The beauty of this article," Taylor wrote, "is that it gives the whole subject a new orientation and new values."⁶⁴ The chamber made 3,000 copies of the report, and Taylor sent copies to anyone who wrote him about the project.⁶⁵

The proponents' most influential organ within Vermont was the *Burlington Free Press*. Its publisher, David Willard Howe, cooperated with the chamber in promoting the project, as did its editor, Edward E. Crane. Commenting on their importance to the cause, Taylor told Wilgus: "All the intellectual fodder which you can give Editor Crane and Proprietor Howe of the *Free Press* is a blessed gift because you are helping build up in the newspaper mind and through that in the public mind a new and proper conception of the design and destiny of Vermont."⁶⁶ Taylor, clearly alluding to the *Rutland Herald's* objection that the parkway was a frivolous use of funds in the face of Vermont's more pressing problems, praised one of Crane's editorials as necessary "to counteract the eternal vapidness of this talk of money, money, money for flood control."⁶⁷ Wilgus called Crane "a tower of strength."⁶⁸ They also had an ally in Frank E. Howe, the publisher of the *Bennington Banner*. Howe was the first to propose and promote a state system of hard-surfaced roads.⁶⁹

Although both men attempted to manipulate the press and were perfectly happy when the editorial bias went their way at the *Free Press*, they were utterly intolerant of the *Rutland Herald's* attempts to defeat the proposal by utilizing those same tactics. Though many opposed the project and though the Green Mountain Club also mounted organized resistance, Taylor directed most of his ire at the *Herald*, which was owned

by GMC members William H. Field and his son William Jr. The *Herald* became the scapegoat for all the parkway's difficulties because Taylor considered it to be the most significant threat to the project—as did many other proponents.⁷⁰

Commenting on Wilgus's numerous engagements, Taylor wrote, "Your speaking dates thrill me, especially the one with the Rutland Rotary. Here's an opportunity for you with hurricanic eloquence to blow away the RUTLAND HERALD smoke screen which lies heavy on some of their minds. So do blow hard."⁷¹ Following a petition drive by the *Herald*, Taylor noted that the paper was becoming "well nigh pathological."⁷² Advocates of the plan were so threatened by the *Herald's* campaign that Thomas Wright sent a letter to President Roosevelt. Probably written by Taylor, the letter stated that "genuine fair factual criticism of any proposal is most welcome, but the misconceptions and the misinterpretations reflected in the enclosed appeal and petition mislead the public and thus fail to be significant." The letter closed with the remark that the "newspapers as a whole and the Vermont people [*sic*] as a whole are for the Mountain Parkway. Official Vermont is for it. Exceptions prove the rule. We feel that it is only fair to you through this letter and the enclosures to let you know how we fail to understand just really why the RUTLAND HERALD opposes and has opposed the Parkway plan." The initial draft of the letter indicated that copies of the *Herald's* petition were to be included; this language was omitted from the final copy, which instead made reference to "enclosures." It is unclear whether the chamber did send copies of the petition directly to Roosevelt. If it did, it certainly would have been a blunder.⁷³ Even if the administration had never before heard of the *Rutland Herald*, between this letter and Wright's later letter to Ickes explaining that the *Herald* was now on board, the proponents had certainly signaled the paper's importance.

Taylor was worried that the *Herald's* activities were having an effect on public opinion. He told Thomas that he had been informed that the rural mail carriers, influenced by the newspaper's ideas, wondered whether money should be spent on improving the roads they used rather than on anything less practical and of less benefit to them.⁷⁴ At a chamber meeting, Taylor queried how to handle the *New York Tribune's* opposition to the parkway.⁷⁵ Taylor sent material to the *Tribune* in an effort to "get some positive material to them who have been following the cue of the RUTLAND HERALD a little too much."⁷⁶

On August 11, 1934, Wilgus informed Taylor that he was leaving Vermont to assume the job of director of work relief for New York City. He would be supervising 140,000 men and women and a \$120 million budget.⁷⁷ Taylor pointed out that Wilgus's labor and budget responsibil-

ities amounted to one parkway per month.⁷⁸ The two men continued to correspond on the project for another year, and Wilgus did what he could from afar.

Taylor idolized Wilgus. Perhaps Taylor saw in this nationally famous man with White House contacts someone he could never be. While Wilgus displayed affection for Taylor, Taylor's letters were filled with adulation for Wilgus. Early in the campaign Taylor wrote Wilgus, "I stand in awe of your vision and your undying persistence which will be rewarded with the crown of glory which they deserve."⁷⁹ Four days later he went on with his praise: "What a fight you have fought! How glad everybody is to make any possible contribution to forwarding what you have championed so valiantly. Vermont owes you undying gratitude, which will be recorded even in the RUTLAND HERALD some fair day."⁸⁰

As time wore on and quick approval of the project by Washington became less and less likely, Taylor became increasingly bitter. He lashed out at Vermont's conservatism and railed against the *Herald*. Furious with the "conservative standpatter" and the "bitter-ender," Taylor fretted about the effect of William Hazlett Upson's reference to "all Vermonters" in a *Herald* article on the parkway. "A statement of that kind makes it possible for a tiny minority either through selfish or special interest or stupidity or a desire to oppose everything, to hold up God's truth."⁸¹ A negative editorial (in the *Burlington Free Press* no less) reflected "the obfuscation of the public mind during the last few days and weeks. . . . You see, our Republican virtue is not to be incriminated by the reception of any gifts from the Federal Government. That would be accepting a bribe. It would be endangering the immaculacy of our alabaster Republicanism. God forbid that there should be the slightest taint on our summum bonum."⁸²

In 1935 the parkway debate left the forum of amorphous public opinion and entered the realm of statehouse politics. The stresses of this process often revealed a more candid admission of the problems some of the combatants faced in attempting to prevail on the issue. Most immediately, Taylor had to rectify a terrible tactical blunder Wilgus had made in promoting his project: playing up its scope. In "Vermont's Opportunity" Wilgus had stated that the parkway would initially require a 1,000-foot corridor, to which would be added lands 5 to 15 miles wide totaling 1 million acres, or one-sixth of the state. The *Herald* began pointing out this aspect of the project almost immediately.⁸³ The notion of one-sixth of Vermont's territory being taken over by the federal government was bad enough, but coupled with the controversy over another New Deal-inspired project, it generated serious animosity toward the parkway. During 1934 a conflict had arisen between Governor Wilson and Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives George Aiken over plans to

retire so-called submarginal lands. Wilson had moved forward on the issue by appointing a committee to make recommendations about which land should be retired, so that Vermont could collect its share of federal Agricultural Adjustment Administration funds. In so doing, Wilson argued that the retirement program would "hasten and render less painful" a process that had been going on in any case since the middle of the nineteenth century: the abandonment of unproductive hill farms. In August 1934, as the selectmen and residents of various hilltowns began to offer their land for sale to the government, Aiken warned against selling too much land to the federal government since the land would someday be needed for homes. Aiken argued that the federal government should be helping to rehabilitate hilltowns rather than demolishing them.

The debate about the land retirement program raged in the General Assembly at the same time it was considering the parkway. The Vermont Grange, the chamber, and the *Free Press*, *Burlington News*, and *Brattleboro Reformer* favored the land retirement program, just as they favored the parkway. The General Assembly appointed a committee to look into the issue but created a foregone conclusion when it appointed Aiken (by then the lieutenant governor) as committee chairman. Having initially asked that 30,000 acres of submarginal land be retired, the proponents of the program by early 1936 were calling for almost 500,000 acres to be retired and 13,000 people to be resettled. Aiken saw to it, however, that the federal government did not end up buying any submarginal land in Vermont.⁸⁴ Historian Richard Judd has pointed out that one cannot determine how a majority of Vermonters felt about the land retirement controversy. Sam Hand, however, has suggested that the parkway vote was in fact a partial referendum on this issue.⁸⁵

Taylor understood, perhaps too late, that Wilgus's ambition for a huge park had unnecessarily embroiled the parkway in a much larger and more politically partisan battle over submarginal lands, thus giving parkway opponents like the *Herald* yet another argument against it. In April 1934 the paper wrote that the parkway would force people off their land. Taylor responded, "So Hindley registers against some of the fundamentals of planning, and we can feel at home with the *Herald* as exuding negation."⁸⁶ But Taylor knew that the issue was hurting the plan's chances.

Two weeks before the initial House vote, Taylor explained the problem to John Thomas. He wrote that Wilgus's proposed million-acre park had "scared people to death." Such a park, Taylor wrote, would "sop up and wipe out town after town. Of course the Colonel did not think it out from that angle, but the Legislature naturally has." Taylor told Thomas that in the early days of the proposal Howard Hindley had pointed out

that Wilgus's park would have taken one-quarter of the state and that this information "gave [Hindley] a fright and he used it to frighten others."

Taylor went on to explain that Speaker of the House Ernest Moore, a vigorous opponent of the parkway, had a copy of Wilgus's original map on his wall. The map showed the million-acre park in order "to frighten him and others." Taylor asked Thomas to point out to people that the bills before the House called for only 50,000 acres for a parkway corridor, "a very limited and restricted affair." He went on to explain that Wilgus had presented his parkway as a "nucleus" for a vast expanse. "It's the vast expansion that the Legislature is afraid of. If they feel that the acceptance of the Parkway will commit them to the evolution of a vast scheme in the way of a Park, they will pretty likely refuse to do anything." Taylor encouraged Thomas to make clear to people that the parkway really was not such a monumental undertaking as it seemed. As for Wilgus, Taylor wrote that "naturally he could not get away from his engineer conception of a big ultimate idea. That is what has made a lot of trouble."⁸⁷ Of course, Taylor was a man of big ideas as well. He had helped Wilgus put "Vermont's Opportunity" together. The mistake had been just as much his.

Responding more generally to parkway opponents, Taylor painted a clear picture of the progressive/New Deal future he envisioned for Vermont—a vision he believed his opponents foolishly rejected. Writing about the GMC's alternative plan for the development of valley roads, he pointed out how the opposition had played "to a number of inherent Vermont characteristics in their title and their arguments. They talk about 'Vermont for Vermonters' and appeal to the instincts for independence, avoidance of outside control, eschewing large expenditures, slow progress along old lines."⁸⁸

Ever interested in the Vermont psyche, Taylor thought that if the symptom was a lack of interest in the parkway, the problem was all in Vermonters' heads. He wrote Wilgus that "the battle of the wilderness is still on" and noted the "mysterious psychology of Vermont." "It drives almost to desperation those who are striving to cope with it in the interest of forward looking activity."⁸⁹ As the showdown over the parkway was taking place in the General Assembly, Taylor regretted that such struggle was still necessary. He complained to Wilgus that "after your superb work in selling the idea to Washington and to Vermont, it seems too bad that so much struggle still hangs on. But there are certain independencies and individualisms in our systems which must be worked off before anything can be accepted."⁹⁰ Writing to Nolen, Taylor said that he "treasured" his comments and those of Washington "on our mentality and problems. The fascination of the present situation is how to deal with a pathological case."⁹¹ As Taylor saw it, the patient was very sick.

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CONCLUSION

An initial vote permitting acquisition of land for the parkway was defeated in the Vermont House and approved in the Senate in March 1935. Later that year both houses authorized the state to incur bonded debt for the acquisition of parkway rights-of-way up to \$500,000. The bill required endorsement by the voters at town meeting the following March.

The referendum question was defeated by 12,000 votes. Taylor and others continued their efforts to get the General Assembly to approve the parkway, but to no avail. The project was dead.

Taylor continued as executive secretary at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. His last battle was an attempt to get Burlington to install a sewage treatment plant to help end the contamination that had turned the waterfront into a "cesspool"—an effort that was ultimately successful. In typical Taylor fashion he spread the antipollution gospel through numerous presentations to various service organizations meeting at the Hotel Vermont. At each meeting Taylor would bolster his view of the need for a treatment plant by displaying his signature "horse race" chart, which showed the progress of various states in their antipollution efforts and legislation compared to Vermont.⁹²

By 1949 Taylor had been secretary of the Greater Vermont Association and the chamber for thirty-seven years. Old and crippled by a broken hip, he shuffled around the streets of Burlington looking disheveled, a cigar always in his mouth. A lifelong bachelor, he had lived alone in a room at the Van Ness Hotel for nineteen years.⁹³ On a late summer day, he took a taxi out to the Sand Bar Inn in South Hero. He was seen pacing up and down the road, appearing to witnesses "pre-occupied, dejected and ill at ease." He had his dinner, smoked some cigars, and then rented a rowboat. He paddled out onto the lake and was never seen alive again—almost certainly a suicide. Authorities found his body floating offshore six days later.⁹⁴

Taylor's boosterism was the focus of his life; the projects he promoted and the values he espoused were inseparable for him. Obstacles to those projects became obstacles to the fulfillment of his progressive vision. This explains his extraordinary commitment to the parkway, as well as his intolerance for anyone who was against it. In Taylor's mind, those who opposed the parkway opposed Vermont itself.

NOTES

¹ Vermont Commission on Country Life, *Rural Vermont: A Program for the Future by Two Hundred Vermonters* (Burlington: Vermont Commission on Country Life, 1931), 35.

² William J. Wilgus, typescript autobiography, 1948, 241–242, Wilbur Collection, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont; Wilgus, "Vermont's Opportunity" (Burling-

ton: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1933), 2. A copy is located in the Green Mountain Parkway Reference File, Wilbur Collection.

³ On July 17, 1933, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce adopted resolutions favoring the idea of a Vermont scenic mountain parkway. Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1916–Aug. 1933," Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier.

⁴ "Jas. P. Taylor, Vt. C. of C. Secy., Is Missing," *Burlington Free Press*, 7 September 1949, sec. 2, 1; Reidun Nuquist, "Founding of the Green Mountain Club," *Vermont History News* 36 (1985): 60–63; Laura Waterman and Guy Waterman, *Forest and Crag* (Boston: Appalachian Mountain Club, 1989), 353–357.

⁵ James P. Taylor, undated typescript, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Club 1911–1914."

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Taylor, typescript, 1910, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Club 1911–1914." Taylor's reference to the state seal is a description of what is now the state "coat of arms." That design, which shows Mount Mansfield and Camel's Hump, was the state seal from 1821 to 1937.

⁸ Taylor, speech delivered in Boston, 1911, 4–6, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Club 1911–1914."

⁹ For a complete copy of the GMC's original 1910 constitution, see Louis J. Paris, "The Green Mountain Club: Its Purposes and Projects," *Vermont* 16 (1911): 151–171.

¹⁰ Taylor, Boston speech, 1–3.

¹¹ Taylor, "Scrap Book 1911 August–December," Taylor Papers, box T-1. Taylor's reference to freedom and unity reflected the tension inherent in Vermont's motto.

¹² Referring to the parkway in 1934, Taylor wrote, "The third and the best third of all our landscape beauties is the far-flung vision of the valleys from the mountain [*sic*] slopes, valleys viewed in the large, miles and miles of mountain-set valleys with their adventuring streams and their clusters of lakes." "Only One Third Revealed Only One Third of a Revelation," 1934, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 Jan.–June."

¹³ Waterman and Waterman, *Forest and Crag*, 357–358; John T. Cowles, conversation with the author, Burlington, Vermont, December 12, 1994. Cowles is the son of Clarence P. Cowles. Taylor was a frequent unannounced dinner guest at the Cowles household in Burlington and was an adopted uncle of the Cowles children, including John. "C. P.," as Taylor called him, was one of Taylor's best friends and supported the parkway project; see Clarence P. Cowles to Governor Wilson, 26 August 1933, Taylor Papers, box T-7, on Cowles's support of the parkway in which he points out that the object of the GMC was to "make trails and roads."

¹⁴ Nuquist, "Founding of the Green Mountain Club," 61–63.

¹⁵ Taylor, speech to Lions Club, 27 October 1930, Taylor Papers, box T-2, notebook 4.

¹⁶ Taylor, radio address given at St. Albans, 3 December 1930, *ibid.*

¹⁷ Taylor, speech, 1931, *ibid.*

¹⁸ Taylor, TS of speech (ca. 1931), *ibid.*

¹⁹ Taylor to Wilgus, 10 August 1933, Taylor Papers (unless otherwise indicated, all correspondence cited hereafter is from boxes T-7 and T-8 of the Taylor Papers).

²⁰ Taylor to William H. Beardsley, 21 June 1932.

²¹ Taylor to William Hazlett Upson, 8 September 1933.

²² Taylor, "Scrap Book 1911 August–December," Taylor Papers, box T-1.

²³ Roosevelt reportedly favored a parkway in New Hampshire and Maine because he believed Vermonters did not want it, sending parkway proponents into a frenzy of activity to demonstrate that this was not the case. Wilgus to John Thomas, 24 September 1934. Wilgus was critical of Governor Wilson for what Wilgus saw as Wilson's refusal to articulate to Roosevelt that Vermonters indeed favored the parkway—a failure he saw as deadly to its chances of winning funding: "If not done quickly, we lose"; Wilgus to Taylor, 24 September 1934. "The Governor is the only one who can authoritatively interpret Vermont sentiment on this score, and he is the one to set the President straight"; Wilgus to Taylor, 30 September 1934. Following an endorsement of the project by the Vermont Grange, Wilgus wrote, "Perhaps the Governor will now feel justified in coming out with a strong pronouncement in its favor"; Wilgus to Taylor, 25 October 1934.

²⁴ Taylor to John Nolen, 2 April 1935.

²⁵ Taylor to Wilgus, 22 September 1933.

²⁶ Taylor to Wilgus, 13 March 1934.

²⁷ Taylor, typescript, 1934, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 Jan.–June."

²⁸ Taylor, typescript (ca. 1934), *ibid.*

²⁹ Taylor to John Orcutt, 15 February 1934. Orcutt, a Wall Street lawyer, was a Vermont native.

³⁰ Taylor to Nolen, 2 April 1935.

³¹ Taylor to Nolen, 12 March 1934.

³² Taylor to Wilgus, 9 March 1934.

- ³³ Taylor to Wilgus, 28 June 1934.
- ³⁴ Taylor to Wilgus, 9 March 1934.
- ³⁵ Taylor to Wilgus, 1 April 1935.
- ³⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, 15 June 1934, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 Jan.-June." The committee consisted of John M. Thomas, Montpelier; H. C. Comings, Richford; S. M. Driscoll, St. Albans; David W. Howe, Burlington; Luther B. Johnson, Randolph; Fred C. Martin, Bennington; Howard C. Rice, Brattleboro; Miles S. Sawyer, Rutland; William J. Wilgus, Ascutney; John E. Weeks, Middlebury; T. B. Wright, Burlington. A publicity subcommittee was later formed and Upson appointed chairman.
- ³⁷ Taylor to Upson, 15 September 1933.
- ³⁸ Taylor to Wilgus, 21 August 1933.
- ³⁹ Taylor to Wilgus, 28 May 1934.
- ⁴⁰ Taylor to Thomas, 17 July 1934.
- ⁴¹ Taylor to Arno B. Cammerer, 16 December 1935.
- ⁴² Taylor to Charles E. Crane, 3 April 1935. Crane was the director of publicity for National Life Insurance Company in Montpelier.
- ⁴³ Taylor to John Nolen, 2 August 1933.
- ⁴⁴ Wilgus to Taylor, undated (probably September 1933).
- ⁴⁵ Taylor to Wilgus, 7 December 1933. Wilgus asked Taylor and Thomas B. Wright, the president of the chamber, to review the script of his forthcoming radio speech.
- ⁴⁶ John Nolen, "Order and Beauty in State and City" (Rutland: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1930). Nolen pointed out Vermont's similarities to Switzerland but said that it was not reaping the benefits it should from tourism. He argued that it lacked "wide highways developed in parkway fashion." Copy in Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1916-Aug. 1933."
- ⁴⁷ Olmsted to Taylor, 18 September 1933.
- ⁴⁸ Taylor to Wilgus, 27 September 1933.
- ⁴⁹ Wilgus to Olmsted, 28 September 1933. After explaining to Olmsted why the parkway deserved approval, Wilgus added a handwritten postscript: "Of course," he wrote, "if this project goes through, it will be one to be planned and executed under the direction of a landscape architect." When Wilgus learned of Nolen's application for the job, he wrote Taylor that he thought it would go to Olmsted. Telegram from Nolen to Taylor, 3 March 1934; Wilgus to Taylor, 7 March 1934.
- ⁵⁰ Taylor to Marian Hardy, 24 August 1933. Hardy had written Taylor to voice her opposition to the project. "It doesn't seem possible that Vermonters will permit their Long Trail to be destroyed by a motor road along the Green Mountains. Even if it doesn't 'follow' the Trail, it will ruin the sense of remoteness." Hardy to Taylor, 22 August 1933.
- ⁵¹ Taylor to Thomas, 26 August 1933.
- ⁵² John Thomas, *Annual Report of the President of Middlebury College* (Middlebury, Vt.: Middlebury College, 1916), 28-29. Copy in Wilbur Collection, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.
- ⁵³ Vermont Commission on Country Life, *Rural Vermont*, 130-131.
- ⁵⁴ "J. P. Taylor Praises Plan for Parkway," *Rutland Daily Herald*, 14 July 1934, 4.
- ⁵⁵ Taylor to Thomas, 29 August 1933.
- ⁵⁶ Theodore Vail, the president of Bell Telephone, was a citizen of Lyndonville and, according to Taylor, a strong supporter of the idea of the Long Trail. "Inevitably, on account of his great weight and his age, Mr. Vail's personal interest in the Long Trail had to be purely vicarious. But no man ever loved Vermont scenery more than he." Taylor, radio speech delivered on 12 July 1934, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 July-Dec."
- ⁵⁷ Taylor to Wilgus, 10 September 1934.
- ⁵⁸ Taylor, radio speech delivered on 12 July 1934.
- ⁵⁹ "Gilpin, Wilgus, and Rice Debate Parks," *Rutland Daily Herald*, 11 August 1933, 1.
- ⁶⁰ Taylor to Wilgus, 21 August 1933; Taylor to Governor Wilson, 21 August 1933.
- ⁶¹ Taylor had used the same technique in promoting the Green Mountain Club in 1911. Working with Charles R. Cummings, the editor of the *Vermont* (the forerunner of *Vermont Life*), he created a special issue on the club that featured seventeen photographs. In a campaign subsidized by the newly created Vermont Bureau of Publicity, the GMC purchased 5,000 copies above their normal circulation, mailing 3,000 to out-of-staters. Nuquist, "Founding of the Green Mountain Club," 64.
- ⁶² William Hazlett Upson, "The Green Mountain Parkway" (Burlington: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1934); "Green Mountain Parkway: Reconnaissance Survey" (Burlington: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1934); "Parkway Questions Answered" (Burlington: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1934). Copies are located in the Green Mountain Parkway Reference File, Wilbur Collection, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.

- ⁶³ Wilgus to Taylor, 25 August 1933.
- ⁶⁴ Taylor to Nolen, 25 September 1934. Laurie D. Cox, "The Greatest Single Artistic Opportunity Presented to the People of New England" (Burlington: Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1934). Copy in the Green Mountain Parkway Reference File, Wilbur Collection.
- ⁶⁵ Taylor, meeting of the Headquarters Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, 19 September 1934, Taylor Papers, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 July-Dec."
- ⁶⁶ Taylor to Wilgus, 21 November 1933.
- ⁶⁷ Taylor to Wilgus, 19 April 1934.
- ⁶⁸ Wilgus to Taylor, 20 April 1934.
- ⁶⁹ Arthur F. Stone, ed., *The Vermont of Today: With Its Historic Background, Attractions and People*, vol. 3 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1929), 87-88.
- ⁷⁰ In April 1934 both Taylor and Wilgus thought the *Herald* had reversed itself and supported the project; they were to be disappointed. Parkway proponents believed this was so significant that President Wright of the chamber wrote Ickes to inform him of the *Herald*'s reversal. "The HERALD which fathered the 'Petition' of last Fall now takes a new and welcoming view of the proposed Green Mountain Parkway. The enclosed editorial from this morning's BURLINGTON FREE PRESS shows how glad the rest of the state is that the HERALD is now disposed to join in and make sentiment absolutely unanimous"; Wright to Ickes, 24 April 1934. Wilgus wrote Taylor that "the support of the Herald will go far to put over the larger scheme"; Wilgus to Taylor, 2 June 1934.
- ⁷¹ Taylor to Wilgus, 27 September 1933.
- ⁷² Taylor to Wilgus, 8 November 1933.
- ⁷³ Wright to Roosevelt, 7 November 1933; copy in the Taylor Papers.
- ⁷⁴ Taylor to Thomas, 17 July 1934.
- ⁷⁵ Taylor, memorandum to the chamber, 19 September 1934, box T-7, "Green Mountain Parkway 1934 July-Dec."
- ⁷⁶ Taylor to Nolen, 28 September 1934.
- ⁷⁷ Wilgus to Taylor, 11 August 1934.
- ⁷⁸ Taylor to Wilgus, 13 August 1934.
- ⁷⁹ Taylor to Wilgus, 22 September 1933.
- ⁸⁰ Taylor to Wilgus, 26 September 1933. This language was by no means unusual for Taylor. "Oh for a thousand men like you! or for a hundred men! or for just ten men!"; Taylor to Wilgus, 8 November 1933. When Taylor learned that Wilgus would be delivering a radio speech on the project, he gushed, "How I wish I could listen to your radio voice"; Taylor to Wilgus, 4 December 1933. Despite their work together, however, and despite their sixty-three letters back and forth to one another, they never addressed each other by first name. It was always "Dear Mr. Taylor" (or, on occasion, "My Dear Mr. Taylor") and "Dear Col. Wilgus." By contrast, Governor Wilson began his letters to Taylor with "Dear Jim"; Wilson to Taylor, 8 September 1933; Wilgus to Taylor, 17 August 1934.
- ⁸¹ Taylor to Nolen, 26 July 1934.
- ⁸² Taylor to Wilgus, 5 November 1934.
- ⁸³ "Just a Dream," editorial, *Rutland Daily Herald*, 14 August 1933, 4.
- ⁸⁴ Richard Munson Judd, *The New Deal in Vermont: Its Impact and Aftermath* (New York: Garland, 1979), 87-93.
- ⁸⁵ Samuel B. Hand, conversation with the author, Burlington, Vermont, December 18, 1994.
- ⁸⁶ Taylor to Wilgus, 6 April 1934.
- ⁸⁷ Taylor to Thomas, 13 March 1935.
- ⁸⁸ Taylor to Wilgus, 22 January 1935.
- ⁸⁹ Taylor to Wilgus, 28 February 1935.
- ⁹⁰ Taylor to Wilgus, 6 March 1935.
- ⁹¹ Taylor to Nolen, 28 March 1935.
- ⁹² "Jas. P. Taylor Is Missing," *Burlington Free Press*, 7 September 1949, sec. 2, 1.
- ⁹³ Cowles, conversation with the author.
- ⁹⁴ "Jas. P. Taylor Is Missing"; "Lake Champlain Gives Up Body of J. P. Taylor," *Burlington Free Press*, 12 September 1949, sec. 2, 11.