The Hardwick Historical Society Journal
Encouraging a Sense of Community

Vol. 11 Issue 1  Summer 2021

Lamoille Valley Creamery in East Hardwick, c. 1925.
Our editor is not a genealogist, but she found connections among 10 of the 12 Robinsons on the Hardwick Charter during less than an hour on the website “Find-a-Grave.” She did not find Benjamin Robinson or Mary Robinson, but she suspects they belong in the family somewhere. The HHS would love to have a notebook of as much information as possible about all the Proprietors. Perhaps one of you, or a group of you, who share a passion for genealogy – and have the tools and skills to do it properly – would like to take that on as a project. If you’re interested, please contact Wiz at edow1@earthlink.net. Let’s see what we can put together.

The by-laws passed, and we have a new slate of Officers and Trustees. We actually had five openings, so all five candidates have joined the Board. You’ll find the names of the new Board on the inside cover of this issue.

More tips on searching on Newspaper’s.com. While the search engine doesn’t care about letter case (Bickford and bickford both get the same results), it does care about word order. For example, searching for “Harold Patch” garnered 2749 hits, but searching for “Patch Harold” garnered only 191.

With much sadness we report that Robert Drechsler, HA ‘53, died on May 31, 2021. He enjoyed publishing memories of his life in Hardwick, including the piece we include in this issue. We’re sorry he will never see his Christmas memories which will appear in the fall issue.

The content on our website has begun to expand. We’re
loading inventories of our holdings – pictures, vertical files, Hardwick Academy publications, etc. – so you can answer the question, “I wonder if they have ...?” for yourself. We’re also adding detailed descriptions of various archival collections – finding aids – to the website. Go to < www.hardwickvthistory.org >, then to “Research and Archives”, then to “About the Collections.” We still have a lot to finish off and post, but it feels like we’re making real progress.

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While you’re at the website, notice the new category “Publications.” The Board decided to post back issues to the Journal there, but that’s still a work in progress. For now, we have posted a complete Table of Contents to all 10 volumes, which we will update with each new volume. In addition, we have posted a fairly detailed index to the first 9 volumes. We’ll update it when our indexer finds time.

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Finally, you may ask why we have not posted pictures, and we have an answer. A number of social media sites post old pictures of Hardwick, and eventually we will, too. But, social media does not tell you where you can go if you want more information than the picture provides, or if you want information that a picture can’t capture; we do. When we make all our inventories and finding aides available, then we can decide what images to post.

The Publications Committee
Good history, like a good meal, requires careful preparation of the finest ingredients. For a cook, that means fresh and pure. For a historian that means clear, accurate, and complete. The historian systematically, and sometimes serendipitously, reads the best sources available and gathers information until he or she finds the threads of the story and weaves them all into a fabric. Good historical writing includes all the known facts and makes sense of them all. You can’t leave something out because you can’t explain it; that’s cheating; so is speculating about something without signaling that you’re speculating.

Editing and writing for the *Hardwick Historical Society Journal* means I write a lot of fast history — stories done with the best information at hand, but not as thoroughly researched as they would have been if I had more time. Like fast food, fast history meets a need, but one must remember its short-comings – it may not get the story exactly right.¹

The further back we go in Vermont history, the fewer sources we have to work with. For early Vermont historical data, historians always turn to Abby Hemenway’s *Vermont Historical Gazetteer.*² Hemenway, born in Ludlow, Vt., in 1828, recognized that Vermont’s original settlers were dying off. She decided to capture their stories before they all disappeared, so she

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engaged the educated men in every town in Vermont —many of them children of the settlers—to write about the founding of their town. She published her first volume in 1858.

Naturally, when I first wanted to know about early schools in Hardwick, I went to Hemenway and learned that in 1799 Hardwick organized four school districts: Eastern, Hazen Road, Middle, and Center. Hardwick has the uncommon good fortune of having official records that go back to the town’s founding. So it happened one day, as I was reading the minutes of the many town meetings held in Hardwick’s first 10 years, that I found a meeting in which the town established the Western School District, a district Hemenway didn’t mention! What happened? Here’s what I think.

In 1799, when most of the population lived in the vicinity of the Bayley-Hazen Road, the Town voted to divide itself into 4 school districts: Hazen Road, Eastern, Middle, and Western. The Eastern District included everything between the “La Moile” River and Walden. The Middle District included everything between the Lamoille River and the Center Road, except the area around Hardwick Street, which became the Hazen Road District. The Western District included everything west of the Center Road.

Two years later, 1801, the Center District, near Hardwick Center, broke off from the Middle District. The organizing meeting occurred at the home of John Bridgman, whose farm stood near the top of Bridgman Hill, so I’m guessing Center
District included the small but growing settlement called La Moileville or South Hardwick.

So how did Hemenway’s sources get the four districts wrong? Easy: they wrote fast history. They relied on what they and their elderly contacts remembered, but, unfortunately, you can’t rely on human memory. The men didn’t question what they heard, and they didn’t check the records. Hemenway published the Hardwick article in 1867, and by then the Town had divided the Western District into District #7 (West Hill), District #4 (Cobb School), and District #6 (Alder Brook), and District #11 (along Rte. 15 west). Possibly Hemenway’s contributors didn’t even know it had started out as a single district.

Elizabeth H. Dow

1 I include so many footnotes so you, the reader, have confidence that I did what I could to make sure I’m accurate and that I did not make anything up. Further, I hope the footnotes give a future slow historian a place to start.
3 You will find all her work online at Hathitrust.org. Search for Abby Hemenway.
4 Referred to as the “District over the river.” Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 23
5 Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 21
6 Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 31
Since the beginning of civilization, societies have struggled with the question of how to take care of the poor and incapable members of the community. Early New England solutions reflect the English Poor Laws of 1601, passed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). Those laws created a system administered at the local level and paid for with local taxes. In New England, that meant that each town paid for the care of the poor within it. Town policies came out of town meetings, so Hardwick’s responses to its poor appear in the Town Records.

The English system made a distinction between the worthy poor, i.e., people too young, or old, or sick, or mentally incompetent to take care of themselves, and the unworthy poor, i.e., able-bodied people who didn’t work. The distinctions weren’t subtle. People recognized extreme mental illness or intellectual disability, but not post traumatic stress disorder, depression, substance addiction, or many other forms mild to moderate mental illness that limit one’s ability to function fully.

The job of managing the care of both the worthy and the unworthy poor fell to the Overseer of the Poor to “relieve, support and maintain all the poor, lame, blind, sick and other inhabitants within such town...who are not able to maintain themselves. [The Overseer] provide for them houses, nurses, physicians, and surgeons...as they shall judge necessary. [Further, the Overseer will] take effectual measures to prevent the poor, resident within their...towns...from strolling into any other town.” That was criti-
each town expected to support its own poor, but not other towns’ poor. In fact, Section 3 of the law described what can happen if a poor person “strolled” into a different town.

Although the State created the Overseer position as a Town office in 1797, Hardwick didn’t appoint anyone until March, 1803, and then it appointed the Selectmen; apparently it felt no need until then.\(^3\) Perhaps, because the Small Pox outbreak the previous December caused a lot of economic disruption in people’s lives, the voters finally felt it necessary to create the Overseer position.

The law expected the town to support the worthy poor, and it did. For instance, in 1803, the men at Town Meeting voted to “pay the expenses of William Maines family having the small pox.”\(^4\) We don’t know the Maines family situation, but the people at the town meeting did, and the voters deemed them worthy of support. Again, in 1809, Town Meeting voted to “sell the care of Miss Cotton” for the next year, to the lowest bidder. Everyone at the meeting knew Miss Cotton and why she qualified as worthy of their support. Still, while they agreed to support her, they auctioned the cost of it off to the lowest bidder. Further, the record defined care as “her food, nursing, house room, firewood, etc., but not to include doctoring nor spirits.” Israel Sanborn got the contract, so the Town paid him the 90 cents per week he bid, for a total of $46.80 for the year.\(^5\) Miss Cotton remained a concern; she reappears in the records in 1811, when the Town voted “to bring Miss Cotton into this town as soon as convenient.” We don’t know where she was, or why, but everyone at the meeting did.\(^6\)

Apparently hard times came to the region around 1811, because the Town voted that the Selectmen should leave people off the tax rolls if they thought them unable to pay taxes.\(^7\)

The unworthy poor posed a more vexing problem.

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\(^2\) Vermont, and Thomas Tolman. *The Laws of the State of Vermont* (Randolph: Printed by S. Wright, 1808); Chapter 29, No. 1, Sect. 2. Emphasis added.


\(^4\) Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 46.


\(^6\) Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 258.

\(^7\) Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 258. I suspect some prominent people found themselves in that situation and didn’t want the embarrassment it entailed.
Starting a Farm

When settlers arrived in Hardwick, they brought farming experience from New Hampshire and or southern New England, and most settlers expected to make their living as farmers. Farming meant animal husbandry for animals which produced eggs, milk, meat, wool, feathers, and leather. For the newly arrived settlers, providing food for the livestock took on a high priority.

First, the settler(s) had to remove trees from the land. Frequently men, and perhaps adolescent sons or nephews, came to newly acquired farms to clear land and build a cabin before bringing the rest of the family to their new home. The trees they cut left stumps and brush; in New England they also contended with boulders and ledge. Initially, settlers had to plant their crops between the stumps and the rocks. Forest vegetation – a mix of wild grass, leaves, twigs, sedge, ferns, and small brush – offered little nourishment for domestic animals, which meant farmers had to clear it with a hoe and seed it with grasses that did.¹ To acquire a plowable field, a farmer had to remove the stumps and had only draft animals and man-power to do the slow difficult work².

In the early years, settlers did not have time to build fenc-
Instead they “branded” their animals’ ears with patterns of nips and slices and let them run wild. For instance, Mark Norris cut off the end of the right ear on each of his animals, while David Tuttle cropped the end and cut a notch in the top of the right ear. Israel Sanborn cropped the end of both ears and put a slit in the end of the left ear. Each farmer had to develop an individual pattern which he registered with the Town Clerk, and every new farmer would have to check to make sure he didn’t use someone else’s pattern. Before the Town was organized, i.e., before it had a Town Clerk, I expect someone kept a list of ear markings so that if an animal strayed, it could be captured and its owner notified. At the first Town Meeting, and every Town Meeting after that for decades, the Town elected “wardens” who had the job of rounding up and tending stray animals until their owners claimed them. An owner would have to pay the warden the cost of their keep.

I have not yet found references to the management of milking animals on the New England frontier, but, having grown up on a dairy farm, I know that in order to have milk, the farmer must keep his animals pregnant. The first generation of all large domestic animals would have walked to Hardwick. Because bulls can have unpredictable temperaments and their sheer size makes them dangerous, bringing them to the frontier would have taken extra effort. Once here, their owners probably had to confine them, so I’m guessing most settlers didn’t have one; the farmer would take his cow

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to someone else’s bull for service – for a fee.

Dairy farmers regard bull calves as essentially worthless, but a bull calf in 18th century Hardwick would have had a warm reception – it could become another breeding bull or an ox. Early settlers preferred oxen as draft animals. Not as flashy as horses, they provided strong reliable labor, had greater stamina, cost less, were easier to manage, and fared better on poor feed. Exactly what a settler needed.

Elizabeth H. Dow

2 “It was not until the construction of the Erie Canal that an ingenious workman invented a stump-puller. Using this device, seven men and a team of horses could pull forty stumps in a day.” How to Build a Road: A 19th Century Primer. http://xroads.virginia.edu/”Hyper/DETOC/transport/how.html Viewed June 1, 2021.
3 Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 343-344. The Town Clerk labeled the records “Of the Marks of Cattle and Sheep” and leaves us to guess about pigs.
4 G.A. Bowling. “Introduction of Cattle into Colonial North America,” Journal of Dairy Science. Vol. 25, Issue 2 (February, 1942); 129-154. The cattle that came to Hardwick with its first settlers would have looked nothing like the cattle we see today, most of which result from rigorous 19th century scientific breeding. A story for another day.
The Unworthy Poor

I have an unverified theory that very early frontier communities did not have lazy or stupid people in them; survival demanded too much physical and emotional work to attract or retain any but the hardiest of humanity. So, when a community starts having to worry about unworthy poor in its midst, it has passed its wilderness days.

Hardworking settlers had little sympathy for able-bodied people who didn’t work. Lazy and manipulative residents existed in towns, and townspeople didn’t distinguish them from people struggling with garden-variety emotional issues – they all looked like deadbeats – and the law required tax payers to care for them all. Therefore, towns became very vigilant of strangers.

After 1797, the State gave newcomers to a town a year to prove themselves, and it gave towns a process for removing people.¹ If the Overseer of the Poor suspected that a new-comer might become a burden on the town, he could contact the proper county authorities to follow a state-mandated procedure to verify the Overseer’s concern. If it proved accurate, the Selectmen could order the strangers to “remove themselves” by a set date. If they refused, a constable could physically move them and their belongings “on the nearest and most convenient route” to their place of last legal residence,² and that Town would pay the expenses.³ The Overseer of the Poor of their legal residence had to take them in, or pay a fine of
$30. Historians generally referred to the process as “warning people out of town.” If a person returned to the town that warned him or her out, he or she could be whipped with up to 10 stripes.4

Between 1800 and 1810, Hardwick’s population rose from about 200 to more than 700; mostly because of new settlers. Not every stranger came as an asset to the community, and in April, 1809, Hardwick made its first record of the people it warned out: Jeremiah Shute; Gideon Burnham and family; Elhanah Danforth and family; Elhanah Danforth, Jr.; Joseph Diggins; Ahean (Ahen?) Shipman and family; Samuel Danforth and family; Patience L. Garish; John Hatch and family; Leedock Cady and family; Abel Wakefield and family; Haroldus Estherbrooks and family; Moses Chamberlain, Jr. and family; Elijah Keezer and family; Enoch Sweat and family.5 Presumably, all these people had come to town within the year, and the Overseer had enough reason to think they didn’t look like good additions to the population to go through the process of getting them legally warned out.

My eye fell on Patience Garish. Most often men received a notice that they and their families had to leave. Occasionally it went to a man but did not include his family. Perhaps he had a family somewhere else, or perhaps he had no family. Rarely does the list single out women, so I wonder if Patience Garish might have been single – and pregnant. If she bore the child in Hardwick, and it had no father to support it, it would become a ward of the Town which it would have to support to adulthood. Nobody wanted that.

This list seems like a lot of people to have been Hardwick’s first use of the warning out process; it may have warned people out earlier, but the Town Clerks did not record it. I see no requirement in the law to record it, but something in a court ruling or an edict from the executive branch may have required it. However it came about, until the State removed the warning out law in 1817, the Town Clerk recorded a group of people every year.

Haroldus Estherbrooks presents a curious case. Hardwick warned him and his family out of town in 1809, but in 1810, the voters elected him to the post of Hay Warden,6 with the duty “to impound stray cattle and feed them until they are
redeemed by their owners.” 7 The law made several points that apply to Estherbrooks’ situation. Most emphatically, that if a town warns you out, you cannot become a legal resident by just hanging around. Instead, you can be physically removed, and you cannot come back.8 But, if you got elected to a public office for a year you become a legal resident.9 I can find nothing about Mr. Estherbrooks in any of the newspapers, but apparently he wanted to live in Hardwick. He may have had friends or family who got him nominated for a public office as a way to allow him to return. I’ll keep my eyes open for him as I continue through the records.

Elizabeth H. Dow

1 Vermont, and Thomas Tolman. The Laws of the State of Vermont (Randolph: Printed by S. Wright, 1808); Chapter 29, No. 1, Sect. 3.
2 Vermont and Tolman; Chapter 29, No. 1, Sect. 3. The law goes on to address a whole host of “what if”s that might arise, but they seem irrelevant here.
3 Vermont and Tolman; Chapter 29, No. 1, Sect. 8.
4 Vermont and Tolman; Chapter 29, No. 2, Sect. 6.
5 Hardwick Records, 1795-1815; 197-201, 203-204, 210-211.
6 Hardwick Records, 1795-1815; 213.
8 Vermont and Tolman; Chapter 29, No. 2, Sect. 2.
9 Vermont and Tolman; Chapter 29, No. 1, Sect. 1.
Sometime before the summer of 1809, a pettifogger – someone who picks at little things – came to Hardwick. Unfortunately, he happened to be a lawyer looking for business, and a frontier community proved attractive because of the way people did business.

Until John Marshall discovered gold in California in 1848, the federal mint did not produce enough coins to meet the country’s needs for “ready money.”¹ State governments printed money, but people had little confidence in its underlying value and knew that the bills could be counterfeit. The federal government didn’t print money until 1861.² Consequently, most local transactions relied on the exchange system. Families built up credit or debit balances with each other as they exchanged labor and goods.³ To keep track of what they owed others and what others owed them, men put a monetary value on every exchange and kept detailed accounts of their debits and credits, and they issued promissory notes.⁴

The problem of the pettifogger lawyer entered the Hardwick Town records when, on August 11, 1809, “37 credible freeholders”⁵ submitted a petition asking for a Special Town Meeting to decide what to do with Joseph C. Bradley. They started their petition by claiming, “We, the undersigned, believing that peace and happiness of society depends much on harmony and good understanding among its inhabitants, and at all times it is the duty of its inhabitants to use all lawful means and measures to prevent litigation and abuse...” Then they claimed Bradley “not to be a good member of society[. He is] a man of no principle of honor or justice, but is continually using means and measures to cause disturbances and difficulty among the people promoting litigation, whereby causing unnecessary expense and expensive bills of cost, abusing our

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courts of justice in this and the towns adjacent.\textsuperscript{6}

In an earlier article,\textsuperscript{7} I described how “Families seldom had enough cash or commodities to handle debts without calling in credits from other neighbors, and demands for settlement could cause distress and inconvenience. Reciprocity ensured that neighbors were seldom far ahead or behind in the community, but stability depended ultimately on the law. Because a single default could ruin dozens of interdependent households, settlers insisted that debtors meet their obligations.”\textsuperscript{8} It appears that Bradley found people – say Farmer A – stressed about a debt and encouraged him to sue Farmer B for the money he owed to Farmer A. That would put Farmer B in the position of having to put pressure on Farmer C to settle his debt. Farmer C, having no more money than Farmer A or B, would have to lean on Farmer D, and on it would go. It would indeed have caused a lot of disturbance in an economy dependent on good faith and trust. So great a disturbance that roughly a quarter of Hardwick’s voters\textsuperscript{9} petitioned the voters to do something about him.

The voters chose a committee of 5 to look into the problem: David Tuttle, Jacob Eaton, David Norris, Jr., Mark Norris, and Joel Whipple. They made their report on September 12, 1809, proposing four points:

1. “Resolved to leave Jos. C. Bradley, as it respects his evil practice as an attorney, and not employ him in any case whatever hereafter.”

2. “Resolved that all lawyers & pettifoggers who are or shall hereafter come into this town to reside, and shall be guilty of the like practice, shall also receive for their reward the prompt & hearty contempt of the inhabitance of this town.”

3. Requested that people not use lawyers to settle “book accounts” or notes “without the consent of the person against whom the demand is due.”
4. If it did become necessary to sue, the report requested that the plaintiff go to a Justice of the Peace, not a lawyer “so as to save cost and trouble, and cultivate peace and harmony one with another in the Town.”

The Town accepted the report and resolutions by a vote of 11 to 9.\(^\text{10}\)

That’s where I thought the story ended, and then I went to the newspapers. In them I discovered a great deal more. Mr. Bradley was born in Canaan, Ct., in 1779. His family moved to New Haven, Vt. in 1785. He studied law under Daniel Chipman of Middlebury, and he was admitted to the Vermont Bar in March, 1800.\(^\text{11}\) He must have moved to Greensboro immediately, because on March 24, 1800, he served as States’ Attorney at the first session of the Orleans County Court.\(^\text{12}\)

Bradley’s education made him ill-suited to his new home. Middlebury, settled before the Revolutionary War, had become commercially successful, attracting a number of lawyers. In 1790, 47 suits for settlement of debt had appeared in Addison County Court, but by 1806, that number had increased to 227.\(^\text{13}\) Law suits were common in Middlebury; it appears Bradley expected the same legal environment in the north woods.

In June, 1803, Bradley sued a Paul Spooner,\(^\text{14}\) of Hardwick, for $1,000.\(^\text{15}\) Young and ambitious, he lacked the wisdom to avoid tangling with the Spooner family. The elder Paul Spooner, formerly a doctor in Connecticut, got involved with politics after the British passed the Tea Act in 1773. From there he became an official on New York grants. He had moved to Vermont by 1777, where he became a member of the Vermont Council of Safety\(^\text{16}\) and then lieutenant governor. He also served as a justice on the Vermont Supreme Court. A land speculator, he was a proprietor on 11 Vermont town charters,\(^\text{17}\) including Hardwick’s. In Clifford’s words, he was one of the “midline men...on the ground floor in the creation of Vermont [who] rose through facilitating civil unrest and grabbing power.”\(^\text{18}\)

The papers never say anything more about Bradley v. Spooner, so we don’t know who won. In 1809, Bradley married Mary B. Warner, daughter of Gen. Jonathan Warner, of Hardwick, Ma. Perhaps Spooner, feeling vengeful because of the
1803 law suit, stirred up the 1809 controversy to hound Bradley out of town; we’ll never know. It does seem curious, however, that while 37 men signed the petition against Bradley, only 20 attended the meeting to hear the committee’s report, and they accepted the report itself by only 2 votes; indignation seems to have waned. Bradley and his wife relocated to New Haven in 1812, to Bristol in 1839, and later, to Middlebury where he died in 1854.  

In Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, Marc Antony observes that “the evil that men do lives after them,” and so it seems with Joseph C. Bradley. In 1870, someone found a story about the Bradley petition and published it, verbatim, in the (Montpelier) *Vermont Watchman and State Journal*. The *Burlington Free Press* repeated it in 1871, as did the (Montpelier) *Vermont Christian Messenger*. The *Watchman*, et al, must have republished an item written in Bradley’s lifetime, for it ended by observing, 16 years after Bradley died, that, “the warning doubtless had a fine effect, for the lawyer now a resident of this town is that rare specimen, a really honest lawyer.”

In 1875, the story reappeared under “Scraps of History” in the (Newport) *Express and Standard*. Two days later, the (Morrisville) *News and Citizen* republished it. By 1875, the editors of the papers must have known Bradley was dead, but it was too good a story to pass up, so they used it to compare the atmosphere for lawyers in Hardwick in Bradley’s day and the atmosphere 60-some years later.

Finally, on July 4, 1891, Hardwick had a big celebration of
the 100th anniversary of the first permanent settlers in town. The Hon. W.P. Smith gave an address which hit the high points in Hardwick history. Smith used the Bradley story to extol the wisdom of Hardwick’s townspeople in their dealing with a bad apple. The *Hardwick Gazette* republished the story in 1927, just because.  

**Elizabeth H. Dow**


3 Larkin; 36-37.


5 People who owned the land they lived on.

6 Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 205.


9 In 1810, Hardwick contained 715 people, including 193 men – 86 of them between 16 and 26. [ Hardwick, Vermont -1810 Census.] If we assume that half those 86 men were 21 or older and could vote, we have a voting population of 150 men. 37 of 150 = 24.6%. https://sites.rootsweb.com/~vtcbarne/hardwick_1810.htm Viewed March 15, 2021.

10 Town Records; 208.


14 We don’t know which Paul Spooner he sued. Both Paul and Paul S. were Proprietors on Hardwick’s charter, and Paul S. became Hardwick’s first Town Clerk. [Hardwick Town Records, 1795-1815; 3.]


16 The interim government between declaring Vermont an independent republic and drawing up a constitution.

17 Cameron Clifford. *Town Founders: Officials, Entrepreneurs, and Settlers in Early New Hampshire and Vermont.* (West Hartford, Vt: Clifford Archive, 2019); 34.

18 Clifford; 63.


23 “Abating a Nuisance,” *Vermont Watchman and State Journal*, June 1, 1870; 2.


In 1850, Horace Eaton issued his fifth and final annual report as State Superintendent of Common Schools. According to Stone, while the state had appointed Superintendents of Schools earlier, the position came and went depending on the legislature’s willingness to involve the State in the education systems of the towns. Eaton’s appointment, in 1845, while he was Governor, marked the beginning of sustained State interest in the education of its children. Eaton’s job description required him to develop a clear understanding of the state of education in Vermont. He established a system of statistical reporting which 220 of the 237 the towns complied with. The District Clerks reported to the Town Clerks, and the Town Clerks reported to him.

In 1850, districts across the state averaged 38-39 scholars in school for an average of 24 weeks. Compare Hardwick and its surrounding towns to the state averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Scholars</th>
<th>Number of Districts</th>
<th>Average No. Scholars per District</th>
<th>Lease Land Rent Totals</th>
<th>Lease Land Support per Scholar</th>
<th>Average Length of School per Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hardwick</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>$433.86</td>
<td>$.94</td>
<td>24.2 weeks</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>$203.76</td>
<td>$.62</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>$259.41</td>
<td>$.78</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>$333.21</td>
<td>$.80</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though Eaton reported an average of students per district, in Hardwick – and I assume in all other towns – the numbers per district varied widely. The following table shows the districts as named in the Land Rents books. In 1842, Hardwick numbered its districts by their size and never changed the district numbers after that. Where possible, I’ve indicated the school house each district used or the area it served. One remains unclear.
In 1848 or 49, the legislature required that teacher salaries come from taxes on the town’s Grand List. Superintendent Eaton noted that “Districts, not infrequently and perhaps commonly, have a sort of standard sum which they think themselves able to raise annually, for support of schools....As a consequence, if a teacher is employed at a higher than the standard rate, the school must be cut short.” He acknowledged that the quality of teachers across the state varied from “miserably qualified” to “far better than 5 years ago” when he made his first report. He assumed that a higher salary attracted a better teacher, and, if he had to choose, he would advocate for “better schools first, and then longer schools if we can have them.” In 1850, male teachers averaged $13.50 per month; females, $5.63. Eaton recommended a minimum wage of $15 for men and $6 for women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Scholars</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Scholars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Middle [Center School]</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9. South East</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Hazen Road [Hardwick Street]</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Walden District 8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Alder Brook [Jackson Bridge School]</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Walden District 13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 465</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Master’s Average Wage</th>
<th>Mistress’s Average Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardwick</td>
<td>$14.50</td>
<td>$5.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walden</td>
<td>$10.66</td>
<td>$5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolcott</td>
<td>$11.40</td>
<td>$5.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greensboro</td>
<td>$15.83</td>
<td>$5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbury</td>
<td>$11.41</td>
<td>$4.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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www.hardwickagriculture.org
contact: bethany@hardwickagriculture.org
The state had just established a series of Teachers’ Institutes, and Superintendent Eaton was pleased with the turnout at the four locations around the state — a total of 340 teachers, 2/3 of them women.\textsuperscript{12} He explained that he wanted to create a professional grade of teacher through the institutes. He would have preferred that Vermont train teachers at a so-called “normal school,” dedicated to training teachers, but the state had none. Instead, it expected the high schools and academies to train teachers, so institutes seemed the best way to improve teachers then working in the state.\textsuperscript{13}

Elizabeth H. Dow

1 Mason Stone. History of Education on Vermont, (Montpelier: Capital City Press, c. 1936); 64-82.
3 Eaton. The numerical data in the tables above came from the unpaginated appendix.
4 Each district within the town set its number of weeks of school.
5 Hardwick had 11 defined districts, but it also sent students to two districts in Walden and land rent money to support them, but it didn’t include those as districts in its report to the state. Land Rent Book, Vol. 2; 27.
6 Hardwick Land Rent Book, 1827-1848; unnumbered pages.
7 The village probably had two district schools. Beers’ 1875 Atlas shows one at the intersection of Glenside and Rte 15, and one beside South Hardwick Academy (now the Town House). [F.W. Beers. “Hardwick,” County Atlas of Caledonia County, 1875]; South Hardwick Academy, a private school, built its school building before it opened in 1860 [Proceedings Book, South Hardwick Academy; 11], so the school in the Atlas may have been built after 1860 – we don’t know.
8 The only map we have for these district appears in the Beers Atlas of 1875. By then District 9 had disappeared; Mackville occupied District 12, which didn’t exist in 1850.
9 Eaton; 17.
10 Eaton; 19.
11 Assume that each district varied in what it paid its teacher.
12 Eaton; 23. Given how poorly women were paid, the fact that so many wanted to be teachers may reflect the attendees’ desire to work at a profession, regardless how poor the pay.
13 Eaton, 28.
I saw a live Black person in Hardwick for the first time when I was in either the first or second grade. The year was 1941 or 1942. My classmates and I were at recess out in front of Hardwick Academy. I remember we had been told someone was coming to entertain us. As we watched, a Black man and his companion walked up to the school. The kids looked, pointed, and began laughing at this strange looking person. I remember being tempted to join in the laughter, but something told me that was wrong. Neither the Black man nor his partner reacted visibly to the heckling (because we kids were white and it was 1941-42 they didn’t dare?) I have no memory of their “entertainment”.

The respectful way to refer to a Black person or an African-American then was to say Negro, although some people used the other n-word.

In the third grade our teacher read the Little Black Sambo stories to us. I also remember she told us that Negroes smell different than white people. I had no reason to disbelieve her.

My memory is vague about details of the following: I was part of a minstrel show held, I believe, in the Masonic Temple on Church Street. I do remember clearly that I was made up in black face. Nothing seemed wrong about that. It was just a funny show.

Florence Lane was organist and choir director at Hardwick’s United Church. She was also my piano teacher, and she had slightly darker skin. The word went around Hardwick that she was once stopped from going further south in our country because she was perceived to have Negro blood.

When I was in high school a Negro family moved into the Hardwick area with a teenage daughter and son who came to our school. The girl, whose name I can’t recall, was active and became popular. I remember working with her on several school functions. Then came time for the all-important junior prom. It was clear that nobody was going to ask her for a date. Our teachers were concerned and encouraged me to ask her to the prom. My mother absolutely forbade me to do that. I still regret not doing it anyway.

Camp Wapanacki children walked into town on Tuesdays in July and August. They included Negro children, about whom there was no problem, because they didn’t live here.

There were two ladies who were known to be Jewish who stereotypically owned a used-clothing store on Main Street. I remember
them as being very friendly. I don’t remember any particular anti-Semitism; simply that it was known they were Jewish and different.

I do not recall any Chinese, Japanese or any other Asian persons at that time in Hardwick. I met a Chinese person for the first time when I went to a church camp for a week. She showed us how to use chopsticks, another stereotype.

This all means we were pretty insular in a time before television and social media. When I finished high school in 1953, I felt increasingly isolated from the rest of the world.

Class distinctions in Hardwick were sometimes vague, sometimes definite. One strong prejudice was the experience of an older generation: the prejudice of the Scots against the newly arrived French Canadians, who spoke a different language and, horrors, practiced a different religion. They were Catholic! They also kept having very large numbers of children. By the time of my generation, that prejudice had faded and seemed less important.

There was the class distinction between the elite and the rest of us. Many of the elite were perceived to live on Church Street. They were wealthy and able to go to Florida for the winter. They were the special people, sometimes envied, sometimes railed against. Please note, dear reader, that this is my memory and is not necessarily the reality.

Amongst us kids there were those of us from reasonably well-off families and those others who were from poorer families. I remember my mother encouraging me to play with everybody, not just the kids in the well-off families.

There was the distinction between those who were “normal” and those who were “different”. The implication is that “normal” meant you are a better person. I wrote about one of these in a previous Journal article about growing up gay in Hardwick.³

There was also the distinction between those who were “normal” or “well” and mentally ill persons. Except we used the word “insane” rather than “mentally ill”. One notable “insane” person was Mrs. Foot
who lived alone in a single story bungalow at the corner of Summer and Kellogg Streets. The kids would mock her and she would yell back at them. Once I saw her trying to direct traffic on Main Street. From time to time she would disappear and we would knowingly understand she was at the “insane asylum” in Waterbury. In those days to say someone went to Waterbury meant going to that institution.

I left Hardwick to go to college, then seminary, and my world became wider as I mixed with all sorts of “races” and beliefs. This became for me more and more the sort of world I liked to live in. As a minister I actively supported the Black civil rights movement of the 1960’s, then later the gay rights movement. I am married to a Black man.

Although I have returned to visit Hardwick many times over the years, I don’t really know what it is like to live here now. So I can’t make any specific judgment. For the past 43 years, James and I have lived in Southern California which has the reputation of being open and accepting. Yet racism abounds here along with anti-immigrant and anti-Latino sentiment. I am guessing that Hardwick, like most communities, still deals with racism and class.

This article did not intend to solve the problem of racism and classism. Finding a solution to the harm it causes begins, I believe, with awareness – awareness of what may have been wrong about some of what we were taught and experienced as children.

Robert Drechsler

1 Ed. Note: The Story of Little Black Sambo is a children’s book written and illustrated by Scottish author Helen Bannerman and published in October 1899; the story was popular for more than half a century. Critics of the time observed that Bannerman presented one of the first Black heroes in children’s literature and regarded the book as portraying Black characters positively in both the text and pictures, especially in comparison to books of that era that depicted Blacks as simple and uncivilized. However, the book fell out of favor because of its racist stereotypes in the mid-20th century – the names of the characters represented racial slurs for dark-skinned people, and the illustrations were in the pickaninny style. Both text and illustrations have since undergone considerable revisions.” “Story of Little Black Sambo” Wikipedia. Viewed February 9, 2021.

2 Ed. Note: Phyllis Francis Bracey, HA ’52 and Orin Leroy Bracey, Jr., HA ’55.

The following article appeared in the March 17, 1981, issue of the Hardwick Gazette, in Harold Patch’s regular column: Odds ‘n’ Ends.

“Norcross record recalls memories”

Not so long ago my partner and I received a package in the mail, bearing the return address of Rick Norcross, who has become pretty well known to Vermonters through his musical entertainment during the past few years. Opening it, we discovered his large album of musical productions which have erupted from his fertile brain and which also record the musical abilities of various other musicians who have worked with him in the entertainment world.

As we played the record through – a matter of about an hour – our memories went back to Rick’s high school years when we first became acquainted with him. He had come to East Hardwick where he was living with his grandmother, Mrs. Delilah Libbey, our next door neighbor, and attending Hardwick High school. One of our first memories of Rick was the twanging of the guitar which was his proud possession and which he played outdoors as well as inside his grandmother’s home. At least he was attempting to play, and his efforts (like those of all beginners) were not always harmonious.

One day Rick discovered that I too had a guitar, which during the early years of Radio Station WDEV, at Waterbury, I used to present a 15 minute program on Saturdays, of old time favorite songs and hymns. In fact, somewhere I still have a large shoe box (if I haven’t given it to one of my daughters) of fan letters from a widespread area of Vermont and New Hampshire; from old and young
as well with requests for favorite songs on the next program.

Well – as you might guess, Rick became a frequent visitor in our home, and one who was always welcome. In fact we frequently invited him to drop in for a meal with us, and having the usual appetite of a growing boy he made the most of those opportunities! He still remembers those meals, and whenever he drops in – which is pretty seldom of late years, he’s always hopeful for a feed of my partner’s baked beans, of which he still can lay in a surprising amount! Being well aware of this my partner usually keeps a supply on hand (not frozen) so they can be available on short notice!

One of Rick’s musical problems at the time was in learning the various chords, and the needful change, when accompanying the human voice in song. I taught him several; at least enough to get him started, after which I figured he would work out new ones for himself.

On one of those occasions he discovered that I had two guitars. During the winter before we moved away from Waterbury I had purchased a guitar with more volume than the old, second-hand one I’d been using during the years when I played over WDEV. In fact I’d used it at the Station but once or twice before we left the Waterbury area.

Well – Rick used to eye that big guitar with a tremendous longing. “Gosh!” he would exclaim, “I wish I could own a guitar like that!”

I thought it over. I didn’t need two guitars, and while the old one
didn’t have anything like the volume of the new one, it certainly had a sweeter tone.

So one day I said to Rick, “You know if you want that big guitar bad enough to work for it – really WORK, I mean – I can probably scare up enough odd jobs around the place so you can pay for it – in time.” Well! You should have seen the look of absolute ecstasy which spread over Rick’s young face! “Do I have to wait till it’s all paid for to have the use of it?” he inquired. “You certainly don’t!” I responded, “take it right home with you now!” Before snow flew next autumn he’d worked out the price of the large guitar. He also made a lot of progress in the use of it!

Well, Rick finished high school and took up residence in Florida, where he attended college. But somewhere along the way he found time to work his passage to England, where he “barnstormed” that country; and I believe went across the Channel and entertained the Continent to some extent.

Oh well, Rick, your album shows the heights you have reached since those high school days! Drop in when you come this way and we’ll warm up the baked beans.

Harold Patch
I have a guitar I use only to write songs; why? So I can have an instrument out of its case and instantly available when I want to pick it up, play music, or flesh out a song idea. I play this guitar every day, not as a “required practice regimen,” but just because I love to play and I appreciate the sound of this particular instrument.

My concert guitar is a magnificent 1974 custom-built Martin-style D-45 which stays in its case with a humidifier to preserve the delicate Adirondack spruce top, Brazilian rosewood back and sides and the neck of this fine guitar; it is vitally important to maintain a constant humidity level for high quality wood instruments.

My songwriting guitar has the name Mark Stern on the headstock and Joseph W. Stern Guitars & Mandolins, New York City, on the very ornate tag inside the sound hole. Shape-wise, it’s what we call a “parlor” guitar, with a much smaller body than the typical dreadnaught shape of most guitars today. The body is unusually deep, and it produces a beautiful tone with surprising volume.

Though there is not a date or serial number anywhere on the guitar, I know that a traveling salesman, Joseph W. Stern, partnered with another salesman, Edward Marks, and together they wrote a song in the late 1890s that became a hit in the vaudeville world. The song made both of them rich. They contracted with a New York luthier to build guitars and
mandolins under their combined name of “Mark Stern.” When the lucrative business of writing and publishing vaudeville music waned, their partnership was dissolved. So, given the year they went out of business, it is reasonable to estimate that this guitar was built between 1903 and 1909.

I am the second owner of this guitar, since the early 1930s, and that’s where my story begins. I met Harold Patch in the late 1950s when he retired from the machinist trade in Springfield, Vermont and moved to East Hardwick next door to my grandmother’s house on Pleasant Street. I was mid-teens and he was nearing 70. I spent a lot of time next door visiting with Mr. Patch and his wife Edna – “Samanthy,” as he called her. Edna Patch was born Edna Allen and lived on the next farm over from my great grandfather, Charles Norcross and my grandfather, Ray Norcross, near Dow’s Crossing in Walden. Mrs. Patch told me several times that my grandfather Ray was a dash-
ing figure on his motorcycle prior to 1915. Edna Patch will be remembered for her many years as the librarian of the tiny East Hardwick Library.

I find it hard to believe today that Harold Patch was a veteran of World War I, decorated at the Battle of Verdun, and his father, born in Morristown, was a veteran of the Civil War.

I shall be forever grateful that Harold Patch, the greatest influence on my life, unknowingly directing me toward my chosen careers in music, photography and journalism. In his retirement years in East Hardwick, Mr. Patch covered local news for the Hardwick Gazette, The Caledonian Record, The Burlington Free Press, The Springfield Reporter and the Green Mountain Trading Post for which he was paid a penny a word. He spent spare time during the long Vermont Winters knitting mittens and sending boxes of them to Indian Reservations in the Southwest.

Mr. Patch was a machinist by trade, first in Waterbury and then down at Jones & Lamson in Springfield. While in Waterbury, in 1936, he had a 15 minute Saturday morning radio show on WDEV Radio Vermont. When he moved from Perkinsville to East Hardwick in 1959, he brought with him barrels of corn and wheat he had put away for his “retirement.” They also had several large containers of maple syrup that he made back in Perkinsville. One of those barrels contained maple syrup that spontaneously generated “wind” from the nether regions when eaten. I was there on several
occasions when the United Church minister came calling, and Edna brought out raised doughnuts, pickles and a liberal dose of that maple syrup. We all enjoyed the treat and waited (not very long) for the fireworks which did not disappoint. The Reverend never caught on and we all chuckled after he left. How could you not love the Patches?

Harold passed away in 1989 at the ripe old age of 96 and will be fondly remembered for his heart, his generosity of spirit, and the twinkle in his eye and with thanks for his years of newspaper writings. Edna died in 1995.

My Mark Stern guitar is the very guitar Harold Patch played on his 15 minute Saturday morning radio show on WDEV in 1936. How did I end up with it? I bought it in 1991 for $150 from his daughter, Lorraine Zigman, at an auction of his belongings. I held on to it for almost 30 years before bringing it over to Matt Bahan at Maple Street Guitar Repair in Burlington. Matt did a masterful job bringing that guitar back to playing condition and, as Mr. Patch always said, “it certainly had a sweet tone.” My Mark Stern guitar, the very instrument that he played on WDEV radio in 1936, has an aura of comfort, meaningful history and creativity hanging over it like the clouds over the volcano Kilauea. It will soon reside at the Hardwick Historical Society.

Rick Norcross
How many of you spent summer days at your favorite swimming hole? We remember these from the 1940's and 1950's around Hardwick. What do you remember?

*WHITE ROCK and other-not-so-nice-names - (past the Village Motel or reached by heading down the RR tracks from the Depot towards the new Health Center and going down the bank)

*LUMBER MILL – (near Beede’s Mill or in back of Knights of Columbus Hall)

*CAREY ROAD – (behind Electrical plant near the bridge; deep enough for jumping into)

*QUARRY – (on right past the Fairview Cemetery and Scott Road)

*MACKVILLE POND

However, most young people preferred to ride their bikes or hitchhike (and getting a ride was no problem) to either:

*CASPION LAKE IN GREENSBORO - lessons were given Hardwick children there

*ELLIGO LAKE IN CRAFTSBURY - both had changing buildings

Getting sprayed with the hose was a popular way to keep cool, too. If you had grandparents who had farms, you might take a quick dip in the cooler used to keep milk cans cold before it was picked up; it was icy cold!

*Janet and Spencer Slayton
Introduction:
The threat of Covid-19 limited public activity at the Depot, but not the volunteers’ work. Here’s what we did.

Awards:
Every year the Vermont Historical Society (VHS) presents Achievement Awards to recognize the exceptional work of local historical societies and volunteers. Two of the nine they awarded this year came to Hardwick. Lorraine Hussey received an award for individual achievement for her work and commitment to Hardwick’s history. Lorraine has been making and preserving Hardwick history for more than 70 years.

The HHS received an Award of Excellence for the Eleanor Angell climate-controlled storage room. Steve Perkins, Director at the VHS, and Eileen Corcoran, Community Outreach Manager, came to Hardwick to present the awards in September. They told us that one of the judges who sat on the award panel admitted s/he had never considered the ‘room within a room’ concept, and s/he would spread the word about it. Another admitted that s/he was just jealous that she doesn’t have a storage room like that.

Collections:
We spent the spring and summer moving the collections into the Angell Room. While we’re still sorting and filing things, our focus has switched to making sure we have an inventory so we know where everything lives. Kris Lance continues to register the artifact collection, and the rest of us plug away at various document collections. Slowly, we’re populating our website <www.hardwickvthistory.org> with inventories of what we have. Before you clean out your attic/basement/closets/garage of all that old stuff, please give me (472-6424) or Lorraine Hussey (472-5903) an opportunity to look for historical treasures in it.

Finances:
In 2020, the HHS had cash expenses of $11,500, paid for by a $3,000 appropriation at the 2020 Town Meeting, membership fees, advertising in the Journal, assorted donations, the St. Patrick’s Day dinner, sales of cards and back issues of the Journal, and bottle redemptions at All Metals’ transfer station. Getting the work of the HHS done, however, took the considerable con-
tribution of time from volunteers.

**Personnel:**

The volunteers logged 781 hours of free labor at the *Depot* in 2020. The logged hours do not include the work volunteers did at home or in outside venues – the treasurer paying bills and keeping accounts, the publications committee preparing the quarterly *Journal*, etc. – so, that number vastly under-represents the amount of work volunteers have contributed to make to preserve Hardwick’s history and make it accessible to the public.

What is volunteer time worth? A group called Independent Sector <http://independentsector.org/volunteer_time > monitors the activities of non-profit organizations all over the country and calculates that, on average, volunteers contribute worth $27.20/hour. By that calculation, the HHS volunteers contribute about $20,000 in time. Even if we ascribe only minimum wage, $10.96, to our recorded volunteer hours, they add about $8560 to the budget. Thank you, volunteers: Lorraine Hussey, Donna Hale, Susan Earle, Carmeline Williams, Janet Slayton, Spencer Slayton, Mary Brochu, Taylor Meyer, Andrew Meyer, Fenton Meyer, Shari Cornish, Tracy Martin, Judy Nudd, Mark Sassi, Neil Stout, Mario Fradette, Mary Janes Fradette, and Kris Lance.

**Membership:**

Membership stands at about 320 members; for $10, you can join, too – contact me edow1@protonmail.com.

**Publications:**

The HHS publishes a journal four times yearly which each member receives. This year the *Journal* included articles as Barr’s Better Beverages, prohibition and bootlegging in Hardwick, East Hardwick fire department, East Hardwick library, nursing at the Hardwick Hospital, women’s suffrage movement in Hardwick, polio in Hardwick, pedestrian bridges and the building of the Swinging Bridge, and much much more. *We warmly invite articles and manuscripts from people who have stories to tell about Hardwick’s history.*

**Visitors:**

The HHS opened the Depot to the public every Tuesday and Thursday afternoons between 1:00 and 4:00, but almost nobody came; only 20 people signed the guest book.

*Elizabeth H. Dow, President*
**MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Society is open to all upon payment of dues. Membership starts in September. With your membership comes a subscription to the quarterly *Hardwick Historical Society Journal*, a vote at our annual General Membership Meeting, and one hour of free research. Please make checks payable to The Hardwick Historical Society.

Annual dues are: $10.00

*A membership means 4 Journals per year........a great gift!!*

*Manuscripts are invited: Address correspondence to Elizabeth Dow in care of the Hardwick Historical Society.*

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**THE BACK PAGE**

Now that we have decided to mail the Journals in an envelope, we have additional space here on the back cover. We will try out various features for a while, and we may settle on a regular one, but maybe not. For this issue, we have included late-breaking news.

*Publications Committee***

The HHS just received a manuscript of Thomas H. Harris’ “Tradition and Transition: A Vermont Farm Family, 1869-1880” – his 1992 MA Thesis for the UVM Dept. of History – based on 18 diaries and account books kept by Olive and Alvah Dutton. He analyzed the contents and assessed how the Duttons, who farmed in Walden, Woodbury, and Hardwick, related to the rapidly changing economic world around them. Short answer: not much. One fact jumped out at me, though. Dutton’s sugaring season generally started in early April and went into early May. Then he started preparing the fields for planting [pp 36-37]. All that work depends on the season and the weather, and Dutton did it a lot later than farmers do it today.

*Elizabeth H. Dow*