



# Racism in Antebellum Vermont

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By JOHN M. LOVEJOY

**T**wo historical events appear to have established Vermont's response to questions about slavery and the existence of racism in the state. The first occurred in Windsor in July 1777, when the Vermont Constitution was adopted. It was the first state constitution to declare adult slavery unlawful within its borders. The second event took place in Middlebury at the Addison County Court House in June 1804, when the Honorable Theophilus Harrington, junior member of the three-judge Supreme Court panel, speaking for the court, declared that slave ownership in Vermont could only be proved by the production in evidence of a bill of sale for the slave signed by Almighty God, Himself. The court's practical application of the law prohibiting slavery set forever the height of the "bar" over which challengers would have to jump. From that day forward no jumpers applied.

The original thirteen colonies had a substantial accumulation of laws on their books, as well as spoken and unspoken codes, relating to negroes, mulattos, and Indians and, in several instances, to slavery itself.<sup>1</sup> Vermont patterned a substantial portion of its constitution after that of Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> However, because Vermont lawmakers were relatively unburdened by an existing legal history and its accompanying tapestry of laws, codes, and precedent-setting opinions, the drafting of the Vermont Constitution was a simpler process than in most of the other states. Lacking a general, experiential historic base, and possessing a negli-

gible black population, Vermont's "outlawing" of adult slavery came easily and, viewed in context, may have been regarded by lawmakers as an inevitable, relatively simple move. In a similar vein, it is significant to the history of Vermont to recognize that as the first new state voted to join the Republic, it had no hand in drafting the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the federal Constitution, or the Bill of Rights. Only after admittance as a state did Vermont begin to have input into the legislative aspects of nation building.

It is important to recognize that neither the constitutional prohibition of adult slavery nor Judge Harrington's famous application of that provision ever really precluded the Green Mountain State from those expressions of racism that existed all over New England and beyond. This paper examines some of the realities of racism, and looks at several blatant examples of racial prejudice that occurred in antebellum Vermont. J. Kevin Graffagnino's admonition in his 1977 article "Vermont Attitudes Toward Slavery: The Need For A Closer Look," turns out to be remarkably prescient.<sup>3</sup>

#### NOTES ON NATURAL SCIENCES AND THE WORD "NIGGER"

Antebellum natural science studies in Vermont resembled similar studies in other states of the new nation. Anthropology was in its infancy. The prevailing nineteenth-century concept of man tended to perpetuate variations on the single theme of permanent racial inferiority: "science became an instrument which 'verified' the presumptive inferiority of the Negro."<sup>4</sup>

The ideas of three men contributed most to Americans' antebellum justification for Negro inferiority: Carl von Linnaeus (Swedish, 1707–1778), Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (German, 1752–1840), and the Reverend Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith (American, 1751–1819). Their theories, dressed in a broad array of factual finery, were either directly or indirectly part of the natural science curriculum at Middlebury College, the University of Vermont, Norwich University, and Dartmouth College. The intellectual basis of racism in Vermont was thus equivalent to the climate in the rest of America. As William Lee Miller explained in his recent book *Arguing About Slavery*, to fathom the degree of nationwide racism in the antebellum period one should "extrapolate backward from today's worst white attitudes, and multiply by a large number."<sup>5</sup>

One clear indication of the conviction among whites of the inferiority of blacks is the widespread use of the word "nigger." By the early nineteenth century, and probably earlier, most uses of this word by whites were considered derisive, particularly when expressed "with dismissive, abusive, or contemptuous force."<sup>6</sup> William Faux, in *Memorable*

*Days in America*, observed while in Boston in February of 1819 that “contempt of poor blacks, or niggers, as they are called, seems the national sin of America.”<sup>7</sup> In perhaps the definitive work on the use of the word “nigger” in the antebellum period, published in Boston in 1837, Hosea Eaton wrote: “Negro or nigger, is an approbrious [*sic*] term, employed to impose contempt upon them as an inferior race, and also to express their deformity of person. Nigger lips, nigger shins, and nigger heels, are phrases universally common among the juvenile class of society, and full well understood by them.”<sup>8</sup>

Lydia Maria Child, a leading light and literary genius in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, wrote in 1836 that “if a person of refinement from Hayti, Brazil, or other countries, which we deem less enlightened than our own, should visit us, the very boys of this republic would dog his footsteps with the vulgar outcry of ‘Nigger! Nigger!’ I have known this to be done, from no other provocation than the sight of a colored man with the dress and deportment of a gentleman.”<sup>9</sup> Beyond the words, reflecting white society’s general opinion of the free colored population in the major cities of the North, including Boston, one could find “cuts and placards descriptive of the negroe’s deformity . . . everywhere displayed to the observation of the young. . . . Many of the popular book stores, in commercial towns and cities, have their show-windows lined with them. The barrooms of the most popular public houses in the country, sometimes have their ceiling literally covered with them.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, such racial stereotyping was widespread in the antebellum North.

Vermonters were not exempt from this kind of stereotyping and invective. Correspondence among educated and prominent citizens frequently exhibited racist attitudes and the epithet “nigger.” For example, on April 2, 1837, Charles B. Fletcher (1818–1852), son of Vermont Congressman Isaac Fletcher, wrote from Charleston, South Carolina to Henry Stevens, Sr., the founder of the Vermont Historical Society, and reported that the “niggers” in the South were not nearly as bad off as Vermonters had been led to believe.<sup>11</sup> Another example is the use of the phrases “nigger” and “nigger business” in letters between Democrat newspaper publishers Robinson and Southmayd, co-owners of the Castleton *Vermont Statesman*, and Charles G. Eastman, owner of Woodstock *Spirit of the Age*, in a political context to disparage the Whig Party.<sup>12</sup>

Even more revealing, and somewhat shocking, are four letters from George Gilpin Robinson to his brother Rowland Evans written between 1854 and 1859. These two men, sons of devout Quakers and prominent Vermont abolitionists Rowland T. and Rachel Robinson, apparently failed to absorb the enlightened attitudes about race promoted by their

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parents, for their correspondence contains many racial slurs. (For further background on the Robinson family, see the articles in this issue by Jane Williamson and Ronald Salomon.)<sup>13</sup> The first letter was written on April 3, 1854 from Astoria, New York, where George was living with his sister Ann for a short time, to Rowland, then at home in Ferrisburgh. He sent word to his brother about a black servant named Sarah who “went Saturday on a nigger cruise to Brooklyn with Niobe’s cook.” This is an allusion to the Saturday afternoon ferry, crowded with African Americans off from work and going to Brooklyn to shop.<sup>14</sup> The next letter was written by George, now back in Ferrisburgh, on December 26, 1858 to Rowland, now living in Brooklyn, New York, referring to black servants employed by the Robinsons. “Eliza is gone & Sarah has stepped into her place—also Julia is gone—Clara is tending the baby, so you see the Black Star is decidedly in the ascendant, whereby the damned niggers are more than ever impressed with the idea that we can’t keep house without them,—which, I presume, tends to make A [Aaron ?] the more confident, as it looks as if the quarrel was only between him and the Greyhound company, the rest of the family being as firm in the colored persuasion as ever.”<sup>15</sup>

In a letter to Rowland from Ferrisburgh on January 9, 1859, George trotted out the race-based “smell” problem so long associated with white criticism of blacks. “The rest of us are in usual health, except that Sarah went home sick the other day,—so we are out of a maid. I suppose the next move will be to get Mary Ann or Frances, unless by chance they find one somewhere that can out stink even them.”<sup>16</sup> The final letter of this set was written February 21, 1859, filling in Rowland on the latest family toils and intrigues. “. . . we have *little* Frances here again. I think odor improves finally, for I can pass within four feet of her without holding my breath. When she comes close to me at breakfast, to deliver the buckwheat cakes it is decidedly refreshing. If Mother’s nigger arrangements are as satisfactory to her as they are hideous to me, they must afford her a great deal of comfort.”<sup>17</sup> An examination of the huge generation gap within this family of abolitionists is beyond the scope of this paper; but it does demonstrate something of the extent to which the derogatory and derisive term “nigger” had become common currency in antebellum Vermont.

#### NOTES ON COLONIZATION

Among the first responses to the growing awareness of a race problem in America was a movement to eliminate it by removing blacks from North America. The American Colonization Society was founded in 1816. Its early roster included James Madison, Andrew Jackson,

Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and Stephen Douglas, as well as many religious leaders and college presidents. Between 1816 and 1820 a number of state legislatures, including Vermont's, went on record officially supporting the American Colonization Society. Auxiliary societies sprouted up in states north and south.<sup>18</sup> In both regions, the principle of colonization was generally upheld as the most viable practical solution to the problem of slavery, or, as the two newspaper editors quoted above stated, "the nigger business."<sup>19</sup>

The first state-level Colonization Society was created in Vermont. It was established in 1818 at the State House in Montpelier, where a group of private citizens held a meeting for that express purpose. The prominence of the Vermont society's membership paralleled that of the national society. Its roster of members contained a heavy mix of notable politicians, including former Governors C. P. Van Ness, Ezra Butler, and Jonas Galusha; former U.S. Senators Elijah Paine, Horatio Seymour, and Samuel Prentiss; Congressman Herman Allen (in 1833, both Benjamin Swift and William Slade were listed as delegates to the Society); judges Abner Forbes and Titus Hutchinson; and financiers Thomas Emerson, Israel Dana, and William Palmer. The membership also included a number of ministers from a variety of churches who, from the 1820s to the mid-1850s, constituted roughly half of the Colonization Society's board of officers. Additionally, "a great majority of the colonization groups were organized in local churches, such as the Baptist Society of East Bethel, the Congregational Society of Montpelier, and the Methodist Society at Pittsford."<sup>20</sup>

The Vermont Colonization Society grew throughout the 1820s but was slowed in the early 1830s by the activities of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society. The Anti-Slavery people, led by William Lloyd Garrison of Boston, who got his early start in Vermont (1828–1829) as editor of the *Bennington Journal of the Times*, were more strident, fanatical as many said, than the colonizationists, and called for the *immediate* emancipation of all slaves.<sup>21</sup>

The colonizationists saw certain "evils" that were the direct result of African slavery in the United States. Reverend J. K. Converse, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Burlington, delivered a discourse to the Vermont Colonization Society on October 17, 1832, in Montpelier, in which he said that "slavery is now acknowledged by our ablest politicians to be a heavy curse on the whole country . . . ruinous to whites; it retards improvement; roots out an industrious population . . . destroys all incentives to enterprise . . . and is followed by many decidedly immoral influences." The root of the problem was the "evils, the degradation, the cruelties, dangers and blighting political influences

arising from the introduction of a colored population into the United States.” Converse’s remedy for all these evils was the colonization movement, which would, first, rescue the free colored population and send them where they could be free and happy; second, “free this country from the unnumbered evils of colored population, and thus avert the danger of dreadful collision between two *castes* which must inevitably be objects of mutual jealousy to each other”; and third, send all free blacks back to Africa, to “spread civilization and christianity through the 100,000,000 who now people the continent.”<sup>22</sup> So firmly did the colonizationists believe that the two castes could not mix that it was a truism of theirs that, “let prejudice be dispelled and let our laws become as favorable as they could wish, opening to the colored man all the avenues of honor and hope, the disadvantages will still be felt.” Basically, whites want white legislators, congressmen, preachers, judges, teachers, physicians, etc., and not black ones.<sup>23</sup> These ideas, shared by colonizationists in Vermont and elsewhere in the nation, were pervasive, strongly held, and, many believed, grounded in religion, science, and the economics of the day.

The Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, organized in 1834 as a chapter of the American Anti-Slavery Society, vehemently criticized the Vermont Colonization Society. The argument between the two organizations was the “immediatism” of the abolitionists versus the “gradualism” of the colonizationists. Oliver Johnson of Middlebury, a board member of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, spoke at the Society’s first annual meeting on February 18, 1835, and outlined the organization’s fourteen basic criticisms of the Colonization Society; two are most relevant here. The first was that the colonizationists were against immediate emancipation; the second was that they denied “the power of the gospel to annihilate prejudice, and blasphemously attribute those feelings of hostility to the people of color, which are the sin and disgrace of the country.” The colonizationists, of course, denied all these charges.<sup>24</sup> Though both organizations unequivocally disapproved of slavery, the Colonization Society did not see immediatism as a workable solution. As to the abolitionists’ charge that the colonizationists were prejudiced toward blacks, the gradualists replied that prejudice existed already, without any help from them, and found as a simple matter of the human condition that whites were “violently prejudiced against the colored, and unwilling to associate with them on terms of equality.”<sup>25</sup> The colonizationists believed themselves to be realists: Whites and blacks were different, could not mix in society, and blacks should live among their own, in Africa, in order to solve America’s slavery problem and at the same time provide a balanced, harmonious life for themselves. Coloni-

zationists in Vermont and throughout the Union were devoted to these racist ideas.

#### NOTES ON ELECTIONS IN VERMONT

The national political scene presented Vermonters with a conundrum. As opposed to slavery as most Vermonters purported to be, the national candidates entered in the presidential elections offered them little choice on the issue. Five of the first seven presidents were slaveholders (Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson), and the executive and judicial branches at the highest levels of government were similarly permeated with slaveholders, up into the 1840s.<sup>26</sup> These realities at the national level posed a dilemma for the voters of Vermont, and the fact is that many Vermonters, not necessarily a majority but large numbers, voted for those presidential candidates who were slaveholders (see Table 1). By their actions, these voters were gradualists on the slave issue, clearly picking candidates who wished to preserve the Union rather than risk its dissolution.

Historians of antebellum Vermont have paid attention to the anti-slavery vehemence of William Slade, one of Vermont's representatives in Congress from 1832 to 1842. But it must be noted that Slade's pas-

TABLE 1 Vermont voters in presidential elections, 1828–1848

<i>Year</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>No. of votes</i>
1828	Andrew Jackson*	Democratic-Republican	8,350
	John Quincy Adams	National-Republican	24,363
1832	Andrew Jackson*	Democrat	7,865
	William Wirt	Anti-Masonic	13,112
	Henry Clay	National-Republican	11,161
1836	Martin Van Buren*	Democrat	14,040
	William Henry Harrison	Whig	20,994
1840	William Henry Harrison*	Whig	32,440
	Martin Van Buren	Democrat	18,006
1844	James Knox Polk*	Democrat	18,041
	Henry Clay	Whig	26,770
	James G. Birney	Liberty	3,954
1848	Zachary Taylor*	Whig	23,117
	Martin Van Buren	Free Soil	13,837
	Lewis Cass	Democrat	10,943

\* Indicates national winner

Source: *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1994), 429–432.

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sion on the slavery question increased over time, and early in his congressional tenure he was a gradualist, like most Vermonters.<sup>27</sup> Originally a Colonization Society member, he shifted to the antislavery side, and finally called publicly for the immediate emancipation of all slaves. However, before Rep. Slade's complete conversion in December 1835, he delivered a speech from the well of the House notifying the membership that "the abolition of slavery which I would advocate is a gradual abolition. I believe the immediate and unqualified abolition of slavery to be inconsistent with a just regard, both of the best interests of the community, and the highest welfare of the slave. The philanthropy which aims at such an abolition, whatever I may think of its purity, I cannot commend for its intelligence or discretion . . . I would not, at once, entirely emancipate him from the control of his master." Slade's middle-of-the-road position at that time also included criticism of the Anti-Slavery Society's use of the U.S. mails to flood the major cities of the South with incendiary publications and thus "to excite the passions of the slave, and tempt him to force the bondage which is not for him to break, but for others to unloose . . . I deplore [the abolitionists'] often misdirected zeal, and deprecate the reaction it is calculated to produce."<sup>28</sup> Captured in time, representing his constituency, or at least what he believed to be the sentiment in Addison County, Rep. Slade took a middle ground.

#### "MOBOCRACY"

Congressman Slade's transition from gradual colonizationist to immediate abolitionist coincided with a rising tide of racism in the country, which seems to have reached a peak in 1835; on September 5th of that year the *Niles' Weekly Register* reported that "*Society seems everywhere unhinged, and the demon of 'blood and slaughter' has been let loose upon us! We have the slave question in many different forms.*" The editor observed that for the preceding week there were more than 500 reports in various newspapers from all the states detailing disturbances of one kind or another connected to the issue of slavery.<sup>29</sup> Some referred to this state of affairs as "mobocracy." New England had its share of disturbances and Vermont was no exception. A discussion of mobbing runs the risk of overemphasizing the number of people participating. Most "mobs" were small. The mob incident in Boston on October 25, 1835, involving Garrison was loud and nasty, but comparatively speaking, not very large.<sup>30</sup> Relatively few individuals in any given state or any given town were interested in physically agitating the subject of slavery. Still, Vermonters' participation in antiabolition mobs indicates the active presence in the state of a virulent form of racism.



The town of Bradford hosted an itinerant abolitionist lecturer in late September, 1835. As word of the impending lecture spread many townsmen objected. Word was passed to the lecturer not to proceed, as his program “was against the wishes of the people of the village to have the subject agitated.” But their entreaties fell on deaf ears and “with that blind and bigoted obstinacy, which characterizes this class of modern reformers, he refused to listen to good counsel and proceeded to lecture to what few he could collect to hear.” Determined that this mouthpiece of abolitionism, this advocate of disunion, should understand, and in this case truly feel the real convictions of Bradford residents, a group of people placed a fire pump at the doorstep of the hall and fired it at the lecturer inside. Initially undeterred he continued, even with his somewhat sodden countenance on display, but when the old pump was replenished and a second round of water applied to the fiery speaker and his small audience, he withdrew. In the words of one newswriter, he realized that “Vermonters understood, as well the art of putting out the torches of incendiaries who would light up our country with flames of revolution, as the brand of him who would set their dwellings in conflagration.”<sup>31</sup>

Much has been written about a similar, though far more dramatic, incident that took place in Montpelier on October 23 and 24, 1835. The focus of this mob activity was two speeches by the Connecticut-based Unitarian minister Samuel J. May, a close associate of Garrison.<sup>32</sup> Writing some forty-two years after the incident, the *Green Mountain Freeman* observed how difficult most people would find it to comprehend “the extent and force of the hostility to the *abolitionists*” in 1835. I would observe that today, it is still difficult in this new millennium to make sense out of the pervasiveness of that hostility. That a great majority of the leading citizens of Montpelier either stood by passively or participated in disruptive activities as Rev. May’s right to free speech, guaranteed under both the federal and the state constitutions, was snuffed out, stands as an exemplar of the depth of feeling in the fall of 1835.<sup>33</sup>

Most of Montpelier’s citizens, in fact, did not take kindly to slavery. However, they did not believe that this out-of-stater should be allowed a platform to discuss his “Absurd Doctrine of Anti-Slavery.” They had no desire to be arraigned and condemned by him as he spoke in a nonconciliatory, aggressive manner, spinning out his incendiary and fanatical doctrines. Their view was to ignore the First Amendment if necessary and move Mr. May out of town. Rocks were thrown at the windows of Representative’s Hall in the old Capitol Building where the first meeting was held, and at the Old Brick Congregational Church where the second meeting took place the next day. Eggs were lobbed, and intemperate shouting from the audience electrified the air and caused disruptions. There were

taunts of violence, and an annoying amount of foot thumping. Ultimately Reverend May relented and left for his scheduled appearances in Burlington, Middlebury, and Rutland, where he lectured to relatively small crowds. He did run into problems at each stop, though none to compare with the magnitude and vehemence of the disruptions in Montpelier.<sup>34</sup>

If nothing else, Rev. May's late fall swing through Vermont energized the Anti-Slavery Society and brought to the surface an undercurrent of deep-seated racial tensions which Vermonters were not used to dealing with, principally because of the absence of black people in the general population. The logic of the Anti-Slavery Society's stand, which many Vermonters found fanatical and far too unrealistic and demanding, was "We do not talk of *gradual* abolition, because as Christians, we find no authority for the *gradual relinquishment of sin*. We say to slave-holders repent now — today — immediately . . . break off your vice at once." This view drove the lecturers to make blistering attacks on the local churches' religious integrity and even to attack the United States Constitution as a flawed document because it allowed slavery to continue.<sup>35</sup> The didactic, often rude stridency of the antislavery lectures offended many Vermonters, especially in the 1830s when abolitionist momentum was just beginning to build.

One of the very few cases in Vermont in which the mobocrats were actually arrested and charged in court for their boisterous activities took place in Newbury on November 19, 1835. The Rev. George Storrs, an agent for the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, was delivering an abolitionist lecture at the Methodist Chapel. A number of men and boys gathered in and outside the chapel making speeches, talking loudly about maintaining the Constitution and the Union. Allegedly fueled by "the power of GROG," they attempted to stop the fanatical speaker and, in effect, to abridge Storrs's freedom of speech. They did their best to disrupt the event, hollering, ringing the bell, breaking a panel on the front door, and throwing brickbats. But Storrs prevailed, raising his voice loudly when the occasion called for it.<sup>36</sup>

Soon after the citizens left the chapel, two local justices of the peace arraigned three of the rioters and bound them over to the county court's December session. A trial eventually took place in June 1836, with Vermont Supreme Court Justice Jacob Collamer presiding on circuit in Chelsea. The jury found the defendants guilty of disrupting the Newbury lecture and interfering with the free speech rights of Rev. Storrs, essentially agreeing with Judge Collamer's charge that no matter what is being said at a meeting, "no man is to be allowed to break it up." The judge penalized the defendants rather harshly, in part for taking up the court's time, by levying fines totalling \$25.00 and cost of prosecution at \$143.76.<sup>37</sup>

The riotous behavior of this mob was certainly approved by a portion of Newbury's citizenry, who shared the belief that the changes sought by the Anti-Slavery Society were simply too radical for Vermonters to bear. There was a real fear that antislavery policies would lead to the disunion of the Republic. Moreover, the idea of eventual amalgamation between a white and a "lesser" race was unsettling to mid-1830s Vermonters, as well as to others in the New England states. This was the face of antebellum racism.

The Newbury incident bears out the prejudicial sentiments so keenly demonstrated over and over again throughout New England, including the Green Mountain State. Whether antiabolition sentiment was predominant throughout Vermont from the 1830s to the 1850s is hard to tell with assurance. However, it is clear that demonstrations protesting what the general public believed was the annoying agitation of the slave question by overzealous speakers within and outside of the state did occur from time to time.

#### LEMUEL HAYNES AND FREDERICK DOUGLASS

The stories of the treatment received in Vermont by two prominent free American blacks provide a final, telling illustration of the realities of racism in the state during the antebellum period. The cases of Lemuel Haynes and Frederick Douglass are separated in time by twenty-five years and represent the actions of two different generations of Vermonters. But the experiences of these two men suggest the extent to which racial prejudice—and actions that can only be considered racist—remained the bedrock of many Vermonters' attitudes toward black Americans throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

The subtleties of Reverend Lemuel Haynes's removal from the West Rutland Congregational Church speak to the rising tide of racism in Vermont in the early 1800s and beyond. It was said that the young men of the neighboring parish used to taunt the Haynes' own young parishioners because they had a "colored preacher." Their retort was that Rev. Haynes's soul was "all white! Snow white!"<sup>38</sup> As time went by over his thirty-year ministry in West Rutland, the parishioners became increasingly conscious that their pastor was indeed a mulatto, in other words he was clearly not white and, as a preacher, an anomaly in Vermont and in New England. Haynes's years of stirring sermons, sick visits, marriages, somewhat outspoken Federalist views, and noteworthy pastoral devotion began to wear thin with a newer generation who began to believe skin color was an impediment to real excellence in the pulpit, and so Haynes graciously withdrew from the congregation he had served for so long rather than allowing himself to be asked to step aside.

The jury is still out on whether changing times, politics, creed or

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race, or a grand mixture of all these factors brought an end to Haynes's thirty-year pastorate, but Haynes certainly thought that race had something to do with it.<sup>39</sup> By the second decade of the nineteenth century a full generation separated free northern blacks from slavery and whites from their earlier perceptions of slavery. New England offered free colored people a basic life, with few "white" social freedoms, at best a degraded life; but many whites were satisfied to tolerate this debasement because they did not honestly believe the races should mix. Haynes had always been a man of outspoken conviction, even entering into the national political disputes of the day. Such outspokenness and willingness to wade into the turbulent political scene undoubtedly made him seem a rather uppity black to the younger generation. That is, the reverend was acting as only whites were supposed to act. After his dismissal in 1818, Haynes related to an acquaintance, with a wry sense of humor, that "the congregation had just then discovered that he was a colored man."<sup>40</sup> Some years later he is alleged to have observed that his congregation thought "they would appear more respectable with a white pastor than a black one."<sup>41</sup> It is reasonable to conclude that the move by Haynes' congregation to dismiss him had racial overtones, at the least.

The last incident exemplifying the play of racism in antebellum Vermont involves an early sojourn of Frederick Douglass to Vermont. In the summer of 1843 Douglass was travelling in Vermont by stagecoach. The stage stopped one night along the way and took on five new passengers, and because it was dark none of the new fares had any idea of the color of the passenger, Mr. Douglass, already on board. As the conversation went on during the ride Douglass "was treated with all manner of respect. . . . Scarcely however had the light gilded the green mountains of Vermont than he saw one of the chaps in the coach take a sly peep at him, and whisper to another 'Egad after all 'tis a nigger' . . . . He had black looks for the remainder of the way, and disrespect."<sup>42</sup> This may well have happened in July 1843 as Douglass headed for Middlebury to participate in his first One Hundred Conventions being sponsored by the New England Anti-Slavery Society. The stagecoach episode was nothing new to Douglass; several times he had been forced from public rail transportation in Massachusetts. Once, when he inquired of the conductor urging him to vacate why he must leave the nearly empty first-class car for the "negro car," he was told pointblank, "because you are black." The conductor then summoned eight to ten assistants to remove Douglass and one cried out "Snake out the d—d nigger!" Douglass held onto the seat so tightly as he was physically removed that both he and the seat, which was ripped out from the floor boards, were thrown off the train and onto the station platform.<sup>43</sup>

The Middlebury Convention was preceded by handbills spread about town and advertisements in the local newspapers, one of which described Frederick Douglass as “the eloquent fugitive from slavery whose thrilling narration of his own history and suffering while in bondage and powerful appeals for his oppressed brethren have accomplished so much in other states.”<sup>44</sup> Douglass’ recollection of the Middlebury College students’ handbills, on the other hand, was that they were a good deal less genteel. Their posters, placed about town, made “violent aspersions” on the character of each of the speakers and made the “grossest misrepresentations of our principles, measures, and objects.” Douglass “was described as an escaped convict from the state prison.”

When only six or eight people showed up on the morning of July 13, 1843, for the first lecture, Douglass strode out of the Town-Room, headed “to the corners of the streets [to] give notice of the Convention, and endeavor to bring people in.”<sup>45</sup> In the evening a larger audience attended, but still very few local professed abolitionists, and fewer still from the surrounding country. In fact, a limited number of Middlebury’s most respected people were in attendance; the audience included a number of idle boys looking for a show.

On the last evening there was a bit of a row as many of those who came wanted to hear Mr. Douglass’ narrative of how he learned to read and write. A grand curiosity on this point seemed to be frustrated when Rev. George Bradburn droned on and on past 9:30 P.M. railing against the church and the clergy. The young, back row benchers threw buckshot and gravel at the podium, at least three eggs flew in the same direction, sending a message to Bradburn to sit down, but also indicating that some in the audience came prepared for a possible disruption. The news report said “the disturbance was made by minors” and speculated hopefully that “the day of mobs has, we trust, gone by in Vermont, and especially in Middlebury.”<sup>46</sup>

The stridency of the convention speakers’ attacks was clearly not appreciated. Bradburn, an abolitionist from Attleboro, Massachusetts, called the clergy a “race of corrupt hypocrites” and claimed that by common law “the clergy as a body were guilty of Murder and Robbery.” A Universalist clergyman named Mr. Knapen questioned the validity of these statements from the floor, but unrelenting, Bradburn asserted that the “northern Universalists . . . were the most brazen faced hypocrites of the whole gang.”<sup>47</sup> He then denounced the Constitution and the Congress and made a “desperate lunge at the Supreme Court,” expostulating that “they were all a dishonest gang led on by the blind Spirit of Slavery.” The news reports expressed dissatisfaction with the lecturers, dubbing them “infuriated disorganizers” who were bent upon destroying the political parties, reviling the clergy, leveling the “pillars

of the Constitution,” and dissolving the Union, unless they were immediately granted their way. Though the Vermont newspapers did not directly attack Frederick Douglass, his speeches “rankled antebellum northern whites because he was both an abolitionist and a black,” and he was at times in various venues called a “saucy negro,” “an impertinent black vagabond,” or just “nigger Douglass.”<sup>48</sup> In general, the speakers’ approach to their subject was adjudged far too harsh, unjustly critical of the churches, the clergy, and the whole nation, for Middlebury hearts and minds. In order to accomplish what the antislavery advocates intended, “to melt the chains from the hands of the bondsmen, and let the oppressed go free,” these abolitionists were advised to “exhibit more candor in their remarks” and to have more warmth and love in their presentations and less “of the thunder and lightning of denunciation.”<sup>49</sup> Middlebury’s appeal to the lecturers was that they should recognize that the progress of antislavery sentiment in Vermont was advancing and would continue, not overnight but by “a long and persevering appeal to popular sentiment.”<sup>50</sup>

The overall review of the Anti-Slavery Convention in Middlebury was fairly blunt. Newspaper reports confirmed that, after three sessions on two successive days, few people attended, and very few of those from the local area who held abolition in some regard.<sup>51</sup> The *Middlebury People’s Press* called it a “Convention of Foreign New Light Abolitionists.” Though there were moments during the two days when “powerful eloquence” illuminated a “laudable kind of discussion,” the editor said, the speakers all too often

relapsed into the most violent denunciations, and bitter invectives against politicians, priests, and all civil, ecclesiastical and benevolent institutions of the country, which should be prostrated unless they would give free course to the mighty carriage of abolitionism which was rolling through the land, and if found antagonist would crush them to a powder.<sup>52</sup>

Even Douglass’ own assessment was none too rosy, and it stands as an affirmation of the depth of underlying racism that permeated antebellum Vermont. The great black abolitionist observed that “few people attended our meeting, and apparently little was accomplished by it.” Moreover, “upon the whole . . . the several towns visited showed that Vermont was surprisingly under the influence of the slave power. Her proud boast that within her borders no slave had ever been delivered up to his master, did not hinder her hatred to anti-slavery.”<sup>53</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process, the Colonial Period* (New York, 1978), 3–16, 61–99, 100–150, 313–389; Lorenzo Johnston Greene,

*The Negro in Colonial New England* (New York, 1974), 124–143, and laws not indexed, scattered through the entire book; Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labor in Early America* (Boston, 1981), use index by state and subject; Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free State, 1790–1860* (Chicago, 1961), 97.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Gillies, “Not Quite a State of Nature: Derivations of Early Vermont Law,” *Vermont Law Review* 3(1) (1998), 99–131; Gary T. Aichele, “Making the Vermont Constitution 1777–1824,” in Michael Sherman, ed., *A More Perfect Union: Vermont Becomes a State, 1777–1816* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1991), 2–24; Walter Hill Crockett, *Vermont: The Green Mountain State*, 5 vols. (New York: Century History, 1921–1923), 2: 167–239; Michael Bellesiles, “The Establishment of Legal Structures on the Frontier: The Case of Revolutionary Vermont,” *Journal of American History* 73 (1987): 895–915; Peter S. Onuf, “State-Making in Revolutionary America: Independent Vermont as a Case Study,” *Journal of American History* 67 (1987): 797–815; John Shaeffer, “A Comparison of the First Constitution of Vermont and Pennsylvania,” *Vermont History* 43 (1975): 33–43; Francis Thompson, “Vermont from Chaos to Statehood: New Hampshire Grants and Connecticut Equivalent Lands,” *Proceedings of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association* 6 (1921): 231–271.

<sup>3</sup> J. Kevin Graffagnino, “Vermont’s Attitudes Toward Slavery: The Need For A Closer Look,” *Vermont History* 45 (1977): 31–34.

<sup>4</sup> John S. Haller, Jr., *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859–1900* (Carbondale, Illinois, 1995), xiv; Larry R. Morrison, “‘Nearer to the Brute Creation’: The Scientific Defense of American Slavery before 1830,” *Southern Studies* 19 (1980), 228–242; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 158n., 222–223, 230, 507–508; William R. Stanton, *The Leopard’s Spots: Scientific Attitudes toward Race in America, 1815–1859* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 3–4.

<sup>5</sup> William Lee Miller, *Arguing About Slavery: The Great Battle in the United States Congress* (New York, 1996), 11–12.

<sup>6</sup> J. E. Lighter, ed., *Random House Dictionary of American Slang* (New York, 1997), 658; Geneva Smitherman, *Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner* (Boston, 1994), 167–169; *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Nigger.”

<sup>7</sup> William Faux, *Memorable Days in America: being a journal of a tour to the United States, principally undertaken to ascertain by positive evidence, the condition and probable prospects of British emigrants* (London, 1823), 9.

<sup>8</sup> As quoted in Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 245.

<sup>9</sup> Lydia M. Child, *An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans* (Amherst, Mass., 1996), 195.

<sup>10</sup> As quoted in Melish, *Disowning Slavery*, 245.

<sup>11</sup> See Graffagnino, “Vermont Attitudes,” 33–34; Crockett, *Vermont*, 3: 277; *Biographical Dictionary of the United States Congress, 1774–1989* (Washington, D.C., 1989), 1006.

<sup>12</sup> Robinson and Southmayd to Charles G. Eastman, 8 June 1842, in Charles G. Eastman Correspondence, 1826–1846, Vermont Historical Society (I am indebted to Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], for this source); Crockett, *Vermont*, 325.

<sup>13</sup> See David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791–1850* (New York, 1987), 147, 170, 173, 174, 180; Charles E. Tuttle, Jr., “Vermont and the Antislavery Movement” (Honors Thesis, Harvard University, 1937), 77–79; Wilbur H. Siebert, *Vermont’s Anti-Slavery and Underground Railroad Record* (Columbus, Ohio, 1937), 24, 25, 35, 73, 74.

<sup>14</sup> George G. Robinson to Rowland E. Robinson, 3 September 1854, Robinson Family Papers, Rokeby Collection, Sheldon Museum. George signed his letters “Gilp,” as he was affectionately known in the family, taken from his middle name, Gilpin, which was his mother’s maiden name. Rokeby Collection.

<sup>15</sup> George G. Robinson to Rowland E. Robinson, 26 December 1858, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> George G. Robinson to Rowland E. Robinson, 9 January 1859, *ibid.*; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black*, 256–257, 259, 260n, 492, 501, 518.

<sup>17</sup> George G. Robinson to Rowland E. Robinson, 21 February 1859, Robinson Family Papers. An earlier letter from family friend Charles H. Symes to Roland demonstrates how comfortable Symes felt “niggering up” Rowland: “I am learning the fiddle but I don’t want you to let the boys know it and I want you to send me the notes to some of the nigger songs that be such as you think will do for next summer if you can get them handy.” (Charles H. Symes to Friend Robinson [Rowland E.], 16 March 1849, *ibid.*). On the opprobrium set upon whites playing the “nigger” instrument, see Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 199–200. On an aspect of the human dynamics that provoked this sort of prejudice in the thoughts of Frederick Douglass, see Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free State, 1790–1860* (Chicago, 1961), 103. On the prevalence of prejudice in antebellum Vermont

and statistical methods of measuring it, see Elise A. Guyette, "The Working Lives of African Vermonters in Census and Literature, 1790–1870," *Vermont History* 61(1993): 69–84.

<sup>18</sup> Litwack, *North of Slavery*, 24; Lawrence J. Friedman, "Purifying the White Man's Country: The American Colonization Society Reconsidered, 1816–1840," *Societas* 6 (1976): 5; *Journal of the General Assembly of the State of Vermont* (1819): 76, 138–139, in its preamble states "that all men are born equally free and independent," and then highly recommends colonization in Vermont and to their senators and representatives in Washington "to alleviate human woe, and eventually to secure this country from great and impending evils"; see also *The Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session* (1851): 158.

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 244; for the full text see Charles George Eastman, Letters, 1826–1846, Vermont Historical Society.

<sup>20</sup> Siebert, *Vermont's Anti-Slavery*, 13–15; Ludlum, *Social Ferment*, 145, 156–157; Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 103, 106; "Eighth Report of the Vermont Colonization Society," October 18, 1833; Tuttle, "Vermont and the Antislavery Movement," 29–42 (quote on p. 30).

<sup>21</sup> Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York, 1998), 59, 70, 72–73, 99, 103, 118, 128, 142, 194, 219–220; Russel B. Nye, *Fettered Freedom: Civil Liberties and the Slavery Controversy, 1830–1860* (East Lansing, Mich., 1963), 3–4; Ludlum, *Social Ferment*, 142, 143, 147, 149, 151, 166.

<sup>22</sup> J. K. Converse, *A Discourse on the Moral, Legal and Domestic Condition of Our Colored Population, Preached Before the Vermont Colonization Society, At Montpelier, October 17, 1832* (Burlington, Vt., 1832), 19, 23; Friedman, "Purifying the White Man's Country," 7–11.

<sup>23</sup> J. K. Converse, "The History of Slavery, And Means of Elevating the African Race: A Discourse Delivered Before The Vermont Colonization Society, at Montpelier, October 15, 1840" (Burlington, Vt., 1840), 22. For another example of colonizationist sentiment, see the Fourth of July, 1826, oration in Burlington by newly appointed University of Vermont Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy George W. Benedict, later the owner and editor of the *Burlington Free Press* (1853–1866): "An Oration, Delivered at Burlington, Vermont, on the Fourth of July 1826: Being The Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence" (Burlington, Vt., 1926), 17, 22, 23.

<sup>24</sup> Oliver Johnson, *Address, Delivered in the Congregational Church, in Middlebury, By Request of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, Wednesday Evening, February 18, 1835* (Montpelier, 1835), 21–23; *First Annual Report of The Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, Presented at Middlebury, February 18, 1835* (Montpelier, 1835), 13–17; Mayer, *All on Fire*, 134–138, 236; William Lloyd Garrison, *Thoughts on American Colonization* (Boston, 1832); and in answer to Garrison, see Cyril Pearl, "Remarks on African Colonization and the Abolition of Slavery, In Two Parts" (Windsor, Vt., 1833).

<sup>25</sup> *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Vermont Colonization Society*, October 15, 1846 (Burlington, Vt., 1846), 16.

<sup>26</sup> Miller, *Arguing About Slavery*, 13.

<sup>27</sup> On Slade's career see Crockett, *Vermont*, 3: 246–247; *Biographical Directory of U.S. Congress*, 1820; Henry Perry Smith, *History of Addison County Vermont* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1886), 151–153; Samuel Swift, *History of the Town of Middlebury in the County of Addison, Vermont* (Middlebury, Vt., 1859), 126, 274–278; Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848* (Philadelphia, 1875), 7: 275–276, 8: 150–151, 9: 39–40, 453–455, 10: 60, 63, 198, 472–473; *Niles Register*, 6 June 1829, 241–244.

<sup>28</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 23 December 1835, 83–89; Miller, *Arguing About Slavery*, see references to "Slade."

<sup>29</sup> *Niles' Weekly Register*, 5 September 1835.

<sup>30</sup> David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828–1861: Toward Civil War* (New York, 1998), 3–32; Lorman Ratner, *Powder Keg: Northern Opposition to the Antislavery Movement, 1831–1840* (New York, 1964), 3–87; Theodore Lyman, ed., *Papers Relating to the Garrison Mob* (Cambridge, Mass., 1870).

<sup>31</sup> *The New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, 12 October 1835, 12, as taken from *The Newport (N.H.) Spectator*, no date, though the incident probably occurred on a weekday in late September, 1835.

<sup>32</sup> Samuel J. May, *Some Recollections of Our Antislavery Conflict* (New York, 1968), 153–155; Ludlum, *Social Ferment*, 149–150; Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 182–83, 362n.63.

<sup>33</sup> *Green Mountain Freeman* (Montpelier), 11 July 1877; Miller, *Arguing About Slavery*, 11–12.

<sup>34</sup> *The Liberator*, 31 October 1835, as reported in the abolitionist *State Journal* (Montpelier), 27 October 1835. Samuel May said he was mobbed five times in Vermont that fall. He appeared in Montpelier on Thursday and Friday, October 22 and 23; went on to Burlington and spoke there on Monday, October 26; to Middlebury to speak on Tuesday, October 27, and on to Rutland to lecture on Wednesday, October 28. In Burlington May was accosted by a man in the gallery who did not wish any speeches on abolition, but a prominent local lawyer and Congressman Herman Allen had him removed and discouraged others from participating. In Middlebury a "youngster threw a hand-



ful of duckshot at May as he spoke and was ejected by the sheriff, and several robust youngsters threw stones at the building, but Rev. May went on"; see *The Liberator*, 31 October 1835. In Rutland a newspaper notice encouraged the citizens opposed to the abolition lecture to stay away from the Baptist Meeting House, rather than go and be disruptive. As a result, few attended. There were some "trifling" disturbances reported but Rev. May thought it best to cut short his lecture. A rock through the window, shuffling of feet by some attendees, some yelling from without, the ring of sleigh bells, as well as the discharging of firearms some distance away likely encouraged his decision; see *The Rutland Herald*, 27 October and 3 November 1835.

<sup>35</sup> *The Liberator*, 31 October 1835.

<sup>36</sup> *The Herald of Freedom*, 28 November 1835; Richard H. Sewall, *John P. Hale and the Politics of Abolition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 32, 133, describes a particularly disruptive antislavery lecture series delivered by Rev. Storrs in Dover, New Hampshire, August 1835, and the tactics used by the opposition to dislodge him from the podium.

<sup>37</sup> Orange County Court Records, Volume 13, 208–210; *The Herald of Freedom*, 9 July 1836; Crockett, *Vermont*, 5: 101–104. Another incident in Newbury took place in 1842 at the Methodist Episcopal School where there were about 260 students. Faculty and students made a concerted effort to keep out one black girl, as "it was held by a large portion of the public to be a sin and a crime to teach a colored person to read and write, a view endorsed generally by the clergy and the religious press, who ranged themselves on the popular side." Frederick P. Wells, *History of Newbury, Vermont* (St. Johnsbury, Vt.: The Caledonian Company, 1902), 213–214.

<sup>38</sup> Richard D. Brown, "Not Only Extreme Poverty, but the Worst Kind of Orphanage: Lemuel Haynes and the Boundaries of Racial Tolerance on the Yankee Frontier, 1770–1820," *The New England Quarterly* 61 (1988): 511 at note 10. See also Paul Douglass, *Black Apostle to Yankeeeland: Equalitarian Catchcolt Who Overlived His Caste* (Brandon, Vt., 1972), 28–29; and Timothy Mather Cooley, *Sketches of the Life and Character of the Rev. Lemuel Haynes, A.M.* (New York, 1839), 81, which was published but a few years after Haynes's death and probably carries the greatest authenticity.

<sup>39</sup> Cooley, *Sketches*, 73–172; Helen MacLam, "Black Puritan on the Northern Frontier: The Vermont Ministry of Lemuel Haynes," in Richard Newman, ed., *Black Preacher to White America: The Collected Writings of Lemuel Haynes, 1774–1833* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1990), xix–xxxviii; Rev. David Sherman, *Sketches of New England Divines* (New York, 1860), 267–284; Albion B. Wilson, *History of Granville, Massachusetts* (Hartford, Conn., 1954), 191–194; Henry G. Fairbanks, "Slavery and the Vermont Clergy," *Vermont History* 27 (1959): 305–312; John Saillant, "'Doctrinal Controversy Between The Hopkintonian and The Universalist': Religion, Race, and Ideology in Postrevolutionary Vermont," *Vermont History* 61 (1993): 197–215; Saillant, "Lemuel Haynes's Black Republicanism And The American Republican Tradition, 1775–1820," *Journal of the Early Republic* 14 (1994): 293–324; Melish, *Disowning Slavery*, 243–244; Ruth Bogin, "'The Battle of Lexington': A Patriotic Ballad by Lemuel Haynes," *William and Mary Quarterly* 42 (1985): 499–506; Bogin, "'Liberty Further Extended: A 1776 Antislavery Manuscript by Lemuel Haynes," *William and Mary Quarterly* 40 (1983), 85–105.

<sup>40</sup> Melish, *Disowning Slavery*, 243–244; see this text at 34 and notes 120–123 on a misplaced use of the word 'nigger'; Saillant, "Haynes's Black Republicanism."

<sup>41</sup> The source of the most poignant anecdote on Rev. Haynes's dismissal comes from the Fitch Manuscript History of Washington County, New York. This was prepared by Dr. Asa Fitch from 1847 to 1878, a collection of articles, bits of transcribed oral history, and pieces of genealogy, mostly of Washington County (which runs along the border of Vermont touching both Rutland and Bennington counties). Dr. Fitch died before the manuscript was published. For the last twenty years it has been available in microfilm (the Vermont Historical Society has a copy). Recently Kenneth A. Perry has done a masterful job of compiling the entire manuscript into a gazetteer, with an extensive index. Dr. Fitch heard the Haynes story from Captain Donald McDonald, of either Salem or Hebron, N.Y., at dinner in about 1848, which would be roughly fifteen years after Haynes died, and as much as thirty years since the actual dismissal. In Capt. McDonald's telling of the story to Fitch he says, "they found out that he was a nigger, and turned him away" [emphasis in original Fitch manuscript]. The quote is McDonald's, not Haynes's, as is often implied when it is quoted. It is questionable whether Rev. Haynes, talking about himself to anyone, would have referred to himself as a "nigger." Kenneth A. Perry, *The Fitch Gazetteer, An Annotated Index to the Manuscript History of Washington County, New York* (Bowie, Maryland, 1999), 1: 220–221; Vermont Historical Society, Film 197, at frame 245. Chrisfield Johnson, *The History of Washington County, New York* (Philadelphia, 1878), 201–202, relating the same incident, uses "a black man"; Ebenezer Baldwin, *Observations on the Physical, Intellectual, and Moral Qualities of Our Colored Population: With Remarks on the Subject of Emancipation and Colonization* (New Haven, Conn., 1834), 46, relates the same incident and uses "a colored man."

<sup>42</sup> Blessingame, *Douglass Papers*, 1: 45.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 1: 10 at n. 2.; Mayer, *All on Fire*, 306–307.

<sup>44</sup> *Vergennes Vermonter*, early June 1843.

<sup>45</sup> *Vermont Observer* (Middlebury), 18 July 1843.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 25 July 1843; Frederick Douglass, *Autobiographies* (New York, 1994), 672.

<sup>47</sup> *Middlebury People's Press*, 19 July 1843.

<sup>48</sup> Blessingame, *Douglass Papers*, 1: xxxvii.

<sup>49</sup> *Vermont Observer*, 25 July 1843.

<sup>50</sup> *Middlebury People's Press*, 19 July 1843.

<sup>51</sup> Douglass, *Autobiographies*, 671–672; *Vermont Observer*, 18 July 1843; *Middlebury People's Press*, 19 July 1843.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.; it is noteworthy that on the last evening a local “colored lady,” Mrs. Betsy Lafas, spoke out and complained during Rev. Bradburn’s talk that her son Samuel was abused while passing out handbills. No response was reported from either Bradburn or the audience.

<sup>53</sup> Douglass, *Autobiographies*, 632.