VERMONT HISTORY

The Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society

SUMMER/FALL 1998

VOL. 66, NOS. 3&4

"I must again remind you that you are a Vermonter": Henry Stevens, Historical Tradition, and Green Mountain State Patriotism in the 1840s

Though his passionate identification with the Green Mountain Boys might seem to be merely idiosyncratic, [Henry Stevens's] particular understanding of history underscores the complex relationship between state, regional, and national loyalties during the antebellum era.

By David E. Narrett

On June 25, 1845, Henry Stevens, the founder and president of the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society, addressed a letter of moral guidance to his son, George, a lieutenant of dragoons serving in the United States Army at distant Fort Jesup, Louisiana. Counseling the young officer to keep to "the path of duty," the elder Stevens sounded a familiar refrain: "I must again remind you that you are a Vermonter. Honor your native state in every condition in which you are called to act." The letter also called upon American troops to commit to memory "the Vermonters' camp song of . . . 1779," a recently discovered patriotic ballad that supposedly dated from the War for Independence. To Henry Stevens, a leading publicist of this verse, the song exemplified the fighting spirit of the Green Mountain Boys, his own state's Revolutionary heroes.[1] The inspirational ballad was not, however, a truly historic piece as Stevens imagined, but it was instead a kind of patriotic spoof written anonymously in the 1830s by John Greenleaf Whittier, the renowned poet. Intending the song to pass for "an old-time production," Whittier successfully played upon the popular veneration of Revolutionary War heroes. His trick easily fooled

Henry Stevens (1791–1867), founder and first president of the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society. Unsigned portrait, 1834.

Vermonters such as Henry Stevens who prized memories of their state's unique role in founding the nation.[2]

Born in Barnet, Caledonia County, Vermont in 1791, Henry Stevens was a somewhat eccentric, self-styled "homespun farmer" and local businessman whose multifarious interests ranged from moral reform and politics, to economic development, to historical collecting, preservation, and commemoration.[3] Though his passionate identification with the Green Mountain Boys might seem to be merely idiosyncratic, his particular understanding of history underscores the complex relationship between state, regional, and national loyalties during the antebellum era. Like other Americans who searched for worthy ancestors, Stevens sought to elevate his own state above others even as he affirmed his broader patriotism. While viewing history from an intensely local perspective, he defined himself as a New Englander whenever sectional divisions arose in contemporary American politics. Two related crises—Texas's annexation and the Mexican War—stirred his opposition to national policies that seemed contrary to Vermont's moral example.

The war itself presented a terrible dilemma to Stevens because his third son, George, fought and died in the conflict after being encouraged by his father to pursue a career in the U. S. Army. As an historian, Henry Stevens venerated the Revolutionary War as proof of his state's loyalty to the Union. The Mexican War challenged his belief in the nation's political course, but it did not finally undermine his faith that personal sacrifice in war was the truest test of Vermont patriotism.[4]

Because historical consciousness in Vermont was still in its formative stages in the 1840s, Henry Stevens had considerable opportunity to shape public attitudes according to his own personal vision of the past. Working in the middle ground between nationalist historians and antiquarians on the village scene, he merits comparison with other "lesser" or "secondary intellectuals" in nineteenth-century America who collectively helped to shape what Michael Kammen has termed "the construction of social and cultural traditions."[5] To Kammen, these individuals fulfilled an especially important role because they pursued their historical interests within a changing, future-oriented society that often seemed heedless of the past. The most common public uses of history during the antebellum era involved the veneration of founding fathers (whether colonial or Revolutionary), the competition between states and regions for national prestige, and the transmission of moral values to the next generation.[6] Henry Stevens shared in each of these concerns, while also being involved in public policy issues governing his state's relation to the nation. Unlike most antiquarians of his era who were little more than local boosters, he commands our attention as a man who sought historical solutions to the most acute social and economic problems troubling Vermont. His praise of the Green Mountain Boys was not simply a means of fostering state pride, but also of persuading his fellow citizens to redirect their behavior toward certain ends. This pragmatic approach to history may be likened to the New England Whigs' tendency to invoke their Puritan ancestors as moral examples to all Americans against the perceived democratic excesses of their society.[7]

Founding the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society with three other men in 1838, Henry Stevens cherished the past above all as a model to the present. His manner of preaching history to the public served the goal of moral reform as much as his belief in temperance and antislavery. Like many rural New Englanders of his era, Stevens was perplexed by rapid westward migration, economic change, and the departure of countless young persons to distant areas.[8] He was especially troubled by what Robert Wiebe has called "the opening of American society"—the movement away from a deferential republican order toward a more democratic society of seemingly boundless opportunity

for free white men.[9] Henry Stevens experienced this conflict between stability and change in his personal and family life as well as in his broader social relations. Like other Americans who had difficulty in adjusting to a modernizing world, he utilized history as a bulwark against uncontrolled change.[10] He valued the Revolution as his foremost guide because it offered a military model of discipline that could strengthen Vermont's place within the nation. Stevens did not perceive the Revolutionary War simply as a series of triumphs on the battlefield, but more broadly as a victory achieved by bold statesmanship and popular dedication to a cause. His painstaking research and writing on the early Vermont republic satisfied a genuine interest in his state's history while it also served his own personal need for self-esteem and influence over others.

State historical societies during the early nineteenth century have commonly been viewed in recent scholarship as organizations that shifted from a nationalistic to a more local orientation toward the past. Though this generalization has some validity, it does not alone explain the complex means of integrating state and national loyalties during the antebellum era.[11] As president of the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society, Henry Stevens focused almost exclusively upon honoring his own state's Revolutionary heroes. Within an increasingly nationalistic society, however, his endeavors would acquire meaning only if they obtained respect outside Vermont. This search for recognition may have been particularly important to Stevens because his state patriotism was often expressed in a defensive mode. Much like the proud, but anxious Americans who were dependent upon sophisticated European opinion for their own self-esteem, Henry Stevens could not ignore outsiders' views of Vermont. Fearing that his small state might be neglected by other Americans, he felt morally bound to spread word of Vermont's historic triumphs across the nation. As Stevens explained in 1843 to Hiland Hall, a prominent Vermont politician and historian: "Important historical facts connected with the American Revolution belong not to me. Every American has an interest in common in every matter connected with the history of our country. The part that Vermont took in the American Revolution is but little understood."[12]

Rather than adopt a consistent viewpoint toward the nation, Henry Stevens alternated between seeking its approval and depending upon Vermont alone to appreciate his work. As a man who tirelessly collected documents but who had difficulty writing history, he exhorted prominent New England scholars such as George Bancroft and Jared Sparks to record the Green Mountain State's wartime triumphs. Finding himself strapped for funds, Stevens attempted unsuccessfully in 1841 to

sell a large portion of his historical collection to the New-York Historical Society—a curious fact given his hatred of the Empire State for its opposition to Vermont's independence during the Revolutionary era. Stevens's short-lived scheme of selling these records out of state clashed with his belief that Vermont's history would be put right only if it was written by native authors.[13]

Although Stevens's activities on behalf of Vermont are amply documented by his voluminous correspondence and mostly unpublished writing, it is difficult to identify the origins of his patriotic fervor. One possible answer to this question lies in his family background. Descended from an old New England family that had experienced frontier warfare in several generations, Henry was the son of Enos Stevens, a Tory, who fled the upper Connecticut valley during the Revolution, joined British forces in New York, and later went into exile in Nova Scotia. Returning to his native region by 1785, Enos made his peace with the United States and became a prominent citizen of Barnet, Vermont.[14] Henry Stevens learned his first history lessons from his father, but he omitted mentioning Enos in his own historical writing on the Revolution. One can therefore speculate that Henry's intense Vermont loyalty represented a means of compensating for his father's Toryism.[15] As an antiquarian collector and publicist of history, Henry Stevens figuratively refought the battles of the Revolution in order to affirm his own American patriotism and to bring recognition for his state throughout the entire country.

Henry Stevens was by no means alone among Vermonters in viewing his state's achievements during the Revolution as an unequaled example of American patriotism. During a Congressional debate in 1842, for example, Hiland Hall of Vermont chided Virginia for failing to support the War for Independence as the Green Mountain State had done.[16] Hall took particular aim at the Old Dominion's fraudulent stake in bounty land claims derived from exaggerating its soldiers' and sailors' services during the conflict. While rebuking a Virginia representative for ridiculing Vermont, he declared that the Green Mountain State had from its birth in 1777 "maintained her independence . . . and established . . . a Government *more* purely republican than any on the face of the globe." This assertion of political virtue was followed by a defense of the Green Mountain Boys, who from the capture of Fort Ticonderoga until the war's end, "were always found foremost in the attack, last in retreat." Hall then proceeded to prove that Virginia, though it had been roughly equal to Massachusetts in population, had furnished less than half as many soldiers to the American cause. Despite its small numbers, Vermont, too, surpassed the Old Dominion in maintaining troops, if its mil-

itary rolls of 1781 were assessed relative to population.[17] Hall's argument is significant for defending his state because of its martial prowess as much as its republican allegiance. The tendency to emphasize the military aspects of the Revolution, often to the neglect of its political or social meaning, was already well established before the Civil War. By the late nineteenth century, this practice had become a dominant form of cultural expression in American popular literature and art.[18]

Henry Stevens's patriotism was generally consistent with Vermont public opinion, though his sometimes impolitic manner of promoting his views did not always win state government support. One of his most striking defeats was his failure to gain legislative approval for a Vermont monetary claim against the United States based upon the state's expenditures during the War for Independence. Like other Vermont historians, Henry Stevens conceived of the Green Mountain State as a republic that had stood apart from the United States from its own declaration of independence against New York in 1777 until its admission to the Union in 1791. As he explained in a report to the governor of September 27, 1842: "Whatever our fathers expended on account of the Revolutionary War, was done as an independent Republic, and in as independent a manner as that of France or Holland."[19] This belief was sufficiently popular in Vermont to allow Stevens to present his views to the state government in an official capacity. The antiquarian encountered resistance, however, when he demanded that a state claim of more than $500,000 be placed before Congress. His plea for federal reimbursement might prove embarrassing to Vermont, undoubtedly because it could not be easily reconciled with the state's recent complaints about Virginia's raid on the national treasury for its bounty land claims. A select committee of the state legislature in 1843 rejected any federal presentation of Stevens's case as "inexpedient" and "without hope of success."[20] A final judgment against the war claim was issued in 1847 by Charles K. Williams, former chief justice of the state supreme court, as special commissioner appointed to investigate Stevens's documentary sources. Adopting a nationalistic perspective, the judge emphasized that Vermonters had considered themselves united to the American cause during the Revolutionary War even though their state was then denied admission to the Union. Williams calculated Vermont's military expenditures at an even higher level than Stevens, but he rejected the argument that the Green Mountain State could be considered a creditor of the United States based upon any equitable or practical mode of reckoning.[21]

Henry Stevens could not help but direct his attention beyond Vermont as he strove to vindicate his state's reputation. Given the growth of print

culture and historical writing on a national level, public recognition of the Green Mountain State depended greatly upon authors in other regions. Stevens therefore attempted to convince George Bancroft that it was Ethan Allen—and not Connecticut's revolutionary authorities—who had originated the plan of taking Fort Ticonderoga in May 1775.[22] A proper appreciation of Vermont's historic role required understanding the consequences of its actions for the nation. In a letter to Jared Sparks, Stevens proudly asserted that Fort Ticonderoga's cannons—once captured by the Green Mountain Boys—were then used by Washington's army to end the British occupation of Boston: "I claim the Ball in the walls of the Boston Church as being fired from a Cannon taken from the British by the G. M. Boys. Do I claim more than what is true [?] If it is a fact . . . I wish to have written in larg[e] Capital letters on said Ball. *Green Mountain Boys*."[23]

This appeal to Jared Sparks was the provincial man's cry for recognition from the Harvard College historian. Henry Stevens's effort to influence American scholarship from small Barnet, Vermont, required him to win over New Englanders of national reputation in the battle against defamers of the Green Mountain State. No accusation disturbed him more acutely than that by William L. Stone, a New York author, who labeled Ethan Allen and his leading compatriots as conspirators whose allegiance to the American cause was fickle at best, and treasonous at worst.[24] This charge could not be ignored by Stevens because it took aim at the Vermont founders' most controversial wartime policy—the conducting of secret negotiations between 1780 and 1783 with the British governor of Canada, Sir Frederick Haldimand, about a possible separate peace and the recognition of their small republic as a Crown province. According to Stevens, this bold diplomacy succeeded in hoodwinking the enemy with false promises of future loyalty, buying time for the American cause, and demonstrating Vermont's courageous and lonely battle for self-preservation against domestic and foreign foes. As he explained to Jared Sparks, his own research proved the state's "necessity of using deception for the furtherence [sic] of Justice and the salvation of the Northern department."[25] Since Congress had failed to assist the Green Mountain State's frontier defense in 1779, its leaders had no apparent choice except to forestall a British advance by Yankee trickery. Henry Stevens informed Jared Sparks that the Allens' shrewd policy benefited the entire Union, including New York, a state which the Vermonter scorned as "a mill stone about the necks of the Continental Congress, a hinder to General Washington. Without money. Without troops Without Provisions Without Patriotism Without Charity forbearance or Brotherly love[,] With abundance of Torys

[sic] and sham Patriots." Had it not been for the Green Mountain Boys, those men "most despised" by the Yorkers, the British Army would have overrun Albany and made it "as desolate as Sodom and Gomorah [sic]. . . ."[26] Stevens thus expressed his contempt for a city that had long been associated in Yankee historical memory with avarice, foreign manners, and collusion with the enemy in Canada. While some New England spokesmen in the 1840s were busily countering Southern cultural pretensions, Henry Stevens remained fixated on an old Yankee-Yorker feud that had ostensibly been settled fifty years before.[27] His sense of the nation was rooted in the colonial past as well as the Revolutionary era.

While seeking to persuade New England scholars of Vermont's historic significance, Henry Stevens kindled pride at home by maintaining that the state had done no less than to win the war of American independence. By obtaining an armistice on the northern frontier in the winter of 1780-1781, the Allens' negotiations with the British supposedly allowed Washington to withdraw sufficient troops from that theater to achieve victory over Cornwallis at Yorktown. As Stevens explained to one Montpelier publisher: "Had it not been for the Green mountain boys the United States of America would to this day [have] remained a British Colony." Though Vermont was but a small independent republic, Stevens wrote Hiland Hall, it "held the destiny of the thirteen American Colonies in her hand."[28] This assertion was an extreme version of state patriotism which other authors voiced in more muted tones. The first influential state history, written by Samuel Williams in 1794, presented the Haldimand negotiations as a necessary, morally justifiable, and shrewd means of Vermont's self-preservation rather than as a primary cause of British military defeat.[29] A similar argument to Williams's was advanced by Zadock Thompson in his *History of Vermont* published in 1842. He uneasily admitted that some persons might question the "propriety" of Vermont's diplomacy, though not its "beneficial effects" for the state and the Union, notably the northern frontier.[30] Eschewing this somewhat defensive stance, Henry Stevens portrayed the United States as being dependent upon Vermont for its own triumph. State allegiance was unquestionably the cornerstone of his American nationalism.

The true nature of the Haldimand negotiations still remains a matter of controversy among historians. Although scholars no longer consider Vermont's policy as vital to the victory at Yorktown, they still debate why that state's leaders courted the British during wartime. Notwithstanding Henry Stevens's claims, there is no clear proof that Ethan Allen and his associates clearly informed American authorities, including Washington, of their course of conduct.[31] Without attempting to

resolve this complex issue, it seems apparent that Stevens's understanding of history was driven by his own personal needs as much as by a careful analysis of the documentary sources that he had collected. Though he was but a small-town resident, a self-described "Henry Homespun," he took pride in the achievements of illustrious forebears who had won independence for their nation as well as state. Even if his own father had been a committed Tory, that unpleasant fact paled in significance before the honor of being a native son of the only independent republic that had fought for and maintained its own statehood throughout the Revolution.[32]

Henry Stevens's veneration of Ethan Allen is especially remarkable because the antiquarian was himself a devoted Christian who might be expected to have recoiled at the brash and uncouth deist's name. After all, respectable Vermonters in the early 1800s commonly felt some embarrassment at the memory of the Green Mountain Boys' leader.[33] To Stevens, however, the desire to honor a Vermont national hero outweighed all else. Though Allen's proverbial Yankee trickery might be mocked by outsiders, Stevens took pride in this native stereotype when in the service of a noble cause. The antiquarian's worshipful view of Allen gained popularity during the antebellum era as citizens in various states identified the famous backwoods strongman with the cause of liberty.[34]

Henry Stevens held a romanticized view of the Revolution in which Vermont triumphed by its leaders' stealth and cunning as well as by its people's righteousness. This conception had some basis in reality considering the bloodless capture of Fort Ticonderoga in 1775 and the armistice secured through the Haldimand negotiations later in the war. Stevens's most treasured time of the Revolution was perhaps 1779, a year of privation and potential danger but with little actual combat for Vermont. Refused admission by Congress, the small republic remained embattled with New York and New Hampshire. To Stevens, this period of hardship served to strengthen Vermont's internal unity and self-reliance—traits that he found lacking in his own time. John Greenleaf Whittier's idealized Revolutionary War song seemed authentic to Henry Stevens because it expressed a mood of defiance against domestic and foreign foes. As Stevens pictured the historical setting for this song, he imagined verses that were "sung at our Bean porrige [sic] family parties, at our raisings & Huskins [sic]. In camp & in the camp of the Northern and eastern department."[35] The song had great meaning to Stevens precisely because it seemed not to be simply an army song, but instead a battle cry of an entire people:

. . . we owe no allegiance; we bow to no throne
Our ruler is law, and the law is our own;
Our leaders themselves are our fellow-men,
Who can handle the sword, or the scythe, or the pen.

Our wives are all true, and our daughters are fair,
With their blue eyes of smiles, and their light flowing hair;
All brisk at their wheels till the dark even-fall,
Then blithe at the sleigh-ride, the husking, and ball! . . .

Hurra for VERMONT! for the land which we till
Must have sons to defend her from valley and hill;
Leave the harvest to rot on the field where it grows,
And the reaping of wheat for the reaping of foes. . . .

Come York or come Hampshire,—come traitors and knaves;
If ye rule o'er our *land,* ye shall rule o'er our *graves*;
Our vow is recorded—our banner unfurled;
In the name of Vermont we defy *all the world*![36]

The publicizing of the Vermonters' camp song was enthusiastically greeted by natives of the Green Mountain State, including those who thanked Stevens directly for bringing this ballad to public attention. One resident of Middlebury wrote that the song was "especially admirable for its bold and lofty tone of defiance." Patriotic verse of the Revolution, he added, was "more precious than gold, in illustrating the history of the times." This correspondent was so moved by such reminders of the past that he even recounted two pre-Revolutionary ballads that he had learned from his father.[37] Emily Skinner of South Hardwick was similarly touched by Stevens's sending her "memento's [sic] of the early history of Vermont." She wrote: "The 'Song' breathes, truly the Spirit of '79, which caused our noble 'Fathers' to defy the oppressor, and fight valiantly, for liberty, and independence." To her, the "Self-sacrificing toil, privation, and suffering" of the Revolutionary patriots was a "*rich inheritance*" that was sadly neglected in the present:

> To me, the past seems like a beautiful Temple,—from which at present the *sunshine and glory* hath departed—or around which a dark shadow is hovering—Yet if 'the Star that *never* sets' is destined *ever* to Shine over our Green hills, the *vapor* and the *cloud* will, doubtless *pass away.*
>
> True,—wealth, intelligence, and refinement of manners, have been rapidly advancing—but if weighed in the 'balances'—a *handful* of the generous, *old-fashioned*, soul felt hospitality, would turn the scales against the cold, studied, *chilling* politeness, of modern Society.
>
> *Nor is our warfare ended*, if we would be a people, 'to be remembered' in the *annals* of the *good* and *Great*,—Not *now*, with 'powder and ball' are we to meet the foe—but with *moral* weapons like the 'two edged sword, which turned every way. . . .'[38]

Though Henry Stevens used "moral weapons" rather than "powder and ball" to convince Vermonters of their duties, one sometimes senses that his conduct was dictated by necessity rather than preference. Frustrated when the state government delayed paying his expenses for a research trip in 1843 to several states and the nation's capital, he declared himself "almost swearing mad." As a churchgoing temperance man, Henry Stevens seldom lost his self-control, but he now in mock fashion warned Governor Charles Paine of his readiness to raise money by lecturing on Vermont history "at every Cabin Hamlet Village & City from this place [Barnet] to the City of Washington": "I will put on the Military Hat of General Ethan Allen, gird on his sword, Buckle on his spurs and [march] with the drum and Broad sword presented by General Starks [sic] taken from Col[onel] Baum Aug. 16, 1777. . . ."[39] This reference to the American victory at Bennington—the battle which secured Vermont's independence—may have been offered in jest, but it also expressed Stevens's desire to experience the Revolutionary War vicariously through his historical research and lecturing.

The need to keep the Revolutionary spirit alive influenced Henry Stevens's social values as well as his family relations. No issue seemed more important to him than the transmission of historical tradition to the next generation—a goal imperiled by the state's uncertain prospects during the economic downturn of 1839–1843. Though historians debate the impact of this depression upon rural New England, there is no doubt that contemporaries feared its effects. Writing to Henry Stevens in early 1843, Chauncey L. Knapp of Montpelier expressed his outrage over a recent legislative report that had concluded that "'[the] *known resources of the State are inadequate to the support of its native population.*'" If this was the real cause of the so-called "rage for western emigration," he remarked sardonically, then Vermonters should "confess the truth and run away. I shall not believe it for some weeks."[40] Stevens concurred with these sentiments, while linking economic problems to moral decline within his state. Too many young men, he wrote, were fancying themselves dandies with "whiskers safety chain, cain [sic] and gloves" rather than rolling up their sleeves for hard work. This taste for luxury contrasted with earlier times when one Massachusetts gathering had toasted Vermont as "'the Backbone hip, shoulders, kidney and pluck of New England.'"[41]

Henry Stevens idealized Vermont's founding generation partly for its military prowess, but above all because of its practice of moral virtues that he deemed essential to the state's future prosperity. Victory on the battlefield during the Revolution was made possible only by sacrifices within the family economy. Thrown upon its own resources in 1779, the

Green Mountain republic survived in Henry Stevens's view largely because the state's rulers "then appealed to their Wives and daughters. They did not appeal in vain. Our mothers by their practical Patriotism their industry and economy done [sic] their full share in establishing the independence of this state and so soon paying of the war debt."[42] The state's welfare therefore depended upon young women keeping to their traditional domestic role rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Stevens decried the social and economic changes that had led to the massive shipment of Vermont wool out of state and the increased reliance upon manufactured cloth produced by southern New England factories, many of which employed Yankee farm girls. Evaluating federal censuses, he calculated that the per capita value of household manufactures in Vermont had declined significantly between 1810 and 1840. Whereas the state was first in the Union in that category in the former year, it had slipped by the latter point behind Missouri, Kentucky, and Arkansas: "We are beaten out and out by each of those slaveholding state[s]. . . . This stain must before 1850 be wiped away."[43] The answer to this problem lay in a renewed dedication to republican principles as exemplified by Vermont's Revolutionary leaders: "The spirit of Chittenden, the Allens, Warner, Herrick, Robinson, Olin, Baker & Brownson, Tichenor, Smith, Galusha, each is now admonishing us to forsake our follies [and] to turn back and walk in their footsteps [.] Incourage [sic] industry economy and domestic manufactures."[44]

Long before William James wrote of the "moral equivalent of war," Henry Stevens called upon Vermonters to address current social problems with the same spirit that had once inspired the Green Mountain Boys. Attempting to reinstate a form of self-sufficiency that had been practiced by necessity during the Revolution, he proposed that Vermont residents be taxed for wearing articles of clothing manufactured in a "foreign state or Government." The Green Mountain State in his view ought to be "as independent of her sister states as the soil climate and ability of the people would possibly permit."[45] This stance was far from consistent, however, because Stevens continually looked to the federal government for support of Vermont's interests relative to the protective tariff and internal improvements.[46] He demanded national assistance in light of the state's past services to the Union, while insisting that Vermont maintain an independent rhetorical position. He accordingly berated William Upham, one of his state's Congressmen, for defending the tariff by quoting statements made by the first five American presidents. In Stevens's opinion, any "Representative of the Green Mountain Boys" need only consult Vermont Governor Chittenden's proclamations

in the 1780s to find "more worthy sayings in relation to *Protection* either as to our *Rights Industry* or *property*. . . ."[47]

Although Henry Stevens never really influenced public policy, his economic ideas anticipate in some ways the changing relationship between the individual and the nation in the modern industrial age. Frustrated by his own problems as a farmer and small wool manufacturer, he conceived a plan in 1844 by which the federal government would acquire the patents on improved textile machinery from large firms in order to allow technical innovations to be shared equally by all producers.[48] It is ironic that Stevens envisioned a more centralized national economic policy at the same time he counseled self-reliance for his state and its people. Being busy on a daily level with a plethora of tasks, he was not fully aware of the contradictions in his own social outlook.[49]

Henry Stevens instructed his own family in Vermont virtues that he associated with rural self-sufficiency, temperance, Whig politics, and antislavery. Indeed, there was no clear distinction between his conception of history, current affairs, and his children's prospects. In an expansive, progressive society, Stevens sought to bind the present to the past and to keep his children fixated on Vermont even when they moved beyond it. When his daughter, Sophia, was visiting Boston in March 1845, he counseled her neither to forget her heritage nor to permit city folks to scoff at her native state:

> You seem to write as though Boston was a Paradise. The time was when her Churches were used for Garrisons for the British troops or for stables for their horses. You may ask who was instrumental in granting relief. I say Green Mountain Boys. They took the Cannon at Ticonderoga that were used to drive the British out of Boston [.] One of those Cannon balls is now in the Wall of Brattle Street Church as a witness to this operation. Around which ought to be written in gilt letters. This Ball was taken from the British at Ticonderoga May 10 1775 by the Green Mountain Boys. When you pass this Church look at said Ball. No Loco Foco can look at this ball without fear and much trembling. Every Vermonter on beholding this ball swears anew that he is for our Country our whole Country nothing but our Country. Whenever a Bostonian speaks disrespectful of the Green Mountain State tell him of that Ball. Advise him to look at it five minutes.[50]

This admonition expressed a jumbled mix of concerns: opposition to alien city ways; an association of the Locofocos, radical members of the Democratic party, with the enemy; and an insistence that the current generation of Vermonters look to the state's Revolutionary heroes for guidance on matters of national significance.[51]

Rather than simply disdaining contact with the broader world,

Stevens hoped that his children would master new environments while keeping their moral compass fixed on home. He thereby typified the social outlook of other Whig civic leaders in rural New England who combined boosterism with concerns for family order.[52] The tension between Stevens's fatherly ambitions and his profound conservatism is especially apparent in his approach to his third son, George. Guiding the young man to pursue a military career, the elder Stevens exercised his political influence in 1839 to secure an appointment for George at West Point. Though Henry had previously considered sending his son to a well-known military school in nearby Norwich, Vermont, he favored the more prestigious national academy once an opening became available there. His fondest wish was that George would honorably represent Vermont as a cadet and later as an American officer. This expectation was also held by others, including former governor William A. Palmer, who recommended George Stevens to the Secretary of War as "a *full blooded Green mountain boy* . . . [who] will do honor to the appointment."[53] As George's experience would prove, however, it was far from simple for him to fulfill his father's moralistic sense of warfare while meeting his duties as an American officer. This particular father-son relationship reveals the challenges of integrating distinct state and national loyalties for successive generations of Vermonters.

From the moment George entered West Point, Henry Stevens measured his son's achievement in relation to cadets from other states. His initial letter to George at the Academy advised him to "Stick snug to your Books and see if you can go ahead of all the New England cadats [sic]." Ten days later, he emphasized the importance of obedience, industry, and economy—virtues especially appropriate to a young man "from a small state (and not a son of a Nobleman but of a Farmer)."[54] After four months of study, George had achieved respectable grades, but had difficulty in explaining his ten demerits for the term, even though that number was small relative to his classmates'. Justifying his conduct to his father, he claimed that it was nearly impossible to avoid these "blackmarks" since they were given for "little insignificant things" like trying to shoo away flies. George added that only one cadet, Senator John C. Calhoun's son of South Carolina, had managed a spotless record for two years.[55] This was small comfort to Henry Stevens, who was content with his son's academic standing, but disappointed with his less than perfect conduct: "It seams [sic] to me that their [sic] is no necessity of a Vermont Yankee being dishonored by black marks. I hope that you will be more particular hereafter. You speak of the son of J. C. Caloon [sic]. Is it possible that a Vermont Yankee is to be out done by a southern cadat [sic]. I hope not."[56]

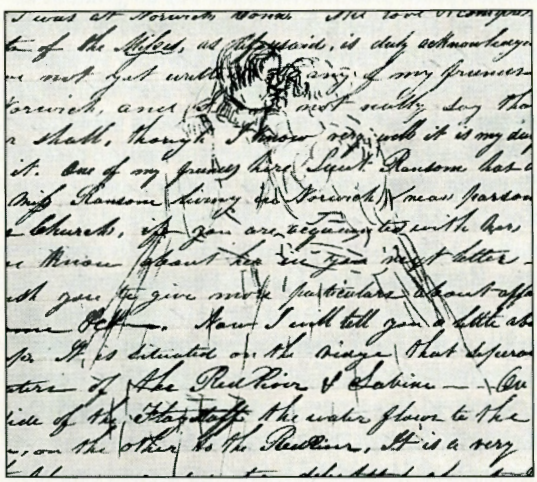
George Stevens's West Point years were marked by concerns about class rank, frequent financial worries, and a sincere interest in his father's pursuit of Revolutionary War claims. More comfortable riding a horse than studying, George wrote to his mother that he planned to "exert myself to the proper limits," but was not "a going to expose myself, and run the risk of losing my eyes, health &c" for the sake of improved grades. The cadet felt so pinched for funds that he welcomed his father's offer in December 1840 that he receive $1 for each month that he had no demerits.[57] Henry Stevens meanwhile struggled to support sons at both West Point and Yale College while also providing for his wife and three younger children. At one point he told his son that he was determined to continue his historical collecting even if it should compel him to sell the farm. George dutifully cheered on his father's campaign to obtain federal compensation for the Green Mountain State: "I have read with much interest your report to the Gov[ernor]and am ready to swing my hat and hurrah for Vermont."[58]

After graduation, George Stevens accepted a position in July 1843 as second lieutenant in the Regiment of Riflemen, a unit that could be mounted at Congress's discretion, and that was posted on the Southwestern frontier.[59] This appointment suited the young man's adventurous nature and his love of horses, though it soon raised the possibility that his allegiance might stray from his father's world. Arriving at Fort Jesup, Louisiana, in December 1843, George Stevens adapted to new surroundings that offered challenges and possibilities. His correspondence with his father during his army service reveals his own change of perspective from a simple Vermont loyalty to a broader, more independent outlook. This shift in viewpoint was not sudden, but as gradual as his acclimation to variations in the Southern climate. Writing to his family in early 1844, he reported that the mild February weather seemed more comfortable than Vermont at any time of year while the blossoming flowers stirred the senses.[60] This enthusiasm was soon tempered by homesickness. As George wrote his sister, Sophia, in late March, "This perpetual Summer climate is indeed pleasant and agreeable, but I would give a month's pay for a good slide down the old 'Mill hill' on a smothe [sic] board or a skait [sic] on the cove or mill pond."[61] By late April, he wrote that it had been too hot for hunting lately and that mosquitoes and ticks were a constant nuisance. His father meanwhile worried continually about his son's health, advising him to guard himself against the alien climate: ". . . you are a northern man. I expect every day to hear that you are sick. Eat no meat, drink *no grog* [and] be very temperate during the warm season."[62] As temperatures of nearly 100 degrees became commonplace in mid-July, George closed one let-

ter with a simple exclamation: "O Lord! how hot." He met this trying circumstance by turning his Yankee ingenuity to the construction of a "shower bath" close to his room.[63]

George Stevens was a young man of high spirits and hardy physique whose pursuit of good times was not easily constrained by his parents' moralistic advice. For Henry Stevens, it was essential that an American officer be a role model to others. "I hope you will on all occasions lend your talent in doing good to your fellows. Try and elevate the soldiers [,] raise them up, those that cannot read or write teach them so to do."[64] Drinking wine and spirits was especially to be avoided as it would imperil George's health and risk his future role as a provider to his aged parents. Reminding George that "our anxiety is very great," Henry Stevens left space in one letter for his wife, Candace, to express her motherly concern that their boy observe his Sabbath duties: "So live that you may be approved of at last."[65] Both parents were doubtless pleased by news that Fort Jesup had a debating club, library, and a temperance society, though they may have been less happy with George's reports of frequent social calls upon "the Ladies."[66] Displaying his considerable drawing skills, the young man sketched an officer embracing a woman in a letter to his brother, Henry Stevens, Jr., in which he described his outpost as "a very pleasant Society."[67] Two miniature photographs of George Stevens, taken sometime during his brief military service in the Southwest, give an impression of strength and relaxed confidence.[68] These qualities seemed to presage a successful military career.

George Stevens's initial questioning of homespun pieties came after visiting plantations in the fort's vicinity. Carefully describing the plant-



Sketch of an American officer and a female companion, in a letter from George Stevens to his older brother, Henry Stevens Jr., Jan. 7, 1844. Courtesy of Wilbur Collection, University of Vermont Library.

ers' agricultural practices and the architecture of their homes, he remarked to his father that "Slaves usually live in small houses of about ten feet square, with a fire place. Every negro family [has] a house—and they live more comfortably than a great portion of the Sons of freedom at the north."[69] These comments did not elicit any direct response by Henry Stevens, but the possible annexation of Texas to the United States in the spring of 1844 soon raised the question of how the Stevens family would reconcile conflicting state and national loyalties. To George, the admission of Texas might offer a welcome opportunity for military adventure on the Mexican border. The young man celebrated with his fellow soldiers in April 1844 upon learning that their regiment was to be remounted on Congressional orders.[70] Henry Stevens's initial response to the Texas question was cautious, though suspicious. As a loyal New England Whig, he expressed distrust of President Tyler's order of troops to the Southwestern frontier without prior consultation of Congress. Though at first sympathetic to annexation, Stevens soon turned against it because of fear that Southern proslavery interests might seize Texas in order to provoke war with Mexico.[71] Notwithstanding this apprehension, he never doubted that George's military service was a test of Vermont's loyalty to the nation. As Henry wrote to his son on June 1, 1844: "I long to have you distinguish yourself as an American officer. Above all do not dishonor the name of the Green Mountain Boys."[72]

George Stevens's unit faced no call to action during the summer of 1844 since the United States Senate rejected on June 8 the proposed treaty of annexation with the Texas Republic. The Texas question remained nationally divisive, however, and it soon had a major impact on the Stevens family. In August, George Stevens was called upon by the Army to carry dispatches from the U.S. charge d'affaires in Texas to John C. Calhoun, the American Secretary of State. Journeying to Washington, D.C., he had only a brief stay in the capital as he was ordered to travel to the Texas seat of government, at Washington on the Brazos, carrying new dispatches from both the U.S. Department of State and the "Texian" Legation.[73] Though only a courier, George's role in important political events undoubtedly boosted his confidence and broadened his experience. Describing his journey between Louisiana and Texas to his father, he explained that he had covered an estimated 750 miles on horseback in less than twenty days, including four days simply of awaiting orders: "I travelled alone—rising in the morning at day break and riding until an hour or more after dark—on a strange road—no moon—divils [sic], ghosts, bears, panthers, wolves, robers [sic]—but no fear, I had a knife and two horse pistols & two belt pistols and any quantity of go ahead, sometimes the houses were 10 or 15 miles apart."[74]

George Stevens (center) flanked by two fellow soldiers during his military service in the Southwest. The structure in the background may be Fort Jesup, Louisiana. Daguerreotype, ca. 1845. Courtesy of the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

By early 1845, George's army experience had led him to form political views utterly different from those of his student days at West Point when he had been a staunch Whig like his father. Influenced by Southern white culture and his travels in Texas, he now strongly favored the Democratic ticket and annexation. As he proudly announced to his father: "I am rejoiced at the Election of J. K. Polk, and hate the abolitionists."[75] Henry Stevens expressed more concern with his son's seeming moral lapses than his politics, though he vented some sarcasm when asking for George's opinion about the recent Congressional resolutions of March 2, 1845 in favor of Texas's admission to the Union: "I expect you and your Brother officers on receipt of the Resolutions . . . will hire some Indian to shoot a wild pig[,] a few turkeys and have a real dinner for your selves and neighbors. We Vermonters in general are opposed to Slavery as well as annexing Texas. This is a Loco[foco] movement [.] What will be the consequence I know not."[76] This letter accurately

reflected state opinion since the Vermont Assembly in October 1844 denounced annexation as a proslavery measure which threatened the dissolution of the Union.[77]

Anti-Texas sentiment was so strong within Vermont that it led some politicians there to deny historic parallels between the admission of the Lone Star Republic and the Green Mountain republic into the Union. In addition to the opposition to Texas on antislavery grounds, New Englanders generally argued that the Constitution gave no license for the incorporation of a foreign nation still claimed by Mexico.[78] When Southern expansionists cited the Green Mountain State as an example of a separate republic being admitted to the Union, Congressmen George P. Marsh and Jacob Collamer of Vermont refuted their contention. Rejecting any similarity between the two cases, they maintained that Vermont—unlike Texas—had been created from a neighboring state—New York—and that it had existed solely within the bounds of the American Confederation.[79] This politically expedient use of history would have doubtless annoyed the Green Mountain Boys, who prided themselves on belonging to an independent state formed outside of any prior political community.[80] Henry Stevens evidently never commented on the congressmen's use of history, but he would not have agreed with their basic premise about Vermont's past.

To Henry Stevens, the crux of Vermont loyalty was patriotic service which was consistent with his own conception of the American Revolution. This ideal might have been served by a war to seize Canada, but not one to secure slaveowning Texas. As Stevens explained to George while the young man was enrolled at West Point, "I am unwilling to have [Queen] Victori[a] retain any possessions on this continent south of 56 [degrees] North Latitude. This is as far north as potatoes and oats will grow."[81] Approaching the Oregon controversy from the vantage point of a Yankee farmer, he later used another homey metaphor to express the American demand that the British "clear out" of that region: "The American Farm is now large yet I am unwilling to have Mrs. Victoria keep possession of any territory back of ours." Stevens's support in the mid-1840s for the acquisition of the entire Oregon country put him in the camp of those Conscience Whigs who distinguished sharply between Northwestern and Southwestern expansion.[82] Disturbed by the threat posed by Texas's impending annexation, Henry Stevens reassured his daughter, Sophia, on March 10, 1845 that James K. Polk's inauguration did not signify the demise of Vermont Whig opposition to slavery's extension: "The 4th of March has passed. The sun shines as usual. The Whigs of the Green mountain state are yet on their [tops?] ready to perform every duty." Vermont stood in this view as a moral

example to other states by disdaining any addition to its territory. Its own fight during the Revolution was identified with the cause of liberty rather than foreign conquest. Echoing Ethan Allen's declaration, Stevens believed that the Green Mountain Boys' most glorious moment was their first strike against British tyranny—the capture of Ticonderoga: "The star which has been our guide rose on the morning of the 10th May 1775 during the time Col[onel] Allen was repeating the following words[,] 'In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Grand American Congress I demand the surrender of this Fortress.' This star never has set. It shines by day as well as by night. I believe it will shine to the end of time. The oppressed in our sister states can look to this *Star* of Liberty and equality when they are muted by tyrants and every vestige of their republican institutions are no more."[83] It is striking that Henry Stevens used a military triumph—and one leading toward the American invasion of Canada in 1775—as proof of Vermont's commitment to freedom. Hoping that George might still be swayed by this heritage, he requested that Sophia write her brother "a good Whig letter. . . ."[84] Henry's own letters to George took a different tack by emphasizing the performance of military duty above all else. Vermont might be the most advanced government and society in a moral sense, but its reputation for right conduct would avail little on a national level unless its sons acted bravely on the battlefield.[85] It was not possible for Henry Stevens to distinguish clearly between his own political conception of military honor and his son's pride in arms.

Always eager for any news of Vermonters in the military, Henry Stevens responded warmly to George's report that Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock, the grandson of Ethan Allen, was stationed with the Third Infantry at Fort Jesup in early 1845.[86] Hitchcock was himself pleased to learn of Stevens's collection of Vermont historical documents and requested a "scrap" of his grandfather's writing. This army veteran of many years—a man whom George Stevens characterized as a "real Vermonter"—aired nostalgic memories of his native state that would be voiced by many fellow emigrants in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Praising the elder Stevens's publishing plans, Hitchcock declared that the writing of Vermont history "would send the blood tingling through my whole body. It has been my destiny to spend my life far distant from the green mountains, but I never forget that they are 'my own native' hills—once trod, protected & defended by my remarkable grandsire."[87]

Hitchcock's expression of fondness for Vermont was precisely the type of sentimental flourish that Henry Stevens desired to hear from his son, but that he could no longer obtain. By June 1845, the elder Stevens

was seemingly so desperate to fuel George's state patriotism that he sent him "the Vermonters' camp song of 1779" for a third time. His letter declared the hope that "every soldier in the service knew this song by heart and were [sic] possessed of that same spirit which characterized the Green Mountain Boys at that period."[88] This attempt to perpetuate Vermont's Revolutionary War in the present was bound to be futile because of the distance in time and space that separated George Stevens from his father's mental world.

George Stevens never abandoned his Vermont loyalty, but he instead assumed an independent outlook in which state patriotism was a secondary concern to national service. As he became more accustomed to military life, he seldom answered his parents' queries about his religious obligations and offered no apparent comment about the Vermonters' camp song to his father. Appointed topographical engineer to the U.S. Army entering Texas in July 1845, he was asked to survey the roughly five hundred mile route from Fort Jesup to Corpus Christi where the troops would be stationed along the disputed border with Mexico. As George traveled through the east Texas woodlands and small towns, his letters to his father were replete with enthusiastic comments about the beauty and healthfulness of the countryside, the friendliness of the people, and the prettiness of the girls who flocked to balls given in the officers' honor. Henry Stevens responded in sardonic Yankee fashion: "You must have a fine time dancing when the Thermometer stands from 95 to 100."[89] As the young officer learned more about Texas, his father hoped that he would be alert to opportunities for land speculation and business similar to his Yankee ancestors' ambitions when settling the northern New England frontier. Advising George to note the presence of "streams, Mill seats, Navigable streams &c" as well as settlement patterns, Henry Stevens recommended that his son and fellow officers "join and petition the Texas Assembly for a Grant of Land say six miles square [the typical size of a Vermont township]. This grant you will get without doubt for moderate Charter fees. Come bargain with some two or three of your Brother Officers and then take the lead in this business. When you get others to sign the petition they will give you an acquitance [sic] for a mere trifle."[90] Here was a concise lesson in town formation that had been elevated to an art by the Allen family and other local land promoters in the former New Hampshire Grants. Organize a numerous company of men to satisfy the legal requirements of securing a valid legal title, and then buy out the uninterested or token grantees for a small fractional share of the unsettled land's potential value.[91] Henry Stevens suggested that George might possibly execute this scheme with Ethan Allen Hitchcock and another Vermont officer,

thereby keeping the profits within a narrow circle of trusted men. The antiquarian cited historical precedent for his plan by informing George how New England officers in the Continental Army had championed Vermont's cause during the Revolution and had then received land grants for low fees from its government. Surely similar possibilities could be had by befriending "the leading men in Texas." That state would soon be awash with federal subsidies for supplying the army and building roads and forts. Henry Stevens had little doubt that this stream of wealth would soon flow to "our Yankee Pe[d]dlers [who] will soon be there to gather up every dollar of current money in exchange for New England Rum & domestic Manufactures."[92]

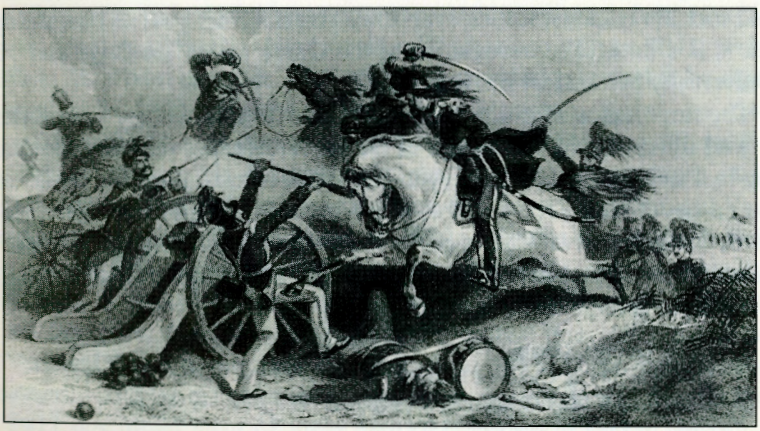
George Stevens was so taken with Texas that he attempted to convince his father to settle there. Writing from Corpus Christi on October 10, 1845, he described his impressions from his journey to the Gulf Coast, claiming that "parts of the country that we passed over are more healthy & beautiful than any part of New England."[93] The young Vermonter marveled at the boundless land with its well-watered prairies, ample timber, salubrious climate, and cattle at bargain prices. His father was curious, but not convinced: "As to moving to Texas, I will wait a little to see what luck you Vermonters have in procuring grants of Land. I should like to visit Texas and see the country. . . . Is the land good in the vicinity of Corpus Christi. What is the price of Cotton goods. Rum by the Gallon. Coffe [sic] by the pound[?]."[94] Henry's desire for useful information prompted George's promise to collect Texas newspapers and all of the Republic's public documents, and to ship them to Barnet as soon as possible. A journey across the prairie to San Antonio meanwhile added to the young officer's collection of "Mexican, Indian & other curiosities."[95] George even proposed to send some red chilies to Vermont, a sure-fire recipe to test the Yankee palate!

As the Polk administration moved to armed confrontation with Mexico in March 1846, General Zachary Taylor's army in Corpus Christi was ordered to march to the Rio Grande. George Stevens joined this advance with the 2d Dragoons, himself riding on his "fine Grey" named Ethan Allen. (Here was a sign of a Vermont officer's state pride, though a loyalty that was more casually expressed than Henry Stevens's veneration of Ethan Allen as a war hero). From mid-March to early May, George's unit journeyed southward to Point Isabel along the Gulf Coast, crossed the Rio Grande to establish camp near Matamoras, and then returned to its base on the north side of the river after the Mexican army moved to contest the American forces on that ground.[96] The young man's last letter to Barnet, of May 3, 1846, doubtless frightened his parents as it described nearby cannon fire and an imminent clash

between the two armies, with the enemy estimated at between 6,000 and 14,000 men. "Boom—Boom Boom in the direction of Matamoras, every minute—Love to Mother and all." George proclaimed himself "in my *war spirits*" and ready for action: "I shall [be] mounted on my Grey horse 'Eathen' [sic] and will take my chances."[97]

The next letter from the war front that reached the Stevens home did not arrive until Saturday morning, June 13, and it announced the painful news of George's death on May 18. As recounted by Lieutenant Potter, one of the deceased officer's comrades, this tragedy had occurred as George's horse bolted while crossing the Rio Grande, tossing him from the saddle, catching his foot in the stirrup, and plunging him under water until he was drowned. Henry Stevens was devastated by this news, though he had sufficient strength to write the War Department in Washington that same day, requesting that all his son's personal effects as well as his collection of documents, curiosities, and correspondence be shipped home so that they could be deposited in the Vermont Historical Society. He also expressed a desire that George's body be removed to Barnet and buried in the family tomb.[98]

The shock of George's death forced Henry Stevens to examine the meaning of the Mexican War in relation to Vermont's own past. Two days after receiving the death notice, he suggested to his friend, E. P. Walton, Jr., the Montpelier newspaper publisher, that he print an editorial recommending that the relatives of deceased officers from the New



"Capt. May's Charge at Resica [Resaca] de Palma." Engraving, Virtue & Co., New York, 1860. This print shows the charge of the U.S. Dragoons on May 9, 1846, in which George Stevens participated. Courtesy of the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

England states be allowed to have their kinsmen's remains "taken up and brought to this land of liberty where slavery dwelleth not."[99] On June 17, 1846, Henry Stevens described his sadness to Phineas White, a prominent Vermont Whig: "my staff on which I so much relied is broken." It was difficult for Henry to reconcile these feelings with George's proud martial spirit: "His Letters from Camp carries [sic] the Idea of Conquer or die." The elder Stevens could not himself call the Mexicans enemies, mourned for the losses on both sides, and described the war as a violation of the Green Mountain Boys' warning against foes from other states: "'Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbors possessions.'" The American army in Stevens's view should have remained stationed at Corpus Christi until the boundary dispute with Mexico was peacefully settled.[100]

At the same time that Henry Stevens condemned the Mexican War, he and other family members took pride in George's accomplishments as a soldier. Stevens was cheered by a report that George with only a few comrades had bravely charged a Mexican battery in the battle of May 9, 1846, and that he had been entrusted with escorting a captured general to Taylor's headquarters.[101] In providing information to a local newspaper for George's obituary, Henry noted that his son—if he had been spared—would have been twenty-five years old on June 8. He recounted the young man's progress as a student: from Caledonia County Grammar school in Lyndon, to Newbury Seminary, Peacham Academy, and on to West Point. George had been a dutiful soldier who had met his responsibilities ever since reaching his post at Fort Jesup: "he was a faithful representative of the Green Mountain Boys and . . . Universally beloved by his Regiment."[102]

The importance of military service to nineteenth-century Vermonters is well illustrated by the design of the Stevens family monument standing in a small hillside cemetery in Barnet. A commemorative stone lists the names of Henry Stevens, his wife Candace, and all their eleven children, including five who died in early childhood. George Stevens's name is carved just below his parents', and above those of his siblings. His simple epitaph reads as follows:

> Lieut. George Stevens
> Son of Henry & Candace Stevens
> Born June 8 1821 Graduated West Point
> Class of 1843 2 Dragoons U S Army
> On Gen. Taylor's Staff Mexican War Drowned
> May 18 1846 while crossing the
> Rio Grande with the General's advanced
> Guard & buried at Fort Brown in Texas.
> Aged 25 years.

Though George's body was never brought back from Texas, his memory was preserved as part of his native state's traditions. This heritage for many years blurred the distinction between the Revolution and subsequent conflicts, so that Vermonters continued to envision their soldiers as Green Mountain Boys.[103] This identification with the past was by no means limited to those men who served in a military capacity. Though a resident of London for most of his adult life, Henry Stevens, Jr., the antiquarian's son and himself a prominent book collector, commonly added three initials to his signature: "G. M. B.," or Green Mountain Boy.[104]

Henry Stevens, Sr.'s long career as an exponent of Vermont patriotism was replete with irony. Though a Tory's son, he helped to perpetuate the legend of the Green Mountain Boys. Striving to relive the Revolutionary War through his own children, he lost a son in a conflict which he believed was wrong. Though he pleaded that Vermonters work to renew their state at home, his efforts proved unavailing against the steady tide of out-migration throughout the nineteenth century. Nostalgia remained a powerful sentiment among many former Vermonters, but such feelings alone contributed little to the economic growth, self-sufficiency, and moral order that Stevens craved for the Green Mountain State.[105]

Notwithstanding Henry Stevens's ceaseless work as a collector of historical documents, his monumental storehouse of Vermont records was largely lost to posterity through two fires. This tragedy reflected the difficulty of historical preservation during an era when governments depended greatly upon private individuals to initiate this type of work at their own expense. While Stevens amassed papers that he considered to be "the property of the Green Mountain Boys," he also expected to profit from the sale of his collections to the state. Given the confusion between his personal holdings and the state archives, it is not surprising that problems ensued between the antiquarian and Vermont's government. During the mid-1850s, Stevens was even forbidden by the legislature to carry away any historical records from its chambers. A disastrous fire in the State House in 1857 consumed most of his first collection. He then compiled a second one which the State of Vermont failed to purchase at his death in 1867. These papers were eventually sold by his heirs to the New York State Library where a fire in 1911 destroyed most of these precious original sources. Though a sufficient portion of the Stevens collection survived to be an important documentary record, its significance was greatly diminished. Henry Stevens's contribution to Vermont cannot be measured solely by these historical papers, but should also include his influence in forging state

tradition—a common sense of the past based upon popular memory and myth.[106]

Although Henry Stevens failed to realize his most cherished goals as an antiquarian, he saved some material artifacts which linked his state's past to the nation's independence. It was largely through his labor that Vermont was able to retrieve two of the four brass cannon that were captured at the battle of Bennington by the Green Mountain Boys and other New England militia. Addressing the state legislature in 1848, the Reverend James Davie Butler praised Stevens for recovering these weapons and expressed his own pride in military sacrifice on the nation's behalf. The retrieved cannon were "time-honored relics" that should be treasured as much as those weapons of war which were enshrined in "the sky-climbing chamber of the Bunker Hill monument." To Butler, this respect for Revolutionary War mementos was quite a recent development in Vermont. Shunning examples of previous indifference, he reminded his audience that General Stark's gift of captured war articles to the state had once been "vilely thrown away." Butler called upon Vermonters above all to show "the same resolution to preserve our rich inheritance which . . . our fathers showed in acquiring it. . . . Then shall our mountains still be the holy land of freedom, and all our battle-fields remain that hallowed ground which speaks of nations saved."[107]

Henry Stevens's own intense identification with the Green Mountain Boys sometimes bordered on the eccentric, but his Vermont patriotism was quite in keeping with the public mood in the state. His influence upon subsequent generations was felt in several ways in the years just following his death in 1867. Documents compiled by his son, Henry, Jr., formed a major part of the first two volumes published in 1870 and 1871 as the *Collections of the Vermont Historical Society*.[108] Henry Stevens, Sr.'s labors had already been of considerable service to Hiland Hall, the highly respected statesman who devoted himself to the writing of history after serving as governor between 1858 and 1860. Hall's *History of Vermont*, published in 1868, was the most accomplished scholarly statement of Green Mountain State patriotism written during the nineteenth century.[109] This book was so cherished by Vermonters that it was placed with other select documents beneath the Bennington Battle Monument's five-ton cornerstone at a dedication ceremony of August 16, 1887, the one hundred and tenth anniversary of the battle. Hall had himself been the foremost public advocate of erecting this memorial stone obelisk for many years before his death in 1885.[110] Henry Stevens, a supporter of the monument's construction since the 1850s,

would doubtless have approved of the intertwining of patriotic history with a statutory commemoration.

The equation of military sacrifice with political virtue was commonplace in the early American republic. Nowhere was this connection felt more strongly than in Vermont, whose own distinct battle for independence as a republic was bound to the Revolutionary War. Whatever its economic and social problems during the antebellum era, the Green Mountain State was viewed by many of its citizens as having a special mission that was defined in historic terms. Fostering a sense of state tradition therefore became an important source of stability in an uncertain time. Vermonters' loyalty to their past placed them on a seemingly higher moral plane than the aggressive, proslavery adherents of Manifest Destiny. Henry Stevens's tragedy was that he attempted in vain to reconcile the virtuous military ideal of the Revolution with American nationalism in his own time. As his son George's experience proved, the responsibility of being a Green Mountain Boy was not a simple burden to carry. Maintaining a sense of statehood and national identity based largely upon heroism in battle is seldom an unmixed blessing, no matter how noble the cause for which a people once fought.

Notes

The author would like to thank J. Kevin Graffagnino for greatly assisting his research, and for introducing him to Henry Stevens as an historical figure. The staffs of Special Collections in the Bailey-Howe Library, University of Vermont, and the Vermont Historical Society were also helpful. Michael Kammen, Michael Bellesiles, Bret Carroll, Stephen Maizlish, and Marcy Paul offered useful critiques of the essay. Richard Francaviglia assisted in selecting illustrations.

[1] Henry Stevens Family Correspondence, 1844–1862, Vermont Historical Society Collections (cited hereafter as Stevens Correspondence, VHS). I have retained original spelling in all quotations, while adding punctutation and capitalization in a few instances in order to clarify meaning. Henry Stevens's correspondence was written from his home in Barnet, Vt., unless otherwise noted.

[2] The ballad was printed as an addendum to James Davie Butler, *Deficiencies in Our History. An Address Delivered Before the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society, at Montpelier, October 16, 1846* (Montpelier: Eastman & Danforth, 1846), 34–36. For an edition of the song with a review of its history, see John Greenleaf Whittier, *The Song of the Vermonters, 1779*, ed. Marcus A. McCorison (Hanover, N. H.: Pine Tree Press, 1956). This edition includes a Whittier letter of 1877 in which he explained his original intent. See also Arthur W. Peach, "The Story of 'The Song of the Vermonters, 1779,'" *Vermont History*, 22 (October 1954), 286–289.

[3] There is no published biography of Henry Stevens, Sr., (1791–1867) or any previous scholarly essay which examines in depth his beliefs concerning the American Revolution. As a civic leader in Barnet, Stevens served for a time as postmaster and justice of the peace. He was elected as his town's representative to the state legislature in 1826–1827. Besides the Stevens Correspondence noted above, there are two other important archival collections of Stevens materials: the Henry Stevens Papers and the Stevens Family Papers, Wilbur Collection, Bailey-Howe Library, University of Vermont (cited hereafter as Henry Stevens Papers and Stevens Family Papers, UVM). For an overview of Stevens's family history, see Ethel M. Stevens, *Footprints Down the Centuries: A Vermont Heritage* (Boston: Chapman and Grimes, 1961). For a brief biographical sketch and a synopsis of Stevens's own historical collections on Vermont history, see Eleazer D. Durfee and D. Gregory Sanford, *A Guide to the Henry Stevens, Sr. Collection at the Vermont State Archives* (Montpelier: Vermont Secretary of State's Office, 1989). For two useful essays which discuss the Vermont historical tradition in the nineteenth century, see Randolph Roth, "Why Are We Still Vermonters? Vermont's Identity Crisis and the Founding of the Vermont Historical Society," *Vermont History* 59 (Fall 1991): 197–211; P. Jeffrey Potash, "Deficiencies in Our Past," ibid., 212–226.

[4] For the importance of war as a source of American national unity, see David M. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," in *History and American Society: Essays of David M. Potter*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 60–108; Merle Curti, *The Roots of American Loyalty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 148–172. Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775–1865* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1968), 68–70; Robert W. Johannsen, *To the Halls of the Montezumas: The Mexican War in the American Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 45–67; Gerald F. Linderman, *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 81–82.

[5] Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 80.

[6] Ibid., 40–90. See also Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 3–58; William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and the American National Character* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1961), 273–281; David D. Van Tassel, *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Studies in America, 1607–1884* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 66–76, 115–117, 134–141; George H. Callcott, *History in the United States, 1800–1860: Its Practice and Purpose* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970).

[7] J. V. Matthews, "'Whig History': The New England Whigs and a Usable Past," *New England Quarterly*, 51 (June 1978), 193–208. This conservative use of history anticipates subsequent efforts by the Massachusetts elite of the 1900s to impose its own vision of the past upon recent immigrants. See James M. Lindgren, "'A Constant Incentive to Patriotic Citizenship': Historic Preservation in Progressive-Era Massachusetts," *New England Quarterly*, 64 (Dec. 1991), 594–608. For a detailed assessment of antiquarianism, see David J. Russo, *Keepers of Our Past: Local Historical Writing in the United States, 1820s–1930s* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988).

[8] Roth, "Why Are We Still Vermonters?" 200–202. Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 220–221, 265–279. Hal S. Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 28–35. See also P. Jeffrey Potash, *Vermont's Burned-Over District: Patterns of Community Development and Religious Activity, 1761–1850* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1991); Harold Fisher Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England: Its Social and Economic History, 1790–1930* (1936; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1967); David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791–1850* (1939; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966), 201, 262. Lewis D. Stilwell, *Migration From Vermont (1776–1860)* (1937; reprint, Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1948).

[9] Robert H. Wiebe, *The Opening of American Society: From the Adoption of the Constitution to the Eve of Disunion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984). For other major works on this theme, see Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992); Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).

[10] Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 59.

[11] The shift from a national outlook to a local orientation is discussed in Van Tassel, *Recording America's Past*, 59–62; Russo, *Keepers of Our Past*, 11–16.

[12] Letter, Stevens to Hall, 27 Mar. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[13] Stevens to President of the New-York Historical Society, 28 Dec. 1841, Henry Stevens MSS, New-York Historical Society. In this letter, Stevens invited his correspondents in New York to review his collection at his home in Vermont: "You or your friend will find the string at the door and a plate knife & fork within." For the New-York Historical Society's lack of interest in Stevens's offer, see Peter Augustus Jay to Henry Stevens, 5 Jan. 1842, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. See also Stevens's letters of Sept. 6, 1842 to George Bancroft and Jared Sparks, ibid. For Stevens's belief in native authorship, see his letter to Hiland Hall, 12 June 1843, ibid. In a letter of Nov. 30, 1842 to Heman Allen, Stevens noted his professional ambitions, but admitted that "facts" still had "to be arranged by some person that has had other advantages besides a woman school forty five years since," ibid.

[14] See the unpublished biographical sketch written in 1897 by Benjamin Franklin Stevens, the youngest of Henry Stevens's six children who survived childhood. This typescript record—as well as Henry Stevens's own brief autobiography of his youth—are found in the Stevens Family Papers, UVM.

[15] According to family lore, Henry Stevens respectfully preserved his father's wig in his library. He had no tolerance, however, for Tory politics. See Benjamin Franklin Stevens, Typescript Biography, Stevens Family Papers, UVM.

[16] *Speeches of Mr. H. Hall, of Vermont, on the Virginia Bounty Land Claims. Delivered in the House of Representatives of the U. S., June 16 and 25, 1842* (Washington: National Intelligencer Office, 1842), 18–20. For the prevalence of state competition, see Kammen, *A Season of Youth*, 52–

58. Arthur H. Shaffer, *The Politics of History: Writing the History of the American Revolution, 1783–1815* (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1975), 11–14.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Kammen, *Season of Youth*, 84–87, 195–197.

[19] See "Report of Henry Stevens on Revolutionary Claims of Vermont Upon the United States," *Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1842* (Montpelier: E. P. Walton & Sons, 1843), 81–90. For another affirmation of the Vermont republic, see Zadock Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil, and Statistical, In Three Parts . . .* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842), Part II, 62–67.

[20] "Report of the Select Committee, To Whom Was Referred the Report of Henry Stevens," *Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1843* (Montpelier: E. P. Walton & Sons, 1844), 11.

[21] According to Williams, "we ought not to ask the United States to remunerate us for *all* the expenditures we incurred in defending ourselves as well as them, and in fighting our battles and theirs for the defence of our common interest." See "Report of Honorable Charles K. Williams, on the Subject of the Claims of this State Upon the General Government," Rutland, Oct. 13, 1847, *The Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1847* (Montpelier: E. P. Walton & Sons, 1848), 153–159.

[22] Henry Stevens to George Bancroft, 6 Sept. 1842. Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. Bancroft was not apparently swayed by Stevens's views since he subsequently credited a Connecticut committee with initiating the plan to seize the fort. See George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America, From the Discovery of the Continent*, 6 vols. (1854; rev. ed., Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1879), 4: 554–555. For the growth of print culture on a national scale, see Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[23] Henry Stevens to Jared Sparks, 14 Feb. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[24] William L. Stone, *Life of Joseph Brant—Thayendanegea: Including the Border Wars of the American Revolution, and Sketches of the Indian Campaigns of Generals Harmar, St. Clair, and Wayne*, 2 vols. (New York: Alexander V. Blake, 1838; reprint, New York: Klaus Reprint Co., 1969), 2: 153, 203–204.

[25] Henry Stevens to Jared Sparks, 14 Feb. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. Stevens's high opinion of Ethan Allen's statesmanship accorded with Sparks's own favorable treatment of the Green Mountain Boys' leader. See Sparks's "The Life of Colonel Ethan Allen" published as part two of Daniel Chipman's *Memoir of Colonel Seth Warner . . .* (Burlington: C. Goodrich & Co., 1858). Sparks originally published his study in 1834 in volume one of his *Library of American Biography*.

[26] Henry Stevens to Jared Sparks, 6 Sept. 1842; Stevens to George Bancroft, 6 Sept. 1842, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. See also Stevens's undated and unpublished notes in MS, Early History of Vermont, Stevens Family Papers, UVM. Stevens spoke for many Vermonters in his feud with New York's version of history. The Vermont House of Representatives in 1844 was so annoyed by New Yorkers' criticism of its founding fathers that it passed a resolution of protest. See Durfee and Sanford, *Guide to the Henry Stevens, Sr. Collection*, 3.

[27] For colonial New England attitudes toward Albany, see John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story From Early America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 188–189. For the New England rivalry with the South, see Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 74–75; *A Season of Youth*, 52–53.

[28] Henry Stevens to E. P. Walton, Jr., 2 Mar. 1843; Stevens to Hiland Hall, 27 Mar. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[29] Samuel Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (Burlington: Samuel Mills, 1809), 2: 214–216.

[30] Thompson, *History of Vermont*, Part II, 62–67.

[31] Michael A. Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws: Ethan Allen and the Struggle for Independence on the Early American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 194–210; J. Kevin Graffagnino, "Revolution and Empire on the Northern Frontier: Ira Allen of Vermont, 1751–1814," (Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Massachusetts, 1993), 158–212. Other important works on these negotiations include: Chilton Williamson, *Vermont in Quandary, 1763–1825* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1949), 90–125; Ian C. B. Pemberton, "Justus Sherwood, Vermont Loyalist, 1747–1798," (Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Western Ontario, 1972); Henry Steele Wardner, "The Haldimand Negotiations," *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society*, New Series, 2 (1931), 3–29.

[32] This conception of history admitted no place for the War of 1812, a conflict during which Vermonters commonly refused to cooperate with federal officials. Farmers traded with the enemy in Canada; the state's governor meanwhile attempted to recall the militia from service beyond the state's bounds. See Paul S. Gillies, "Adjusting to Union: An Assessment of Statehood, 1791–1816," in Michael Sherman, ed., *A More Perfect Union: Vermont Becomes a State, 1777–1816* (Montpelier:

Vermont Historical Society, 1991), 114–149; Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 226–227, 266–267.

[33] Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws*, 260. Henry Stevens was so worshipful of Allen that he pleaded with the patriot leader's impecunious son, Ethan A. Allen, to return to Vermont from his home in Virginia and then later in Wisconsin Territory. See Henry Stevens to Ethan A. Allen, 2 Jan. 1844; Ethan A. Allen to Henry Stevens, 12 May 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[34] For Stevens' view of Allen, see his undated and unpublished MS, Address on Early Vermont History Before a Historical Society, Stevens Family Papers, UVM. See also the popular novel by Judge Daniel P. Thompson, *The Green Mountain Boys: A Historical Tale of the Early Settlement of Vermont* (1839; reprint, New York: John B. Alden, 1883). Thompson was one of the charter members of the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society. For changing perceptions of Ethan Allen, see John McWilliams, "The Faces of Ethan Allen: 1760–1860," *New England Quarterly*, 49 (June 1976), 257–282.

[35] MS, Early History of Vermont, Stevens Family Papers, UVM. Stevens's view of the Revolution understated the degree of conflict within Vermont between New York supporters and the advocates of state independence. He also paid little attention to Vermont's attempt to incorporate discontented New Hampshire towns within its government. Stevens preferred to portray the small republic as an underdog rather than an aggressor in nearly all cases. For the political situation in 1779, see Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws*, 186–194.

[36] I have copied the song as it is printed in Butler, *Deficiencies in Our History*. See also Whittier, *Song of the Vermonters*.

[37] Charles [L__?] to Henry Stevens, 13 Mar. 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[38] Emily Skinner to Henry Stevens, 15 Feb. 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[39] Henry Stevens to Charles Paine, 14 June 1843. For Stevens's financial plight, see his letter of July 17, 1843, to an unidentified correspondent. Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[40] C. L. Knapp to Henry Stevens, 4 Feb. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[41] Henry Stevens to Daniel Baldwin, Mar. 1843, Stevens Papers, UVM. This letter, written sometime in Mar. 1843, underwent at least two drafts.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Henry Stevens to Daniel Baldwin, 11 Jan. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[46] See, for example, Stevens's support of a federal subsidy to the state for railroad construction. Henry Stevens to E. P. Walton and sons, 16 Jan. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[47] Henry Stevens to William Upham, 25 Mar. 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. Stevens favored a prohibition on the importation of many types of goods into the United States. This position was noticeably more extreme than the state government's stance in the 1840s. For example, the General Assembly opposed the lowering of duties on wool and woolens, but not a ban on imports. See "Report of the Select Committee on the Subject of a Tariff and the Protective Policy," *The Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1846* (Windsor, Vt.: Bishop & Tracy, 1846), 149–155.

[48] Henry Stevens to Congressman Jacob Collamer, 27 Jan. 1844, Stevens Family Papers, UVM. Stevens proposed that "the owners of the Patent machinery be generously rewarded," and their improvements "be [made] common stock, the property of the Nation." Stevens believed that technological advances since 1835 had rendered it unprofitable to manufacture wool with only "ordinary machinery." See his *Address Before the Caledonia County Agricultural Society, At the Annual Fair Held at St. Johnsbury Plain, Oct. 2d, 1845* (Published by Request of the Society, [1845]). Robert H. Wiebe has identified "antimonopoly" as a central issue to advocates of "community self-determination" in late nineteenth-century America. See *The Search For Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 52.

[49] Stevens's varied activities in the 1840s included historical collecting, farming, operating several mills, and managing a turnpike company. For Stevens's role as an entrepreneur, see Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 222–225, 255–257, 265–268. Roth offers fine insights into Stevens's character but appears to overrate his wealth. Stevens's diary in the late 1830s shows that he regularly performed a variety of chores with hired hands who labored on his farm and road. On June 22, 1838, he noted bringing wool from his farm to another man's mill to be made into "fulled cloth," while he attended to his own carding. See "The Diary of Henry Stevens," *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society*, new series, 2 (1931): 115–128; Stevens, *Footprints Down the Centuries*, 70. Stevens's textile mills, capitalized in 1825, could not apparently compete successfully with larger, more advanced manufacturing establishments. A new "flannel factory," which Stevens founded with other investors in 1836, did not resolve this problem. For extant portions of Stevens's diary in 1836 and 1839, see Stevens Family Papers, UVM. See also Frederic Palmer Wells, *History of Barnet, Vermont From the*

Outbreak of the French and Indian War to Present Time (1923; reprint, Barnet Center, Vt.: Candlewood Shop, 1975), 75–77, 89–90, 623–624.

[50] Henry Stevens to Sophia Stevens, 10 Mar. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[51] Stevens tended to equate all Democrats with the Locofocos. He held a common New England Whig view of the Democrats as fostering immorality. See Daniel Walker Howe, *The Political Culture of the American Whigs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 210–211. Stevens delighted in quoting an unnamed poet who characterized the typical Democrat in 1798 as someone who "can't bear to obey, but will govern the law; His manners unsocial, his temper unkind,/He's a rebel in conduct a Tyrant in mind. . . ." See MS, "Character of a Democrat," [n.d.], Stevens Family Papers, UVM. Stevens also associated the Locofocos with expansionist, proslavery politics which he viewed as evil and anarchic. See Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 10 July 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[52] Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 265–268. Henry Stevens's devotion to temperance and moral reform was in stark contrast to the outlook of his eccentric brother, Willard Stevens, who reveled in his opposition to Christianity. See Roth, "Why Are We Still Vermonters?" 203–204.

[53] W. A. Palmer to J. R. Poinsett, Secretary of War, 18 Feb. 1839; Henry Stevens to Alden Partridge, 23 Dec. 1838; I. Fletcher to Henry Stevens, 11 Feb. 1839, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. The admission procedures for West Point in the 1830s are discussed in Stephen E. Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), 38–61, 113–115. For an overview of Alden Partridge's military academy at Norwich, see Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 76–80.

[54] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 30 Aug. and 9 Sept. 1839, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[55] George Stevens to parents, 10 and 13 Jan. 1840, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[56] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 20 Jan. 1840, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[57] George Stevens to Candace Stevens, 15 Sept. 1841; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 13 Dec. 1840; Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 11 Sept. 1840, 3 Dec. 1840, 7 Jan. 1841, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. In the letter of Sept. 11, 1840, Henry hoped that one gift to George of five dollars would suffice "to drive away the poor fits for a time, and [I] will send the other three [dollars] by and by rather than have you home sick."

[58] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 3 and 22 Nov. 1841; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 27 Mar. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[59] For George's initial inclination to join the dragoons, or mounted riflemen, see George Stevens to Candace Stevens, West Point, 10 Oct. 1842. For his appointment, and eventual posting at Fort Jesup, Louisiana, see George Stevens to R. Jones, Adjutant General, Barnet, 19 July and 7 Aug. 1843; George Stevens and Rufus Ingalls [?] to Major Fauntleroy, Fort Jesup, La., 7 Dec. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[60] George Stevens to parents, 16 Dec. 1843, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM. George Stevens to Candace Stevens, 19 Feb. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[61] George Stevens to Sophia Stevens, Fort Jesup, 25 Mar. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[62] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 22 Apr. 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM; Henry Stevens to George Stevens, Barnet, 15 May 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[63] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 12 July 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 10 Aug. [1844], Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[64] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 11 Jan. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[65] Henry and Candace Stevens to George Stevens, 29 Jan. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. Henry Stevens's concern about his son's moral conduct may have been influenced by his own memory of youthful indiscretions. In keeping his early autobiography to just a few pages, Henry Stevens wrote that "I am ashamed to relate the whole of my boyish proceedings." See Stevens Family Papers, UVM.

[66] George Stevens to parents, 16 Dec. 1843; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 18 Jan. 1844, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 3 Feb. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[67] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, Jr., Fort Jesup, 7 Jan. 1844, Stevens Papers, UVM. George's ribald sense of humor is captured in a mock letter of 30 June 1844 addressed to "His Satanic Majesty & Sulphurious [sic] Highness, the *Devil*," Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[68] These photographs are in the Stevens Family Papers, UVM.

[69] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 4 Mar. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[70] George Stevens to Candace Stevens, 12 Apr. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[71] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 11 Mar. 1844, 10 July 1844, and 4 Aug. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. New England Whigs were generally the most vigorous opponents of annexation within their party. See Michael A. Morrison, "Westward the Curse of Empire: Texas Annexation and the American Whig Party," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 10 (Summer 1990), 221–249. For the con-

troversy over Tyler's movement of troops and naval forces, see Justin H. Smith, *The Annexation of Texas* (1911; rev. ed., New York, Barnes and Noble, 1941), 226–230.

[72] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 1 June 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[73] W. W. S. Bliss, Assistant Adjutant General, to George Stevens, 13 Aug. 1844; George Stevens to Sophia Stevens, Washington, 5 Sept. 1844; George Stevens to Henry Stevens, Washington, 12 Sept. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[74] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 26 Oct. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[75] Ibid., 6 Jan. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[76] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 16 Mar. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[77] See "Report of Joint Committee on Resolves of Other States Relative to the Annexation of Texas to the Union," *The Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1844* (Montpelier: E. P. Walton & Sons, 1845), 90, 123–125. Vermont public opinion was strongly anti-Texas since the issue of annexation first arose in the 1830s. See Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 291–293.

[78] Kinley J. Brauer, *Cotton versus Conscience: Massachusetts Whig Politics and Southwestern Expansion, 1843–1848* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), 62–63, 103–104; Morrison, "Curse of Empire," 237–238; Randall Richardson Butler, "New England Journalism and the Question of Slavery, the South, and Abolitionism, 1820–1861," (Ph. D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1980), 42–52; Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont*, 183–188.

[79] Both Marsh and Collamer in their respective speeches of Jan. 20 and Jan. 23, 1845 explicitly rejected the pro-annexationist argument linking the Vermont and Texas cases. The fullest Southern statement defending this analogy was made by George C. Dromgoole, representative of Virginia, in his speech of Jan. 24, 1845. See *Congressional Globe*, 28th Cong., 2d sess., House of Representatives, 1845, 14, Appendix, 300–307, 314–318, 402–406.

[80] See, for example, Ethan Allen's declaration in 1779 that the inhabitants of Vermont were "as free as is possible to conceive any people to be." Their government, founded upon "natural right," was "not only independent of the state of New-York, but of any and every of the . . . u[n]ited [sic] states." See "A Vindication of the Opposition of the Inhabitants of Vermont to the Government of New-York, and of Their Right to Form Into an Independent State," in J. Kevin Graffagnino, ed., *Ethan and Ira Allen: Collected Works*, 3 vols. (Benson, Vt.: Chalidze Publications, 1992), 1: 207.

[81] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 10 Mar. 1840, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[82] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 11 Mar. 1844, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. Charles Francis Adams was among the prominent Massachusetts Whigs favoring the acquisition of the Oregon country, while opposing Texas's annexation. See Brauer, *Cotton versus Conscience*, 209–210.

[83] Henry Stevens to Sophia Stevens, 10 Mar. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 25 June 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[86] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 6 Jan. 1845; Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 5 Feb. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. This last letter explains Henry Stevens's ambitious, though unrealized goal of publishing for profit a multivolume documentary history of Ethan Allen and other early Vermont leaders.

[87] Ethan Allen Hitchcock to Henry Stevens, 2 Mar. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[88] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 25 June 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[89] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 17 July 1845; George Stevens to Candace Stevens, Camp near Nacogdoches, Tex., 31 July 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS; Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 18 Sept. 1845, Stevens Papers, UVM.

[90] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 18 Sept. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[91] Bellesiles, *Revolutionary Outlaws*, 42–45, 83–85, 167–169; J. Kevin Graffagnino, "'The Country My Soul Delighted In': The Onion River Land Company and the Vermont Frontier," *New England Quarterly* 65 (Mar. 1992): 24–60; Matt Bushnell Jones, *Vermont in the Making, 1750–1777* (1939; reprint, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1968), 21–58.

[92] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, Montpelier, 29 Oct. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS; Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 18 Sept. 1845, Henry Stevens Papers, UVM.

[93] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, 10 Oct. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. Vermont farmers of the antebellum period seem commonly to have delighted in open country. One man declared in 1845: "We will go somewhere else if it is even Hell or Texas. We will not stop where God has never ironed or even took his rolling pin acrost [sic] the mountains to smooth them." Cited in Roth, *Democratic Dilemma*, 221.

[94] Henry Stevens to George Stevens, 10 Nov. 1845, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[95] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, Corpus Christi, 13 Jan. 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[96] George Stevens to Henry Stevens, Corpus Christi, 5 Mar. 1846; Point Isabel, 26 Mar. 1846; Point Isabel, 3 May 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[97] Ibid., 3 May 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[98] Lieutenant Potter to Henry Stevens, Camp opposite Matamoras, 20 May 1846; Henry Stevens to General R. Jones, Barnet, 13 June 1846; Stevens to Lieutenant Potter, Barnet, 15 June 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[99] Henry Stevens to E. P. Walton & Sons, 15 June 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[100] Henry Stevens to Phineas White, 17 June 1846, Stevens Papers, UVM. The Mexican War was so unpopular in Vermont that only one volunteer company of 84 men was raised throughout the state to fight during the conflict. See Anthony Marro, "Vermont's Local Militia Units, 1815–1860," *Vermont History*, 40 (Winter 1972), 28–43.

[101] Henry Stevens to Henry Stevens, Jr., 29 June and 13 July 1846, Stevens Papers, UVM. George Stevens fought in the battle of Resaca de la Palma on May 9, 1846, two days before Polk sent his war message to Congress. See Johannsen, *Halls of the Montezumas*, 8. Unlike George Stevens who had no doubts about the justness of the American cause, Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock served loyally during the Mexican War despite his personal belief that his country was the aggressor. Hitchcock's sense of duty as a regular army officer greatly influenced his conduct. See John Edward Weems, *To Conquer a Peace: The War Between the United States and Mexico* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), 113–114, 384–385.

[102] Henry Stevens to A. G. Chadwick, 15 June 1846, Stevens Correspondence, VHS.

[103] In his history of Vermont intended for schoolchildren, the Reverend S. R. Hall identified the state's soldiers in the Union Army as "Green Mountain Boys" deserving of their ancestors' name. See *Outlines of the Geography, Natural and Civil History and Constitution of Vermont* (Montpelier: C. W. Willard, 1864), 138–139. At a review of Vermont troops held in the nation's capital on June 7, 1865, each soldier wore an evergreen sprig in his cap, "the badge so often worn by the Green Mountain Boys and their descendants." See Walter Hill Crockett, *Vermont: The Green Mountain State*, 4 vols. (New York: Century History Company, 1921), 3: 623. The inscription on the Stevens monument may have itself been designed by Benjamin Franklin Stevens, George's youngest brother, since he arranged for the restoration and maintenance of the family cemetery in 1900–1901. See Wells, *History of Barnet*, 186-187.

[104] See Henry Stevens, Jr.'s presentation of colonial petitions for publication in the *Collections of the Vermont Historical Society*, 2 vols. (Montpelier, 1870–1871), 1: 274–275; Stevens, *Footprints Down the Centuries*, 71; For a biography of Henry Stevens, Jr., see Wyman W. Parker, *Henry Stevens of Vermont, American Rare Book Dealer in London, 1845–1886* (Amsterdam: N. Israel, 1963).

[105] J. Kevin Graffagnino, "Arcadia in New England: Divergent Visions of a Changing Vermont, 1850–1920," in Nancy Price Graff, ed., *Celebrating Vermont: Myths and Realities* (Middlebury, Vt.: Christian A. Johnson Memorial Gallery, 1991), 45–60.

[106] A recent agreement between the states of New York and Vermont has returned the Stevens Collection to the State Archives in Montpelier. See Durfee and Sanford, *Guide to the Henry Stevens, Sr. Collection*. For Stevens's publishing plans, see his letter of Feb. 5, 1845 to his son, George, Stevens Correspondence, VHS. The Albany fire was especially tragic considering Stevens's statement in this letter that his collection of Ethan Allen manuscripts "must never go out of the state." In addition to his collecting for Vermont, Stevens also assisted Peter Force, the well-known compiler of American documentary history in Washington, D. C. For the problem of historical preservation and the issue of tradition, see Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 5–11, 76–78.

[107] Stevens seems to have discovered the cannon in 1843 while on a research trip to Washington, D. C. See James Davie Butler and George Frederick Houghton, *Addresses on the Battle of Bennington, and the Life and Services of Col. Seth Warner; Delivered before the Legislature of Vermont, in Montpelier, October 20, 1848* (Burlington: Free Press Office, 1849). See also "Report of Henry Stevens," *Journal of the Senate of Vermont, 1843*, 7–10.

[108] These documents include correspondence and memoranda related to the Haldimand negotiations between Vermont and the Governor of Canada from Jan. 11, 1779 to Mar. 25, 1783. These papers were given to Henry Stevens, Sr., by Henry, Jr., from sources copied by Jared Sparks in the Dorchester Collection in England. Unfortunately, eight volumes of Revolutionary Papers compiled by Henry Stevens, Sr., himself were burned in the State House fire of 1857. See *Collections of the Vermont Historical Society*, 2: 3–4, 5n.

[109] Hiland Hall, *The History of Vermont, From Its Discovery to Its Admission into the Union in 1791* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1868). For this book's place in Vermont historiography, see J. Kevin Graffagnino, "The Vermont 'Story': Continuity and Change in Vermont Historiography," *Vermont History* 46 (Spring 1978), 86.

[110] [Bennington Battle Monument and Historical Association], *Centennial Anniversary of the Independence of the State of Vermont and the Battle of Bennington, August 15 and 16, 1877* (Rutland: Tuttle & Co., 1879); Tyler Resch, *Bennington Battle Monument: Massive and Lofty* (Bennington: Beech Seal Press, 1993); John Spargo, *The Bennington Battle Monument: Its Story and Its Meaning* (Rutland: Tuttle Co., 1925), 110–111.