

"...HANDS TO WORK AND...HEARTS TO GOD"

To Sir from an ardent supporter
and believer.

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

"...Hands to Work and...Hearts to God"

Mother Ann's (Ann Lees, 1736-1784) guiding tenets for her people were: "Be faithful to the gospel; be neat and industrious; put your hands to work and your hearts to God".¹ Thus reads the master rule of the oldest continuing communistic society in the world today, the United Society of Believers in the Second Coming of Christ (as they call themselves) or the American Shakers. We shall herein briefly view some of the products of that philosophy of life and work.

The Shakers made many continuing contributions to our culture. Since they didn't believe in waste or in fancy ornamentation, the work they did was strong and lasting in its simplicity and functional value. The farm world and the home might both be much further behind than they are today if it were not for the Shakers.

The usual procedure for American farmers at the time of the greatest strength of the Shakers was to plant what and where they could. Not so the United Society; they set up a system for the rotation of crops in neatly marked fields. From those well-planned acres came one of the Society's first and greatest industries, the production of world-famous Shaker Seeds.

This business enterprise began in 1790 at Watervliet (then

1. M.F.Melcher, The Shaker Adventure, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941. p. 158.

Niskayuna), New York when Joseph Turner, for the first time in that area, sold the community's surplus farm seeds. Brother Turner's seeds were such a success that his successor, Ebenezer Alden, found it necessary to invent a printing box for putting labels on seed bags. In 1811, twenty-one years after the first sale, David Osborne, Trustee at Watervliet, recorded an average annual sale of about \$300.00.

With the typical Shaker enterprise applied to this seed business, it soon became a major source of revenue for the Society. Then came the concept of what we now call "quality control". One Brother, Morrel Baker, decided that just any seed wasn't good enough to be sold as Shaker Seed. In his attempt to improve the seeds in the labelled bags, he soon found himself launched into a program of research and experimentation which considerably improved the stock from which the seeds came and contributed to the study of plant genetics. More to his taste may have been the fact that with his new seeds on the market, the annual intake was raised to \$1,000.00.

As part of his program, Brother Baker required that the Society unite in a written pact to the effect that no "outside world" seeds would ever be sold with or as Shaker Seeds. How many products today can guarantee to be "100% pure"?

After this there was no stopping the seed-peddlers from the United Society. For many years seed wagons roamed the countryside selling the pure Shaker product. Eventually, ex-

pansion meant setting up distribution and marketing places. Of these Albany, Poughkeepsie, New York and Brooklyn were the most prominent. From New York, the seeds were shipped all over the world.

This work in horticulture led naturally into the growing of herbs. The Shakers were the first people to systematically gather and classify herbs. These they sold in dry, oil and extract forms. In New Lebanon, New York, the major portion of the herbs that were grown went into "Corbett's Shaker Syrup of Sarsparilla", a cure-all which was a medicine remarkable for its healthful composition and purity. The Shaker herbs and medicines were sold in Europe, too, England being the prime market.

An interesting insight into how the Shaker religious rules interacted with their business acumen was demonstrated in their production of rosewater. This perfume was made and sold to the "outside world", although their religion forbade its use. To remove the temptation of wearing a rose from the Sisters who worked with them, the flowers were cut without stems.

Fruit-growing was another area of agriculture in which the Shakers excelled. They were the originators of the quince apple, Shaker pippin, Shaker greening and a variety of sweet apples for drying. For themselves, the Shakers used the apples in cider, applesauce, boiled cider sauce and pastries. They dried apples in great lofts for their use all year and sold great quantities of their dried surplus. Their apple business

eventually spread to include the selling of apple products and apple seedlings to the "world's people". From New Lebanon especially, apple products such as sugar and syrup brought in such revenues that in 1828 the processing of these foods for sale became a major and separate industry of the Society.

Another and slightly unusual business area for the Shakers was stock breeding. Although totally celibate themselves, these amazing people became experts in the theory of eugenic breeding of stock animals. Cattle, sheep, goats, horses- they leased their animals for breeding and sold their young stock to interested markets as far away as Europe.

An outgrowth of the Shakers' growing of field crops was their cultivation of broom corn. In 1791, it was grown in Watervliet with the other corns; not until 1798 did it assume enough importance to be grown as a single crop. It was only natural that, with a good supply of broom corn in their fields, the inventive Shakers should do something to have a constructive effect on the broom industry. Until this time, brooms had been awkward round- or rough-bottomed affairs which accomplished little of their intended purpose, often creating more mess than they were to clean up. In 1798 one Theodore Bates of the Niskayuna family solved this problem for housewives then and now by beginning one of Shakerdom's largest and longest industries, the making of Shaker brooms. These differed from the others of the time in that they were straight-bottomed and most functional.

In order to produce them in this new shape, machines had to be invented. And before they had toiled themselves through that barrier the Shakers had devised a thresher to remove the seeds from the corn, a sewing vice to hold the corn flat for stitching, a wrapping machine for putting wire around the broom straw and handle tighter than ever before and a cutting box to facilitate the slicing of the straight edge. A Shaker broom is so perfectly cut that it will stand erect on its bristles with no support.

For the manufacture of brooms you need handles of the correct length and when cutting those handles on a vertical saw you must blow the chips and sawdust away. All of this consumes time and energy, and if anything could offend the sensibilities of a Shaker it was the waste of either one. So a Brother invented a device built from a sewing machine to blow the dust away. This was a piston in a confined area which, when forced down, compressed air through a nozzle directed at the saw's contact point, thus blowing the blade clear.

Since the Society cut all its own wood, there were sawmills in all the major 'families'. A Sister, while observing the men at their work in the mill, noticed how difficult it was for the vertical saw to cut a log with any speed. She also noted that only part of the blade was used and that that part often wore out. So in 1812 this Sister, Sarah Babbitt, conceived the idea for a circular saw blade. She fashioned the first from a sewing machine. After practicing copper and placed it on

with shingle-cutting, she demonstrated her new device to the Elders and Eldresses of her community. It was soon after this that the first circular iron saw blade was put into use by the New Lebanon Shakers.

Not too long after that saw added ease and speed to their building work, Brother David n. Smith invented a tongue-and-groove machine to improve things even more. It was natural that the United Society would be searching for a faster way to make a tongue-and-groove, since they were great believers in peg construction (the last peg-frame building made in the United States was built at the New Lebanon community, where it still stands in use today). Not only did Brother Smith's machine speed up the process of building, it also made a tighter and better-fitting joint than did hand construction.

Even though building became easier, the Shakers could not be deterred from using their simple designs. Each building was symmetrical, with two doors (one for Sisters, one for Brothers) and an even placement of windows. The windows were slanted out from the building to allow more sunlight to enter. Each one was held in place by thumbscrews within slots, thus making it easier to work on or to wash them. This is a typical example of their inventiveness...always toward the end of saving time and effort which could be spent either at other works or in worship.

A Shaker staircase typifies the beauty of their sheer simplicity of design. To enter a Shaker building a see its main

stairway with its graceful handturned banister and comfortable placement of steps is really to experience beauty of form and utility of construction in combination.

In their rooms, the United Believers built all the cabinets into the walls. This allowed for more usable room space and made it easier to clean the floor. Another innovation for the same purposes were the rows of pegs one still sees around the walls of a Shaker room, at about eye height. On these were hung all items that were light enough and not in use at the moment, even excess chairs.

For ease of both hanging and sitting, the Shakers invented the uniformly designed three-slat-back chair. These are famous throughout the world for their comfort and durability. This last quality came from their unique double-woven seat construction. Most woven seats have one layer of caning, but Shaker chairs have two- an upper one to support the sitter and a lower one to support the upper. It might be expected of the Shakers that they not only lessened the depreciation of the chair itself, but were also concerned with the floor on which it sat. To delay the wear and tear on carpets and the marring of floors, they added another innovation to their chair design. This was a small wooden ball, flat on the bottom, which fit into the base of the chairleg like a ball-bearing. This allowed the chair to tilt slightly as needed while maintaining stationary the point of contact with the floor. The chair industry became so prosperous that the Mount Lebanon "Family" in 1862, constructed a chair factory building with a

large showroom where the chairs were displayed in room settings. One satisfied customer who wrote to the Society commenting on the comfort of his Shaker chair was Abraham Lincoln, who preceded the late President Kennedy's rocker with a Shaker slatback in the White House.

Not all letters of commendation related to the chairs. The Girard House of Philadelphia, the American House in Boston, Willard's Hotel in Washington, D.C. and the Pullman Palace Car Company are a few of those who expressed their gratitude for the dependability and utility of the Shaker Washing Machine. This invention had been patented by the Community in 1858. At the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876, this washing machine won a gold medal. A "customer satisfaction survey" conducted in 1875 indicated that people who had purchased their machines in 1859 had neither repaired nor replaced them, nor did they want to. Not only was the idea of a market survey unusual at that time, but the results of this one would please many of today's manufacturers.

The Shaker ingenuity led them even into the field of metals, as these became readily available. They used tin, copper, iron and pewter; from these they fashioned pails, pots, pans, teapots and fluid storage cans. Unsatisfied with the methods of their day, the Society invented a leakproof seam for the manufacture of metal containers for storing liquids. This seam is still used

in the construction of metal pails and was used in all can construction until the very recent invention of the seamless aluminum can.

The Shakers were also responsible for the development of the metal pen point. These points were manufactured of brass in Watervliet prior to 1819; the machines for the rolling and cutting of the metal were all Shaker-invented. After 1820 the points were made of silver and in that year the unnamed inventor wrote that he had "...my new shears with which I have cut 292 pens in 14 minutes".² By 1825, New Lebanon was mass-producing pens for sale.

The work of the Shakers was not limited to light metals; they also made many innovations in casting. Probably the best-known of their heavy items is the Shaker stove. All of its parts are cast iron and all surfaces are open to air movement for greater heating power. Although the stoves could thus be quite small, not an inch of even this was wasted; a ledge was often put around the bottom for the heating of flatirons and small pots were fashioned for use on the stovetop to prepare small quantities of food.

All of these inventions and improvements are but a few of the hundreds devised by the Shakers for both utility and comfort. They also invented the crew propeller, the harrow, the threshing

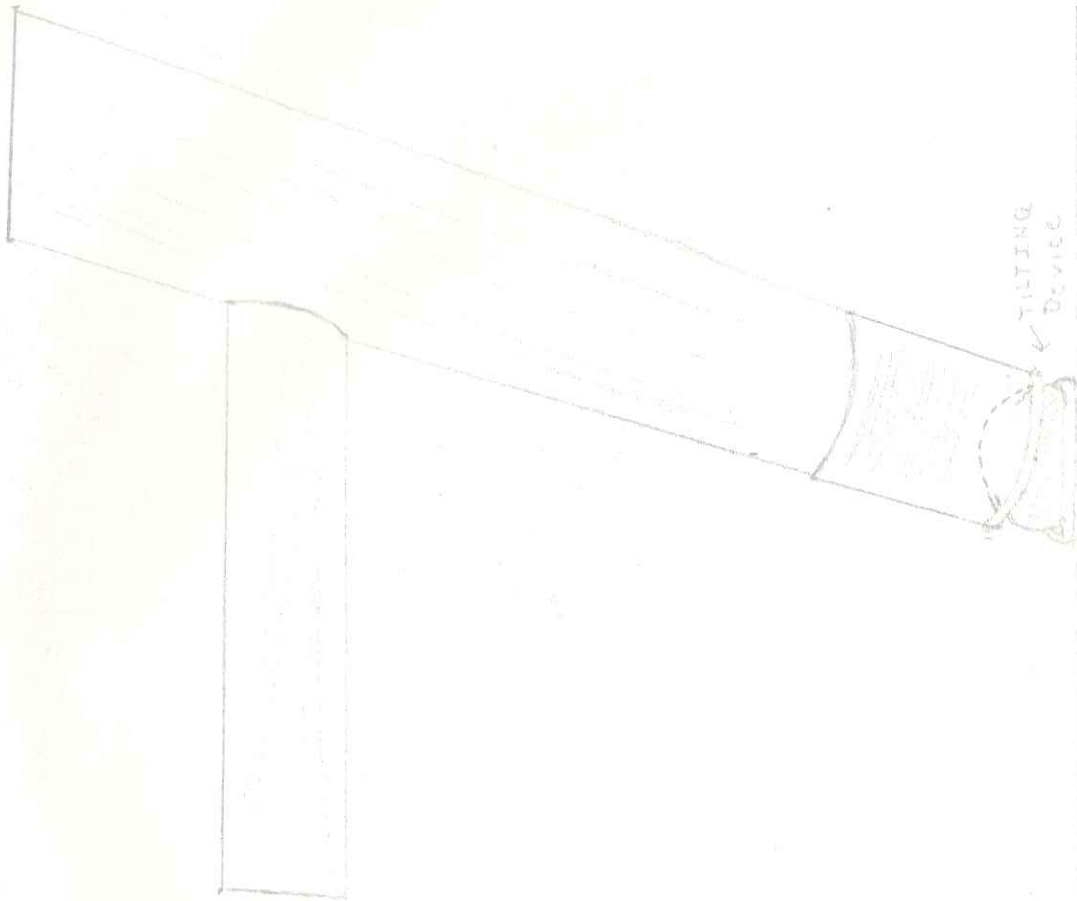
2. J.S. Williams, Consecrated Ingenuity. Old Chatham, New York: The Shaker Museum Foundation, 1957. p. 3.

machine, the pea sheller, the first horse buggies in America, the triphammer, the apple corer and cut nails. There is literally no facet of daily life which they did not make more productive or more pleasant. Everything from apple dryers to modern methods of market research owes a debt of thanks to the Shakers and to their simple faith in God Who, they believed, guided their hearts and hands to the Right Way. It is possible that we might all be as constructive as the United Society of Believers if we could adhere as faithfully as they did to their example: "Do all of your work as though you had a thousand years to live and as you would if you knew you must die tomorrow".³

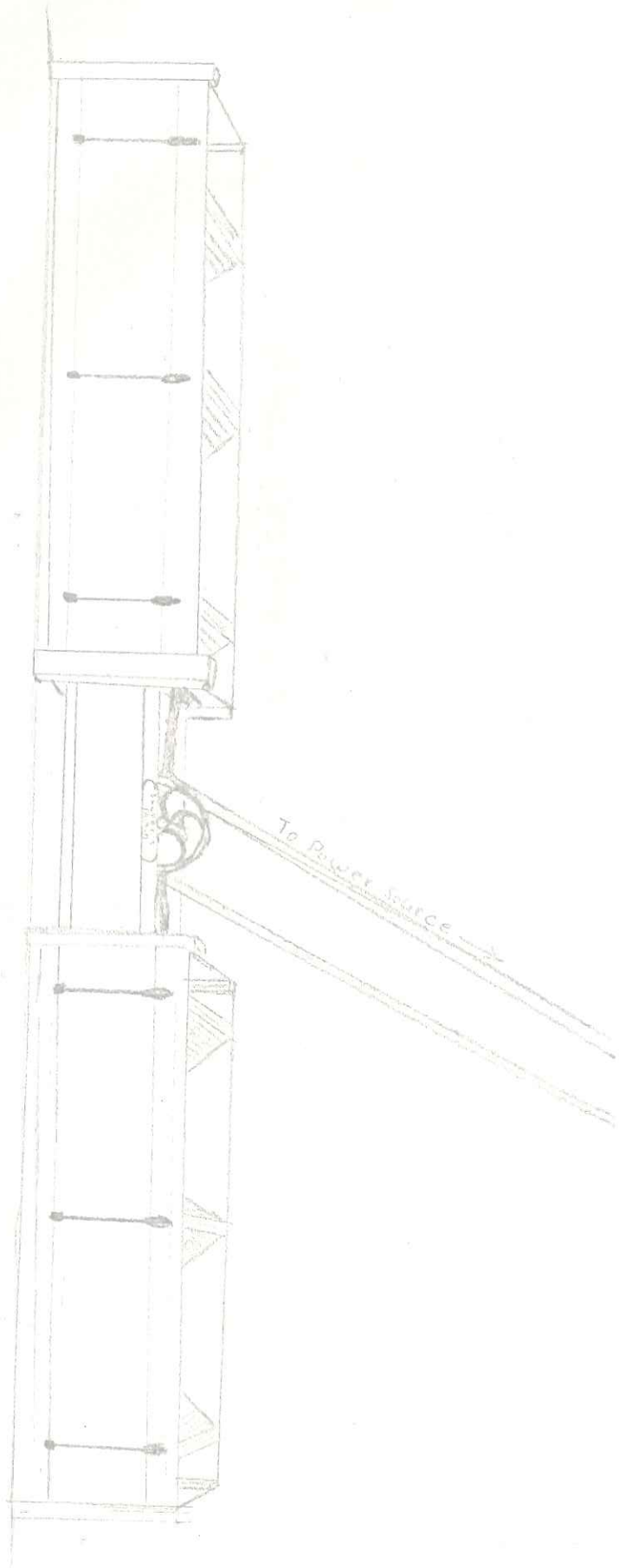
3. ~~Edwards~~ ~~et al.~~ Guidebook of the Shaker Village Work Group.
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TITING
Device



F-M Yorkers win state contest again

The Fayetteville-Manlius senior High School Elkhorn Yorker Chapter for the second successive year has won first place in the highly spirited exhibit competition at the annual Yorker Convention in the Washington Armory in Albany.

Fabius and East Syracuse Yorkers also won awards.

The Yorkers are junior historians who are enrolled in history clubs in grade 7-12, sponsored by the State Historical Association.

The exhibit for the F-M Yorkers, the first place plaque, was the sixth top award for the school in 11 years.

Their exhibit entitled, "American Architectural Styles," was deemed to be of high professional quality by the judges.

Edward Pasto Jr., president of the Lake Ontario District Yorkers was the Elkhorn exhibit chairman. Pasto also won one of

the nine trophies for the best historical essays, "The Baron Visits Manlius."

He was was one of the finalists candidates for the Steven C. Clark \$4,000 memorial scholarship, which was won by Dale A. Rice of Addison.

Robert Cobb Jr. of the F-M Yorkers was also an award winner in the essay contest with his manuscript, "Hands to Work — Hearts to God." Tony Marx of the F-M Yorkers won a Who's Trophy, an award given to the top 20 individual Yorkers in the state.

Warren Petty, sponsored the top place F-M group.

The Fabius Yorkers, under the direction of Mrs. Margaret Cox, won two exhibit awards with a model of the old Pompey Academy and an excellent working model of the famed Eisenhower Lock of the St. Lawrence

Seaway. Another Fabius Yorker Barbara Steves, also won a coveted Who's trophy.

Oswego Catholic Yorkers won a certificate and a special award for their architectural survey projects in the city of Oswego. Mary Kay Stone also was one of the top nine essay writers who received a special award.

Sister Philomene received her five year pin as sponsor. Elizabeth Short received a Who's trophy.

The Roundhouse Yorkers of East Syracuse Middle School under the direction of Russell Sager produced an exhibit on candle making which featured the Muench-Kreuzer Candle Co. This exhibit received a certificate of merit.

More than 2,600 students from across the state participated in the conference held from Thursday through Sunday.

Yorkers Win Top Honors

For the second year in a row, Fayetteville-Manlius High School Yorkers have won top prizes in the state-wide competition among junior and senior high school students interested in history. Yorkers are members of clubs sponsored by the New York State Historical Assn. The prizes were awarded Saturday after a two-day convention in Albany.

It was the sixth top award for F-M Yorkers in 11 years of competition.

THE SENIOR HIGH Elkhorn Chapter won first place for the exhibit on American architectural styles, and Elkhorn chapter president Edward Pasto Jr., won the top trophy for his essay about Baron Von Steuben's visit to Manlius.

Warren Petty is the Elkhorn chapter advisor.

Other F-M prize winners are Robert Allan Cobb, son of the Rev. and Mrs. Robert Cobb, Woodchuck Hill Rd., for his essay on Shaker communities in New York State and Anthony Marx, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Marx, 110 Sims Pl., Fayetteville, who received a Who's Who trophy, given to the top 20 individual Yorkers in the state.

Yorkers from Fabius Central School, led by Mrs. Margaret Cox, won awards for their models of the Pompey Academy and the Eisenhower Lock of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Barbara Steves, a chapter member, won a Who's Who trophy.

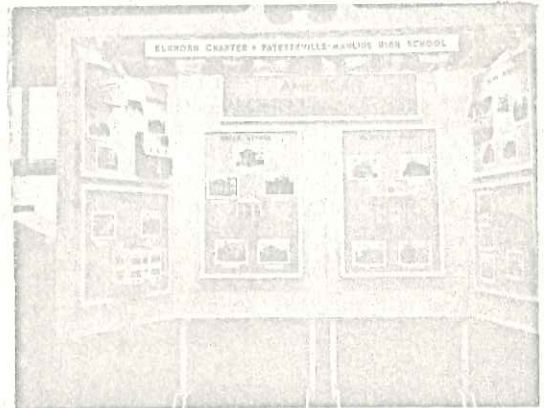
ROUNDHOUSE YORKERS

OF East Syracuse Middle School, directed by Russell Sager, won a certificate of merit for their exhibit on candlemaking, featuring the Meunch-Kreuzer Candle Co.

Also attending the convention were representatives of the Wellwood Yorkers, with their exhibit on the Syracuse salt industry.

Golf Classes

Three Y.W.C.A. golf classes are scheduled in Fellowship Hall of Fayetteville United Church each Wednesday morning starting May 28. There will be four lessons in each class. Class size is limited. Call the Y.W.C.A. for registration.



Top individual Yorker prize winners are, from left Robert Cobb and Edward Pasto Jr., with trophies won in the Governor's Essay Contest, and Anthony Marx, a Who's Who winner. The display of American architectural styles, right created by the F-M Senior High Yorker Chapter, won first prize in the state-wide competition. The exhibit features plexiglas models of various styles and pictures of local homes. It is now at the senior high library and will be shown in Fayetteville and Manlius.

THE LEBANON SHAKERS 1780-1929.

An unfamiliar chapter in American History

and

A possible future development.

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Before the end of the War of Independence, a curious experiment was begun in the region along the New York-Massachusetts border, where the Berkshire Hills start their steep descent to the valley of the Hudson River. It was an experiment unique in our history -- social, economic and religious -- of great interest to all who care for the past or the future of America.

It started in the year 1780 with the settlement, on the southern slope of Mount Lebanon, of the persecuted people called Shakers, converts to a strange new religion, whose foundress, Mother Ann Lee, enjoined celibacy upon her followers. Under the Leaders who succeeded her, they rapidly built up a series of some twenty self-supporting settlements, in all of which the members worked with their hands and all property was held in common. It was the only successful example of communism on a large scale to be found in the world, and from all parts of Europe and America visitors flocked to Lebanon to talk with the Shakers and to observe their way of life.

The center of interest was the Church Family, which served as the pattern for all the other Shaker societies and

*Samuel Johnson
Praying Properties*

was regarded by them as the center of the Shaker faith in America -- "the spiritual Mount Zion, whence the law and gospel went forth to believers". There the curious visitor can still see the broad fields once tilled by the Shakers; great dwelling-houses and barns built by their labor; workshops where they made implements, furniture and clothing; and most impressive of all, the immense meeting-house erected by Moses Johnson in 1824, where the members of the Society held their Sabbath gatherings and practiced the strange ritualistic dance which gave their sect its name. Even today, the meeting-house is an object of admiration, as one marks its hardwood floor, laid with such skill that the joints between its boards are still hardly perceptible, and the strange barrel-vaulted roof of heavy oak timbers pinned together with wooden pegs. There is no building comparable with it in America.

Throughout the countryside the Shakers proved themselves to be worthy and desirable neighbors, proverbial for cleanliness, thrift and honesty. In their settlements they brought up and educated hundreds of orphan children. When disaster overtook neighboring cities, they sent generous gifts of food and money to relieve the sufferers,- for example, at the time of the great fire in Troy, N.Y., and at the terrible epidemic of yellow fever in New York City. Everyone was better for their presence and example.

With such a history of accomplishment, one regrets to find that the Shaker settlements are today in grave danger of

extinction. Most of their people are now advanced in years, and of late it has become harder and harder for them to carry on their life together. Taxes are heavy, labor is hard to secure, and they cannot well maintain themselves in their old homes. Many of their communities have already disbanded and sold their property. Unless something arrests the process, a few years more must see the transfer of the last of their property to other owners, who may break it up into small holdings or devote it to purposes so different from those to which it has been dedicated that all visible memorials of the Shakers may be destroyed.

To avoid this fate, and to save for posterity the most interesting and significant monument of the Shakers, it is proposed that part of the property of the Church Family at Mount Lebanon be acquired and placed in the hands of a board of Trustees to be used as a boarding school for boys. This plan has won the enthusiastic support of the Shakers. It has also been approved, as practicable and wise, by the heads of several neighboring schools, whose co-operation and goodwill are assured if the new enterprise is started. They have inspected the property and found it admirably adapted for the purpose proposed -- buildings in good repair and of ample size, well heated and equipped with electric light, and with a fine water supply. The site is ideal from the point of view of health and environment, and near enough to Pittsfield to make supplies, medical attendance, etc., readily available. Modern plumbing alone will be needed to make the present equipment

satisfactory.

To purchase the property from the Shakers the sum of \$150,000. is required. This will enable the surviving members of the community to retire to one of the dwelling-houses, which they will reserve for their life-use, and will ensure proper care and medical attention for the aged and infirm members of the Society, during their remaining years.

In return for this sum, the Church Family will transfer to the Trustees of the School some 400 acres of land, with the various community buildings and the springs which supply water to the establishment.

The School will be organized as a non-profit-making corporation, under the laws of the State of New York, with a board of trustees made up of men and women of recognized standing in New York and the neighboring States, sympathetic with its aims and ideals as outlined below:

It will be a non-denominational school, controlled by no religious sect, but open to those of all faiths.

It will take for its own the old Shaker motto, "Hands to work; hearts to God", and will attempt to teach its students to prize such distinctive Shaker virtues as industry, sincerity, and simplicity of life.

In its classrooms and workshops its members will learn something of the dignity of labor and the joy of co-operative effort; in its meadows and quiet woods they will have opportunity of feeling the mystery which makes men humble and reverent; and its old meeting-house will become again a

gathering place for those who pray that God's spirit may dwell among men.

It is hoped that there will be a wide-spread response to the invitation to subscribe to this plan for saving a monument so significant in the history of the Berkshires and the upper Hudson Valley. Pledges may be made conditional upon the successful raising of the whole sum needed for purchasing the property, and they need not be paid before the summer of 1929. A prompt response, however, is essential, if we are to save the property. If sufficient funds are forthcoming, the purchase will be carried through at once, and the new school will be opened in September 1929.

Pledges should be sent to Charles S. Haight, Treasurer,
27 William Street,
New York City, N.Y.

Some of those associated in the plan as outlined above are:

1. Sister Emma Neale, New Lebanon, N. Y.
2. Mr. George VanSantvoord, Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Conn.
3. Mr. Winthrop M. Crane, Jr., Dalton, Mass.
4. Miss Eliza Kellas, Emma Willard School, Troy, N. Y.
5. Mr. Horace D. Taft, The Taft School, Watertown, Conn.
6. Rev. Crane, Richmond, Mass.
7. Mr. Charles S. Haight, New York City, N.Y.

also : Miss Hall Pittsfield, Mass.
:
to be secured if possible : Rev. Mr. Crane Richmond, Mass.
another from New York City.

To be printed on front (or back) cover of folder, if
desired:

"The great houses stand ready to become once more
the centre of hopeful communistic activity. The vast
acres gathered at such cost of toil, fenced with boulders
dug by strong hands from the hillsides, the mighty barns
reared of stones that once whitened the broad green fields,
all await the new inflow from earth's earnest seekers after
simplicity and the right gifts of labor. They will abide
as they have already stood for a century and a quarter,
object lessons of thrift, integrity and noble ideals."

Sister Anna White: Shakerism and its Message.

Anna White

AN ESSAY ON-

The Shakers: A Precedent.

A history honors thesis submitted by
Dan Wallace Jr., March 31, 1949.

Lawrenceville School

Lawrenceville, N. J.

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Preface -

The Shakers: A ~~pre~~ Precedent.

It ~~shall~~ ^{is} the purpose of this ~~thesis~~ thesis to demonstrate the singularity of the Shakers, their tenets and practices, and their contributions to humanity. ~~The~~

The Shakers were a placid, ingenious and prosperous congregation, and their story is a vital one. A person [?] solicits only two things of life: - a adventure and security. The Shakers achieved a perfect balance of the two. Their adventure was primarily a spiritual one. In the eyes of the sect it was a success; the world viewed it as a failure, for the religion has left only a comparatively faint trace on our slate of reasoning and ~~feeling~~ ^{feeling}. ~~The~~ It was conceived in ecstasy of emotion (the sect acquires its name from the shaking-like dance which was characteristic of its worship ritual), it was born amidst the chaos of a world of bigotry, ignorance and fear. Its origins was humble, yet it grew and its doctrine was propagated throughout the New World. It attained a pinnacle, during which period it was subject to constant impugnation and undermined by betrayers in its ranks, and then it began to depreciate in scope, until today the ^{Society} ~~Society~~ is almost extinct.

Their ventures in the spiritual ~~realm~~ ^{realm} were largely a result of their internal dissatisfaction and cravings for a more blessed and virtuous world. They prided

themselves ^{on} realizing a religious utopia and economic security, which ^{although} called for by their needs, was achieved only after appreciable setbacks and tribulations. The result was a practicable scheme that has endured over a hundred and ~~forty~~ fifty years, and has given to every Shaker a deep sense of pride ~~at~~ for their accomplishment.

Noyes, the founder of the Oneida Community, a group emulating the Shaker principles, once declared, "We [of the world] are indebted to the Shakers as social architects who have upheld the paper theories (or communal theories) of the French and the Germans." ¹

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Chapter I America Welcomed the Shakers.

When the British colonies were first established in America there was a secure bond between the Church and the State as there was in the Isles. This state of affairs existed in effect until the American Revolution, with the exception of the Quaker colonies. Toleration of diverse minor sects was, however, increasing, and this is illustrated by the fact that in 1776, two-thirds of colonists in Virginia were dissenters (to the Church of England), and many of these men (such as Jefferson) believed in freedom of conscience.² Although the precepts of the Church of England and other denominations were very harsh, many "back-woods" congregations were very lax in their religious habits.

Commencing in 1776, there began a series of reforms in the Church codes. Such concepts as "duty to God should be directed by conviction", "that men should not be required to attend services of worship", and others gained recognition. The State of New York even went so far as to promulgate the following statement:

Liberty of conscience and worship are guaranteed to all, provided that liberty shall not be understood to justify practices that are inconsistent with the peace and safety of the state.³

Quakers and others, such as the Shakers, who had qualms over bearing arms, were not compelled to do so. Contingent to this "permit" there was the payment of a certain fee which was specified by the state legislature.

In general the practices of such "bizarre" societies as the Shakers were tolerated to some degree in the American colonies, and so it was only natural for many such sects to gravitate towards this "sanctuary."

* * *

The Great Awakening in the middle of the eighteenth century introduced a slackening in religious bonds in the U.S. The hierarchical control of the Church had now completely disappeared, and the movements for increased rights for the common man were prolific. What a pioneer wanted was not a mysterious, ritualistic cult but rather a genuine and simple faith. There was, therefore, a great tenacity of belief in such doubtful sects as the Mormons, Shakers etc.

The period was noted also for its attempts at labor reform, and an essential factor in this program was the growth of various communistic settlements. The true communist society was typified by the ^{Owens} ~~Owens~~ who settled in a region now a component of Indiana.

Quite distinct from this type of society were the

Rappists, Zorites and the Shakers. These last three were religious in scope whereas the Owenites were purely Communist and non-religious.

The Rappists came from Germany and settled in the Wabash valley, Indiana, naming the site of their home, Harmony. They were fervent exponents of celibacy, communism, and Christ's second appearance, and were in derivation an offshoot of the Lutherans. Although similar to the Shakers, they could not duplicate the ingenuity of this group or the Owenites, and in 1828 they sold their tract of land to the latter.⁴

The Zorites [whose nationality was German] were fortunate in having some land in Ohio ~~granted~~ entrusted to them. They soon organized a community there and proceeded to apply their main tenet: "each one should work for the benefit of all."⁵

Contemporary to these experiments were the rise of the Mormons and the Brook Farm project, which was under the ^{of Fourier} tutelage, et al. The last case was a highly intellectual communist experiment, yet its reward was not as bountiful as the Shakers'.

The Shakers were essentially a communistic and religious society, incorporating the finer points of the truly inspirationalist Rappists and the practical

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Owenites. Many societies of this calibre flourished, but the Shakers lasted the longest. They were basically of American ~~native~~ origin (as opposed to the German Rappists and Zoarists), and it was to their habitat that they contributed most generously, culturally, physically and ~~and~~ spiritually.

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Chapter II.

The Chronological History of the Sect.

In 1685 many French Camisards (name applies to Tunis they wore while fighting) fled to England as a result of pressing circumstances in France. These men were "^{prophets} prophets" who denounced revocation of the Edict of Nantes and were of French protestant, peasant stock. They were irreconcilably opposed to catholicism and the torture methods ^{both} of the Crown and the Church. Louis XIV suppressed them unsparingly, and consequently they sought refuge in Britain.⁶

Once there, many ~~Britons~~ Englishmen were attracted into their fold by the sheer novelty of the group. These apostates entered into all the absurdities characteristic of the Camisards with the exception of "communal ownership", a practice of these quaint Frenchmen.⁷ After their military setbacks in France they reverted to pacifism, and, in this manner they recruited many adherents from the ranks of the ^{poorer} Quakers.

In 1747 they began to meet under the title of Shaking Quakers at the home of James ~~Wardley~~ ^{Wardley} a tailor living near Manchester. Eleven years later a girl in her twenties named Ann Lee, who was thought to be illiterate,⁸ joined the society.

In 1770 this same woman was thrown in prison under the pretext of some minor offense. She was cruelly confined to a cubicle without food or water. Surreptitiously

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she obtained milk and wine through a pipe furnished by a small boy whom she had reared. In this manner she subsisted for a fortnight. While incarcerated she had visions of Christ, and she emerged alive, with renewed vigor and zeal, to the consternation of her turnkeys, who had expected her to be dead. As a result of this "miracle," she assumed leadership of the little band of Believers.⁹

In 1774, Mother Ann, as she was known to her followers, was by a special revelation directed to repair to America; simultaneously, she received a divine promise predicting that the work of God would greatly increase, and that the millennial church would be organized in America. She was accompanied to America by her husband, Abraham Stanley, her brother, William Lee, and six other members of the sect.¹⁰

At Waterliet, seven miles northwest of Albany, they founded their first community. Ann Lee was as yet uncertain of her true mission, and therefore gave her worthless husband another chance to redeem himself. However, he soon deserted her for another woman, and Ann rejoined the others.

The Shakers were ~~from~~^{not} the outset persecuted and abused, and since their arrival on these shores coincided

closely, with the initiation of war with Britain they were accused of being British spies.¹¹ Ann's denunciation of matrimony was considered nothing short of witchcraft, and these two "felonies" brought about a charge of treason and ^{subsequent} imprisonment.

Once free, the stalwarts journeyed to New Lebanon, N.Y. where they organized what eventually became their most influential society. Employing the "revival" as their mode of conversion - which entailed the assembling of crowds, the scourging stress of revivalistic preaching, exhortation and stormy prayer - the Shakers converted a group of ^{citizens} Baptists to their faith (1780).¹² Mother Ann now pursued a course of canvassing the countryside for converts, preaching her mission as she ~~went~~ wended her way. Before she died in 1784, as a result of hardship and suffering, she had succeeded in establishing an additional half-~~dozen~~ dozen communities.

In 1795, the first covenant of the Society was drafted. It called for the gathering of the church "into one joint interest and union", that all might have an equal right and privilege, according to their calling and needs, in things both spiritual and temporal."¹³

James Whitaker and Joseph Meachen, both among the first disciples, succeeded Mother Ann as leaders of flock in the order noted.

In 1792, which is the date usually accredited to the occurrence, ~~occure~~ the central church was established at New Lebanon in complete agreement with a united interest.¹⁴

* * *

In 1796, Lucy Wright became the spiritual leader of the Believers. She had been an early convert, and was an individual with cool and calculating discretion, and a born executive.¹⁵ Under her domination the Shakers thrived, and multiplied in numbers rapidly.

Between 1825 and 1860 the greatest achievements and gains were ~~made~~ made. Communities sprang up at ~~numeros~~ numerous localities, and at their prime the Shakers boasted settlements in New York, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine, Ohio, Kentucky, Florida and Indiana.¹⁶

Two of the Shakers' most dynamic and brilliant leaders who conducted the Shakers through their precocious ascent were Richard McNemar, chief Elder during 1820-1840, who virtually singlehandedly transplanted Shakerism to Kentucky and Ohio, and Frederick Evans, who governed the sect at its prime and lectured so cogently in its behalf while he was abroad.

The Shakers' history has been a rich and glorious one, and although today there survive only a handful, their legacy remains.

Chapter III

Mother Ann.

It is only proper to devote at least one chapter to Ann Lee, the founder of Shakerism in America, and the person, above all others, who most diligently disseminated the Shaker doctrine in this land.

Born of a family of common blacksmiths in Manchester, England in 1736, she grew up amid the squalor of an industrial town. These sordid conditions impressed her with the fact of "human depravity and the odiousness of sin."¹⁷ Being one of eight children, any formal education whatsoever was out of the question. From the outset she held all matters of "physical sex" as repugnant, and this conviction was given added impetus by the death of all her four children which resulted from her marriage to Abraham Stanley, at her father's behest. She earnestly believed that the untimely death of her children constituted a judgement on the part of God against the institution of marriage. It was this episode which occasioned the adoption of celibacy by the sect in America. It was during this period of despondency that she met the Wardleys and became a member of the Shakers. The date of this memorable occasion was 1754.¹⁸ Since they (the Shakers) were endowed with the faculty of suppressing sin in themselves, they appealed enormously to Ann, who readily became possessed by this urge. It has periodically been commented that Ann possessed a gift for psychic elevation,¹⁹ and this many

have ~~been~~ construed as a form of "witchcraft".

The Wardleys had prophesied that the second coming of Christ was imminent, and this combined with Ann's honesty, piety, and magnetism made many members of the ~~class~~ ^{clan} believe that Ann was the chosen one. What could be more natural than that God should find his incarnation in a woman as well as in a man. She filled the requirements admirably. Her quest for the pure and sinless life was real and passionate. Her agonized struggle to determine and understand God's will and to conform to it was anomalous even in the ~~group~~ ^{band} of revivalists that she found herself in.

She was frequented by visions and divine messengers. Weary at times from her brain-wracking efforts of searching for God, she would suddenly become radiantly exhilarated and would buoy up the hopes of her colleagues. Her culminating "session" with God came only after twelve years of tireless activity. This experience occurred at a short time previous to the incident alluded to in Chapter Two when Ann was in jail on a charge of disturbing the peace. She perceived Adam and Eve perpetrating the act which precipitated their ejection from Paradise. It was revealed to her that she was the anointed successor to Jesus, the embodiment of the word of God. She was henceforth to be known as Mother Ann: Ann the Word.²⁰

Mother Ann was sound of body, of strong constitution, rather tall, stoutish and majestic in bearing. Many who viewed her without prejudice, declared her to be beautiful.

She enjoined her adherents to be blithe and joyful. She once reproved a man who was paving the floor with his head bowed in dejection, exclaiming, "Hold up your head. God made man upright. Don't lean against walls. Be cheerful, be cheerful!"²¹ Many of her teachings and feelings were also incorporated into the "articles" of the denomination. Her admonition, "Put your hands to work and your hearts to God," was respected throughout Shaker history. She urged that followers be neither debtors nor slovens, that their ways be frugal and their manners observe propriety's code. She propounded a "theory of grace and virtue"²² and advised her "children" to be generous to all.

It is questionable whether Ann Lee believed herself to be the realization of Christ's second coming, yet this belief is popularly held. From old documents it has been ascertained that Mother Ann did, however, behave as if the millennium had already begun. She was the source of a radically new concept of the deity. For the first time in modern civilization there was formulated a "Father-Mother God" idea.²² Yet Mother Ann did not adopt domineering airs as ~~some~~ ^{have} ascribed to her, but

rather she remained simple and sincere.

Mother Ann was ^{not only} a dynamic and significant element in the advent of the Shakers, but also a vibrant, godly and formidable spirit.

Chapter IV
The Shakers' Creed:
Their Principles, Philosophy and Precepts.

The following passage will serve in analyzing the response of the populace to the tenets of the Shakers: "In ways of belief and living they [the Shakers] maintained divergencies from what we regard as the norm."²³

Their adoption of the practice of celibacy was held to be the most eccentric of their numerous quaint observances. The Shakers were one of the few sects to defy monogamy. Whereas the Mormons selected polygamy, the Shakers embraced the diametrically opposite extreme, celibacy. Mother Ann promoted this policy and it soon found general acceptance among the Shaker ranks. Moreover, it was their contention that Eve was responsible for the eviction from the Garden of Eden, and that the temptation she had offered had been of a carnal nature ~~had~~ as was the first sin. The Shakers were always firm in their belief that sexual relations were necessarily depraved ones.

Hand in hand with this conviction went a sincere and far-sighted pattern of sexual equality. This stressing of ~~the~~ duality was explained in 1871 by Elder Evans while lecturing to a London audience. "Since Eve was in God's own image, there must ~~be~~ be a feminine part of [or a whole] God," were his exact words.²⁴ Such logic did much to attract women to the fold, and they constantly outnumbered the men. Their sincerity in obeying this doctrine

is demonstrated in the absolute separability of the elders and
 elderesses. Their final dwelling houses, office buildings and
 churches with separate ~~entrances~~ ^{entrances}, and stairways furnished
 adequate safeguards for celibate living. Celibacy is
 indeed characteristic of their efforts at making all their
 actions instrumental in obtaining certain spiritual ends.
 The ultimate objective was transmutation into "more advanced"
 spiritual states and ~~it was~~ it was to be attained ^{by} ~~in~~
 a variety of modes. These included separation ~~from~~ ^a from
 the world, community of goods and meticulousness. These
 sought after goals dictated all of the Shaker deeds. They
 developed a philosophy similar to pragmatism for
 this very reason.²⁵ The primary concern ^{was} whether the thing
 in question produced a significant change. If it didn't
 it was discarded but only after being put to ^{the} acid test.
 It was from this self-imposed regimen of achieving
 perfection that they acquired an extremely efficient business
 sense which coupled with their innate honesty made
 them immensely successful.

The Shaker ~~so~~ ^{argument} ~~argument~~ for collectivism was
 supplemented by a recitation of the charms of spiritual companionship
 and the futility of individual struggles against the environment
 and the heavens. The members of the sect undertook all tasks
 in groups and participated in worship on a communal basis. A

foundation of their covenant was the principle of "united inheritance",²⁶ and this relationship is vividly indicated by the official title of the sect, The United Society of Believers.

An integral part of this communal life was the acknowledgement of the dignity of the common ^{man}. Ann Lee had been of humble origins, and the Shakers were only too proud to admit it. Inherent in this cherishing of their status of humility was a great propensity for positive accomplishments. ~~As an~~ In addition, the Shakers, although professing no belief in matters of esthetics, admired practical technique²⁷. They were excellent craftsmen, and with ingenuity they remedied all flaws and defects in their methods until their product became the most useful and practical one possible of its kind.

An acquaintance of mine, one Brother Ricardo (a Shaker), recently told me the following Shaker maxim: Work as if you would live forever, and live as if you would die on the morrow. As a result of this reasoning the Shakers became prosperous and led a relatively luxurious existence, caring for their ^{infirm} ~~infirm~~ and tending in their lieu during their illnesses.

Shaker literature seems to verify the statement made in Chapter Three ~~the~~ regarding Christ's Second Coming and describes as prevalent the feeling that the Millennium was already in progress.

It is a proven fact that the Shakers were averse to admit the veracity or infallibility of the Bible. They regarded it as a corrupt record of the word and world of God, and on this issue they were in complete harmony with Quaker sentiment. They renounced the "resurrection" as repugnant, and in defiance of traditional ceremonies they abolished the sacraments and inaugurated a policy of inspirational services.²⁸

Their tolerance was far reaching. They accepted negroes as their equals and did not discriminate in this respect against any person seeking entrance into the society. In the winter they erected "hobo houses" for the use of vagrants, in order that they might be sheltered from the merciless elements. Their love and humanity for others was such that they could not ~~countenance~~^{countenance} the use of a firearm for slaying humans, and they refrained from engaging in any form of strife.

They ~~have~~^{had} complete faith in human nature, and although their practice of honesty has sometimes entailed detrimental consequences, they still observe it ~~at~~^{to} this ~~time~~^{day}. There are many tales of self-sacrificing in honesty's behalf in the annals of Shaker trade. Brother Ricardo has in his little shop, today, a clock which he promised to keep for a man who requested it nine years ago. Many a person has since been eager to purchase

it for a much larger sum, yet this honesty of the Shakers has restrained Ricardo from selling it.

The traits the Shakers evinced may seem eccentric to us who live in a ruthless, competitive world, where we perform solely for the sake of emolument, yet, on an ideological level, they stand out as virtuous, precedental and worthy of imitation.

Chapter V

Shaker Life

The Organization of Church and Community

Contradictory as it may seem, family life was emphasized and cherished by the Shakers. Their connotation of the word was, however, different from the one we understand today. Their teachings called for a fraternity not only of human companionships, but also a joint fellowship with the holy spirit. It was part and substance of the Millennial Church's doctrine to create a communal ^{life} which emulated the Utopia they preached about.

The various Shaker settlements were designated as "Societies," and these in turn were sub-divided into "families." These units were occasionally named for their originators, but the system of nomenclature finally developed into one of denoting the families by North, South, ^{or} Church etc. depending upon their direction from the Church edifice.

The families averaged in number from thirty to ninety persons. The Ministry, or ruling body of a "society", of elders and eldresses usually resided at the Church family. In each "society" one family was allotted to applicants to live in. They dwelled in these quarters until they had ^{proven} their merit and desirability to the Elders and Eldresses and had definitely decided to remain. Each family was, in reality, a diminutive village, ~~self~~ self-sustaining and separate from the others in its week-day chores. ²⁹

Once separated into "societies" a form of government had

to be devised which would foster the unity that the Shakers were striving for. The solution arrived upon called for a "panel" of Elders and Eldresses. This caste was never popularly chosen, but came to be a self-perpetuating aristocracy of ability. This highest authority, the Ministry, was selected for life provided that they behaved themselves correctly. The Elders and Eldresses were responsible to the members only morally, since their appointment by the previous leaders vouchsafed their ability. Since they could trace their authority back to Mother Ann they were endowed with a sort of divine sanctity. The Ministry of the New Lebanon ^{society} Society, one of the original and largest ones, ultimately became the supreme body in the Shaker government. As various other Shaker communities ~~prosp~~ flourished and prospered, they too were subordinated to the will of four Elders and Eldresses (two apiece) who assumed the reins of their respective society. It was the office of these individuals to preside at religious conclaves, do missionary work when thought necessary, and in essence to conduct the religious life of the societies. They also determined matters of policy in the temporal affairs of their particular group, but for the management of such practical matters as food, clothing, industry etc. there were appointed "deacons" and "deaconesses".

When it became evident that some contact with the "outside

world" was inescapable, there came into being the "trustee." It was this person (each society had one or more) who negotiated business transactions with the world, handled legal problems, and governed the investment of funds. They did not of necessity embrace the Shaker creed. These men and women became renowned for their business shrewdness, scruples and conscientious service.

The Elders and Eldresses were in no way recompensed for their labors, with the possible exception of a holiday or two. Discipline was maintained by the ~~the~~ leaders with resoluteness, and ~~so~~ when you associate with this the technique of admitting new members (which was rather discriminating in some ways and called "high-handed" by outsiders) it will be seen that some complaining was ^{only too} ~~very~~ natural.³⁰ The regimen was a demanding one.

The day started at four-thirty A.M. in the summer and an hour later in the winter, and for all concerned it was a rigorous one.³¹ Upon arising fifteen minutes ^{were} ~~were~~ set aside for dressing. Following this operation each Shaker spent approximately an hour and a quarter doing his chores; the women prepared breakfast, while the men performed heavier tasks. (By a system of rotation some sisters cleaned the rooms and made beds at this time, and after they had finished a four week stint they replaced the other sisters in the kitchen.)

A breakfast bell summoned the Believers to table. In most instances there were two doors on each side of the dining room. Those on one side were reserved for the sisters, while those on the other were for the use of the brethren. Meals were eaten in complete silence. The repast was concluded with a moment of silent prayer, which was also the practice at the beginning of the meal. The men then proceeded to head for their places of work (i.e. - mills, farmland, orchards or shops) while the women commenced such occupations as preserving, mending and dairy chores, as well as spinning, tailoring, ^{the} education of children, _(converts or children of converts) bonnet and basket weaving etc.

The curfew was fixed at approximately ~~a~~ nine or ~~more~~ nine-thirty. The various evenings were spent in planned entertainment of a tame and sometimes religious species species. Two evenings met be allocated to conversation, one for hymn singing and marking and another for worship. Yet another such evening might be devoted to a "laboring meeting", at which time the Believers "labored to get good," via song and dance. Sunday was no exception since the Shakers considered Sunday as ending officially at sundown.³²

Sunday proper was the scene of hectic and emotional outbursts, wild demonstrations deeply religious meetings. Sobriety was temporarily abandoned, and masses of members became possessed. Dancing and singing, which ~~was~~ ^{were} engaged in

at the meeting hall or the chapel, relieved the soul of burdens. Different motions signified diverse emotions; for instance, a violent shaking of the body was a means of ridding oneself of a "devil".

In the 1840's, there ^{was} introduced an intense ^{wave of} spiritualism, communities were barred to "outsiders", and meetings approached ~~to the level of~~ ^{the} classification of seances, where demons, the dead re-appeared and angels vied for attention. In light of the general revivalist ^{craze} which pervaded the country at this time this was not surprising.

Shaker food was plain but wholesome, abundant rather than lavish. The diet tended towards vegetarianism, and in numerous villages there were tables set which offered a purely vegetable fare. Alcoholic beverages were frowned upon, eventually prohibited, as was tobacco in the majority of the societies. Tea and coffee were served only sparingly.

The attire of the Shakers was comfortable ~~by~~ but not ostentatious. Their textiles were woven on their own ^{looms} mills and were of a fine grade and texture. The clothes soon came to comply with the styles in general use, although their hues were more somber and the workmanship finer than the usual. The sisters were noted for their straw bonnets,

which many historians have attributed as ~~best~~ head-gear indigenous to the Shakers. It was a custom of the sundry communities to make mutual visits to each other. This, in part, accounts for the uniformity of speech and dress in the several societies. These excursions provided one of the only legitimate sources of diversion and relief. These journeys, the daily labor and the meetings of worship and conversation constituted the pattern of Shaker life.

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The Shaker mode of worship has been assailed as crude and even pagan in character. Although many of these accusations are malicious and erroneous, yet others cannot be refuted. But somehow, in their primitive ritual the Shakers grasped the meaning of true submission to our infinitely wise God and lasting fellowship with the Holy spirit. Holy Spirit.

Chapter VI

Shaker Functionalism.

Craftsmanship, Convention, Music, Industry,
Literature and Culture.

Although the Shakers had no interest in theories of esthetics, they had ~~posed~~ a profound concern for practical technique. Yet, in spite of themselves, the Believers produced articles of beauty. If their songs, furniture or structures disclosed a note of beauty it was only a by-product of their planning, which was geared to a functional formula.

The artisans were men and women who ^{highly} prized their accomplishments. ~~Each~~ Each project they undertook was a challenge to their ingenuity and craft, for nothing short of perfection was their goal. The first requisite was always utility; nothing was wrought for display purposes.

The Shakers are best known for the excellent furniture they made. The wood for their chairs was hewn only from the soundest trees and was always properly aged. The chairs made from these materials ~~were~~ never failed to be light and durable and conforming to prescribed standards.³² The Shaker craftsman always attempted to fashion his creation to fit the need it was intended for. Thus, for example, you find certain chairs designed to ~~act~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~part~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~given~~ ~~person's~~ deformities and/or requirements.

Pegs were turned on lathes (although originally they were hand cawed) under constant ~~vigil~~ vigil and were always

faithfully examined before being threaded on a machine perfected by Shaker research and genius. These could then be screwed into peg boards which were an essential part of every Shaker room, be it a dormitory or meeting room. A hallmark of all their carpentership was practicality, yet in striving to ~~ful~~ fulfill this end their achievements always boasted an inherent ~~but~~ beauty which has been unsurpassed by contemporary designers.

Shaker craftsmanship was also influenced by the tastes of the individual workers, and, since many of the artisans were Swedes, it is not at all odd ~~that~~ ^{that} there should be similarity between some Shaker furniture of the middle of the 19th century period and what is known as Swedish Modern.³⁴

In an effort to remain loyal to their ideal of functionalism ^{the Shakers} they produced a varied selection of chairs and tables, installed drawers in walls and bedizened their walls with pegs.

The ~~best~~ ^{immediately} acme of Shaker craftsmanship was attained in the era preceding the civil war; at this point Shaker communities ~~has~~ were still thriving and constantly gaining new members, erecting new buildings, composing stirring music, and in all ways culturally animated.³⁵ There was the added incentive of excelling previous accomplishments. The music became lively and assumed a rhythm suitable

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22

to fit the dance ritual, and Shaker literature wined a logic and conciseness, ^{rarely} duplicated. ~~Of both of~~

A few years earlier the famed Round Barn at Hancock, Mass. had been erected by the Shakers. It featured a distinctive device whereby grain could be deposited at one level, and then be transported by a shaft to a lower one from whence the livestock might feed. This procedure eliminated a great deal of manual work (eg. shovelling). This and other structures were built as a result of fatiguing toil involving the hewing and hauling of stone and beams and precision workmanship. These barns still stand today, a hundred or more years later, intact and as mute testimony to the adeptness and proficient and conscientious craftsmanship.

The sisters spun their own yarn and wove their own cloth, which in turn they tailored into fine garments for both the men and themselves. For on matters of apparel the Shakers were self-sustaining. Shoes were the result of the brothers' handicraft ^{and} were, moreover, cut to fit a definite person's foot. The style of buckle on the shoe, the type and number of buttons on ~~up~~ a jacket and ~~so forth~~ so forth always conformed to special rulings which provided for the ultimate in comfort and usefulness. Although ~~no code~~ ^{no code} dictated its use, "a deep astringent blue based on cobalt" was used

almost universally in dyeing Shaker fabrics.³⁶

Their aims ^{of} perfection gave impetus to the acquirement of a very keen business sense. They were soon (as early as 1790) inventing implements which were of great assistance to the Shakers themselves. With such aids business with the outside world made rapid strides. They originated such items as the Dorothy cloak, knit underwear, certain "Shaker bonnets" and the straw broom.³⁷ They also antedated many others in the development of a screw ^{propeller} propeller, a machine for cutting cloth in quantity, a turbine water-wheel and a threshing machine.³⁸ These inventions together with their flair for business led to early prosperity. In 1794 the Shakers embarked upon a seed selling venture (entailing botanical gardens and the breeding of medicinal herbs) which was to hold them in good stead for years.

Some of the brethren engaged in clockmaking. The fruits of their labors were at first earmarked for communal use, but eventually this craft also came to supply articles to be sold to the public. It must be remembered that trade was always subservient to ~~the~~ a subsistence economy, and only excess products became merchandise.

At times the trustees would act for the Shakers in ^{matters} business throughout the world. They invested Shaker capital,

built mills which sold their commodities to the public, and even set up such companies as the Shaker Mills Company, which sold Shaker flannels, at Enfield, N.H. Time was to prove that these ventures into business (so contrary to earlier teachings) were to be costly to the Believers security and pocket-books.

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Shaker literature, similar in some respects to their other activities, was a mixture of the utilitarian and the inspirational or mystical. When Benjamin Young wrote his Testimony of Christ's Second appearing, he had visualized what he would write before he had actually put one word down on paper,³⁹ and, furthermore, he knew exactly how to express his thoughts. The Shaker scribes made it a practice never to baffle their thoughts in their writings but rather to clarify them.

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The early Shakers devised a peculiar system of notation whereby ~~whereby~~ the notes of a musical scale were represented by the first seven letters of the alphabet. This arrangement facilitated the ~~transcribing~~ ^{transcribing} of their hymns of which there ~~was~~ ^{were} a plethora. These were considered, by the world, to be highly mysterious and ebullient with emotion, although when sung with their respective verse they were beautiful

and inspiring. The dancing, which has previously been alluded to, was of a highly symbolic nature, ~~wherein~~ and ~~it~~ was composed of an array of gestures depicting different moods and sentiments. The Shakers felt that these fields of culture were ample in giving vent to their artistic penchant, and they never tried ^{it was their contention that the} their hand at fiction or drama. ~~The~~ former violated their standards of literary truth.

Today there are but few examples of Shaker literature which have attained eminence; their theories on construction have never been popularly accepted; yet they have left a heritage of which they might be justly proud. Their furniture is always in demand and sells at a premium as an antique, their inventions have been perfected and are ~~in~~ being applied everywhere, and their systematic approach to life has been incorporated in numerous ~~to~~ ideologies, and, unconsciously perhaps, it has been adopted as a foundation upon which many economies stand.

Chapter VII

The "Outsideworld" and the Shakers.

Although the Shakers consistently remained apart and aloof from the neighboring farmers and townspeople by whom they were surrounded, they were never uncooperative in matters of taxes, poor relief or local improvements. Since they believed that their interests in the realm of the spiritual might be diverted to worldly channels if they became involved in political issues they abstained ^{from} ~~from~~ voting. They were content to follow Jesus's exhortation, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."⁴⁰

Since they neither went to the polls or aspired to any public office, since they supported their own unfortunates and donated liberally to the keeping of the town paupers, and since they attended to their share of the town's road work, they felt it their prerogative to dedicate themselves to the Lord, their services and belongings as they chose.

At the site of the various Shaker communities, the "world folk", in time grew accustomed to seeing the Shakers going unpretentiously about their ~~way~~ business, helping where they could, and asking only to be left unmolested.

The townspeople came so completely to accept this experiment in practical communism which was being attempted before their eyes, that they took it as a matter of course. To the world's people the Believers were ~~only a group of eccentrics but successful farmers, not to be branded with the epithet of Red, as the under~~

To the world's people the Believers were only a group of eccentric ~~by~~ but successful farmers, not to be branded with the epithet of "Red", as they might be today.

Chapter VIII

The Decline of the Shakers.

That there are today only about fifty Shakers living is the consequence of two forces. One was internal in ~~nature~~ nature, the second external.

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The late nineteenth century witnessed the following impasse: The original zeal so characteristic of the early Believers was no longer in evidence, and the leaders at the end of the century did not have the personal magnetism so necessary to guide the congregations, which previous Elders and Eldresses had possessed. With perfection attained, there was left no goal to strive for. This last fact was paramount in those factors which influenced the deterioration in the Shaker institutions.

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Immediately following the Civil War, America embarked on an ambitious program of industrial expansion the likes of which had never been beheld anywhere. With it came security to many, and an opportunity to for success to all. Many an enterprising youth who might have cited the Shaker haven as an ideal solution to his financial dilemmas in the forties now turned to industry for the antidote. This

institution with its impersonality and immenseness engendered conditions of poverty and ~~mass~~ misery, and many Shakers were wont to claim that no product of this society was ~~suited~~ suitable to be converted to Shakerism. And so industry took a double toll on the Shaker ranks, it restricted conversion, and it also tempted many to abscond from the Believers and try their luck elsewhere.

The number of societies began to diminish, and various devious suits brought against the sect by ruthless corporations accelerated the process.

Today there are but three Shaker communities ^{they are located at} extant; Hancock, Mass., Canterbury, N.H. and Sabbath-day Lake, Maine. Soon these will pass the way of the others, yet the Shakers remain firm in their refusal to accept new converts.

And so a truly creative and beneficial sect is ^{pronouncedly} ushering in its death knell. Soon it will be defunct, but its deeds will survive to attest to its worth and ~~at~~ enhance its prestige.

Conclusion.

In this day and age the Shakers no longer recruit new members to further the cause. Many believe that even if a spark of the old ^{inspiration} flame remains, no one could kindle it into the traditional flame of enthusiasm. Others query as to how the faith could appeal to younger generations. It is a dormant cult.

Yet for the sake of equity let me close with the words of Brother Ricardo, one of the few surviving Shakers. - The cause of our decline is not inexplicable. For the ideals of our society linger on. But in this troubled strife and den globe we find none eligible to perpetuate our dogma.

Due to this dearth of converts, the Shakers and their culture will soon have vanished from this earth, and their labors have passed into oblivion they will be rewarded with eternal gratitude.

Charity was their foremost trait, and may this be an asset in securing for them admission into the portals of Heaven and lasting blessing for them therein.

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~~Mark Research~~
DON WALLACE

40 WEST 55TH STREET

NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

May 29, 1949

Dear Mr. Count,

Accompanying this note you will find the essay which I recently wrote as my history project. Originally over fifteen thousand words in length, I had to condense it to comply with school requirements. I appreciate your attention, and shall be only too glad to discuss various aspects of the paper with you at some future date.

Sincerely yours,

Don Wallace

P.S. Would you please be so kind as to return the manuscript when you no longer need it.

A Biographical Scetch of F.W. Evans

Bernard Weitzman

Fredrick Evans was born of George Evans, and Sarah White. Fred's mother died when he was but four years of age, and he was thrown in to live with his relatives, aunts, and uncles at Chadwick Hall. He was treated there as the black sheep of the family because of his apparant dislike for book learning. However, once left to his own devices, Fredrick began reading any thing and everything that he could lay his hands upon, and soon the prosses of self-education was well underway.

Evans relatives soon got tired of supporting him, so they shipped him off to America to lime with his brother G.H. Evans. Living in close proximity with his brother he was naturally profoundly infleuenced by his brothe's political outlooks. G.H. Evans started the land reform movement in this country. In conjunction with his elder brother he published a number a-~~nam~~ of books, among which were:

1. The Workingman's advocate.
2. The Daily Sentenel
3. Young America

Fredrick and his brother organized the land reform party which later came to be called "The Locofoco Party". The orogin of the name "Locofoco" is as follows:

On the evening of the Twenty ninth of October, 1825 The Democrates held a presidential nominating convention. The land reformers in an in the party revolution severed themselves from the party taking with them more than half the party

membership. The conservatives walked out in a huff turning off the gas and leaving the hall in darkness as they went.

A cry was raised "Let there be light", and there was light. Throughout the hall Locofoco matches were ignited, and applied to candles and thereupon a glorious illumination resulted bringing on a cheers for the Locofoco matches. The name "Locofoco" took hold and remained.

The platform of the party was as follows in part:

- I. The right of man to the soil.
2. A bolition of the U.S. Bank.
3. Freedom of the public lands.
4. Home steads made inalienable.
5. Abolition of all laws for the collections of debts.
6. Alien of the laborer upon his own work for his wages.
7. Equal rights for men and women in all respects.
8. Abolition of imprilonment for debt.
9. A general bankruptcy law.
10. Abolition of chattel slavery and wage slavery.

II. Land limitation to one hundred and sixty acres.

While carrying on his work with the "Locofoco Party," Evans continued his self education, putting to full use photographic memory. Finally, giving up his work with the party, he went to Ithica to school himself under an Episcopalian minister. Under the minister he received what he believed to be the greatest and most important lesson of his life, "Live so you will always be able to respect yourself".

He then apprenticed himself at Sherburne Four Corners N.Y. To learn the hatters trade. While at his new home Fredrick had free access to a library of valuable books and became acquainted with the works of Voltaire, the Koran and varied other religious works. Evans became a fanatical materialist and remained so until joining the Shakers. being a materialist he became a communist, and fired with enthusiasm walked eight hundred miles to join a community in Ohio.

After Evans had been in the community for two months it was dissolved because of religious dissent among its members. Fredrick holding many lengthy discussions with members of the community decided to form a new community being careful to eliminate all possible religious troubles.

Evans was deputed to travel and obtain information as to a suitable place to start the new colony. One of his first stops was at Mount Lebanon. On a sunny day

Evans arrived on a sunny day in the month of June 1830, and was directed to the north house as the proper place to obtain information. He was recieved with such inthusias-
iasm that he remained for a number of days. Fredrick then returned to his friends, gave ~~tham~~ the information he had gathered and returned to Mount Lebanon to live out his remaining life in honor, peace, and security.

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Sherry work (yay)

On February 29, 1736 in Manchester, England, a girl child was born to a blacksmith. Little was it thought then that Ann Lee was to become the leader of a religious movement that was to sweep the Lebanon countryside in America. Ann Lee, like others of her time, could neither read nor write, but went to work at an early age. In 1747 she joined the Society of Wardllys who were offshoots of the Quakers. In 1758 she joined the order of "The United Society of the Believers in the Second Appearing of Christ" and due to her unusual vigor and complete belief in the movement she became the accepted leader of the new order. To all that saw her, she seemed to be "surrounded by a wall of God's protection". She became so engrossed in the religion that she began to have revelations. Two things kept reappearing to her; one that she was the second appearance of Christ for God was both male and female, and two, that not until both sexes were separated could complete spiritual attainment be acquired. In 1774, Ann Lee set forth from England with 8 followers for New York City. Arriving there, they all separated to earn their living. John Hocknell, the only one who had any money, bought some land a few miles from Albany at Niskeyuna. That spring they all gathered there and set up the first Shaker settlement in this country. During the winter of 1779, after a period of great persecution, a religious revival took place here in New Lebanon and brought the Shakers many converts. New Lebanon became the center of Shaker activities and many families were set up here. Shaker locations were always chosen with a view to practical activity.

Most of the Shaker converts came at an early age to live in the family. They were usually either orphans or had been given to the Shakers by their parents. At the age of 21 years, the person could either take up the "covenant relationship" and relinquish all property and give up the right to receive wages; or they could leave the order and go out into the outside

world.

Sometimes whole families would join the order of Shakers, and due to the opposition to disrupting family ties, the Shakers were divided into two orders, the Adamic and the Spiritual. In the Adamic order husband and wife were allowed to live together and enjoy sexual union, but only for the production of offspring. The Spiritual order, like the nuns of the Catholic church, were completely celibate, for they believed that all their energy should be directed toward the attainment of spiritual heaven on earth and after death.

Perfection in work was a keynote with the Shakers. They believed in variety of labor for "variety of occupation is the source of pleasure!" Many articles were made for public consumption, but only those articles which did not tend toward extravagance and superfluity, for all decoration was considered sinful. All articles they made for outside use were also used by themselves. The Shaker articles had the reputation for excellence and perfection.

In relationship to work, each member of the community was given work suited to his abilities and both men and women were equal.

Not every member of the community took care of the business, but the trustees, who were a group of Shakers with equal number of men and women, took care of all business affairs of the community.

Because of the lack of personal property, there were no misers and nothing was hoarded or "made to perish for want of use"-"production and its improvement at their highest, waste and destruction at their minimum"

The Shakers were known for their generosity and in the days of prosperity, no one was ever turned away from their door.

Now the Shakers are dying out and soon the religious group that became known because of its communal and celibate way of life will be no

more. With their spiritual and religious way of life is going to their excellence in crafts and the belief that all men should strive for peace in this life.

Mimi Isaacson

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