*Jane Means Appleton Pierce (1806–63), known to her family as Jenny or Jeannie; from an albumen print by an unidentified photographer, c. 1862. "Her tastes were of exceeding delicacy and purity. Her eye appreciated in a remarkable degree whatever was beautiful in nature and art. . . . This contact with Nature's freshness and variety and beauty often renewed her strength, when the ministries of human affection and skill were alike powerless." (*Boston Recorder, *January 8, 1864) New Hampshire Historical Society.*

The President's Wife, Jane Means Appleton Pierce: A Woman of Her Time

Jane Walter Venzke and Craig Paul Venzke

JANE PIERCE is among the least studied and perhaps the most misunderstood of America's First Ladies.[1] She is an intriguing and complex, yet controversial figure. In order to more fully understand her role as wife of Franklin Pierce and her influence on his career, it is important to understand her background and the impact of events in the formative years of her childhood and of her early married life.

Jane Means Appleton was born in Hampton, New Hampshire, to Jesse and Elizabeth (Means) Appleton on March 12, 1806, just thirty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In that era, young girls most often learned the social role of women in the home from their parents. The level of education, the moral philosophy, and the social practices of a girl's parents greatly influenced her education.

"As to My Family"

Jane's father, Jesse Appleton, was born in New Ipswich, New Hampshire, on November 17, 1772, the fourth son of Francis and Elizabeth (Hubbard) Appleton. He came from a family of poor farmers and acquired an education when a brother offered to aid him financially. Jesse graduated from Dartmouth College in 1792 and went on to educational posts in Leominster, Massachusetts, and in Dover and Amherst, New Hampshire. He most likely met Elizabeth Means of Amherst while he was teaching there at the Aurean Academy, which her father, Col. Robert Means, helped found.[2]

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Elizabeth, the second daughter of Colonel Robert and Mary (McGregor) Means, was born in 1779, one of six children who survived childhood. The Means family was considered wealthy by standards of the day. Robert Means was respected as a successful merchant both locally and throughout the state. His title came from his role in the militia, and he was well known for his service in the New Hampshire General Court, Senate, and Executive Council. His daughters' letters speak lovingly and respectfully of him.[3]

Elizabeth's mother, Mary, is noted to have been stern and powerful within the family and the community. She was said to have adhered to a strict moral and social code. Very little is known of Elizabeth's childhood other than sketches of life in Amherst from the Means' family letters and published recollections. According to her grandniece, Anne M. Means, who compiled the family correspondence for publication, Elizabeth appeared lighthearted when young, "enjoy[ing] the frivolous pursuits of the other young ladies of the town." Later in life, however, she "devoted herself solely to the severer aspects of her religion and to contemplation of the awful fate of those who died without due preparation for the judgment of God." She was remembered as a "good and earnest woman," who, nevertheless, "seems to have lacked a saving sense of humor."[4]

After teaching in Amherst, Jesse studied for the ministry. By the time he and Elizabeth were married in 1800, he was the pastor of the Congregational Church in Hampton. In the next thirteen years, the Reverend and Mrs. Appleton had six children. Jane Means was their third child.[5]

As Hampton's pastor, Appleton oversaw the building of a meeting house and he earned praise for his kindness, scholarship, and moral views. He devoted much time to study and led the conservative element of his

congregation. Appleton's scholarly writings and sermons soon elevated him within the church community and, when the directorship of the Harvard theological department became vacant, the conservatives at Harvard advanced his name as a candidate. In the end, he was a runner-up for the position and, as a result, became widely recognized for his educational and theological views and abilities.[6]

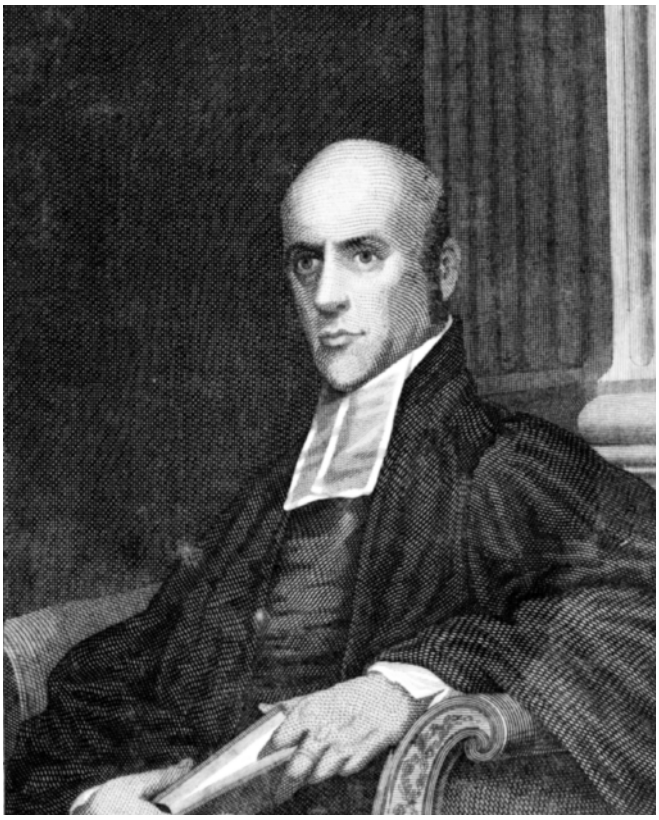
In 1807, at thirty-five years of age, Appleton was elected as the second president of Bowdoin College in Maine. He moved his family to Brunswick and assumed the post of college president in December 1807.[7] His daughter Jane was then about a year old.

Bowdoin Childhood

When Jane was growing up, advanced educational opportunities were not readily available to young women. It is likely that she received most of her early education from public schools in the Brunswick area, from her father and mother, and perhaps from some of the Bowdoin scholars her father taught and tutored. Of her father's teaching style, it was later noted:

> The cares and labors of his station did not prevent him from superintending [his children's] studies, and he instructed them much himself. His walks and rides with them were made no less seasons of improvement, than of delight to them. He took great pains to imbue their minds with useful knowledge, to inculcate the principles of a correct taste, to cultivate moral and religious feeling, and to lead them to the knowledge and acceptance of the Saviour.[8]

In addition to his official duties as the college's president, Jesse Appleton had taken on the responsibility for both the Department of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy and the Department of Rhetoric and Oratory. Bowdoin provided young men with a classical education, considered a good foundation for further studies, whether in law, medicine, theology, literature, business, or education. Directing departments in philosophy and rhetoric gave Appleton, and probably



Rev. Jesse Appleton (1772–1819), President of Bowdoin College (1807–19); engraving by John Chorley after John Ritto Penniman, (1783–1830), Boston; frontispiece in Addresses of Rev. Jesse Appleton . . . *(Brunswick, Maine, 1820). In the development of Jane's personality, the Calvinist theology and ascetic ways of her father were clearly influential, though he died when she was thirteen. Courtesy of the New Hampshire State Library.*

his family, significant exposure to students and the classroom. It also required him to read and study not only in his chosen discipline of theology but also in the classics, history, and other subjects related to his teaching. At the same time, he attempted to keep up with professional periodicals and administrative tasks.[9]

In order to fulfill his responsibilities, President Appleton was known to rise as early as four in the morning and to study into the late hours of the night. Such rigorous attention to responsibility, together with the constant presence of books and students immersed in the classics, must have established a home environment in which intellect and duty were high priorities, though love and respect are also said to have characterized the Appleton home.

Jesse Appleton's life was driven by duty, first to God, then to his students and responsibilities at the college, then to family, and finally to friends. His austere lifestyle and his desire to commit himself wholly to his work caused him to eat sparsely, avoid exercise, and sleep very little.[10] Analysis of his physical symptoms—a cough, weight loss, and fatigue—suggests, furthermore, that Jesse Appleton had tuberculosis (consumption). The death of his youngest child, John, at age three in 1817 marked the beginning of a sharp decline in his own health. In 1819, Jesse Appleton grew increasingly ill and was not well enough to preside at the college exhibition in May. "It was hoped, that a journey, which he took in the spring vacation, as far as Amherst, N.H. would be beneficial, and he prolonged his visit to his friends beyond the opening of the term."[11]

On June 12, the president wrote from Amherst to the students at Bowdoin, indicating that his health was too precarious to travel to Brunswick for the beginning of the summer term but that he hoped to be back at school within the next ten days.[12] The Appletons and some of their children, including Jane, had traveled to Amherst with him and were in residence at the Means farm. Elizabeth sent a letter from there to her daughter Frances on June 10 stating that they were "applying blisters on his chest to remove the hoarseness and cough." In the same letter, she indicated that Jane was traveling back to Bowdoin and should be there by the time the letter arrived.[13]

Jane's father died on November 12, 1819, following several weeks of labored breathing, coughing up of blood, and intermittent signs of approaching death. During his final days, the dying minister's children spent time with him while he "gave to each of them separately what he considered his dying counsel."[14] Despite her young age, Jane was no doubt already familiar with death, but the loss of her young brother and her father during her early teen years must have significantly affected her development as a young woman.

Jane's attitude toward death was likely influenced by the Calvinistic predestinarian beliefs her father and other relatives held. In an address to the college following the death of his son, Jesse Appleton had commented:

> Now, as to my family; what remain are in health and prosperity. Blessed be God, his mercies are very great to us, unworthy sinners. But oh, we have not the same number which we had the last Thanksgiving. On the 19th of October, our dear John, a most beautiful, affectionate, interesting child, was snatched from our embraces in a very sudden manner. I love the very grave, where his dear remains are deposited. But the Lord is most righteous in sending this affliction. God had tried us with mercies for a long time. He had threatened us often, but we did not improve, in a suitable manner, either his mercies or his judgments. At length he assumed the rod with decision. In faithfulness has he afflicted us. It is right, we needed affliction. I hope we have been able to feel some submission. But, without his grace, it will do us no permanent good.[15]

After Jesse Appleton's death, his widow moved her family back to Amherst. In a letter to her sister Mary Mason on June 17, 1820, Elizabeth spoke of preparing the farmhouse her father had provided and of her hope that it would be ready for the extended family to visit over the summer. She lamented that she was "still under my dear father's roof, for owing to some inattention in the Capt. of the vessel the residue of my furniture was not taken from Brunswick as soon as I expected and it has not yet arrived."[16]

"Progress in Science, Literature, and Virtue"

Although it is unclear the extent to which Jane Means Appleton received formal education, her mother's June 1820 letter to Mary Mason indicated that Jane, William, and Robert were attending school (Jane would have been fourteen years old at that point). Elizabeth was referring almost certainly at this time to the public schools in Amherst, which traditionally prepared students up to the age of fourteen or sixteen. In 1818, a local school census docu-

Catharine Fiske (1784–1837), artist unknown, watercolor on ivory, c. 1820. Returning from Brunswick, Maine, to live with her mother's family in Amherst, New Hampshire, following her father's death, Jane attended public school in Amherst and later a boarding school for girls in Keene kept by Miss Catharine Fiske. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Cheshire County, Keene, N.H.

mented that 477 children in nine districts were attending public school in Amherst. According to a list of books recommended for use in the town's schools in 1823, the students were studying reading, spelling, history, arithmetic, geography, astronomy, grammar, and rhetoric.[17]

A February 1822 letter from Jane places her by that time in Keene at the Ladies' Boarding School (also known as the Young Ladies' Seminary or Miss Fiske's School for Girls). On February 1, Jane wrote to her sister Frances that "it is school time now but I have asked Miss Fiske's permission to write in the sitting room, and am now by a good fire and very comfortable."[18] Jane and her family may have become familiar with Miss Fiske's school through Eunice Appleton who was the wife of Jesse's cousin Aaron and served on the school's visiting committee.[19]

Catharine Fiske had opened her school in Keene in 1814 on the east side of Main Street where she continued until 1824 when she purchased the John G. Bond House, also on Main Street. The school remained at that site until it closed in 1844. Miss Fiske's school is generally considered the first institution in New Hampshire where a young woman could obtain advanced education comparable to a beginning college education at the time. Earlier such schools elsewhere in New England included the Litchfield Female Academy (Miss Pierce's School) in Litchfield, Connecticut (founded in 1792), and Bradford Academy in Bradford, Massachusetts (opened in 1803).[20]

Like Jane Appleton's parents, Miss Fiske was a stern and pious role model. Her students were to follow a simple life while at school. The catalogue clearly stated that "it is important that youth should be inured to application and economy, that they may know the value of money and the worth of time—to this effect it is necessary that their dress be Plain and Neat—durable and dark coloured clothes, made in a simple style, for common use with no great variety, are most conducive to the benefit of pupils—for when the mind is greatly occupied with dress, it much impedes its progress in science, literature and virtue."[21]

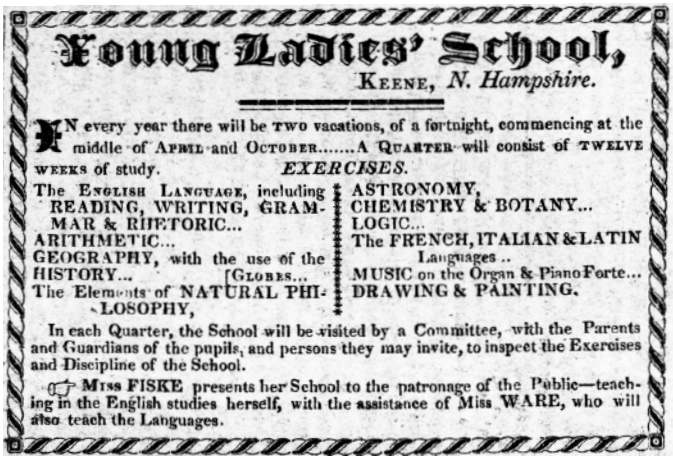
The mission of the school, as printed in the 1832 catalogue, was grounded in intellect and virtue:

> to promote that industry and economy, which insures a competency—that gentleness of manner, which forbids unkindness—that uniform cheerfulness which promotes good health,—that firmness which is unmoved at vexations, and prudence which teaches to overcome them—that judgment, which knows how to do right, and that independence, which dares to do so—that kindness which is ever ready to do good, and resolution which enables one to perform it, and that genuine Piety, whose actions in society never contradicts its prayers and professions before GOD. Thus may be formed a consistent and useful character, qualified for the good friend, wife and mother—and such a mind may hope, through faith in a Redeemer, to bear that image to

the Divine Spirit, by which it will be prepared for the enjoyment of celestial Happiness.[22]

Jane's letter from school, posted February 1, indicates that she was boarding there, since Amherst was approximately forty miles from Keene and it was in the middle of winter. As no catalogues exist for the period when Jane attended Miss Fiske's school, it is uncertain how many terms or years Jane may have attended in addition to the winter term of 1822. In a letter to Elizabeth Appleton that June, Miss Fiske indicated that Jane had been a student of hers for half a year and that, during that time, she had "endeared herself" to Miss Fiske and Miss Withington "by her good conduct & improvement." The letter further requested Mrs. Appleton's "permission that Jane should visit us in the months of Nov. & Dec.—and attend to music." Miss Fiske concluded by promising "that Jane will receive exactly the instruction in music she needs."[23]

While at Miss Fiske's School, Jane could have studied any of a broad range of other subjects, as listed in the 1823 catalogue, including: "Spelling, Reading, Arithmetic, Plain sewing, Geography, History, English grammar, Book keeping and Composition, Law required for a lady to instruct a District School, Political class book, Rhetoric, Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, Botany, Philosophy of Natural History, Algebra and Geometry, Logic, Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, Natural Theology and Evidence of Christianity, Latin and Modern Languages, Organ and Piano, Drawing and Painting." The school also taught needlework, and samples of the students' work currently hang in the Archives Building at Keene State College.[24]



Young Ladies' School,

KEENE, *N. Hampshire.*

IN every year there will be TWO vacations, of a fortnight, commencing at the middle of APRIL and OCTOBER.....A QUARTER will consist of TWELVE WEEKS of study.

EXERCISES.

The ENGLISH LANGUAGE, including READING, WRITING, GRAMMAR & RHETORIC...
ARITHMETIC...
GEOGRAPHY, with the use of the GLOBES...
HISTORY...
The Elements of NATURAL PHILOSOPHY,
ASTRONOMY,
CHEMISTRY & BOTANY...
LOGIC...
The FRENCH, ITALIAN & LATIN Languages..
MUSIC on the Organ & Piano Forte...
DRAWING & PAINTING.

In each Quarter, the School will be visited by a Committee, with the Parents and Guardians of the pupils, and persons they may invite, to inspect the Exercises and Discipline of the School.

☞ MISS FISKE presents her School to the patronage of the Public—teaching in the English studies herself, with the assistance of Miss WARE, who will also teach the Languages.

Advertisement for Miss Fiske's Young Ladies' School, published in the New Hampshire Sentinel*, Keene, October 12, 1822. Jane received a good education for a girl of her times. She is known to have studied Euclid when just fourteen and to have taken music and arithmetic classes at Miss Fiske's school the year she turned sixteen.*

In her letter from school, Jane told Frances that "Miss Carter our instructress in music has left here on account of the illness of her mother and I do not now take lessons but practice every day."[25] It is likely that Jane's music lessons were on the piano as, in 1824, her uncle Amos Lawrence gave her one of the newly popular instruments, and she later took piano lessons in Boston.[26] In addition, she spoke of classes with Mr. Barstow and of applying herself to arithmetic.[27] While it is certain that sixteen-year-old Jane was in attendance at Miss Fiske's School in the winter term of 1822 and that Miss Fiske wanted her to return, there is no record regarding further study there.

During this stage of Jane's development, there are many indications of poor health. Family letters often mention her frailty, referring to her vulnerability to winter colds and contagious childhood diseases as well as to her petite size and to her digestive or eating problems. In her letter from Miss Fiske's School, Jane herself notes that she "sometimes feel[s] the want of a closet between meals, but I never feel the want of an appetite, whatever the food is."[28] In addition to citing a variety of breathing, digestive, and eating problems, family correspondence reveals as well as a pattern of anxiety, melancholy, and sleeplessness.

Courting the Family's Favor

When Colonel Means died in 1823, his daughter Elizabeth moved her family to live with and care for her mother. Over the next decade, the Means house became the site of the weddings of her three daughters: Mary, Frances, and Jane.[29] The Appleton sisters all married well.

Col. Robert Means House, built in 1785, Amherst; photographed in 2004. Following the death of Jane's maternal grandfather, a well-to-do merchant of Scots-Irish background, Jane and her family moved into the Means homestead, to help care for her grandmother Mary McGregor Means. Photograph taken by, and courtesy of, William P. Veillette.

Mary, the oldest sister, became the second wife of John Aiken in 1832. Aiken had graduated from Dartmouth College in 1819 and held many positions of responsibility in the mills in and around Lawrence, Massachusetts. The couple settled in Andover, Massachusetts. From that location, John served as treasurer of the Cocheco Manufacturing Company of Dover and the Salmon Falls Manufacturing Company in nearby Rollinsford, New Hampshire. His volunteer work on behalf of education included positions as trustee of Dartmouth College, Phillips Andover Academy, and the Andover Theological Seminary. John and Mary Aiken were extremely important figures in Jane's life, and their Andover home often provided her a refuge from the pressures of public and private life.[30]

Frances, the second oldest Appleton sister, married Alpheus Spring Packard in 1827. Though only twenty-nine at the time of their marriage, Alpheus Packard was already recognized as a scholar and theologian. He had graduated from Bowdoin College in 1816, second in his class. After pursuing teaching opportunities elsewhere for a short time, he returned to Bowdoin as a tutor and, in 1824, became chair of the Latin and Greek department there. He remained at Bowdoin for a distinguished sixty-five-year academic career.[31] It is possible that Frances met her future husband while her family lived in Brunswick. In 1819, the year her father died, she would have been fifteen and, that same year, Packard returned to Bowdoin as a tutor. He later edited a two-volume compilation of the works of Jesse Appleton, which he introduced with a memoir of his father-in-law's life. This scholarly work was published in 1837, ten years after his marriage to Frances Appleton. While it is not clear when the couple first met, it was no doubt in relation to their mutual association with Bowdoin and its second president.

Jane, the youngest Appleton sister, was twenty-eight when she married Franklin Pierce. Her eldest sister, Mary, had been twenty-nine when she wed, so a relatively late marriage date was not unusual within the Appleton family. Nor is it surprising that the man she married was a Bowdoin graduate. The girls' uncle Robert Means Jr. had graduated from Bowdoin in 1807, and their brother William attended Bowdoin in the late 1820s. Moreover, when Franklin Pierce was a student there in the early 1820s, Alpheus Packard was one of his teachers.[32]

After graduating from Bowdoin with an excellent preparation in classical education, Franklin had studied law under Judge Levi Woodbury in Portsmouth and Judge Samuel Howe in Northampton, Massachusetts. Then, in 1827, he moved to Amherst, New Hampshire, to complete his law studies with Judge Edmund Parker. This move placed Franklin in close proximity to the Appleton family just about the time his father, General Benjamin Pierce, was elected governor of New Hampshire.[33]

The Appleton sisters were extremely close, and the Means home—now also Elizabeth Appleton's home—was frequently used as a gathering place for the Aikens, Packards, and Appletons, as aunts, uncles, and cousins returned for holidays, weddings, and social events. As the son of the governor of New Hampshire, the young law student would have been considered an important young bachelor to invite to

Jane's uncle Amos Lawrence (1786–1852), of Boston; engraved by Joseph Andrews (c. 1805–73) after Chester Harding (1792–1866); published in Extracts from the Diary and Correspondence of the Late Amos Lawrence *(1855). The Appletons were related by marriage to several of coastal New England's great Federalists, who had made their fortunes as merchants and later invested heavily in the region's industrial development.*

local events. By the fall of 1827, however, Pierce had moved back to Hillsborough to open his own law office and begin his political career. Seven years passed following his stay in Amherst before he and Jane were married. But, it is likely that the paths of Pierce, Packard, and the Appleton family crossed in many ways during this time.[34]

Courtship and marriage for women in the 1800s was often a family matter in which not only parents but also extended family members provided input regarding the choice of the intended husband, and the Appleton-Means family was no exception. Elizabeth Appleton's sisters, Mary Mason and Nancy Lawrence, and their husbands played a significant role in the family structure. Nancy and her husband, wealthy manufacturer Amos Lawrence, had disapproved of Mary Appleton's first fiancé, and the engagement was broken. Her second fiancé was a clergyman who "found favor, not only with her, but with all of her family." When it was discovered that this clergyman had "loved and betrayed a young girl who, with her baby, died in childbirth," Elizabeth's "indignation flamed up . . . at the man who had presumed to love

Col. Robert Means House parlor, as photographed, c. 1927, for the White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs. *Jane Means Appleton and Franklin Pierce were married in this room on November 19, 1834. According to oral tradition, the flowers that were freshly cut for the wedding remained on the mantel until the house was sold out of the family more than a century later. Courtesy of William P. Veillette.*

her daughter," and the engagement was broken. Mary eventually married John Aiken, a widower with two children.[35]

Little is known of the courtship of Jane Appleton and Franklin Pierce. When they met, Jane was living with her mother and grandmother in the Means home in Amherst. The family was clearly of the local aristocracy. Although Franklin's father was governor of New Hampshire, the Means descendents are said to have regarded themselves and their husbands as more sophisticated than their Hillsborough counterparts. Elizabeth and her sisters supposedly tried to dissuade Jane from marrying Franklin, but the wedding plans proceeded nevertheless. [36]

A year before Jane and Franklin were married on November 19, 1834, Franklin was elected to Congress. A long-time supporter of President Andrew Jackson, he assumed this office during Jackson's second term. The wedding took place at the Means home. Jane's brother Robert escorted her into the parlor. She was a tiny woman weighing less than one hundred pounds at her healthiest, and her features, like those of her father, were sharp and refined. Appearing frail and delicate, Jane wore a traveling dress and bonnet for a very simple ceremony performed by the Reverend Silas Aiken, Amherst's Congregational pastor and a relative of the Appletons by marriage. Only immediate family members were in attendance, and the couple left shortly after the ceremony for Washington, D.C., because of Franklin's congressional responsibilities. How exciting the trip from Amherst to Baltimore where the Pierces spent the first six days of their marriage must have been![37]

Getting Established

From her family experiences, Jane Pierce had prepared to be a wife and mother. She was well educated and religiously devout, having been raised in a stern, loving, intellectual, and rigorously religious home where, until the death of her father, both parents were present. Her sisters were married to men who ran major mercantile and textile businesses and who, except for the occasional business trip, were home with their families to help guide the running of the home and the raising of children. The patriarchs of the family were often involved in politics, usually as Federalists, but their involvement was confined to the state level. When the husbands' responsibilities required them to travel, their wives remained at home tending to the needs of family, household, and business.

Jane's extended family gathered regularly, and cousins grew up together. There was a sense of belonging to a much larger family and of sharing. The Means home was lively; the women were the moral touchstones of the family; and the children were expected to marry well if they were girls and, if they were boys, to move into the family business.

Franklin was raised in a politically charged home in rural New Hampshire. His father Benjamin—a pioneer, Revolutionary war veteran, and general in the militia—devoted much of his life to public service. Benjamin first glimpsed his land in Hillsborough during his return from the war. He later settled there in a log cabin where Franklin was born on November 23, 1804. Life in the hills of New Hampshire was difficult for Franklin's mother, who had been born in the flourishing town of Amherst, New Hampshire, and now lived in the country with her large family of five boys and three girls. She focused on her children and on maintaining a home in a frontier environment, while her husband was frequently away. Franklin described her as a caring mother; others characterized her as an outgoing and talkative woman.

By pioneer standards, the family farmhouse in Hillsborough was considered a mansion. Given its location on the highway and Benjamin's hospitable nature, the Pierce homestead often served as a tavern, and the travelers who stopped there brought its occupants much excitement, as well as contact with the world beyond. Franklin's parents, with their outgoing personalities, are certain to have made fine tavern keepers.

The atmosphere within the Pierce family was one of good humor, thrift, and hard work; a respect for education that the elder Pierce never had himself but wanted for his sons; and a deep sense of patriotic

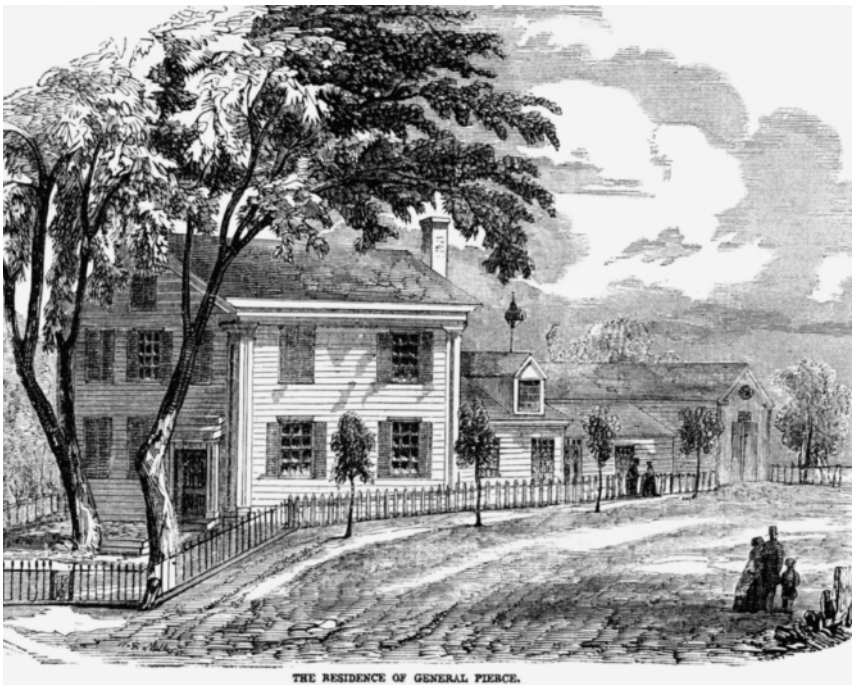
duty. When the war of 1812 broke out, there was no question but that the men of age in the family would leave to fight. Franklin, who was only ten years old at the time, waited patiently for their return with stories of battles and victories.

Of the five Pierce sons, only Benjamin and Franklin pursued a college education. To prepare for further study, Franklin attended Hancock and Francestown academies. Although Benjamin attended Dartmouth, the elder Pierce decided that Franklin should attend the more democratic Bowdoin College. To qualify for admission to the freshman class, Franklin was required, according to college regulations, "to write Latin grammatically, and to be well versed in Geography, in Walsh's Arithmetic, Cicero's Select Oration, the Bucolics, Georgics, and Aeneid of Virgil, Sallust, the Greek Testament, and Collectanea Graeca Minor." Upon proving his abilities, Franklin was admitted to the Bowdoin class of 1824 along with eighteen other young men.[38]

Franklin and Jane brought to their marriage a mutual love of family, sense of duty, religious conviction, and intellectual acumen. Yet their home life was to be quite different from that of either family. During the first years of marriage, the Pierces lived primarily in boarding houses in Washington, returning when Congress was not in session to the family home in New Hampshire. In those days, most politicians did not bring their wives to Washington. The capital was considered a mosquito-infested swamp, and politics was an engagement of hearty good fellowship carried on in pubs, clubs, and sporting arenas as well as in the halls of Congress.

Jane's father had died of a lung condition, and Jane was described as tubercular, frail, and in poor health for most of her life. Following seasons in Washington, Jane often visited her sisters in Massachusetts where she sought modern medical treatments for her physical ailments. Most commonly, this involved applying leeches to remove the toxins in her blood.[39]

Modern-day analysis suggests that Jane faced a number of mental and physical health challenges. Early in her life, she had lost several key family members and was brought up in a strict matriarchal household with a strong Calvinistic background. She watched her mother and an unmarried aunt struggle to survive without property or financial means. For a solitary woman at that time, the circumstances of life often must have seemed overwhelming. Jane was extremely close to her sister Mary and must have mourned with her over lost suitors. As they both approached thirty, the sisters probably wondered if they ever would marry. Jane, moreover, had inherited a predilection for seclusion and seriousness from her father and mother, which made her ill at ease, especially in the politically charged social world she was entering.


THE RESIDENCE OF GENERAL PIERCE.

The Concord home of the new president and his family as pictured in the Illustrated News*, February 12, 1853; engraved by William Rickarby Miller (1818–93). For all but a few years of Franklin and Jane's married life, including at the time of his election, the couple lived in rented quarters, whether in New Hampshire or Washington, D.C.*

Like her father, Jane was often ill with digestive complaints. Her vomiting and lack of appetite are signs of an eating disorder or chronic disease. Her constant struggles with respiratory infections, coughing, and fatigue could also have been signs of tuberculosis or other chronic lung disease. In addition to these health problems, the corseting of women's waists to an unrealistic eighteen inches restricted the lungs. Anatomical and medical books of the nineteenth century demonstrate that prolonged use of corset stays could result in a woman having a permanently funnel-shaped rib cage, significantly reducing her breathing capacity.[40]

Jane was, therefore, neither equipped physically to cope with the hot, humid weather of the nation's capital nor emotionally with the socio-political life of a congressman's wife. In a letter to her sister Mary, she commented on her responsibilities to visit other congressmen's wives: "I have many calls on hand and wish I could get rid of the trouble altogether, for there is no heart in it and it consumes much time and money and I feel little able now to make the exertion."[41] It had not been the custom within her family for a wife to travel with her husband for business purposes. Jane's willingness to spend her early years of marriage shuttling between New England and Washington and living in boarding houses suggests her commitment to serve as best she could as her husband's companion and partner while he forged his political career. In the letter to her sister, Jane described her boarding house as primarily occupied by congressmen. She noted that only a few women accompanied their spouses. When feeling well, Jane seems to have found enjoyment in their society.

During the summer of 1835, the Pierces moved into a house in Hillsborough, which Franklin had acquired two years previously. He spent that summer overseeing work on the house, hiring help, and moving Jane's personal belongings from Amherst. The couple occupied the house on May 27, 1835, and Franklin returned to his law practice in Hillsborough, hiring a law student, Albert Baker, as an assistant. Baker, who graduated from Dartmouth in 1834, was the brother of Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science. Baker ran the law office and watched over Pierce's aging parents when the young politician returned to Washington and his congressional responsibilities.

In a letter to her mother that summer from Hillsborough, Jane expressed her loneliness for her family, describing herself as "brighter than usual this evening. I rode on horseback yesterday and wish I had strength and energy enough to ride every day, as it is undoubtedly the kind of exercise necessary for me."[42] Franklin was often away for two to three days, meeting with clients and attending court. Although her letters speak of frequent visitors, Jane seemed very lonely when he was away.[43]

"Righteous Afflictions"

By the end of the summer, Jane was pregnant with their first child. She was too frail to accompany Franklin to Washington that year, so he left her in Boston to visit her aunt and uncle, the Lawrences. She later traveled back to Amherst, where she spent the winter with her mother and grandmother as she prepared for the birth.[44] On February 2, 1836, Franklin Pierce Jr. was born in Amherst, while Franklin was in Washington. Just three days later, before Franklin could see his first son, the child died. Upon reading a letter from his mother-in-law giving him the latest news, Franklin wrote to his sister: "He who has lived thirty years in this world of ours, seen its vanity, aye its inanity and felt its miseries ought not to repine at or weep over the demise of an infant but alas! what has our experience or what has phylosophy to do with the feelings of a father."[45]

The death of their first child was devastating for both Jane and Franklin. Jane had plenty of experience in dealing with the deaths of those close to her. Her brother John had died at age three when she was eleven; her father had died when she was thirteen; her brother William died at twenty-two when she was twenty-four. She had been taught early to view death as the will of God: "Not only the event itself, but the time, the place, the manner, every circumstance connected with it has been appointed & regulated by

infinite wisdom."[46] It was common throughout early America for children to die in infancy or childhood from accidents or contagious diseases for which there were no cures or preventive measures available.

Experience with death and understanding the uncertainty of life probably provided little comfort for Jane, however, as a new mother who had lost her first child. In their letters written around this time, family members described Jane as melancholy. Her sorrow was all the more deep at the loss of her child as Franklin was so far away. Her sister Mary Aiken comforted her during this loss and over the years would become known within the family as the "angel of consolation."[47]

On Franklin's return to New Hampshire following the end of his second congressional term, the Pierces planned a move to Concord, where it was hoped his law practice would thrive and Jane would be happier in the larger community. Following the resignation of United States Senator Isaac Hill, however, Franklin was elected to the Senate and began his six-year term in 1837. At thirty-two, he was the youngest senator that session.

As Franklin and Jane were preparing for a December trip to the nation's capital, Jane became very ill with a cough alleviated only slightly by paregoric.[48] Despite this setback, Franklin put the house in Hillsborough up for sale, and he and Jane left for Washington in early December. By the time the Pierces arrived in Washington, Jane was so ill that she retired to their room in the boarding house where she spent a considerable portion of the winter. In February 1838, they journeyed back to New England. Jane stayed in Massachusetts and Amherst with her family for the spring while Franklin returned to Hillsborough to assess his law practice and the welfare of his family.

Franklin's father had suffered a stroke from which he was not recovering; his mother displayed advanced signs of senility; and his sister, Nancy, also was not well. In addition, business in New Hampshire and the rest of the country was poor, and banks were failing. The country was slipping into economic depression. Albert Baker, who by then had completed his law training, had taken on the responsibility of running the law practice in Hillsborough and caring for the elder Pierces.[49] In August 1838, Franklin finalized his business plans, and he and Jane moved to Concord, where they would maintain their residence for the rest of their lives.[50] Later that year, Franklin's mother died, followed soon after by his father in 1839.

Mary Means Appleton Aiken (1801–83), carte de visite by George K. Warren (1834–84), Lowell, Massachusetts, c. 1860. Throughout her life, Jane maintained an extremely close relationship with her older sister Mary and visited her often in Lowell and later in nearby Andover. Mary had a reputation among the Appletons in times of family tragedy as "the Angel of Consolation." (Anne M. Means) Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The Washington environment and the socio-political expectations of a senator's wife caused Jane great distress and contributed to her ill health. She was not prepared to take an active part in the jovial, loud, male-dominated, atmosphere of Washington politics and had little interest or aptitude for the role of a politician's wife. A letter to her sister Mary, in December 1838, recounts in great detail the uncomfortable and boring practices of visiting dignitaries, embassies, party organizers,

leaving calling cards and conducting small talk—all in the name of political protocol. She also described in this letter her visits to the Capitol and listening to both House and Senate members' speeches, which she did not find at all stimulating or interesting. As she saw it, some of the gentlemen seemed to be speaking for their own amusement.[51]

Through the years, Jane Pierce struggled to cope with her illnesses, with her role as Franklin's wife and traveling companion, and with her role as a woman in Washington. Yet, though often ill and negative about life in Washington, she seems, as attested by her letters, to have been pensive but not depressed. Although she shared many periods of grief with family members over the deaths of cousins and acquaintances, she could view death in a proper perspective that was in accord with the expectations of her time. As a young woman, she was not overwhelmed or paralyzed by tragic events of her life but, beginning in 1839, her reaction was to change.

A Woman in Mourning

On June 2, 1839, the younger of Jane's sisters, Frances Packard, died at the age of thirty-five. At that time, Jane was six months pregnant with her second child and living in a Concord boarding house. Franklin was away attending to his law clients. Jane became extremely despondent and questioned her religious beliefs. Lonely for her family and for Franklin, grieving the recent loss of Franklin's parents, anxious over the birth of her child, Jane wrote to her sister Mary: "My mind is sometimes, yes much of the time in a perfect chaos, and I hardly know what I think or feel, or whether I feel at all." She continued on, expressing her yearning for "peace amidst this grief, fears, anxiety, darkness."[52]

Over the summer months, Jane's letters to family members spoke of her sleeplessness, rheumatism, and anxiety. By the end of July, however, she seemed to find consolation in her faith, stating in a letter to her sister Mary: "Cant we ever be thankful *enough* for God's mercies to us, for we will not forget a[nd] lose sight of the abundant consolations in our darling Frances' care, even though our hearts bleed with the bitter loss. Oh! I would serve him & love him & place my faith and hope in his blessed Son."[53]

On August 27, 1839, Frank (Franky) Robert Pierce was born in Concord while his father attended to his responsibilities in Washington. Although the couple had begun to talk about Franklin's resignation from the Senate, the decision to do so was delayed. In the meantime, the Pierces lived in a number of boarding houses in Concord where they had ample room and assistance so that Jane was not alone while Franklin traveled.

Benjamin Pierce was born nearly two years later, on April 13, 1841, and Jane and Franklin appeared to have achieved a well-ordered life. Jane lived mostly in a boarding house in Concord with their two children, often traveling to visit her sister in Andover and her mother in Amherst and anxiously awaiting Franklin's return to private life. Well aware of the uncertainties of life, Jane urged Franklin to retire from politics soon and return to New Hampshire.

In March 1842, Franklin resigned his seat one year short of his six-year term as a senator and returned to private life. The couple purchased a home on Montgomery Street in Concord and moved there with their two children. The Pierces attended services at the South Congregational church and settled into a quiet life in Concord. During the mid-1840s, Franklin focused attention on his law practice, while maintaining an interest in local government and becoming increasingly involved in party organization and politics. Just as Franklin and Jane were carving out a new political niche and were becoming settled in their home life, tragedy stuck the Pierce family once again.

On November 14, 1843, four-year-old Franky died of typhus. Both he and Benny had been ill for several weeks, and there was great concern for their well-being among the extended family.[54] Franklin struggled to understand the loss of his second son and to derive meaning from his son's death: "We should have lived for God and have left the dear ones to the care of Him who is alone able to take care of them and us. . . . Few have been more entirely absorbed in the whirl of business and cares purely of a worldly character than I have."[55] How similar Franklin's thoughts were to those

of Jesse Appleton at the death of his three-year-old son, John, in 1817. New England's strong Calvinistic heritage "stressed the absolute sovereignty of God's will and the doctrine of election, which . . . is irreversible and over which man has no control, and further, that man has no control over his ultimate personal salvation."[56] Such beliefs did not lessen a family's grief. If anything, they added a measure of guilt for the death of a child as God's lesson for the parents.

Jane's sister Mary arrived just before Franky passed away and once again served to console Jane. In a letter to her husband, Mary expressed Jane's belief that she had given Franky to God at his baptism and that God had accepted her offering. Mary worried that Franky's death would take a "heavy hold" on Jane.[57] She described her as "of a pensive, melancholy disposition, exceedingly retired and modest."[58] Jane became obsessed with the health and happiness of Benny and was seldom far from his side.

Jane was thirty-eight years old when Franky died. Before her marriage, she had spent the first twenty-eight years of her life under her mother's roof. After her father and grandfather died, the household had been run by her mother and grandmother. Jane had always maintained close ties with both her mother and her sister Mary. Therefore, the death of Jane's mother on November 15, 1844, one year and a day after Franky's death, must have been unbearable. Elizabeth was Jane's link to Amherst, to the Lawrences and Masons, and to her nuclear family. Of the parents and six children who had comprised Jane's family, only two siblings, Mary and Robert, remained.

Although Franklin was offered many political posts in the next three years, he resolved that his place was with his ailing wife and their son in New Hampshire. He stated clearly that the only compelling reason for him to leave his family would be in a case of national emergency. This came in 1847, when the War with Mexico was declared. Commissioned a Brigadier General in March 1847, Franklin was sent to Mexico. It is not clear if he ever discussed with Jane his decision to accept the military post. Having had a father who was a Revolutionary War veteran as well as two brothers (Benjamin Kendrick and John Sullivan) and a brother-in-law (John McNeil) who served in the War of 1812, Franklin had a deep-rooted commitment to protecting his country.

Before leaving Concord, Franklin made arrangements for a woman to stay with Jane and Benny so that they would have the stability of remaining at home yet the flexibility of visiting relatives in Massachusetts. At the end of the war, however, the Pierces sold their Concord home. In 1849, after Franklin came home a hero, the couple and Benny spent time in Andover with the Aikens making arrangements for their return to Concord.[59]

Franklin's reputation was always strong in New Hampshire and within his party. While he had few important assignments as a representative or senator, his sense of patriotic duty was the core of his life.

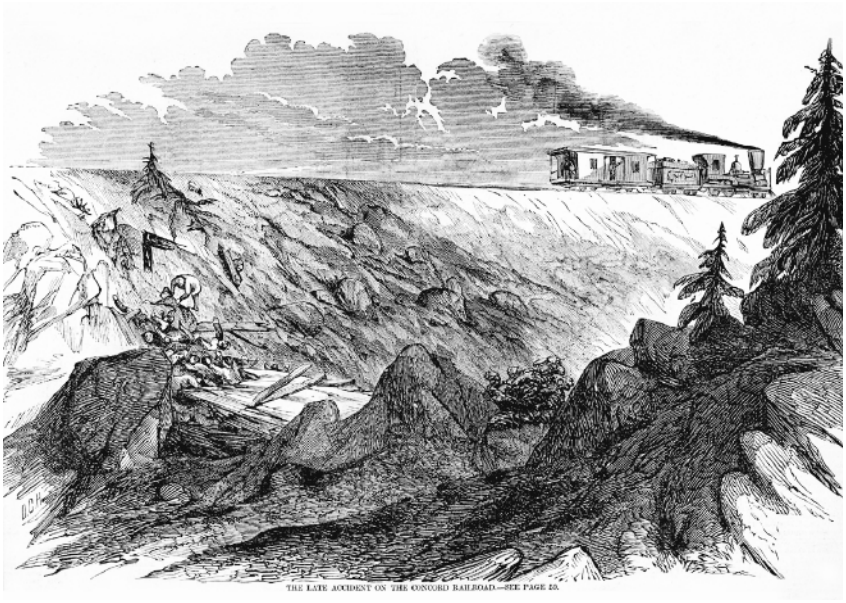
Jane Pierce and son Benjamin ("Benny"), by an unidentified daguerreotypist, c. 1850. Following the deaths of the Pierce's two oldest sons, Jane devoted undivided attention to protecting and caring for Benny, the couple's one remaining child. This remarkable image captures the powerful bond between mother and son. Courtesy of the Pierce Brigade.

And, despite accusations that he drank while promoting temperance, he was well liked and earned a reputation for hard work. It was probably not too surprising then that, in 1852, Franklin received the Democratic party's nomination as its candidate for president. Jane was reported to have fainted when she heard the news.[60] Franklin arranged a trip to Newport, Rhode Island, for rest and quiet, hoping that a stay by the sea would allow his wife time for reflection and healing.

In the fall of 1852, Franklin won the general election, and the inauguration was set for March 4, 1853. Meanwhile, Franklin and Jane took a trip to visit her relatives in Boston and then Andover. On December 31, while they were in Andover, Jane's uncle, Amos Lawrence, died, and the Pierces returned to Boston to attend the funeral. Any relatives who had opposed Franklin and Jane's marriage had long since reversed their opinion of their now famous in-law, despite lingering political differences. Amos A. Lawrence even offered Franklin money for his campaign.[61]

Two days after the funeral, Franklin, Jane, and Benny boarded the train at Andover Depot for the final stretch of the trip back to Concord. A short distance from Andover, the train crashed, and the Pierces' car derailed and rolled down the embankment. Franklin grabbed Jane and reached for Benny, but he was too late. Benny was thrown down the aisle of the train. When the train stabilized, the Pierces saw their son, the back of his head severed by debris, lying lifeless beside them. The third and last of their sons—the one in whom they had invested all their hopes for the future—had died horribly in front of their eyes. This terrible tragedy left the parents inconsolable. Over the next few days, Benny's funeral was held in Andover, and Franklin accompanied the body back to Concord for burial in the family plot, returning then to Andover to be with his wife.[62]

Together, the couple sought to understand this tragedy. Jane's strict Calvinist upbringing led her to see everything in life as happening according to God's will. Benny's sudden death, therefore, must have been God's way of relieving Franklin of the distraction of his concern for the child's welfare and future so that he could devote his full attention to the presidency. This interpretation of Benny's death is consistent with Franklin's earlier reflections following the death of Franky. Despite such attempts at Calvinist reasoning, however, the president-elect was distraught with grief over Benny's death, and his



Engraving from the Illustrated News*, January 22, 1853: "The Accident at Andover, Death of the Only Son of General Pierce"; engraved by David C. Hinman. In the time between Pierce's election and his inauguration, a terrible tragedy struck the Pierce family, leaving the president grieving and understandably distracted as he began his term of office. Eleven-year-old Benny was killed in a train derailment before his parents' eyes.*

wife, soon to become the nation's First Lady, would mourn her son for the rest of her life.[63]

The role of a First Lady in the mid-nineteenth century was one of managing the White House, of supporting the work of the president by maintaining a rigorous social schedule, and of attending ceremonial functions. Jane had already demonstrated her dislike for many of the social and ceremonial tasks during Franklin's congressional career. Even in the best of times, the job had been difficult for her and now became impossible. Abigail Kent Means, the second wife of Jane's Uncle Robert, became Jane's constant companion and often supported Franklin in Jane's place at White House social functions.[64]

Jane's family was very concerned about her ability to cope with the tragedy of losing her son as she embarked on new challenges of the White House. One of Jane's cousins, Mary Jane Adams, wrote: "We know not what she will do but we all hope she will not allow herself to be separated from Mr. P. nothing of course will now be expected of her and wherever she is, she will be secluded from the world."[65] Her cousin added that Franklin was equally affected by the loss of his son and would, in those first days after Benny's death, come into Jane's room and "throw himself on the bed by her side and mingle his woe with hers."[66] Abby Means was always intended to be Jane's companion in Washington. After the death of Benny, she became her companion in seclusion. Franklin cancelled all events in the cities between Concord and Washington to which Benny was to have accompanied him.[67] Although Jane had planned to attend the inauguration, she now stayed behind, arriving in Washington at a later time.

When a spouse, parent, or child died, it was the custom and ritual of the time to drape the home in black, cover mirrors, and refrain from social gatherings. Jane secluded herself in the White House living quarters where she accepted visitors and guests, making friends particularly with Mrs. Jefferson Davis and Mrs. Robert E. Lee. When there was a social event, Abigail Means or the wife of a cabinet member would preside as hostess. Expected to engage in the mourning rituals of the time, Jane was driven into seclusion by her loss.

Although Franklin was surrounded by his political allies and could perform well in the midst of political activities, he faced social events without the support of his wife. One can only imagine how difficult it was for him to worry about the health and well being of his wife, face social gatherings alone, and bear the burdens of the presidency when he too had experienced the dreadful loss of his last child.

The mourning customs of the time dictated Jane's dress and behavior during the first two years of the presidency. Heavy or deep mourning usually lasted a year and one day, but it could vary; full or second mourning lasted an additional nine months; and half mourning for three to six months. During heavy or deep mourning, a woman dressed in heavy black

Abigail Atherton Kent Means (1802–57), Jane's girlhood friend, aunt by marriage, and White House companion; ambrotype taken in Lowell, Massachusetts, c. 1852. "In the complete collapse of Mrs. Pierce, Mrs. Means . . . became for a time virtual lady of the White House." (Anne M. Means) A slip of paper with the portrait says, "To my dearest Jane. Your affectionate friend. A. A. Means." New Hampshire Historical Society; gift of William P. Veillette.

clothing without ornamentation and wore a full mourning veil when out in public. Wearing such a veil—uncomfortable at best—must have proven unhealthy for Jane given her constant breathing problems. The heavy fabric of mourning veils did not allow air to flow easily. Books of mourning etiquette and newspaper advertisements for mourning clothing cautioned women to lift the veil regularly to take a few breaths of fresh air.

While in deep mourning, a woman would not have taken part in any social events other than those necessary for the continued well-being of the family. During second (or full) mourning, a woman was still required to wear a veil, but it could be lifted from the face during outings and ornamentation could be added to the black dress. In the final phase of half mourning, color could be gradually added to the mourning attire, the veil could be eliminated, and the woman could once again engage in social activities.[68]

Jane's period of mourning went beyond what society dictated. She mourned for a full two years, the amount of time usually reserved for the death of a husband rather than the twelve to eighteen months expected following the death of a child. She seems to have found the additional time necessary, perhaps in order to find relief from the pressure of social engagement, perhaps to find time for reflection and remembrances, and perhaps for her own peace of mind and survival. She received cards and letters, and sometimes visitors, during her residence at the White House. However, she did not engage in any state social functions until a full two years had passed following Benny's death. At her first formal public social event at the White House, her attire was described as black evening wear with a black-and-white lace overlay on her skirt. The guests that night, obviously curious about the First Lady's state of mind and health, noted both her "winning smile" and the "traces of bereavement . . . on a countenance too ingenuous for concealment." [69]

Jane used mourning stationery, at least when writing to her family, through 1856. At first, her social outings were limited to an occasional ride or visiting with family. When the first and second stages of mourning were over, Jane assumed her responsibilities in the White House as much as her physical and mental health would allow. She made regular trips to the Capitol between 1854 and 1857 to hear congressional debates, and she took an interest in the major political events of the times.

Jane Pierce is sometimes presumed to have been a nagging and depressed wife who distracted her husband from his presidential duties. Even during the official period of mourning, some criticized Jane for her lack of attention to social obligations at the White House.[70] J. H. Hoover, marshal of the District of Columbia during the Pierce administration,

Jane Pierce, carte de visite by George K. Warren, Lowell, c. 1862. Jane wore black well after the accustomed mourning period. The mental stress of Benny's death compounded Jane's ever-present physical ailments, aging her prematurely. "I long to fly away sometimes, I hardly know when, only to freedom & quiet, but then seek to . . . head on in the path of duty and necessity." (Jane to sister Mary, 1853) New Hampshire Historical Society.

however, stated that Mrs. Pierce "seldom omitted attendance upon the public receptions of the President. She was punctually present also at her own Friday receptions, although at times suffering greatly." [71] Mrs. Robert E. Lee wrote: "I have known many of the ladies of the White House, none more truly excellent than the afflicted wife of President Pierce. Her health was a bar to any great effort on her part to meet the expectations of the public in her high position but she was a refined, extremely religious and well educated lady." [72]

Many empathized with the First Lady's health problems and tragic losses, as attested in her obituary when, ten years later, Jane herself died at the age of fifty-seven: "She shrank with extreme sensitiveness from public observation. Through the season before her great trial was sent upon her, she had been nerving herself for the undesired duties and responsibilities of her public station at Washington. And with the burden of that crushing sorrow upon her, she went forward with the noblest self-sacrifice to do what was to be done, as well as to bear what was to be borne."[73] A few years after Jane's death, Franklin himself wrote that her life had been one of retirement: "She very rarely participated in gay amusements and never enjoyed what is sometimes called fashionable society. Her natural endowments were of a high order, recognized by all persons with whom she was, to any considerable extent, associated."[74] Evidence in surviving letters to intimate family members and friends suggests that Franklin and Jane generally shared a loving and supporting relationship.

Notes

A more complete discussion of Jane Pierce's life in the White House, her contributions to its physical beauty and utility, her passion for the issues surrounding slavery, and the few years of her life following the presidency are topics that the authors continue to research. It is difficult to study women of Jane's era because they were not public figures and most records of the time reflect the men who were their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Much of what we know of Jane Pierce has come from letters about her or between her and those with whom she interacted, primarily her family members. The authors wish to thank Donna-Belle Garvin for her assistance in the preparation of this manuscript.

1. While Jane Pierce of necessity plays a role in every biography of Franklin Pierce, rarely do scholarly writings focus on her life alone. The few that do are: Lloyd C. Taylor Jr., "A Wife for Mr. Pierce," *New England Quarterly* 28 (September 1955): 339–48; and Michael Minor and Larry Vrzalik, "A Study in Tragedy: Jane Means Pierce, First Lady (1853–1857), *Manuscripts* 40 (summer 1988): 177–89. See also *Notable American Women* and *American National Biography*, s.v. "Pierce, Jane Means Appleton" (the entries are by Lloyd C. Taylor Jr. and Norman F. Boas, respectively).
2. *The Works of Rev. Jesse Appleton, D.D. . . . With a Memoir of His Life and Character*, ed. Alpheus Spring Packard, 2 vols. (Andover, Mass.: Gould and Newman, 1837), 1:2; Daniel F. Secomb, *History of the Town of Amherst* (Concord, N.H.: Evans, Sleeper, and Woodbury, 1883; reprint ed. Somersworth: New Hampshire Publishing Co., 1972), 322–23. For a summary of Appleton's life, see the *Dictionary of American Biography*.
3. Secomb, *History of Amherst,* 689–90, 901–2.
4. Anne M. Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree* (Boston: privately printed, 1921), 61–62, 125–26.
5. Ibid., 126; "Memoir," in *Works of Rev. Jesse Appleton*, 1:2, 10–11, and 21.
6. "Memoir," in *Works of Rev. Jesse Appleton*, 1:11–22.
7. Ibid., 22.
8. Ibid., 72.
9. Ibid., 27, 34.
10. Ibid., 42–44, 72.
11. Ibid., 46.
12. Jesse Appleton to "My Dear Young Gentlemen," June 12, 1819, in "Memoir," in *Works of Rev. Jesse Appleton,* 1:47–49.
13. Elizabeth Appleton to Frances Appleton, June 9, 1819, abstracted in Norman F. Boas, *Jane M. Pierce (1806–1863): The Pierce-Aiken Papers*. (Stonington, Conn.: Seaport Autographs, 1983), 5. This manuscript collection is now at the Library of Congress.
14. "Memoir," in *Works of Rev. Jesse Appleton,* 1:54.
15. Ibid., 71–72. The inscription on John's gravestone was written by his father, Jesse.

The rose bud had begun to open
Its leaves, and diffuse its fragrance.
In one night came a deadly frost:
In the morning its tints were faded,
And its leaves were withering on the ground.
He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down.

16. Elizabeth Appleton to Mary Mason, June 17, 1820, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 158. Over the years, the letters from Elizabeth Appleton bore postal markings from Portsmouth, New Hampshire (where her sister Mary Mason lived); Keene, New Hampshire (where her brother Robert lived); Lowell, Massachusetts (where her daughter Mary Aiken lived); Concord, New Hampshire (where Jane and Franklin Pierce lived); and Amherst, New Hampshire (where the Means homestead was located).
17. Secomb, *History of Amherst*, 326–27, citing census originally published in the *Amherst Cabinet*, September 11, 1818, and a list of books compiled by Charles Atherton, 1823.
18. Jane Means Appleton to Frances Appleton, February 1, 1822, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 64.
19. Appleton genealogy, in Charles Henry Chandler, *History of New Ipswich, New Hampshire* (Fitchburg, Mass.: Sentinel Printing, 1914), 193–99. See *Catalogue of the Inspecting Committee, Teachers and Pupils, of the Ladies' Boarding School, in Keene, N.H.*, 1823–36, for Eunice Appleton's association with the school. The school's visiting committee acted on issues of enrollment, curriculum, resources, and property similar to the activities of a college board of trustees today.
20. Ramona Dearborn et al, "Catherine Fiske, A Woman Educator: An Architect of the Future" (typescript, Historical Society of Cheshire County, 1986); *Collections of the Historical Society of Cheshire County*, no. 4 (July 1931): 82; and Gardner Hill, "Miss Catherine Fiske's Boarding School of the Early Days," *Granite Monthly* 39 (October 1907): 335–38. The Bond House is the current residence of the president of Keene State College. For background information on higher education for girls, see Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States* (New York, N.Y.: Science Press, 1929), 1:342–43, and Emily Noyes Vanderpoel, *More Chronicles of a Pioneer School, from 1792 to 1833* (New York: Cadmus, 1927), 7 and passim.
21. *Catalogue of the Inspecting Committee, Teachers and Pupils, of the Ladies' Boarding School, in Keene, N.H. for the Year Ending October, 1826*, p.8.
22. *Catalogue of the Inspecting Committee, Teachers and Pupils, of the Ladies' Boarding School, in Keene, N.H. for the Year Ending October, 1832*, 13–14.
23. Catharine Fiske to Elizabeth Appleton, June 25, 1822, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 10–11. Although the Cheshire County Historical Society in Keene has numerous catalogues of the school in its archives, the first catalogue in the collection is for the 1823 school year, and Jane Means Appleton was not listed as a student then. Therefore, it is speculated that Jane attended the school for an undetermined time between 1820, when she is known to have been living in the Amherst area, and 1823.
24. Dearborn, "Catherine Fiske," and *Catalogue of the . . . Ladies' Boarding School, 1823*, p.15.
25. Jane Appleton to Frances Appleton, February 1, 1822, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 64.
26. Jane Means Appleton and Elizabeth Appleton to Amos Lawrence, February 18, 1824, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 171–72; Frances E. Packard to William Appleton, July 7, 1828, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 48–49.
27. Jane Means Appleton to Frances Appleton, February 1, 1822, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 64. There was a Rev. Z. S. Barstow on the visiting committee, and it is possible that Jane studied natural philosophy with him.
28. Ibid.
29. Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 235.
30. Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 30.
31. For more information, see: www.famousamericans.net/hezekiahpackard/ or the *Dictionary of American Biography.* A tutor at that time was a teacher of a certain academic rank, not, as usually today, a private instructor.
32. Secomb, *History of Amherst*, 467, 484; Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 56.
33. Colleges traditionally prepared students in the classics and theology. Professional education in medicine and law built on this classical education through prolonged apprenticeships with accomplished professionals. For background on Pierce's life and career, see Roy Franklin Nichols, *Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931).

34. Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree* contains a wealth of information on the Means and related families.
35. Reminiscences of Mary Jane Adams, recorded in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree,* 241–43.
36. Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree,* 62–63*;* Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 75–76.
37. Mary Jane Means to Abigail Atherton (Spalding) Davis, probably November 1834, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree,* 240; Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 64; and Secomb, *History of Amherst*, 308, 482.
38. Bowdoin College, catalog, March 1822, n.p.
39. Miscellaneous letters in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 159, 239, 247–60.
40. See, for example: Calvin Cutter, *Anatomy and Physiology* (Boston: Benjamin B. Mussey, 1847), 167–68.
41. Jane Pierce to Mary Aiken, December 11, 1836, abstracted in Norman F. Boas, *Jane M. Pierce (1806–1863): The Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement* (Mystic, Conn: Seacoast Autographs, 1989), 28.
42. Jane Pierce to Elizabeth Appleton, August 9, 1835, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement*, 24.
43. Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 66–69.
44. Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 80–81.
45. Franklin Pierce to Elizabeth McNeil, February 9, 1836, Pierce Papers (quoted in Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 86).
46. Rev. Benjamin Tappan to Elizabeth Appleton, November 8, 1830 (on the occasion of the death of her son William), abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement*, 6.
47. Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree,* 245.
48. Jane Pierce to Elizabeth Appleton, November 5, 1836, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement*, 26.
49. Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 94–100.
50. Ibid., 105.
51. Jane Pierce to Mary Aiken, December 24, 1838, in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement,* 29–30.
52. Jane Pierce to Mary Aiken, July 6, 1839, in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement,* 32.
53. Jane Pierce to Mary Aiken, July 22, 1839, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers Supplement*, 34–35.
54. Mary Aiken to John Aiken, [November 1843], abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 32–33.
55. Quoted in Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 124–25.
56. Minor and Vrzalik, "A Study in Tragedy," 177–79.
57. Mary Aiken to John Aiken [November 1843], abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 32.
58. D. W. Bartlett, *The Life of Gen. Franklin Pierce* (Auburn, N.Y.: Derby and Miller, 1852), 239.
59. Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 57–58.
60. Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 203.
61. Ibid., 224; William R. Lawrence, ed., *Extracts from the Diary and Correspondence of the Late Amos Lawrence* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1855), 334–42.
62. "The Accident at Andover: Death of the Only Son of General Pierce," *Illustrated News,* January 22, 1853; Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 246–60 (including several letters).
63. Jane Pierce letters, 1853, abstracted in Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers,* 70–71; Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 224–25.
64. Boas, *Pierce-Aiken Papers*, 60; Mary Jane Adams to her husband and sister, January 17, 1853, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 259; Elizabeth Lorelei Thacker-Estrada, "True Women," in *The Presidential Companion*, eds. Robert P. Watson and Anthony J. Eksterowicz (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 80–85.
65. Mary Jane Adams to husband and sister, January 10, 1853, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree, 255.*
66. Ibid.
67. Mary Jane Adams to husband and sister, January 17, 1853, in Means, *Amherst and Our Family Tree*, 257–60.
68. For information regarding mourning customs of the day, see: http://ky.essortment.com/victorian-mourni_rlse.htm and www.geocities.com/Bourbon Street/Quarter/2926/Mourning.html/.
69. Quoted in Margaret Brown Klapthor, *The First Ladies* (Washington, D.C.: White House Historical Association, 1975), 37.
70. For examples of such interpretation, see Carl Sferrazza Anthony, *First Ladies: The Saga of the Presidents' Wives and Their Power, 1789–1961* (New York: Quill, 1990), 156–59, and Minor and Vrzalik, "A Study in Tragedy."
71. Laura C. Holloway, *The Ladies of the White House* (Boston: Bradley and Co., 1881), 490.
72. Quoted in Klapthor, *First Ladies*, 36.
73. Obituary of Jane Pierce, *Boston Recorder*, January 8, 1864. This obituary had appeared previously in the *New York Observer.*
74. Franklin Pierce to Laura C. Holloway, March 29, 1869 (letter sold by Sotheby's, 1992), quoted in Holloway, *Ladies of the White House*, 495. In the same letter, Franklin identified the author of the obituary cited above as Professor Aiken, presumably Charles Augustus Aiken of Dartmouth, the step-son of Jane's sister Mary.