

LIBER

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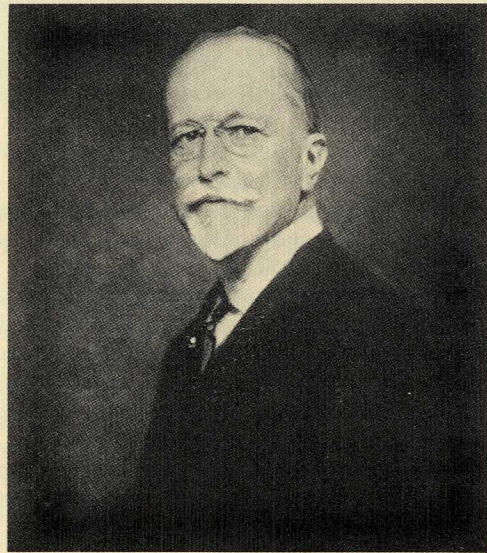
Spring, 1987

THE DEVELOPMENT OF UVM'S VERMONTIANA COLLECTION

At most universities, a "time-honored tradition" is usually anything that has been in place for five years; after all, that's one year longer than the senior class has been on campus. "Forever," according to this view of things, is as far back as the oldest alumni or faculty can remember. At UVM, the collecting of Vermontiana qualifies on both of these chronological counts; certainly nobody alive today can recall a time when the University did not have a fine Vermontiana library. In addition, Vermontiana connections abound in UVM's history from the school's very beginning. Vermont's two earliest historians, Ira Allen and Samuel Williams, were the school's principal founders; first president Daniel Clark Sanders wrote a famous history of the Indian wars that is a rare and choice Vermont title; and UVM's early faculty and student rosters included such collectible Vermont authors as Royall Tyler, James Dean, Zadock Thompson, and Charles G. Eastman. Logically, then, UVM should always have been an avid institutional collector of Vermont books, pamphlets, maps, manuscripts, and other paper. Good logic makes good tradition.

However, as one of UVM's best Vermont historians used to tell his classes each year in the 1960s and 1970s, good logic does not always make good history. UVM and its libraries existed for nearly a century before the University became serious about collecting Vermontiana. Prior to 1900 few colleges in America did collect local books and papers, much less offer classes on state history, and UVM was no exception. The UVM library grew to impressive size and diversity in the decades following the loss of most of the school's books in the May 1824 fire that also destroyed the single UVM "edifice," but Vermont titles were few and far between in the library's acquisitions. When UVM raised \$10,000 in 1835 to improve the library, Professor Joseph Torrey spent the money in Europe, not locally; a year later, the published catalogue of the University library listed just three Vermont volumes, the 1793 and 1833 editions of Nathaniel Chipman's *Sketches of the Principles of Government* and the 1787 edition of the state statutes. That was all—nothing by Sanders, the Allens, Zadock Thompson, Samuel Williams, or any other early Green Mountain author appeared in the 1836 listings.

UVM's acquisition of Vermontiana picked up slowly after 1836. By the time a printed supplement to the catalogue appeared in 1842, the library had the first edition of Samuel



James B. Wilbur

Williams' *History of Vermont*, one of Ira Allen's *Olive Branch* pamphlets, the 1838 reprint of Ethan Allen's *Narrative*, a few volumes of Vermont laws, four Zadock Thompson books, and a handful of other Vermont titles. At mid-century, the Phi Sigma Nu Society and the University Institute libraries each had a half-dozen volumes of Vermont history and literature on their shelves. When Zadock Thompson went to England in 1851, he met Henry Stevens, Jr., the Vermont native who was just then beginning his rise to the top of London's antiquarian bookselling community, and received from him a Riviere-bound copy of Ira Allen's *History of the State of Vermont* that Stevens was donating to UVM. The University's last comprehensive published library catalogue appeared in 1854, and it added Ethan Allen's *Reason the Only Oracle of Man*, Joseph Gallup's *Sketches of Epidemic Diseases in the State of Vermont*, Daniel Pierce Thompson's *The Shaker Lovers*, a folio-sized 1768 manuscript charter for Cumberland County, and a variety of volumes of Vermont sermons, laws, periodicals, and state government publications to the earlier Vermont listings. Although in all likelihood the only Vermont institution with more Vermontiana than UVM in 1854 was the Vermont Historical Society (which would lose much of its col-

lection in the 1857 State House fire at Montpelier), the University's holdings still represented only a fraction of the antiquarian Vermont material available by then.

UVM's Vermontiana collections seem to have continued their leisurely pattern of growth for several decades after 1854. Such major acquisitions as the 12,000-volume personal library of George Perkins Marsh (1883, the gift of Frederick Billings), Rush C. Hawkins' Civil War collection (1898), and Benjamin F. Stevens' donation of the Whittingham/Chiswick Press collection (1898) greatly enriched the University library but included few Green Mountain titles. The Vermontiana breakthrough came in 1898, when UVM bought much of the impressive collection of Lucius E. Chittenden. A native of Williston, Chittenden (1824-1900) had combined a career as lawyer, banker and government official with a passion for antiquarian books. In 1891 he had offered his entire library to UVM for \$7,500; following the University's refusal, he sold many of his better American and European books at auction in 1894. However, Chittenden apparently held back most of his Vermontiana from the auction, and its inclusion in the 1898 sale raised UVM's Vermont collections to instant respectability.

Chittenden had collected Vermont books and pamphlets with an omniverous zeal for more than 25 years. His fondness for *anything* on paper relating to Vermont or Vermonters brought hundreds of nineteenth-century pamphlets, sermons, state organization reports and annual proceedings, and state government documents, many bound in his favorite dark green morocco and marbled-paper boards, to UVM. At the same time, Chittenden had had the time, money and inclination to acquire the rarest and most expensive early Vermontiana as well, and these choice titles were also part of the University's purchase. Among Chittenden's many Vermont treasures that came to UVM were: Ethan Allen's *A Vindication of the Opposition of the Inhabitants of Vermont to the Government of New-York* (Dresden, 1779), the second edition (Boston, 1779) of Allen's *Narrative*, and his *The Present State of the Controversy Between the States of New-York & New-Hampshire . . . and the State of Vermont* (Hartford, 1782); Stephen Row Bradley's *Vermont's Appeal to the Candid and Impartial World* (Hartford, 1780); Anthony Haswell's *Memoirs and Adventures of Captain Matthew Phelps* (Bennington, 1802); and Mormon leader Joseph Smith's *Appeal to the Green Mountain Boys* (Nauvoo, 1843). Even though Chittenden exaggerated the rarity of his best Vermont titles, his was probably the most extensive Vermontiana collection of his time, and its purchase was a major acquisition for the University.

With the Chittenden collection in hand, UVM began to devote more attention to Vermontiana after 1900. General and scholarly interest in Vermont topics, especially the state's early history, was increasing, and UVM faculty such as John Ellsworth Goodrich (1831-1915) and Walter Hill Crockett (1870-1931) used the University library for their research on Vermont's past. Billings Library established a separate Vermont Room above the Circulation desk to house the Vermont collection. Occasional acquisitions from the libraries of George Grenville Benedict, Horace Ward Bailey and others

helped keep the collection growing. Still, it was all a little haphazard, and there were many gaps in UVM's Vermontiana holdings that needed filling. In addition, the University still lacked a sense of long-term commitment to maintaining and enlarging its Vermont collections, as well as the funds to do so. What was needed was a patron, a "Vermontiana benefactor" with the personal library, wealth and interest to raise the University's Vermontiana program to a new level. In the early 1920s, that patron finally appeared, in the person of James Benjamin Wilbur.

At first glance, Wilbur seems an unlikely candidate for the role of major Vermontiana collector. Born in Cleveland in 1856, he made his fortune in Colorado and Chicago and had little or no connection to Vermont until his retirement in 1909 to a large country estate in Manchester. Once there, however, he took up the study of Vermont history and soon developed a particular interest in the life of early Green Mountain leader Ira Allen. By 1920 Wilbur had accumulated a fine collection of Vermontiana to help him write a biography of Allen. Whether UVM approached him or whether he simply adopted Allen's school on his own is uncertain, but in the last decade of his life Wilbur became the University's most generous donor. He began in 1921 by donating the Ira Allen statue on the Green, then paid for the construction of Ira Allen Chapel six years later. When his two-volume *Ira Allen: Founder of Vermont 1751-1814* appeared in 1928, Wilbur began to plan for a library room or building at UVM to house his Vermontiana collection. He died in 1929 before completing this last project, but his will left his Vermont books and manuscripts, a \$150,000 endowed fund to care for the collection, and a total of nearly \$3 million in general and specific other bequests to the University.

UVM formally took possession of Wilbur's library in the autumn of 1930. Walter Hill Crockett called it—some 3,000 volumes, 1,200 photostats, and uncounted maps, broadsides, newspapers, and manuscripts—"the best private collection of Vermont material in existence," while John Spargo of Bennington estimated its value at \$250,000. In keeping with Wilbur's plans for a separate location for his library, the University deposited it in an impressive Wilbur Room in the new Fleming Museum in 1931. The Wilbur Library became UVM's principal Vermontiana collection, and nearly all subsequent Vermont acquisitions went to it rather than the Vermont Room in Billings. The two collections remained separate for nearly 20 years, until the University moved the contents of the Vermont Room to Fleming for consolidation into the Wilbur holdings. A few interesting acquisitions in the 1930s and 1940s—the personal collection of Darwin P. Kingsley (1933); the early records of the Champlain Transportation Company; 29 volumes of the papers of the Stevens family of Barnet (1936); the first installments of the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Papers—improved the University's holdings, but the consolidation of the early 1950s set the stage for a more concentrated approach to collecting Vermontiana at UVM.

It took several years after the merging of the Vermont Room and the Wilbur Library for the University to settle both on a plan for maintaining the collection and a Curator to administer it. UVM wanted a Wilbur Curator who could also teach Vermont History, a goal achieved in September 1958 with T. D. Seymour Bassett's arrival at UVM. Under Bassett's aggressive care, the Wilbur Collection began to grow rapidly. In printed Vermontiana, his addition of the acquisition of modern titles to the traditional emphasis on history simultaneously broadened the scope of the Collection and preserved twentieth-century sources for future generations.

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COLLECTING FOR THE WILBUR LIBRARY

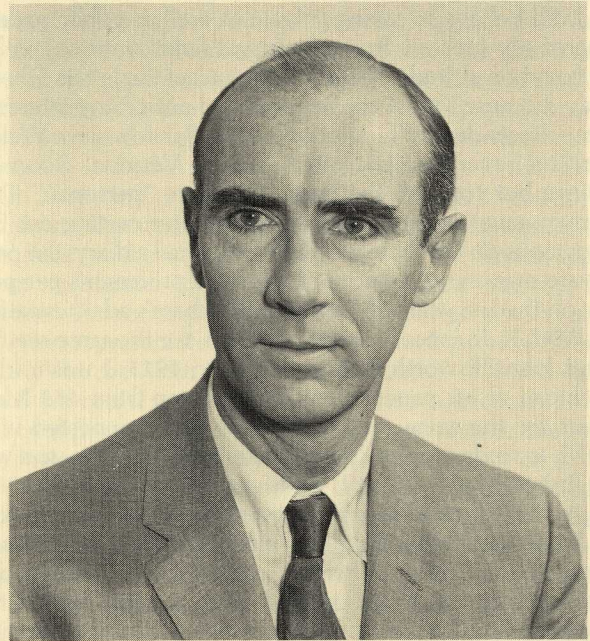
By T. D. Seymour Bassett

The grind in my college year book said I was planning to go to graduate school and then teach American history. I never planned to be a librarian and never had any professional library training. To be sure, I had worked as janitor and at the circulation desk at the Fletcher Free Library three or four summers during high school and college, and in the serial record and catalog departments of the Yale Library. How come I ended up Curator of the Wilbur Collection and University Archivist?

I am fascinated to watch how careers develop, as a person's strengths and weaknesses get sorted out by employers and the employee. Somebody once told me that one often starts one's career in the field one has been practicing part time while getting an education. I spent twelve years from the crash of 1929 studying in schools, keeping my name at employment bureaus for teaching jobs and not getting any, until I went to the National Archives in January 1942. I had wanted to be a teacher, like my father, brother, and sister, but people kept telling me, by hiring me to manage sources, that there, buried in the stacks, was where I belonged. They were half right. While happily arranging hundreds of feet of the records of the Emergency Fleet Corporation of the U. S. Shipping Board in World War I, in the bowels of the National Archives, I would call out to the secretary, who could look out a window, to ask if it was raining and I would need a raincoat to walk over to the Justice Department cafeteria for lunch. I was not allergic to the dust and smell and cave-like conditions of the old records.

They were half wrong too. While I could stand stack arrest better than most, I had also tasted the joys of traveling about Vermont, introducing myself to householders and talking them out of their family archives, for the University of Vermont. Paul Evans started this collecting program. He had collected New Yorkiana as a graduate student at Cornell and instructor at Syracuse, and knew, as a local historian of the Holland Land Purchase, that beyond the public archives, a significant fraction of the sources for any historical subject are inaccessibly in private hands. Professor Evans' arrival at UVM in 1930 coincided with James Benjamin Wilbur's death and his bequest of his private library, with funds to pay for its maintenance and development. As head of the History Department and chair of the committee to set policy for Wilbur's library, Evans promptly put the Wilbur Library endowment to work by persuading President Guy Bailey to hire my brother Ray to collect Vermontiana. Evans had taken a seminar under Frederick Jackson Turner at Harvard, and was aware that the Baker Library of the Harvard Business School had recently sent a collector into Vermont for railroad and other business records. My failing memory tells me that at least the first summer of 1934 Ray had no car, but traveled about the hills of Orange County on a bicycle, packing his loot between the handle bars down to a post office, and shipping it to Annie Donahue, first Wilbur Librarian and widow of the astronomy professor at UVM.

After a second summer of bringing in the sheaves (especially old newspapers) for Wilbur, Ray handed the lucrative job over to me. UVM paid for a 1929 Model A Ford for my use; also my meals and four nights a week in tourist homes. In May 1936 when I bought the car, a veterans' bonus had just been distributed, and prices of used cars were high—I had to pay \$120 for the seven-year old.



T. D. Seymour Bassett (1959)

I began to qualify for the 251 Club. The two months of the first summer I learned about the hills of outer Chittenden County, and the lesser towns off the main roads in Rutland and Windham Counties. Ray wrote a tour-guide column in the *Free Press* entitled, "Leave the stream line behind," and I followed his advice. I don't know whether the reputed freightcar loads of business records—probably a gross exaggeration—sent to Harvard's Baker Library, were paid for or given, but my job was essentially that of a beggar. Once, at his suggestion, I carried a letter of introduction from John Barrett to the old families of Grafton, and I usually took an address list of alumni in the area I was visiting, but most of the time I just arrived at the general store, asked which were the old families in town, explaining why I wanted to know, and then appeared at their kitchen doors. On the paved highways, antique dealers had begun to make even Vermonters suspicious, but rural hospitality greeted me on the dirt roads. They would turn me loose in the shed chamber (temperature 110 Fahrenheit), and around noon would call, "Come on down for lunch." I remember being impressed with the poor quality of poor farmers' diets—few fresh vegetables, little milk.

My pitch was indirect flattery, by assuming, as social historians do, that this ordinary family, with no governors or senators in its past, had records worth saving. There is an ugly rumor that I was only a historical trash man, who would clean out any attic for you without charge. Let me scotch the lie at once. I was a historical stamp collector, intent on getting one of each kind. For example, I found no manuscript by a black until I acquired Sarah Cleghorn's papers, which include some letters from a woman she befriended. There was an unwritten list of Very Important Vermonters including poets like Walter Hard, newspapermen like Howard Rice, industrialists like the Proctors, and major politicians winning statewide elections, all of whose papers I sought. The Wilbur Library's manuscript holdings when I

arrived consisted of the Allen, Canfield, Champlain Transportation Company, L. E. Chittenden, Holton, O. O. Howard, James Johns, and G. P. Marsh papers (I may have forgotten some), plus perhaps eight feet of miscellaneous documents. There were a good many slots left to fill.

I did believe in saving private as well as public papers. One of my greatest frustrations was (and continues to be) the common attitude, "You wouldn't want the letters I threw away, because they were personal and not of any interest." Some descendant of Governor John L. Barstow gave Walter Crockett several of his letters for the Vermont Room in Billings but tore off the parts that were "personal." One woman gave me some family books after cutting out the autographs on the fly leaves. My father had a diary, the only private manuscript I know of to give a professor's perspective on the last years of President Buckham's administration at UVM. It disappeared after his death, for the same reason. After John Ellsworth Goodrich died in 1915, I was told, a truckload of his papers went to the dump from 483 Main Street for the same reason. He had been connected with UVM, as student or professor, for forty-seven years, and was the first to issue a call, at UVM's charter centennial in 1891, to give our Library historical papers. This story was repeated for Frederick Tupper (English, some fifty years' service) and George H. and Henry F. Perkins (natural science, whose combined careers at UVM totaled over a century). In the Goodrich and Perkins cases it was not so much a question of discriminating between personal and official papers—rather a question of cleaning house.¹ Ranney Galusha suffered a house-cleaning when he bought his ancestral home in Shaftsbury, featured in Herbert W. Congdon's *Old Vermont Houses*. With visions of Governor Jonas Galusha's papers I arranged to visit him. Alas, Ranney told me that on his arrival to take possession, the man who had charge of the place told him, "You'll be glad to know that I cleared out all that rubbish in the attic for you." So nothing but scraps of the papers of the eleven-time governor and leader of the Jeffersonian Republican Party survive.

Like Elbridge Jacobs, who wanted to be State Geologist more than twenty years before he was appointed, I long wanted to combine working for the Wilbur Library with teaching History at UVM. A few months after going to Princeton in June 1946 I talked with University Librarian George Donald Smith and learned that he and Paul Evans were in favor of such a combination job, but lacked the funds. After UVM's financial crisis of 1940, John Millis had been called to the presidency with a mandate to restore financial order. It was not a time to expand programs. As I was about to leave Princeton in 1948 I wrote again, but President Millis was still not ready to fund such expansion. In the spring of 1957 Harold Schultz wrote me that UVM was ready to go with a combined History/Wilbur appointment, but I was committed to a year at the Riverside campus of the University of California, so Harold said they would wait until the next year.

Although I was in many ways best qualified for the job, by my Harvard Ph.D. thesis on Vermont history, my experience collecting for Wilbur, and my general knowledge of Vermont, I was among the last of the "Old Boys" appointed to the UVM staff. I was the kind of person Guy Bailey would have appointed. I belonged to his church (the College Street Congregationalist) until I joined Friends at Earlham College in 1950. My father's friend and successor, George Kidder, was Dean of Arts and Sciences, and also a College Street Church member. I had substituted for Harold Schultz's summer school classes when his father was sick in

1952, and taught UVM summer classes in 1954-55. I had lived three doors south of Paul Evans, also a member of the College Street Church, before the War. I was a known quantity, a complete WASP.

The only assurance I required, in coming, was that more space become available. The Dean assured me that a new library was planned, in which space would be included for Vermontiana. It was four years coming, but in 1962 we moved into the Bailey Library, using students to help move the books—a system which had worked well for the much smaller library at Earlham College, as I mentioned to Helen Oustinoff or Morrison Haviland, Director of University Libraries. Haviland had supervised, if not designed, the new library at De Pauw University, and although he asked for input from each department, had the major impact on the arrangements, I believe. I later ran across a letter from James B. Wilbur to Guy Bailey, criticizing McKim, Mead and White's design of the monumental Wilbur Room in the Fleming Museum as not at all proper for a research library. The Special Collections space in Bailey fit his specifications more closely. Gladys Flint and her predecessors in Fleming's Wilbur Room were tied to the desk in the southeast corner, accessioning, cataloging, referencing, indexing, but with no chance to continue the acquisitions program Paul Evans had fostered in the thirties.

Some eighteen to twenty thousand dollars had accumulated from Wilbur Library Fund income. How should it be spent? In 1957, when I was still in California, John Huden, in the midst of his most fruitful period of research on the Vermont Abenaki, applied for some of the Wilbur surplus to finance his studies. I knew of Warren Austin's interpretation of the terms of the Wilbur Library endowment as including research which would develop the collection. Dean Kidder deferred to my judgment, which was basically that research on Indians, however valuable, would not enhance the collection. Perhaps the Wilbur Collection would now have an unequalled collection of photocopies, with translations, of unpublished French mission journals and such other library materials as Gordon Day has uncovered in a lifetime's study of the Abenaki. The gentle John Huden never showed me his disappointment.

Instead of using the reserve for the purchase of rare books, broadsides, maps, prints, and manuscripts, we rapidly dissipated the backlog in the salary of a secretary whom I did not know how to use effectively. Later, when John Buechler guided the work of Betty Lovell and Catherine Mazza, we had real assets at the front desk. My experience was in begging rather than buying, so that I did not know where to look in the auction and rare-book catalogs for the gems that were missing from our crown. If John Buechler had arrived four years earlier, he would have known how to spend the money more wisely, but the rare book department consisted in 1958 of some shelves in the balcony of the Billings apse, neglected by all except Herbert McArthur and other members of the English Department.

This neglect was symptomatic of the University's orientation toward teaching, which began to shift toward research in the 1950s, with the expansion of graduate study, and moved rapidly that way during the administration of President John T. Fey, 1958-64. My coming in 1958, with mandate to deepen the pool of local sources for the use of students of all the humanities and social sciences, was a part of the same re-orientation. A step forward in the early 1950s had been the integration of the contents of the locked Vermont Room with the Wilbur Library. The few shelves in the balcony over the circulation desk in the Billings Library

represented the tiny accumulation up to 1929. All Vermontiana were now together, but isolated from the main collection. Reintegration in the Bailey Library made it more convenient for the student of Vermont to bring the resources of the whole library to bear on his research.

Librarian Sidney Butler Smith imposed an open circulation policy, unsuitable for a special collection, on all the merged Vermontiana. I remember a faculty member's returning a book with a coffee ring on the fine calfskin binding. By November 1959 I had reclassified the books into rare (in locked cases), reference, non-circulating and circulating sections. I spent time trying to retrieve from former students the books they had borrowed before I arrived. Once in Bailey Library, the Collection, except for rare books in locked cases around the edge of the reading room, and some reference shelves, was in closed stacks. Errol Slack, Wilbur Cataloger, and I, for lack of stack boys, had to fetch for the patrons, except for Betty Bandel, who always had the run of the place.

One of the thorns in my side was the Wilbur catalog. One system was used in the 1930s, and another, modifying Dewey, had supplanted it in the 1950s. Some published sources were in a documentary classification and others treated as history. The literature category was as wide as the world. The alphabetization, according to rule, defied Webster. I tried to add some subjects, but Errol Slack, who knew the rules and tried to accommodate me, was hard put to reconcile my unprofessional innovations with the rigidities of the rules. Our catalog had one advantage over the strict Dewey decimal system: all of the town histories were arranged alphabetically by name of town. When Ben Bowman asked me to scan catalogs and order books on New England history and for those parts of New York and Quebec bordering Vermont, I discovered that Dewey had arranged the 974's by county, when counties are of little importance in New England. I could not go to the shelves with a local history dealer's catalog, arranged alphabetically by state and town,

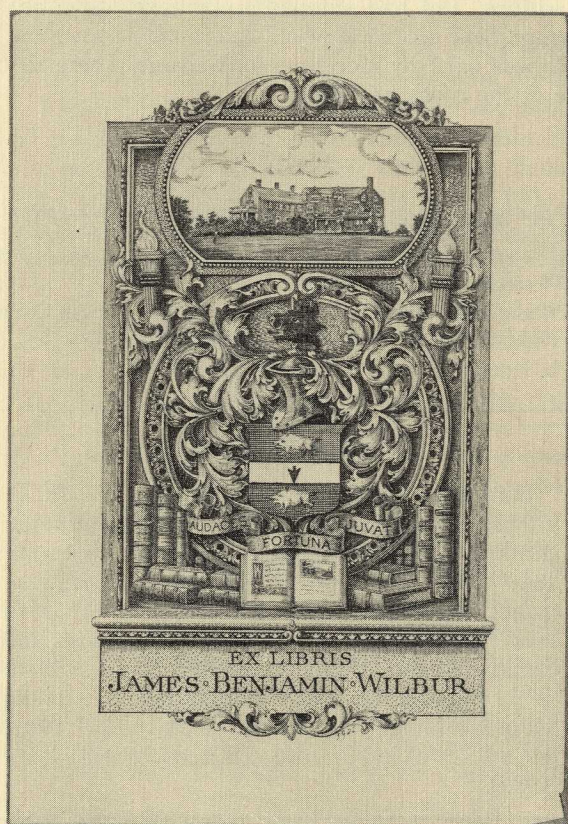
and quickly find out what we lacked unless I knew which county a town was in. I hope the current shift to the Library of Congress system, with computerization, will streamline the catalog for easier use.

What about competition with the Vermont Historical Society? In the days of George Grenville Benedict and Walter H. Crockett, UVM did not compete. Some time after World War II, the papers of James P. Taylor, Secretary of the Vermont State Chamber of Commerce, 1917-49, and those of the Eugenics Survey, which produced Elin Anderson's *We Americans* and other sociological studies, were in the Waterman basement. Because someone needed room for administrative dead files, and believed that Montpelier was the place for the sources of state history, the Taylor Papers were transferred to the Vermont Historical Society, and Anderson's working papers to the Public Records Division. In 1959, representatives of the Vermont Historical Society and UVM met with its Director Richard Wood and me to see if we could somehow unite our two collections. It was as hopeless as the nineteenth-century attempts to unite the Burlington and Middlebury colleges. I have since tried in vain to conjure up one of Aladdin's djinns to build me a Mormon rock vault in the Bolton ridge, big enough to take all Vermont archives and libraries, with magic carpet service to get us there.

We did talk about a "Farmington Plan," in which the strengths of each collection, such as Vermont literature at UVM and Vermont imprints at Montpelier, should be recognized as giving each a priority in the specialty, instead of competing on the market. The Smith family of St. Albans had given their railroad papers to the Vermont Historical Society. Curtis Smith sold UVM what was left for \$600. Should these have followed the railroad papers? When UVM acquired papers of the Vermont patriotic societies, Wood sent us the Vermont Historical Society holdings. When the heirs of George Perkins Marsh decided to send his papers to UVM, Dartmouth sent us Caroline Crane Marsh's unfinished manuscript Volume II of her *Life and Letters of George Perkins Marsh*. It is unrealistic to expect that the major sources of any subject can ever be in one place. Nevertheless, it is a pity, as Stephen Greene once told me, that with so few devotees of Vermont history, and so many sources to tend to, we should fight over where they should be.

John Buechler's appointment by Ben Bowman as Head of Special Collections in 1962 further emphasized the commitment to research. Rare books were henceforth not just things we happened to acquire but paid no attention to. Staff and purchase funds were committed to build collections to serve faculty and visiting scholars. There was tension at first, as between a firstborn and a new sibling, but more because Bowman had not communicated with me at all about his plans for Special Collections. John as boss, however, dealt with me as the inner-directed person I am, tactfully and with minimal interference.

Among the major collections added in my first years were the Brigham, Cleghorn, Congdon, Crafts, Farnham, Gibson, Smith, Wills, and Wilson papers. In many cases, I made the initial request years before the family decided to give the papers. One important collection which came in 1987 I first sought a quarter-century ago. I corresponded with John Spargo from Princeton about his Socialist publications, and renewed the connection soon after I reached Burlington. He offered his valuable books and manuscripts more out of disgruntlement with the Vermont Historical Society than my persuasiveness. I talked with Walter Hard in the Johnny Appleseed Bookstore, Manchester, and he told me where



Sarah Cleghorn's stuff was stored. The owner of the barn at the Center, who had given Sarah the space, was glad to see the "remains" go where they might be used. I took my senior assistant, Glenn B. Skillin, '59, to visit Herbert W. and Helen Congdon, and we added the rest of his photographs of old Vermont houses, with records of his work on the Long Trail. In my conversation with former Congressman Elbert Brigham, he showed me manuscript evidence of how Vermont bankers shored up shaky banks during the early depression and prevented several failures. He had been advised to destroy these as confidential. I argued as well as I could for their preservation, but when the Brigham papers arrived, they were missing. Judge Keyser was responsible for my getting the papers of Governor Wilson, but I did not find his files as counsel and secretary for the Vermont Copper Mining Company. For the provenance of James B. Wilbur's own collection (where it came from) we needed his correspondence and accounts while he was assembling it. Too much was apparently at stake more than a generation after his death for Lyman Rowell to permit me to approach the Wilbur family to locate these essential records. In one instance we learned where a piece came from. Clarence W. Rife, a student of the Haldimand Negotiations (toward the end of the Revolution), wrote asking for his Yale doctoral thesis back. He said he had lent it to James B. Wilbur, but had never been able to retrieve it.

I have been guilty of the same kind of misunderstanding. After the Estey Organ Company moved to Hempstead, Long Island, Hyacinth Renaud, a Brattleboro cabinet maker, acquired the records they left behind, except for a set of catalogs which Milton Nadworny took with him after he researched his article on the Company's history.² Renaud showed me the nineteenth-century correspondence of the Company, and I picked two volumes which he "let me have"; also a sample roll of plans for the organ of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Burlington. Long after, he asked me when I was returning those loans. So of course I got his permission to microfilm the correspondence and returned it, as we returned Rife's thesis. The curator is tempted to assume that because it would be better for scholars that sources be accessible in public repositories, their owners must certainly understand this and give them away.

My peace testimony since 1940 interfered little with the successful performance of my duties—except once. I talked to Bill Ross, a St. Albans house painter who served as Kenneth Robert's guide when he retraced the route of Rogers' Rangers raid on St. Francis. Ross had the best data on the locations of the graves of Vermont veterans of all wars, and a good collection of Vermontiana. He was ready to give these to UVM until he saw me on TV, boarding a plane to participate in the 1969 "Washington Moratorium," a demonstration against the Vietnam War. Dr. A. Bradley Soule, a friend of his and mine, told me that this changed his mind, and Ross gave his collection to the Bixby Memorial Library of Vergennes. I got along fine with John Spargo, a supporter of Senator McCarthy, anti-Novikoff Governor Emerson, legionnaire Judge Ernest W. Gibson, and conservatives like the St. Albans Smiths.

It was perhaps fear that I might jeopardize acquisition of such important papers as those of Senators Austin, Aiken, and Prouty, and Governors Hartness and Hoff that negotiations for these treasures, after I had in most cases made initial approaches, were conducted by my superiors. Also, to involve the Director of Libraries emphasized the donors' importance.

Most of these major acquisitions came after I had lost the Flanders Papers. When Ralph Flanders was about to retire from the Senate I wrote him for his papers. He replied that he was using them for an autobiography, but would give my request serious consideration when he was through. When I reviewed his autobiography I wrote reminding him, and when he visited UVM soon after, we discussed it further. Imagine my chagrin when he wrote me in 1963 that he had agreed to send his papers to Syracuse University, our discussions having slipped his mind. Although I have a decade to go before I reach his age when this happened, I understand the failing. Nevertheless, it was a bitter pill. I sent Syracuse a copy of Flanders' letter, and offered to describe the collection for them, if, after one of their graduate students had used the Papers for a Ph.D. dissertation, they would transfer them to UVM. Nothing doing. Years later I tried again, pointing out that their folder list showed that a large proportion of the material related to Vermont, and that it interlocked with several of our collections. Because they had advertised the Flanders Papers at Syracuse, they replied, they should not be moved. In the twenty-first century, perhaps, a Syracuse head of special collections, pressed for space, may survey his holdings and finding the Flanders Papers little used, may offer them to UVM. If not, I shall not rest, though poppies grow in Flanders' fields.

Might-have-beens attract old men musing in the chimney corner. What if Allan S. Everest, UVM '36, Columbia Ph.D. 1950 (thesis on Henry Morgenthau), native of New Haven, Vermont, a successful teacher at Plattsburgh State University College and a publishing scholar in North Country New York history, had been appointed Associate Professor of History and Curator of the Wilbur Library in 1958 instead of me? Or what if Glenn Skillin, who as an undergraduate prepared an excellent paper on the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38, and a bibliography of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, had returned to UVM to build on his expertise in some capacity? Or what if I had restrained my insatiable appetite for more acquisitions, and had stopped to arrange, describe, and therefore make accessible what I had found—something that had to wait until my successors took charge? These are only some of the roads not taken.

NOTES

¹I touched on this problem, and summarized the historical philosophy on the basis of which I collected, in "Research in town history," *Vermont History*, 28:288-292 (Oct. 1960), and "The care and keeping of paper," *Friends Journal* (February 15, 1971), 102-103.

²"The perfect melodeon: the origins of the Estey Organ Company, 1846-1866," *Business History Review*, 33 (Spring 1959), 43-59.

GUEST ESSAYIST

Burlington native Tom Bassett earned his Ph.D. in History at Harvard in 1952 with a dissertation entitled, "Urban Penetration of Rural Vermont, 1840-1880." The dean of Vermont historians, he taught Vermont History at UVM from 1958 to 1966, and served as University Archivist and Curator of the Wilbur Collection from 1958 to 1977. Among his many publications on Green Mountain History are *Outsiders Inside Vermont* (1967; rev. ed., 1976) and *Vermont: A Bibliography of Its History* (1981).

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ENDOWMENT

In the 1986 annual report of the Associates of the University of Virginia Library (the equivalent of the Friends of Special Collections at UVM) occur two noteworthy expressions. The first indicates that the purposes of the organization are "maintaining and developing the splendid special collections, and to bring an enlarged community into greater contact with the Library." This is certainly the objective of the UVM Friends as well. The second quotable expression is this: "We are delighted to report that the Endowment Fund for Rare Books and Manuscripts, established in the fall of 1984 has now reached the sum of \$95,000." We cannot, alas, report that the UVM Special Collections Fund has reached a like figure. We can, however, announce that the UVM fund has reached over \$10,000, a modest sum compared to that at the University of Virginia. Since the figure represents contributions from a mere handful of generous individuals, however, we have reason to hope that more Friends and prospective Friends will want to join in supporting the department.

At the same time, he was remarkably successful at securing important historical manuscript collections, acquiring more than 1,500 linear feet of Vermont papers during his 19 years as Curator. The opening of a Special Collections department at the new Bailey Library in 1961, followed by new departmental quarters in the Howe wing of the Library in 1980, allowed continued expansion of the Collection. This was fortunate, since the increased emphasis at UVM on Vermont-related research and teaching brought more and more users to Wilbur's printed and manuscript holdings after 1960.

While much of the rapid growth of the Wilbur Collection since 1958 has resulted undramatically from UVM's more systematic approach to collecting, there have also been some very special acquisitions in the past three decades. John Spargo's donation of his fine Vermont library in 1959

brought in many rare early titles that had been lacking. Beginning in 1968, the University acquired much of the remarkable collection of Hall Park McCullough (1872-1966) of North Bennington, including numerous splendid eighteenth-century books, maps, prints, and manuscripts, as well as George Washington's autographed copy of Royall Tyler's *The Contrast* (Philadelphia, 1787). In manuscripts, the acquisition of such diverse collections as the papers of George D. Aiken, the Eagle Square Manufacturing Company, Philip Hoff, John Johnson, Mary Jean Simpson, and the Vermont Church Council has added significantly to the Collection's resources. Expanding Wilbur's horizons to emphasize new kinds of paper Vermontiana has helped bring in substantial collections of Green Mountain photographs, maps and ephemera. In keeping with the tradition established by the Chittenden purchase in 1898 and the Wilbur bequest of 1929, the University has been successful in recent years in acquiring many of the important Vermontiana collections that have become available.

Today the Wilbur Collection constitutes the largest and finest Vermontiana library in existence. In 1938 the Collection had 4,375 volumes; by 1948 the number stood at 15,000; and in 1987 there are approximately 75,000 books and pamphlets on the Collection's shelves. The picture holdings, which include Vermont photographs, stereopticon views, postcards, engravings, and lithographs, contain upwards of 200,000 images. Some 7,500 manuscript and printed maps detail the geography of Vermont, northern New England and the Champlain Valley from the seventeenth century to the present. The Vermont manuscript collections now total more than 5,000 linear feet, including bound volumes, individual folders and boxed collections. Nearly 6,000 researchers a year visit the Collection, with scholars coming from across America, Canada, England, France, Japan, Australia, and other nations to join the Vermont students, historians and others using the Wilbur resources. In the past decade more than 100 published books and articles have cited the Vermont manuscript and picture collections at UVM. A century ago the University had no Vermontiana worth mentioning; 50 years ago the combination of the Lucius E. Chittenden purchase and James B. Wilbur's bequest gave UVM a rich but little-used Vermont library; and today the Wilbur Collection offers a wealth of Vermontiana to scholars and general readers alike in many diverse subjects and fields of interest.

FRIENDS OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT UVM

Please enroll me as a member of the Friends of Special Collections at UVM for the year 1987.

_____ Basic Membership, \$25.00 _____ Sustaining, \$50.00 _____ Benefactor, \$100.00
_____ Patron, \$200.00 _____ Fellow, \$500.00

NB: If you select Sustaining membership or above, you are eligible to check out books from the library for the period of your membership.* However, *you must indicate* on this form that you want that additional benefit: _____ yes _____ no

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

For UVM alumni/ae: if you wish credit to be given to your class please indicate your class year: _____ . Thank you.
Make all checks payable to University of Vermont and mail to: **Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0036.**

**Students enrolled at colleges and universities other than UVM are not eligible for this privilege.*

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS NEWS

Within the past six months, the department has issued three publications on portions of the Special Collections holdings:

Michael P. Chaney's *Sources for the Study of Canadian-American Relations at the University of Vermont Library* is a 47-page guide to the University's impressive Canadian collections. As part of a U.S. Department of Education Title II-C grant, Michael, Diane M. Stockton and Karen A. Stites worked for Special Collections for a year under the direction of Curator of Manuscripts Connell B. Gallagher to identify, arrange and describe our manuscript collections containing materials of Canadian interest.

Special Collections head John Buechler's *Henry Stevens: Green Mountain Boy 1819-1886* is both a catalogue of a November 1986-January 1987 library exhibit and a valuable source on the career of a great antiquarian bookseller. The 30-page catalogue, beautifully designed and printed by the Meriden-Stinehour Press of Lunenburg, Vermont, highlights the Wilbur Collection's voluminous printed and manuscript Stevensiana.

J. Kevin Graffagnino's *Vermont Historical Resources: The Manuscript Resources of the Wilbur Collection, University of Vermont* adds more than 50 new manuscript collections to the department's 1980 guide of inventoried Vermont collections and offers researchers an overview of the breadth of the Wilbur Collection's holdings.

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Nadia Smith, the Department's Reference Specialist, is on maternity leave through June 1987 (the result: a boy, John Peter Smith). Karen A. Stites and Ksenya Kiebuszinski have been filling in for Nadia during her absence. Karen was recently named Editor of the Chittenden County Historical Society *Bulletin*, as well.

Reference Assistant Sylvia Knight recently visited Cora Eastman (UVM 1928) in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Miss Eastman, whose family papers are in Special Collections, reminisced about her museum work in New Jersey and her mother, Cora L. Lovell Eastman, who lived into her 99th year in Bradford, Vermont.

RECENT ADDITIONS TO SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Since the last issue of LIBER, Special Collections has acquired a variety of interesting printed and manuscript material.

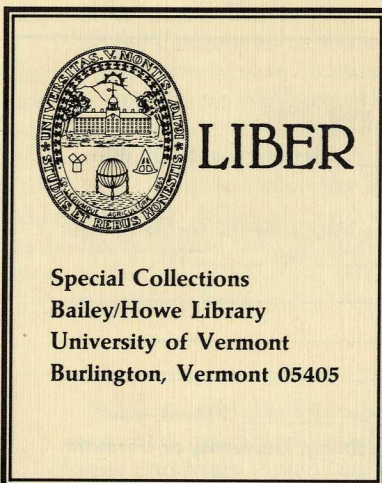
Mrs. Mary deJong of Philadelphia recently gave a fine collection of the papers of the Parker and Fleming families of Burlington and Waterbury, Vermont. The collection includes letters written by Rev. Charles Carroll Parker while he was serving as a Civil War chaplain.

Veteran film and TV actor M. Emmet Walsh, formerly of Swanton, Vermont, presented over 150 acting scripts to the department in February 1987. Mr. Walsh, whose many screen credits include *Midnight Cowboy*, *Alice's Restaurant* and *Cannery Row*, made his donation through UVM theater professor Edward J. Feidner.

In February 1987 the descendants of Jacob Collamer (1791-1865) deposited three cartons of Collamer Family Papers on loan with the department. Collamer, who graduated from UVM in 1810, was one of Vermont's most distinguished nineteenth-century leaders, serving as state Supreme Court judge, member of Congress, Postmaster-General of the United States, and United States Senator. The Collamer collection contains a wide range of family, business and political papers from three generations. This loan came to UVM from Byron K., Robert C., William B., and Margaret Kelly, Jacob Collamer's great-great-grandchildren.

The Hayden Carruth Papers received an additional 11 feet of manuscripts of one of Vermont's best-known poets. The additions consist of Carruth's correspondence and literary manuscripts for the years 1978-84. Other Vermont poetry collections in the department include the papers of Sarah Cleghorn, Walter R. Hard, John Engels, and Roger Weingarten.

With the help of funds from the Friends, the department recently purchased a copy of the scarce *Effigies Regum Francorum Omnium* (Nuremberg, 1576), with 62 engravings and etchings by Virgil Solis and Jost Amman. This fine volume complements the many Solis-illustrated editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* already in the Rare Book collection.



FIRST CLASS