

Atlantic Parlour Culture: Loci of Power

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Abstract

Parlour Culture is considered for its long duration and social impact on both sides of the Atlantic, but my research focus culminates with the expression of that culture in Queens County, Nova Scotia from the late 18th century to the mid-20th century. Interdisciplinary research of vernacular parlour culture has uncovered evidence for a sharing of social power through reciprocity and inclusivity during the American parlour of New England, the Liverpool Township and the settlements of White Point and Hunts Point, Queens County. To identify the essence of parlour culture in each of these areas, research traces the intangible life behaviours as related to the tangible ones of place (*locus*). Through its dominant goal of promoting relationships between the home and the community, parlour culture becomes the instrument for the realization of self-identity. Thus, the essence of parlour culture is that of a spatial artifact directed toward the construction of sustainable community life. An original study of two South Shore communities reveals an elegant social model based on a parlour culture that was transferred from New England. Moreover, vibrant traces of this culture are still found there to the present day.

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Thesis Interviewees— All my participants have provided much needed assistance to advance this thesis: finding old pictures, photographing furniture, accessing genealogies, filling in details on distant family and local history, and trusting me with their personal copies of family diaries. Nobody could set a value for these tremendous efforts and I hope I have done justice to the part these great families have performed in developing strong, happy communities within the heritage of parlour culture.

There has been, during the progress of this thesis, a sense of cultural loss. Shortly after her interview, Edna Smith died and during the final week of editing, in August 2015, Ivan Doggett passed and was buried in the White Point Cemetery.

My partner, Blaze Rhyno, for his constant support and words of encouragement throughout the completion of my Bachelor of Arts, Honours Certificate and Master of Arts at Saint Mary's University.

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Quotation

“While every man must consider himself a citizen of the world, it seems to me that if he is not to dissipate his energies he must find some corner of it that he loves, whose people he understands, whose past and present he knows, whose future is his concern, and spend himself there in the best way he knows”¹

¹ Thomas Raddall to Paul J. Gelinias, 21 August 1944, Dal MS 2-202 S 508-509, Corres. P.V. Gelinias, DUA.

Introduction

The thesis title, *Atlantic Parlours: Loci of Power*, connects place to power in parlour culture. In this culture, power is mediated by place. Place not only provided comfort, privacy, and space for entertainment but also a means of self-identification for the owner. This self-identification would be displayed in ornamentation, architectural style and artifacts that represented the life of the owner in a celebratory way—heroic feats, accomplishments, family possessions or portraits of the family that would encourage visitors to think highly of their host and be happy to share his domicile. Most of these homes were passed down from one generation to another and represented a measure of history rather than the modern attitude of a quick sale investment. The emphasis on place is necessitated for the purpose of the parlour to be an instrument in the meeting and sharing in community life. Power is, therefore, not vested directly in the control of others but rather is mediated through place, locus, as the nexus between interior and exterior communications. Place in the home as an essential mode of power characterized centuries of parlour culture in what was often lively and inclusive socialization, but this home connection has been largely lost in present social life.

The concept of the English parlour has persisted some eight hundred years adapting to new lifestyles and different geographies with varied practices and artifacts. The parlour is a key architectural invention in the evolution of the

meaning of home² and in the creation of community life often through the practice of visitation.³ While the term ‘parlour’ designates a particular kind of space, its meaning should not be limited to that material confine. Parlour in this study includes the structural features, furnishings, decorations, and activities dictated by the goals of its owners.⁴ A study of a “material renaissance” concludes to the need to see not only the spatial decorations and structure of parlours but also the uses of these artifacts and how they “condition behavior during social interactions between the owner and members of his community”.⁵ The nature of these social interactions will determine the orientation of the culture, whether it is characteristic of exclusive or inclusive attitudes towards people.⁶ A parlour is a specialized living space as indicated by the derivation of the term from the Old French *parleur* and meaning a place for private conversation or reflection and, similarly, it relates to the French verb *parler*.⁷ This essential feature of a parlour makes it a conceptual idea, one facilitating the expression of the ideals of the home, hence the identity of the home and its owners.⁸ Parlour activities project

² Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 12.

³ Karen V. Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994), 80.

⁴ Logan, *The Victorian Parlour*, xiv.

⁵ Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, “The ‘material renaissance’ and the middling sort: domestic goods and the practices of everyday life in provincial English urban houses”, University of Birmingham, UK and University of Kent, UK. URL: <https://materialhistories.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/urban-history-conference-paper.pdf>. Accessed: 30 July 2014, 14.

⁶ There is an ongoing debate on the issue of exclusivity versus inclusivity in parlour culture; see the research work of Ann Judith Poole’s 2007 master’s thesis titled *Taking Tea in the Parlour: Middle Class Formation and Gender Construction in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, 1760-1850* (Simon Fraser University, 2007) and Karen V. Hansen’s *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England* and dissertation, *Transcending the Public/Private Divide: The Social Dimension of Laborer’s Lives, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983) and numerous related scholarly articles. Both Poole and Hansen are current researchers in the colonial era of parlour culture.

⁷ Logan, *The Victorian Parlour*, 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*

those ideals into reality to be understood and transmitted to the wider community by those people assembled from time to time in its surrounds.⁹

My research explores the historical concept of parlour culture on both sides of the Atlantic and how it shaped society in the communities of Hunts Point and White Point, Queens County, Nova Scotia through its social inventions. The study of the social life of these small but remarkably self-contained communities is beneficial for social history and contributes to original research in the field. My interviews and written transcripts from past and present members of the Hunts Point and White Point communities have revealed vital memorial links to a long lasting parlour culture, related to that of New England. Interesting stories of lives well lived have risen from the data of pictures, portraits, unpublished diaries, book collections, furniture collections, glassware and keepsakes. As one of my interviewees, an eminently sage nonagenarian and recent recipient of a Diamond Jubilee Medal, grasping the enormity of the historical project of parlour making, was moved to exclaim, “What made all those people build and furnish parlours?”¹⁰ And we might all profitably ask “Yes, why?” What cause maintained the long continuity of an architecturally framed outreach from the home in Nova Scotia to others on both sides of the Atlantic?

The lives of our ancestors and the visible remains of their endeavours contain the answer—an answer that appeals to the deepest resources of what it

⁹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 80.

¹⁰ Interview with Beulah Waterman Smith. In-person interview by Amber Hanrahan. Hunts Point, Queens County. September 14, 2013.

means to be human. My interviews reinforced one fact again and again—the strong, intimate connections between South Shore, Nova Scotia and New England. Whole collections of furnishings and other artifacts from New England are still treasured in South Shore homes, along with pictures and certificates of the marriages of their grandparents, which were solemnized in places like Boston and Gloucester. On another occasion I was able to trace and talk to one of my interviewees, another nonagenarian from the little village of White Point, at her home in Worcester, Massachusetts. The main thread connecting all these conversations was the spirit of being good neighbours and having a respect for each other—the foundation of parlour culture as discerned in this region. A strong social inclusivity was the original and continuing social characteristic of the culture of the Liverpool area according to the evidence of field research in this thesis.

The study of parlours in the rural communities of Hunts Point and White Point, Nova Scotia, has not been examined in academic research on Nova Scotia material culture, but in the adjacent area the Liverpool Museum display of Simeon Perkins parlour, circa 1767-1812, is a major attraction for tourists and scholarly attention.¹¹ Allen Penney's study of that museum house, including the parlour, *Simeon Perkins House: An Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, is regarded as an authoritative source on the subject. In the spring of 2007 at Simon Fraser University, Ann Judith

¹¹ The Simeon Perkins Museum has since been closed indefinitely by the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage due to "structural problems". See Paul Withers, "Perkins House in Liverpool Closed Indefinitely after 249 Years - Nova Scotia - CBC News." *CBCnews*. 26 May 2015.

Poole completed her master's thesis titled *Taking Tea in the Parlour: Middle-Class Formation and Gender Construction in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, 1760-1850*. Part of her study involves a critical analysis of the diaries of Simeon Perkins; nevertheless, the complexity and topical breadth of these diaries makes them a gold mine for future research.

My study is a contribution to the greater understanding of the social and cultural roles of parlours in early Nova Scotia homes. Specifically, it makes an examination of the vernacular household features of parlours and their architecture in several communities on Nova Scotia's South Shore, Hunts Point and White Point, as well as an exploration of the significance of parlours there to community life up to the mid-20th century. By discovering the extent of 'parlour culture' in rural Nova Scotia, the design of vernacular homes, and how parlour culture was expressed in the social and cultural behaviours of the inhabitants of its homes, along with the traditions of their communities, the structure of this thesis conforms to the tangible and intangible aspects of parlour culture in Hunts Point and White Point, Nova Scotia.

My thesis research is interdisciplinary in scope, including the disciplines of history, architecture, culture, and literature. The reclamation of descriptions of social living patterns through texts, diaries and oral histories constitutes a final opportunity to seek out memories of parlour culture throughout the communities of White Point and Hunts Point in Queens County. 'Parlour' in this work follows its customary use of location, design, furnishings, and purposes, hence its material and nonmaterial

aspects.¹² In the latter case, parlour activities will be considered the determining factor of goals projected towards visitors and the social life of the community. For instance, visits, “purposeful and systematic but informal and unplanned—provided occasions to exchange comfort, companionship, [and] information”.¹³ Through the use of local diaries in early New England, Karen V. Hansen notes that looking at a diary conveys a feeling “like reading a telephone book, calling roll for the community”.¹⁴ In this culture the act of visiting was the chief instrument for providing benefit to community life; people were, in fact, able to “sustain their community life through the practice of visiting”.¹⁵ In line with Hansen’s research, visits to the parlour and informal meetings outside the parlour are seen to serve a similar beneficial service to the community. The social life of the parlour is, thus, extended beyond that room in an informal way into the community.

In respect to division of subject matter in this thesis, Chapter 1 concerns the migration of the parlour tradition to America in a new vernacular form with its physical adaptations both of style and substance and changes in cultural practices to meet colonial needs. A literary parallel of this transition of the parlour is found in the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), whose *Wayside Inn* stands as an extended metaphor for the full democratization of parlour culture in the inclusive society of New England that was transferred by sea to Nova Scotia. Finally, the argument for this transfer of vernacular parlour

¹² Logan, *The Victorian Parlour*, xiv.

¹³ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 79-80.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

culture is shown to be based on Karen Hansen's intensive research of records, letters, and diaries of *antebellum* New England.

Chapter 2 examines the design and furnishings of the museum model of Simeon Perkins colonial parlour in Liverpool, circa 1767-1812. Artifacts of this parlour are closely examined for their claim to authenticity for the period of Perkins lifetime. In his gift to posterity, Simeon Perkins' diaries, all five volumes from May 29, 1767 to April 13, 1812, display in minute detail the prominence of the parlour life style in the newly formed town. His diaries, a distinct genre of literature, chronicle the daily visits, concerns, interests, and goals of himself and his neighbours in a colonial town and are a unique testament to the power of parlour culture to link the bonds of continuity through citizens and their emerging institutions. Visiting and congregating with others occupied a large portion of Perkins' time; through the practice of visiting the idea of separate spheres was challenged by Karen V. Hansen because both men and women visited, often in gender-integrated settings.¹⁶ According to her analysis, the extensive gender "integration of activities in the social realm refutes the belief that working people observed a culture of separate spheres".¹⁷ Like Simeon Perkins, a man who kept his own parlour before his second marriage in 1775, "men's involvement in the capitalist market did not render them inept at domestic affairs".¹⁸ Neither Karen V. Hansen nor Simeon Perkins find colonial society to be operating characteristically

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

in separate spheres of gender or exclusive class formations; gender-integration and multiple spheres of influence would be a more apt interpretation of colonial society.

In keeping with Hansen's deliberations, this theme of social inclusivity is central to Chapter 3 in respect to the communities bordering Liverpool in Hunts Point and White Point. Visiting neighbours and kin brought such benefits as "dissipating the loneliness of others, comforting the bereaved, caring for the infirm, attending the births of future generations, engaging in the labor-intensive tasks of providing shelter and clothing", all acts of social inclusion in times of need.¹⁹ Hansen's contention is borne out, most forcefully in Simeon Perkins' detailed chronicle of his life, for Perkins was the consummate visitor and truly the father of the little town of Liverpool. Though the parlours have largely disappeared from these old communities of Hunts Point and White Point, the memories of that culture are strong and vital, a living repository for evidence of an earlier culture. Diary writing, the social impact of the organ, remaining traces of traditions and connections with New England, neighbourly good will, and the struggle to maintain long standing institutions are all significant areas for research in this culture. Field research has revealed a whole new vision of these little villages and their claim to a satisfying life style manifesting parlour culture.

The theory of material culture is foundational in this thesis for an analysis of the tangible and intangible dimensions of history. A review of the theory of

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 112-113.

material culture reveals the significance of parlour culture and the related fieldwork of this thesis. Jules David Prown, in his article “Mind in Matter”, finds the appearance of mind in matter in human artifacts: “Material culture is the study through artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time”.²⁰ Material culture theory holds that it is only through objects that “we have direct sensory experience of surviving historical events”²¹, since objects offer information across all divisions of population whereas the written word is generally restricted to the educated elite.²² Prown concludes that objects are the last evidence of the lived-experience of a people and that the vernacular buildings and belongings quickly disappear after a lifetime. My fieldwork discovery of a rare collection of parlour furniture brought to Hunts Point by sailing ships from the 1700’s to 1900 is an instance of Prown’s conclusion, for which I am saddened to say that my pictures will record the last time the collection has been intact following the recent death of its owner. A cultural interpretation using artifacts permits engagement with the other culture “not with our minds, the seat of our cultural biases but with our senses”²³ and gives a fresh platform for perception of the people who made, used or enjoyed these objects.

The interview aspect of this thesis fieldwork is founded on the use of oral history methodology as well as the traditional documentation and material

²⁰ Jules David Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 17:1 (Spring, 1982): 1.

²¹ Jules David Prown, “Style as Evidence,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 15 (1980): 208.

²² Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method”, 3-4.

²³ *Ibid.*, 5.

evidence. In the process of creating oral history, my thesis addresses the four documented challenges of securing reliability of information, establishing fair representation of different social levels, hearing the authenticity of the voices of society, and discovering the genuine practices of the lived-society. Paul Thompson states that traditional “historians study the actors of history from a distance”, risking a projection of the historian’s own experiences on the lives being studied.²⁴ Oral history transforms ‘objects’ of study into ‘subjects’ and “makes history richer, more vivid, and heart-rending, but truer”.²⁵ Both types of study are needed to constitute the full body of the discipline of history. Together, formal history and oral tradition form a “harmonious union, with the one offering objective interpretation based upon sound evidence, and the other giving a personalized immediacy, a sense of being there and of participation”.²⁶ This personalized immediacy was sought in my oral history interviews with seniors, who have long-term memorial connections with their communities of Queens County, Nova Scotia relating back to the 19th and 20th century; some even have stories relating to the original settlers who founded the town of Liverpool in 1759.

²⁴ Paul Richard Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 117. Research reveals evidence of the primary obstacles faced by noted historians of oral life stories. In his book, *The Voice of the Past*, a study of method and meaning in history, Paul Thompson suggests that the first challenge of oral evidence, its reliability, be met by cross-questioning subjects while also examining their motives. Thompson considers the second challenge, the need to address equal representation of the different social strata for which he refers to the pioneer work of Henry Mayhew’s survey into poverty in the 1840’s. In my thesis, examination of material artifacts and visitation patterns offers the main evidence for fair representation of society level. Mayhew also led the way in the third challenge to reveal the authentic voices of his respondents by his “unusual concern with their exact words”,²⁴ a concern for all interviewers since his time. A fourth challenge in oral history is the need to discover the structures of target societies, their supporting institutions, customs, goals, and work force. It is the aim of this thesis to discover the real work of institutions, customs, goals and habits, the intangible aspect of the artifacts and structure of parlour culture in Hunts Point and White Point. See, Paul Thompson’s *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Barbara Allen Bogart and William Lynwood Montell. *From Memory to History: Using Oral Sources in Local Historical Research* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1982), 3.

The four challenges have been carefully weighed in respect to the choice of my interviewees. There are strong reasons for the choice of the four living candidates, Ivan Doggett, Irene Doggett, Edna Smith, and Beulah Waterman Smith. They were all born before or during the 1920's and were the last practitioners of the parlour culture era in their communities. These four provided an equal representation from each of the communities of White Point and Hunts Point. Also, they were still living independently in their own homes, a factor assuring reliability of memory. An exhaustive search for other living citizens having these qualities yielded no other candidates. In respect to ethnicity, all four respondents were descended from the original settlers of the Liverpool Township of 1760 whose family names appear on the document for incorporation of the town.

Equal distribution of candidates from the two communities is important, but it is only one aspect of the challenge of fair representation. This group of four has to be proportional to the size and diversity of family lines inhabiting the two communities. For example, Beulah Waterman Smith and Edna Smith led very different life styles—the first, an esteemed professional person contributing to the vital structure of learning in the community while bringing up her own family and, the second interviewee, a devoted homemaker of a large family while making tremendous voluntary contributions to the community. To complete this group, Irene Doggett and Ivan Doggett shared a genetic inheritance through separate branches of the same family dating back to the early pioneers of the township, Captain John Doggett and Captain Samuel Doggett. Their diversity of

contribution to community is shown in their lives; Irene was a lifelong homemaker now living in Massachusetts and Ivan was an early entrepreneur diversifying the family business as well as being a positive proponent of parlour culture. While the composition of this group of four shows diversity of contribution to their culture, its limitations must be viewed through the finality of vital statistics revealing no other living candidates possessing such familiarity with the life of parlour culture.

The size factor of this initial group needed to be expanded. Originally I had planned to approach Lawrence Verge, a lifetime inhabitant of White Point, with special achievements in education and sports, whose antecedents traced back to an early pioneer in Liverpool, namely, Joseph Verge Sr., who founded its major cooper shop on Main Street. But Lawrence died suddenly and it was at his funeral in Liverpool that I met Nina Frellick Inness who made the disclosure of her Grandmother Annie Mackay Frellick's twenty-five year diary. I was most eager to read her diary, at the very least, as a cross-reference for the testimony of other interviewees, since the reliability of information is a major challenge to oral history. With the invaluable help of Nina, I studied the diaries, realized the depth of her grandmother's knowledge of the community and her perception of parlour culture which overlapped the 19th century as well as the 20th century, and I decided to construct Annie Mackay Frellick's view of parlour culture. This construction was made from her diaries, a store hold of pictures, an unpublished genealogy that traced her back to the earliest Loyalist settlers in the area, published documents concerning her life and her granddaughter's vivid memories

of Annie's life. There emerged a profile of Annie's life that met the challenges of reliability of information, fair representation, authenticity of her words, and descriptions of her living experiences. Not only did this profile meet the four basic challenges but it also revived all the other testimonies of parlour culture.

The final respondent from White Point fell to Honora Verge from the memories of her granddaughter, historical research of her life and artifacts from Ireland, Gloucester, and the old homestead in White Point. Honora was, in fact, the grandmother of Lawrence Verge whom I had hoped to interview. As to the make-up of families settled in White Point the family names of Doggett and Verge were most dominant. The two respondents of different branches of the Doggett family represent about fifty percent of the homesteads in the village. Four other family names, Publicover, Payzant, Fisher, and Harrington, held one homestead each, but no representative of parlour culture exists from this group. There remained only three homes once belonging to the West family but now no surviving members. Finally, there were three Verge homesteads derived from William Allan and Honora Verge whose lives, spanning half of each of the 19th and 20th centuries, were vividly recalled by American representatives of their twelve children and by their living granddaughter, Bette Verge Hanrahan, who grew up in her grandmother's house and in her presence until her death in 1942. Thus, the two selections to provide fair representation of population, Honora Verge and Annie Mackay Frellick, devolved from ratios of family homesteads, the loss of contact with certain family lines, and the availability of sources to meet the four challenges of oral history.

In conclusion, this unique and detailed social history of White Point and Hunts Point in Queens County, Nova Scotia comprises a final opportunity to discover first-hand accounts and memories of parlour culture throughout these old communities. The spirit of being a good neighbour and respect for everyone marks the foundation of this parlour culture as one of inclusivity as discovered from the authentic voices of my interviews. These findings, when aligned with other academic studies of parlours, have refined the meaning of the impact of this culture on life in Nova Scotia. While a number of studies of the conceptual development of parlour culture find certain parts of society to be characterized by exclusivity of class and separation of gender roles, the literature also shows a strong support for inclusivity of society in the early medieval times and in the colonial society of America. The factual definition of parlour culture is necessarily open to emerging changes in its long history on the material level of the spatial dimension and artifacts and their accompanying goals and purposes. While the framework of the parlour concept keeps its stability of purpose for the home to achieve the identity of the family, the manner of this accomplishment makes it an open concept varied by the power of choice and decision whether this identification is oriented towards a society of exclusivity or inclusivity. The vernacular culture of *antebellum* New England and its immigrant descendants in Nova Scotia firmly represented their choice for a social orientation of inclusivity.

Chapter 1: Inclusivity and the American Parlour

The spread of the parlour and its behaviours of gentility, that began with the Medieval Ages' royalty and English-Norman aristocracy, advanced into the upper reaches of the English middle class by Victorian times and expanded by the eighteenth century across the Atlantic to the American colony.²⁷ In the display of social relationships, Americans came "by their love of entertaining²⁸ quite naturally, as a continuation of courtly traditions of England and France, though the grandeur of what came before would have to be translated into colonial means".²⁹ Refinement had entered the human spirit, "taking control of personality, establishing a standard of human worth, and defining large segments of personal identity".³⁰ Ann Judith Poole makes the qualification that, despite this American middle-class attachment to decorum, Richard Bushman does acknowledge that "High culture was not impervious to vernacular culture and embodied elements of it".³¹ Throughout time the parlour "has always played a symbolic role in representing the family to its guests. Its furnishings and decorations spoke of

²⁷ Note that Richard Bushman also traces the movement and spread of parlour gentility to the United States: "What motor drove the refinement process? ...The expansion in turn was a branch of a movement that began much earlier in Europe. The spread across America continued the flow of gentility outward from fifteenth-century Italian cities and country villas to European Renaissance courts, across the Channel to the English aristocracy, into the upper reaches of the English middle class, and in the eighteenth century across the Atlantic to the great houses of the American gentry". See, Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 402.

²⁸ "The verb *entertain* began its life with the meaning 'hold intertwined' and 'maintain, keep up'. These meanings still live within our contemporary sense of entertaining, as we display our social relationships and reinforce our social interwinings by guesting and hosting. We give room to this display in the domestic parlor, the different terms for which demonstrate shifts in the American cultural conception of the parlor and its purpose". See, Allison Burkette, "Parlour Talk: Complexity from a Historical Perspective", in *American Speech*, 391.

²⁹ Allison Burkette, "Parlour Talk: Complexity from a Historical Perspective", in *American Speech* 87:4 (2012), 391.

³⁰ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 402.

³¹ Ann Judith Poole, *Taking Tea in the Parlour: Middle-Class Formation and Gender Construction in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, 1760-1850*, 24.

their tastes and interests, as well as their claims for status in the unspoken hierarchies of community life”.³² Thus, the refinement of America “involved the capture of aristocratic culture for use in Republican society”.³³

Richard Bushman’s argument concerning parlour culture in *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* is examined through two distinctive phases. In the first phase, from 1690 to 1790, when American gentility used sources such as etiquette books and the rise of parlour culture with the building of a room dedicated to entertainment and receiving guests, Bushman ultimately concluded that “the houses were in truth but outward signs of what the inhabitants hoped would be an inward grace. They wished to transform themselves along with their environments”.³⁴ Bushman shows how these personal ideals “interacting with materials changed the American environment and reshaped American culture”.³⁵ As to its practical benefits, “Gentility bestowed concrete social power on its practitioners” since “it was a resource for impressing and influencing powerful people, frequently a prerequisite for inspiring trust...[as] a convenient identity and a definition of position”.³⁶ Power as the underlying bedrock of parlour culture is a significant factor in its dynamics.

In the second phase, from 1790 to 1850, as “refinement spread downward and the middling orders assimilated a diluted refinement of their own, the great

³² Peter W. Ward, *A History of Domestic Space: Privacy and the Canadian Home*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 62.

³³ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, xix.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, xii.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, xix.

divide between polite and coarse isolated the lower orders on the margins of American culture".³⁷ The source of this refinement's power was, in Bushman's estimation, the "imagined vision of a noble life once enjoyed by the aristocracy of the Old World".³⁸ The cultural class lines "were not more severely drawn, but because they separated the lower from the middling orders rather than the gentry from all the rest, they were more humiliating".³⁹ By this reasoning, Bushman sees American culture being infected by orientations toward ideals of exclusivity and separation of classes all based on rules "usually written long ago and far away".⁴⁰ Such social exclusion was not always the case; it is not to be forgotten that "the great entertainments of the medieval world had been essentially public events".⁴¹ But "the invisible lines defining inclusion and exclusion could be the cause of great anguish in the higher reaches of society," especially as to whom to invite so as to not cause humiliation to others.⁴² However, "Genteel values spread so widely in the population and infiltrated so deeply into religion and the organization of neighborhoods that gentility shaped the structure of society".⁴³ Gentility was the sign of the power wielded by parlour culture.

Bushman delineates the structure of parlour culture as a framework for gentility in social life that generates power for successful living. This power issues

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 279.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, xix.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* In fact, the colonists of America did devise "open public entertainment of their own"; in Virginia's less structured communities "funerals turned into drinking parties for the neighbours...no one was excluded from these events because of class". *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 50.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 446.

from its connections with the elite in English society and constitutes a social orientation of exclusivity. Though the American parlour derived from this model⁴⁴, it had to undergo a transition to meet a new set of circumstances⁴⁵ faced by the vulnerable immigrants on the vernacular level. The essential question concerns the nature and purpose of the new American form of gentility that had to contend with hostilities from the aboriginals and French forces, as well as the dangers imposed by the immoderate climate and terrain. The nature of that transition is considered in this thesis by an examination of, firstly, the material culture⁴⁶ displayed in the vernacular architecture of its dwellings; secondly, the conceptual development of the 'parlour' in the poetic works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; and, thirdly, Karen V. Hansen's extensive research of extant diaries, letters and documents over the period from 1788 to 1908.

In the first instance of the argument for the transitional nature of vernacular American parlour culture, research shows that New England immigrants were innovative in their material culture. They borrowed from English models but they modified these models into new types; thus, their vernacular culture was not a

⁴⁴ The American parlour was seen to be directly connected to features of its British antecedent; Thad Logan's preface asserts, the "American parlour cannot be adequately understood without a knowledge of the British parlour, since nineteenth-century Americans were still heavily dependent on British cultural authority in the realms of design and decoration". See, Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2001), xv.

⁴⁵ Katherine C. Grier has noted in her study that the concept of Victorian can be defined in more global terms as the "Anglo-American, transatlantic, bourgeois culture of industrializing western civilization". See, Katherine C. Grier, *Culture and Comfort: People, Parlours and Upholstery: 1850-1930* (Massachusetts: Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum, 1988), 2.

⁴⁶ Grier contends that Victorian Americans took pleasure in the "material world around them, and the intricacy of the systems of conventional meanings-in-things that they manipulated for social ends". See, Katherine C. Grier, *Culture & Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1997), vii.

copy of the English model in concept or in form. For example, the rooflines of dwellings were redesigned to meet new climatic conditions; these rooflines make a new view plain with the colonial style and its additive structure, later the Georgian style was a further adaptation, and finally the new Hatch roof appeared on the Nova Scotia skyline. People who show such a spirit for innovation on the material level would surely have also modified their social customs to meet emerging and strategic needs for survival.

American colonists brought to the new land British middle-class structural ideas in home building; it was “English medieval architecture with a new flavor that was in time to make it completely American. As English building styles changed...New England styles followed suit. They adapted rather than copied exactly”.⁴⁷ In the early seventeenth century, the first “simple, thatched roofed, small casement windowed home represents the Medieval period of English and American architecture”.⁴⁸ In England the steep, thatch roof readily shed water and small windows kept out the cold, but New England faced more prolonged severe weather than was customary in Britain; therefore early American construction was geared for wind and snow.⁴⁹ Within one-room structures there was a large fireplace and an entry directed into a large room or to a small hall with stairs (see figure 1-1).

⁴⁷ Abbott Lowell Cummings, *Architecture in Early New England* (Sturbridge, MA: Old Sturbridge Village, 1958), 1.

⁴⁸ Isabella Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture* (Boston: Herman Publications, 1977), 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

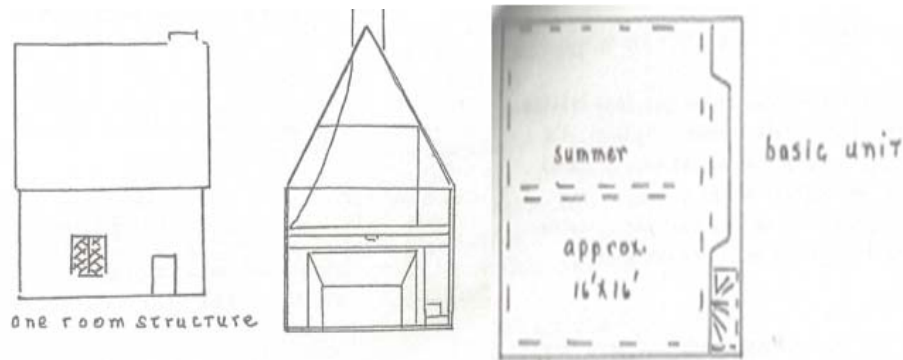


Figure 1-1: Within the one room structure, a huge fieldstone fireplace dominated one wall. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein’s *A Primer on New England’s Colonial Architecture*.⁵⁰

As families grew and more space was needed, as in England, “basic units were often joined to form great houses with a center courtyard” and thus, colonists applied traditional building skills.⁵¹ Another addition was an added lean-to at the back of the house to continue the roofline (see figures 1-2 and 1-3). A study of roof pitch will show the evolution of the New England ‘Salt Box’ with its steep 60° English roof pitch used in Early American homes (see figure 1-4). These 60° pitched roofs served in the English climate but when the custom was transferred to America, a more moderate pitch of 45° was soon found more suited to the prolonged periods of ice and snow (see figure 1-4).⁵² Allan Gowans considered the medieval tradition of building to have survived in New England “in spirit...in a whole approach to the art of building—in concepts of proportion and design, in the additive plan, in the ‘plain style’”⁵³ and that style is to be recognized in Nova Scotia as a heritage of the New England civilization.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵³ Allan Gowans, “New England Architecture in Nova Scotia”, in *The Art Quarterly* XXV:1 (Spring, 1992), 27.

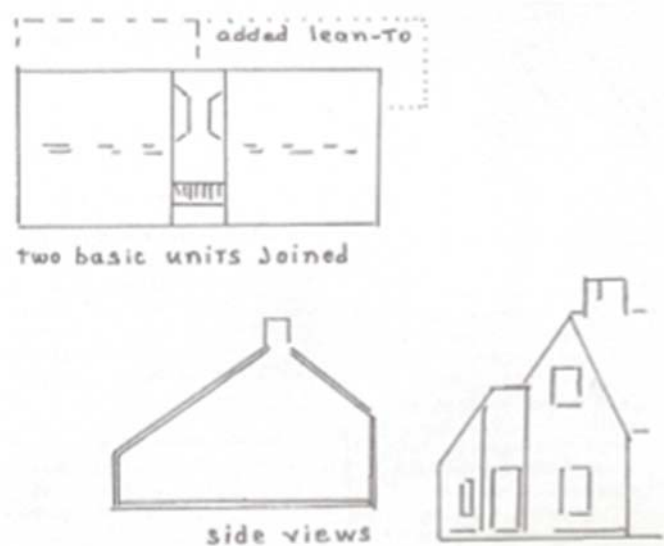


Figure 1-2: At first two basic units were built abutting each other and joined with a single roof. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein's *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*.⁵⁴

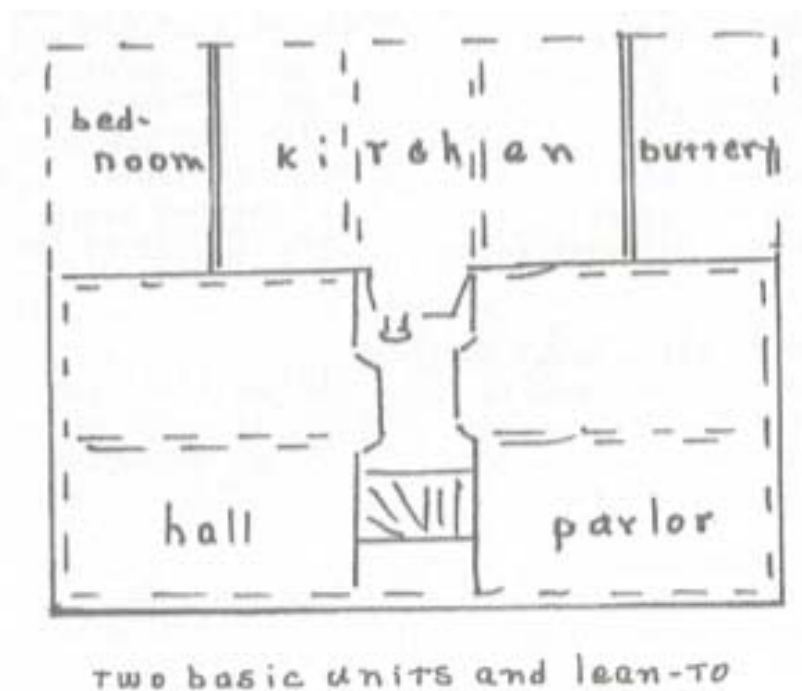


Figure 1-3: Two basic units and lean-to. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein's *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*, 7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

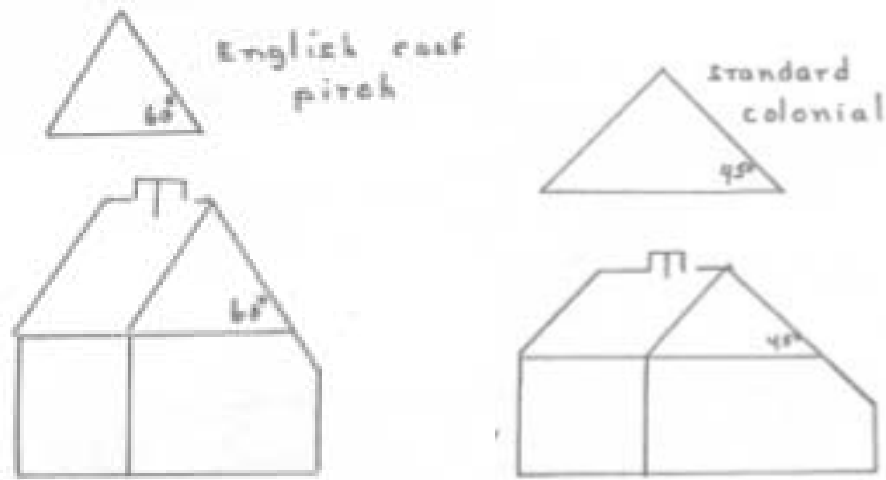


Figure 1-4 (Left): The steep English roof of 60°. **Right:** The standard colonial 45° roof pitch was also known as the New England “Salt Box”. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein’s *A Primer on New England’s Colonial Architecture*.⁵⁶

But the simple, basic one unit house did not die, the Cape Cod style home was a half house (see figure 1-5 left) which meant the door was at the corner with the windows on the side, steep stairs tucked in a corner and two large rooms and a small birthing room completed the first floor while the second floor was comprised of two bedrooms in the center of the house with a small fireplace.⁵⁷ By adding a small room, with one window on the other side of the door, a three-quarter house was created (see figure 1-5 right). The second floor would have two bedrooms in the centre of the house along with one fireplace.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

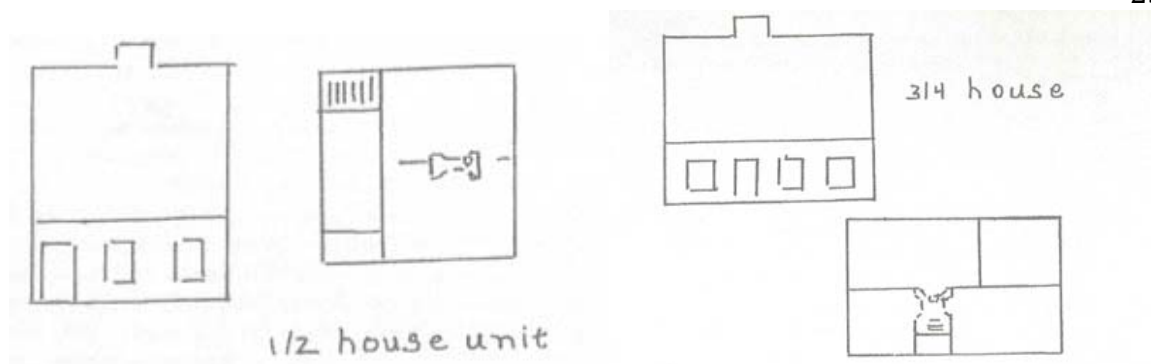


Figure 1-5 (Left): The Cape Cod, 1/2 house unit. **Right:** Cape Cod, 3/4 house units. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein's *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*.⁵⁸

The full Cape Cod had a balanced façade, two windows on each side of the center entrance, large and small rooms and many windows on the first floor created a warm cheerful house while on the second floor bedrooms varied, three or four small rooms or two large rooms, one or two with fireplaces (see figure 1-6).⁵⁹ Immigrants to Nova Scotia often brought with them the style of architecture most natural to their social position in their country of origin.⁶⁰ Some settlers even brought their own houses by ship to be reassembled in Liverpool.⁶¹ Simeon Perkins, who will be discussed further in Chapter 2, had a true New England house in style, form and technology and it exhibits characteristics typical of houses in Connecticut.⁶² The style of Perkins' house is often referred to as 'Cape Cod' yet Allen Penney finds this term misleading, as the style was common to all

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶⁰ Allen Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: TUNS Architecture, 1987), 71,72, 96.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 96-97.

of New England (see figures 1-7—1-10).⁶³ However, Penney finds that “Perkins not only maintained a style of architecture common throughout New England at the time, he also maintained close links with his home in Connecticut and with the culture of upper class colonials, which must have been visible in his way of life and in the way that the house was used”.⁶⁴ By the mid-eighteenth century, from South Carolina to Nova Scotia, “one and two storey houses were built in the Georgian vernacular style which had been “developed from medieval English models, but had been modified into a uniquely North American style”.⁶⁵

The American colonists began with traditional architectural patterns transported from England, but when incongruities between that pattern and the new geographical context became evident they were quick to modify plans for a better fit to climate, terrain, and social conditions. But all of these traditions gave way to ingenious adaptations such as the lean-to extension by a 45° pitch of roof line or salt box style, the core fireplace serving both front and back of the house, slate replacements of thatched roofs, two units joined with summer beams on the roof, the hall entry as an access to various rooms, and the American Georgian style. It is worth the reminder that both the new Georgian and Salt Box lean-to styles were uniquely North American modifications. The colonists were not slavish replicators of tradition but rather innovators within those traditions to the extent that they created new North American Styles.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 138-139.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

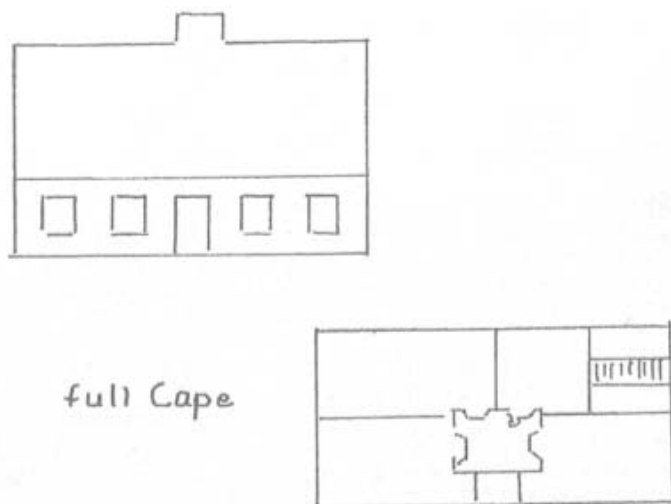


Figure 1-6: Cape Cod, full house unit. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein's *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*.⁶⁶

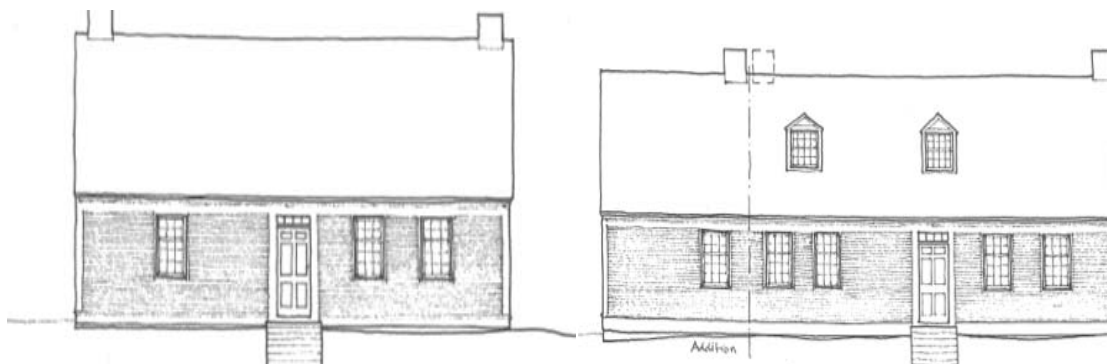


Figure 1-7 (Left): Simeon Perkins House, 1767, without addition that was very similar to a Cape Cod style. **Figure 1-8 (Right):** Simeon Perkins House, 1781, with addition. Available from: Allen Penney's *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*, 13.

⁶⁷ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 121.

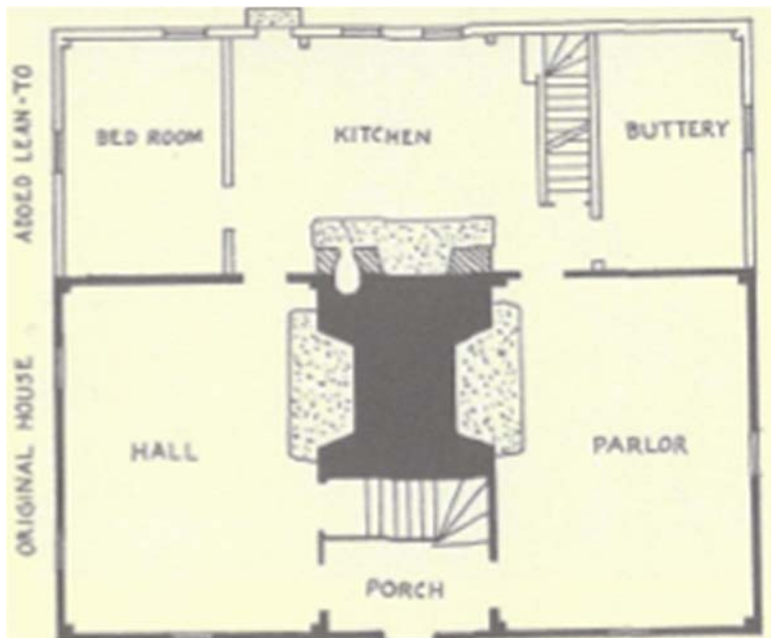


Figure 1-9: Seventeenth Century Cape Cod House Plan. Available from: Abbott Lowell Cummings' *Architecture in Early New England*.⁶⁸

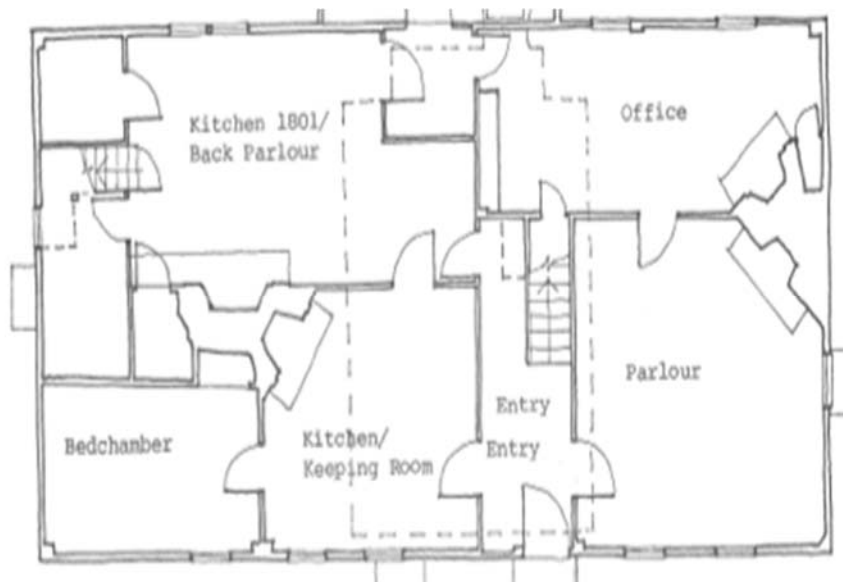


Figure 1-10: Ground Floor Plan, Simeon Perkins House, 1949 (kitchen extension not included in this floor plan). Available from: Allen Penney's *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Cummings, *Architecture in Early New England*, 3.

⁶⁹ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 150.

In England after 1714, the Georges (I, II, and III) were reigning and from them the architecture of the period derived the name Georgian.⁷⁰ Brick characterized Georgian architecture, along with a 30° roof pitch, ornate chimney, dormers cut into the front roof of the gambrel.⁷¹ During this period, the two-storey house was often built as a half or three-quarter house and when modified to a Georgian colonial the home had taken on a new spaciousness (see figure 1-11).⁷² Variations of the basic Georgian lines appeared, “A double hipped roof allowed dormers and third floor living space, or a fence, enclosing a flat deck, might decorate the roof as well as cut the height of the roof” (see figure 1-12).⁷³ An important Georgian architectural style typical of Anglo-American domestic architecture that could be found in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was Neoclassicism. The Wadsworth-Longfellow House (see figure 1-13)⁷⁴ is an excellent example of this Georgian style and within it “lived four generations of one remarkable family that made significant contributions to the political, literary, and cultural life of New England and the United States. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) grew up in the house and went on to become one of the most famous men of his time”.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷¹ Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*, 18-19.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 20-21. “With the addition of rooms comes the designation of each space as public or private. Once this distinction is made, it becomes an important one to maintain”. See, Burkette, *Parlor Talk: Complexity from a Historical Perspective*, 395.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁷⁴ “The Wadsworth-Longfellow House is an important architectural artifact of New England’s past. Originally a two-story structure with a pitched roof, it was the first wholly brick dwelling in Portland.” See, Maine Historical Society. “The Wadsworth-Longfellow House”.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

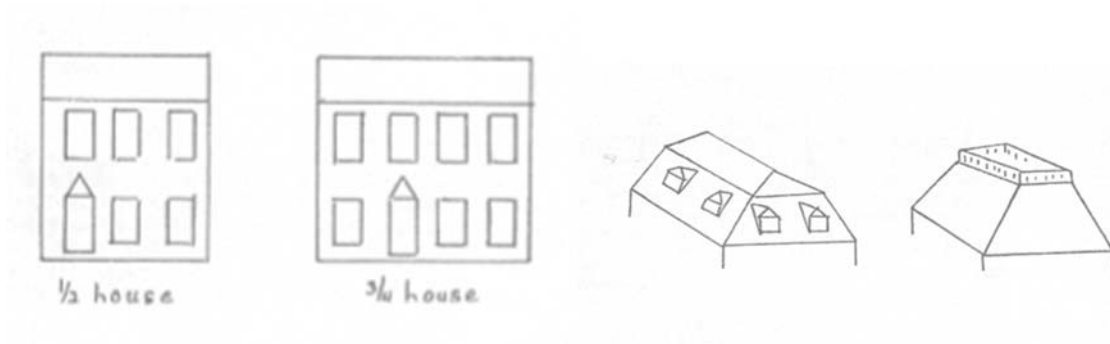


Figure 1-11 (Left): The two-storey Georgian House was often built as a $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ house. These styles were particularly popular in Connecticut. **Figure 1-12 (Right):** Double hipped roof allowing for dormers, third floor living space, fence or enclosing a flat deck. Available from: Isabella Hagelstein's *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*.⁷⁶



Figure 1-13: Henry Wadsworth-Longfellow House on Congress Street in Portland, Maine. Available from: Maine Historical Society.⁷⁷

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a “commanding figure in the cultural life of nineteenth-century America”.⁷⁸ Born in Portland, Maine, in 1807,⁷⁹ he became

⁷⁶ Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*, 20.

⁷⁷ Maine Historical Society. "The House and Grounds", Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Maine Historical Society. URL: http://www.hwlongfellow.org/house_restoration.shtml. Accessed: 15 July 2014.

⁷⁸ Joyce Butler, Richard D'Abate and Laura Fecych Sprague, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Portland Home* (Maine: Maine Historical Society, 2004), 1.

⁷⁹ Charles C. Calhoun, *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2004), 5.

a “national literary figure by the 1850s, and a world-famous personality by the time of his death in 1882”.⁸⁰ The ancestry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is recorded in his name as the Wadsworth and Longfellow families were representative of New England’s old-stock, modest, cultural elite.⁸¹ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow lived in two houses for most of his life: the Wadsworth-Longfellow House on Congress Street in Portland, Maine,⁸² built by the poet’s grandfather, General Peleg Wadsworth, in 1785-1786⁸³ where he grew up (see figure 1-13); and Craigie House, the 1759 colonial mansion in Cambridge, Massachusetts (see figure 1-14), where he lived from 1837 until his death in 1882⁸⁴ and which served for a time as George Washington’s Revolutionary headquarters.⁸⁵ In regard to the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, Anne Longfellow Pierce, the poet’s sister, “bequeathed the Wadsworth-House to the Maine Historical Society upon her death in 1901; it opened as a museum later that year. Virtually all of the household items and artifacts are original to the Wadsworth and Longfellow families”.⁸⁶ Anne’s decorating decisions in the Wadsworth-

⁸⁰ Butler, D’Abate and Sprague, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Portland Home*, 1.

⁸¹ Longfellow’s grandparents were “plentifully endowed with the goods of this world. Their social status is unquestioned. The father is a successful lawyer and soon to be entrusted with public offices. He is a State Legislator, presidential elector and member of Congress in turn. He is the official welcomer of Lafayette to Portland. He is a trustee of Bowdoin College and the recipient of an LL.D. from that institution. He is the Recording Secretary and President of the Main Historical Society. Henry’s mother is the complement to this nature. She is sensitive, a lover of nature, of music, of poetry, of religion. The mind of Henry is evolved from the imbedded urges and instincts of these two people”. See, Herbert S. Gorman, *A Victorian American Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 38.

⁸² Herbert S. Gorman, *A Victorian American Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 37.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁴ Calhoun, *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life*, ix.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ix. ⁸⁵ Longfellow’s descendants “occupied Craigie House until 1950 and it became a National Historic Site in 1972, and is now known as the Longfellow National Historic Site”. See, Maine Historical Society. “Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: His Homes”. URL: http://www.hwlongfellow.org/life_overview.shtml. Accessed: 15 July 2014.

⁸⁶ Maine Historical Society. “The Wadsworth-Longfellow House”.

Longfellow house “reflected the Victorian aesthetic, but always kept the historic nature of the building in mind”.⁸⁷ The Longfellow family “possessed a reverence for the past. For them, having antique objects and furniture stimulated their awareness of America's past and their house's association with George Washington and the American Revolution”.⁸⁸



Figure 1-14: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow occupied Craigie House, a colonial masterpiece built in 1759, which served as George Washington’s headquarters during the Revolutionary War. Available from: Historic Buildings of Massachusetts.⁸⁹

The parlour, located off a central hall, was always the best room in the house, used by the Wadsworths and the Longfellows regularly as well as for special formal occasions.⁹⁰ The parlour was furnished with portraits of Henry

⁸⁷ Butler, D’Abate and Sprague, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Portland Home*, 21.

⁸⁸ National Park Service U.S Department of the Interior. "Historical Furnishings and Decorative Arts." *Longfellow National Historic Site*. Last Updated: 21 June 2014. URL: <http://www.nps.gov/long/historyculture/historic-furnishings-and-decorative-arts.htm>. Accessed: 15 July 2014.

⁸⁹ Historic Buildings of Massachusetts, “The Vassal-Craigie-Longfellow House (1759)” URL: <http://mass.historicbuildingsct.com/?p=7>. Accessed: 31 July 2014. “Craigie House epitomized Longfellow’s genteel decorum”. See, Gartner, “Longfellow’s Place: The Poet and Poetry of Craigie House”, 42.

⁹⁰ Maine Historical Society. "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow : The Parlor". Zilpah Wadsworth, the poet's mother, “wrote during her childhood of the reading and musical events that occurred here. This room is also where her sister Eliza Wadsworth died in 1802 and where the Wadsworth and Longfellow daughters were married”.

Wadsworth Longfellow along with landscape paintings, engravings, and stylish furniture.⁹¹ Around the 1800s some of the furnishings had achieved heirloom status, including a pair of colonial Boston chairs, 1808 Portland lolling chairs, the 1801 Edward Savage print of George Washington in its historic location over the mantle, and three images of *Evangeline*, the heroine of Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem.⁹² Several different pianos were integral parlor furnishings over the years and the poet's Bellisent flute from Paris as well as early American music books with family annotations are in the collection.⁹³



Figure 1-15: View of parlor, ca. 1882. This view shows the walls covered with circa 1840-1850 foliate wallpaper and the use of polychrome paints on the woodwork. A wall-to-wall carpet with a diaper pattern covered the floor. Photograph by Jackson & Kinney. Available from: Maine Historic Preservation Commission.⁹⁴

⁹¹ *Ibid.* "The family's collection of colonial and federal furniture fills the house. Portraits, sculpture, works on paper, and furniture have been conserved. The interior is newly interpreted as the one Henry knew and loved at the height of his literary career".

⁹² *Ibid.* The 1855 engraving of *Evangeline* by James Faed, which is still on display, was, according to Anne Wadsworth Pierce, "the first one made after the Poem came out."

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Maine Historical Society. "The Parlor", Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Maine Historical Society. URL: http://www.hwlongfellow.org./house_parlor.shtml. Accessed: 15 July 2014.



Figure 1-16: Parlour as restored in 2002. Available from: Maine Historical Society.⁹⁵

In less than two centuries colonial architecture in New England grew from the one-room structure to increasingly elegant establishments, climaxing in the Georgian colonial mansion (see figure 1-13, the Longfellow House, Maine).⁹⁶ While the “Cape Cod house was transferred to Nova Scotia, the Connecticut Salt Box house was not. Nor was the more ebullient neo-classical or late nineteenth-century ornamentation widely used”.⁹⁷ Architectural critics seem to have derived as much pleasure from proving that a simple house could be as beautiful as one displaying the magnificence of the most elaborate residence.⁹⁸ The inclusion of cottage plans in the same book with mansion plans “indicated the author’s conviction that both participated in a single culture, that of beauty and

⁹⁵ Maine Historical Society. “The Parlor”, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Maine Historical Society. URL: http://www.hwlongfellow.org/house_parlor.shtml. Accessed: 15 July 2014.

⁹⁶ Hagelstein, *A Primer on New England's Colonial Architecture*, 29.

⁹⁷ Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth, “Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces— A Reconnaissance,” *Acadiensis* 10:2 (1980): 100.

⁹⁸ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 274.

refinement”.⁹⁹ Even those who lived in poverty “could represent the self through an exhibition of modest possessions”.¹⁰⁰ Thus, objects, particularly the architectural dimensions of dwellings and their rooflines, could be interpreted as an expression of refinement and sensibility in material culture and an expression of American innovation in the transition of its parlour culture from the English models.

In the second instance of the argument for the transitional nature of vernacular American parlour culture, innovation was also key to that transition in the development of social behaviour that carved out its own form of ‘refinement’. The term ‘refinement’ can also refer to intangible, social behavior as well as to material culture. Then according to Grier, by the eighteenth-century,

The ideas behind the words *refine* and *refinement* included the concept of progress—‘an instance of improvement or advance toward something more refine or perfect’, both in the realm of technology and science and in the world of the humanities, as in ‘to polish or improve; to make more elegant or cultivated’. This concept of improvement and advancement not only encompassed scholarly learning but also included a broader notion of personal cultivation—‘fineness of feeling, taste or thought; elegance of manners, culture, polish’.¹⁰¹

A comparison of these definitions is significant for its “conflation of material and social qualities; it also contains the possibility of expressing ideas about moral character in terms of progress”.¹⁰² Thus, we can think of ‘refinement’ as “suitable for expressing certain qualities in human social behavior: technical skill; control of time for the purposes of improvement; attention to detail; and development of

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Ward, *A History of Domestic Space: Privacy and the Canadian Home*, 63.

¹⁰¹ Grier, *Culture & Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930*, 156.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

‘fineness of feeling’, self-control, and mastery of social forms”.¹⁰³ Grier, who follows within the Bushman sphere of influence, concludes that refinement or “gentility was sometimes relevant to common people, not a matter left entirely to the wealthy who could afford its costly *accoutrements*”.¹⁰⁴

The refinement of actions and spoken words also carried over into letter writing because “style is the dress of thoughts” as writing could tell as much about a person as their clothing.¹⁰⁵ Letter writing had many purposes for the colonists but primarily the letter became the primary means for maintaining social networks after people had moved from their communities.¹⁰⁶ Books also long “had a place in refined households. A particular species of books—courtesy books—had for centuries helped the refining populations to polish their personalities”.¹⁰⁷ But fiction ranked high with the reading public. Readers consumed “vast amounts of it as short stories or novels, and got more of the same notions from poetry that was nearly widespread”.¹⁰⁸ Their choices were significant “for the refining process because the writers of sentimental fiction so warmly embraced genteel values”.¹⁰⁹ An apt literary parallel for this theme can be found in the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, as it is from the Boston states that parlour culture was transferred by sea to Nova Scotia.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁰⁵ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 90.

¹⁰⁶ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 173.

¹⁰⁷ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 280.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 288.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

Longfellow's poetry "evoked the sympathy of his readers, and it strengthened their best feelings by giving natural, appropriate, and beautiful utterance to them...His poems in their excellence were the true image of the poet".¹¹⁰ Longfellow was not only a more admirable poet "than his twentieth-century detractors would have admitted; his most enduring cultural achievement is to have created and disseminated much of what we think of as Victorian American culture".¹¹¹ Longfellow's "contemporaries saw him not just as a world-famous poet and an admirable man but as a vitalizing force at the very center of their culture."¹¹² Longfellow, without being "quite conscious of it, was as much English as he was American. He was our great Victorian".¹¹³ Longfellow's influence spread to most aspects of American life, most notably the decorative arts.¹¹⁴ People were reading fiction and "Their choices were significant for the refining process because the writers of sentimental fiction so warmly embraced genteel values. By invariably making the heroes and heroines refined, the stories taught people to pursue mental culture and the rest of the genteel virtues".¹¹⁵ Fiction consumed through novels, short stories or poetry "was better suited than the etiquette books to reach a broad public if only because the authors told stories about real life".¹¹⁶

The heroes and heroines were idealized stereotypes, and the secondary figures were caricatures set up as foils to make a point. Yet for all their

¹¹⁰ "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow", *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 17 (June 1881-82): 406.

¹¹¹ Calhoun, *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life*, xi.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, xvi.

¹¹³ Gorman, *A Victorian American Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, ix.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xi. For the next fifty years, there were people who sought to live in replicas of the Craigie House right down to the tall-case clocks that had stood in the parlour.

¹¹⁵ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 288.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 289.

unreality, the characters in the stories lived in recognizable villages where people worked, married, sickened, and died, making them far more appealing than the list of rules in the etiquette books.¹¹⁷

One way to conceive “the influence of fiction is to recognize that people thought of their own lives as stories, following narrative lines like the ones they so frequently read. They intermingled literature and life”.¹¹⁸ The presence of the parlour was a testament of the family’s refinement and the presence of the word ‘parlour’ in Longfellow’s poetry was a symbol of the dissemination of that culture through literature to the population.

The term, ‘parlour’, recurring in a number of Longfellow’s poems, involved the crucial characteristic of a refined house, “free of work paraphernalia and beds, and dedicated to formal entertainment and the presentation of the family’s most decorative possessions”.¹¹⁹ In Longfellow’s *Voices of the Night* collection, 1839, written after the death of his first wife, he enshrined her memory in one of the “most exquisite elegies in our literature, ‘Footsteps of Angels’”.¹²⁰ The term ‘parlour’ in this early work, *Voices of the Night*, followed some four years after the tragic death of his first wife, Mary Potter, who died in 1835 after a miscarriage.¹²¹ This elegy sets an eerie parlour scene: “Ere the evening lamps are lighted, And, like phantoms grim and tall, Shadows from the fitful firelight Dance upon the parlour wall”.¹²² This passage evokes a presence of the Victorian parlour after

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 288.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹²⁰ Oliphant Smeaton, *Longfellow & His Poetry* (London: George G. Harrap & Company, 1978), 36.

¹²¹ Calhoun, *Longfellow: A Rediscovered Life*, 115-118.

¹²² Henry Frowde, *The Poetical Works of Longfellow* (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), 5.

dark when candles or oil lamps provided light and a fire would burn in the hearth, a place suited to the solitary musings of the poet. The darkness and solitude of the parlour scene acts as a shadow stage where grim phantoms and fire imagery play upon the wall. Such a scene is quite believable of the 1882 view of the aristocratic Wadsworth-Longfellow parlour in Portland, Maine (see figure 1-15) that portrays the dream-like quality of a long ago parlour, one that was even then “steeped in a reverence for the past”. This claim for a multi-dimensional past could not be made so unequivocally for the same parlour pictured as a restoration in 2002 (see figure 1-16) that emanates a modern aura with its forthright bright appearance—almost glaring—and bare windows; though the same antique furnishings remain, like the loss of the three renderings of *Evangeline*, these furnishings have lost their appeal from the past, as they shrink, faded, into the corners amid a starkly bright exterior. Longfellow’s parlour scene in *Voices of the Night* is a poetic compliment to the 1882 photograph of the Longfellow parlour in Maine.

In his following poetic references to ‘parlor’ Longfellow moves away from the individualized, personalized parlour of *Voices of the Night* to one of a more inclusive social context such as the parlor in his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, 1863, from *Part First*, “Prelude: The Wayside Inn”,

The firelight, shedding over all
 The splendor of its ruddy glow,
 Filled the whole parlor large and low;
 It gleamed on wainscot and on wall,
 It touched with more than wonted grace
 Fair Princess Mary's pictured face;
 It bronzed the rafters overhead,

On the old spinet's ivory keys
 It played inaudible melodies,
 It crowned the sombre clock with flame,
 The hands, the hours, the maker's name,
 And painted with a livelier red
 The Landlord's coat-of-arms again;¹²³

This is another apt description of an American parlour in the culture at that time with firelight, decorative wainscot on the walls, portraits of royalty, and perhaps a tall case clock. However, it is not a personal parlour, but one that is used by the common folk who have need of the hostel. Even so, the continuity of the poet's musing established by the generative power of his earlier metaphor is extended here by the firelight or lamplight, in a distinctly Heraclitean mode, transforming the common artifacts of the *Wayside Inn*. This transformation by fire is revealed as a "shedding over all, The splendor of its ruddy glow", gleaming on the wall and on "Fair Princess Mary's pictured face", bronzing the rafters and the spinet piano's ivory keys, but "it crowned the somber clock with flame"...and reddened "the Landlord's coat of arms". What was used, common, and ordinary has taken on the lustre of a prized museum collection, burnished by the abrasion of time to the extent that the clock, the marker of time, is "crowned...with flame". This transformation is evident not only to the squire in "Prelude" (Part Second) who "sat before the parlor fire"¹²⁴ but also to the random crowd of folk who enter and are enumerated by him. Longfellow's symbolism paints a glowing picture of the passage of time upon the parlour and all its users from the sundry walks of life. It

¹²³ Frowde, *The Poetical Works of Longfellow*, 344.

¹²⁴ 'Prelude' from *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (Part Second) from Maine Historical Society—Poem Database. URL: www.hwlongfellow.org. Accessed: 30 July 2014.

is ironic that these common folk pay respect to a rigid conformist of Victorian ritual, the then “Fair Princess Mary”. This parlour in the inn is for the common folk and displays a thorough-going democratization of parlour culture in its inclusivity of all types of travellers.

Thus, Longfellow’s symbolism is beginning to structure a pattern for revealing the changes in social forces that reestablish the exclusively aristocratic parlour along democratic lines. He reveals the parlour being rapidly structured into the architecture and social mores of a newly developing common society, through his common inn. Against the dangers and obstacles in the American continent, a mutual dependence encouraged co-operation and sharing in a respectful manner that would benefit the common good. Those social changes are revealed through the levels of symbolism over the course of the great poet’s productive life, over forty years, from *Voices of the Night*, 1839, to *Tales of the Wayside Inn*, 1863, and finally *Keramos and Other Poems*, 1878, shortly before his death in 1882. Beginning with the elegant Longfellow parlour, his dominant symbols of fire and light herald the change to a democratization of the parlour as a force in American life down to the most humble abode. So sustained was his interest in the theme of the parlour that he even utilizes symbols of the heavens, roadsides and rivers to aid perception of this proliferating social process and his interest never waned in this topic but moved concurrently with his revelation of the parlour in the great republic.

Longfellow's elemental symbolism of fire and light in *Tales of a Wayside Inn* continues to expand and substantiate his insight into the democratization of the parlour.

Then all arose, and said "Good Night."
 Alone remained the drowsy
 Squire to rake the embers of the fire,
 And quench the waning parlor light;
 While from the windows, here and there,
 The scattered lamps a moment gleamed,
 And the illumined hostel seemed
 The constellation of the Bear,
 Downward, athwart the misty air,
 Sinking and setting toward the sun.
 Far off the village clock struck one.¹²⁵

By late evening in the "Finale" (Part First), the Squire, a representative of the emerging middle class, remains alone to rake the embers of the fire and put out "the waning parlor light". Nevertheless, scattered lights gleam here and there such that the illumined hostel seemed "The constellation of the Bear", Ursa Major, which also finds mention in Homer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Tennyson, and in Job. Ursa Major is an apt parallel to the unanimity of increasing numbers of parlour dwellers since that constellation is visible to everyone throughout the year in most of the Northern Hemisphere, a most extended metaphor of inclusivity. Longfellow's efforts to bring the parlour within the conceptual parameters of the common people is again echoed in his coarsest metaphor, the "*Wayside Weeds*" in "These are the tales...Flowers of the field...And tufts of

¹²⁵ 'Finale' from *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (Part First) from Maine Historical Society—Poem Database. URL: www.hwlongfellow.org. Accessed: 30 July 2014.

wayside weeds and gorse Hung in the parlor of the inn Beneath the sign of the Red Horse".¹²⁶ Parlours did proliferate like weeds along the Western Atlantic.

From *Part Third of Tales of a Wayside Inn*, the "Theologian's Tale: Elizabeth": "Thus spake Elizabeth Haddon at nightfall to Hannah the housemaid, As in the farm-house kitchen, that served for kitchen and parlor, By the window she sat with her work, and looked on a landscape"¹²⁷, which gave a view of the flowing Delaware. His description of this farmhouse kitchen (see figure 1-17) that also served as a parlour acknowledges a parlour culture that was created for the wealthy and leisured but had now become assimilated by people who depended on hard work. These sparse words convey the whole idea of the parlour historically transformed into a farmhouse—an early vernacular setting that largely conformed to the figure 1-17 diagram of "The Hall and Parlour House".

The last scene being Elizabeth's view of the flowing Delaware seems at first just a random choice of one of America's rivers except for the historical part played by the Delaware River in the Mason-Dixon line. From 1774 negotiations of the commissioners of Pennsylvania and Virginia continued for five years to determine the western border by tracing the course of the Delaware River displaced five degrees to the west. After Pennsylvania abolished slavery in 1781, the western part of this line and the Ohio River became a border between slave

¹²⁶ 'Finale' from *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (Part Third) from Maine Historical Society—Poem Database. URL: www.hwlongfellow.org. Accessed: 30 July 2014.

¹²⁷ Henry Frowde, *The Poetical Works of Longfellow*, 436.

and free states. The significance of Elizabeth's perception of these facts casts a prophetic meaning for the progress of inclusivity in parlour culture. That Mason-Dixon line had a negative import of the inclusivity of all people.

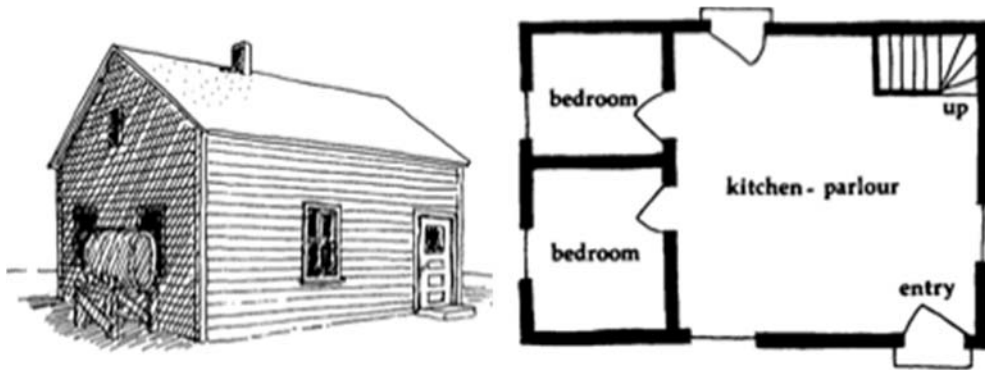


Figure 1-17: The Hall and Parlour House, 1750-1950. Available from: Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth's "Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces—A Reconnaissance".¹²⁸

This shift in the parameters of 'parlour culture' constitutes for Longfellow a full democratization of the concept befitting a new republic. The aristocratic poet was able to voice the enrichment of parlour culture with its integration in the concept of 'home' for all citizens.

The glimpses into his quasi-aristocratic lifestyle are likewise offset and neutralized by his willingness to indulge the commonplace feelings of melancholy, weariness, and loss. In short, Longfellow managed to be simultaneously of and not of the people, and this paradox seems to have made him all the more dear to them.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Ennals and Holdsworth, "Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces—A Reconnaissance," *Acadiensis* Vol. X (Spring, 1981), 90.

¹²⁹ Gartner, "Longfellow's Place: The Poet and Poetry of Craigie House", 56.

In social terms, this poetic transformation of the parlour is one of inclusivity that encompasses human concerns on the vernacular level that joined kitchen and parlour. Finally, before his death in 1882, from *Keramos and Other Poems*, 1878, in “Kéramos”, Longfellow writes “The parlor walls, the chamber floors, The stairways and the corridors”¹³⁰ to include the whole humble house in the parlour way of life. With these words he has completed the tale of the emerging inclusive structure of the parlour in the new world and he returns to his own solitary parlour in his 1878 “A Dutch Picture” from *Keramos and Other Poems (Birds of Passage. Flight the Fifth)*: “Restless at times with heavy strides, He paces his parlor to and fro; He is like a ship that at anchor rides, And swings with the rising and falling tides And tugs at her anchor-tow”.¹³¹

Longfellow’s poetry acknowledged a parlour culture that was created for the wealthy and leisured but had also become assimilated by people who depended on hard work. However, Sally McMurry in her article on “Rural Vernacular Design and the American Parlor” suggests “Country people tended to associate the parlor with waste, idleness and excessive formality, while urbanites usually accepted it as a room that accommodated well to the demands of city society”.¹³² In the rural areas the conflict over the parlour had produced new vernacular designs which served as alternatives and an expansion of the functions of the parlour. One alternative was the “seventeenth-through

¹³⁰ Frowde, *The Poetical Works of Longfellow*, 725.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 334.

¹³² Sally McMurry, “City Parlor, Community Sitting Room: Rural Vernacular Design and the American Parlor, 1840-1900” *Winterthur Portfolio* Vol. 20, No. 4 (1985), 261.

nineteenth-century New England village with its central green, or commons, Protestant church, and meeting house”.¹³³ The correlation “between community function and settlement form was so important”.¹³⁴ The value placed on inclusive community life is emphasized by the construction of these comparatively large halls. The importance of the hall in community-building activities and in promoting parlour culture will be seen in Chapter 3 on the small communities of Hunts Point and White Point, Queens County.

This analysis of the progression in the vernacular American parlour culture, as noted, firstly, in its material culture and, secondly, in its intangible social mores portrayed in Longfellow’s symbolic transition of the parlour, brings this study to the third instance of the argument for transition in the American parlour culture. This third argument concerns the research by Karen V. Hansen of the actual customs of the colonial people in an expanded form of parlour culture. *A Very Social Time* by Karen V. Hansen uncovers an important and largely untapped history by investigating “first-person narratives—in the form of diaries, letters, and autobiographies—of textile workers, sailors, domestic servants, day laborers, and other working people of New England”.¹³⁵ These documents provide a unique view of “everyday life that helps to fill a gaping hole in American history and sociology”.¹³⁶ The writings of 56 diarists (28 men and 28 women), spanning

¹³³ Harvey K. Flad, “The Parlor in the Wilderness: Domesticating Iconic American Landscape” in *The Geographical Review* 99:3 (July 2009), 356-341.

¹³⁴ Joseph S. Wood, “Village and community in early colonial New England” in *Journal of Historical Geography* 8:4 (1982), 333-341.

¹³⁵ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 2.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

the period 1788-1908, 19 autobiographers, and approximately 100 letter-correspondents comprised the body of her historical materials.¹³⁷ The primary advantage of first-person narratives—

that they are personal testaments of lived behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs—offsets what social scientists and historians usually assess as a major disadvantage, the bias of an individual’s subjective perspective. The workingmen and women render the world using their own palette of colors. Their universe revolved around their families, work, and community.¹³⁸

Hansen’s conceptualization of the social grew out of her interpretation of everyday life in *antebellum* New England embracing the activities that transcended an individual household and included the whole community.¹³⁹

Community-building activities required “time, intention, and skill; they were a kind of ‘social work’, or work in the social sphere”.¹⁴⁰ Karen V. Hansen investigated “visiting rituals as a form of ‘social work’ and this formulation acknowledges both the need to actively maintain neighborly friendships and the labor—mental, physical, and emotional that sustains them”.¹⁴¹ Hansen expands our understanding of the early social work beyond kin networks to look at the neighborhood, the village, and the town. Women and men “within the social sphere dynamically mediated the various forces of society—tying the family to the community, neighbor to neighbor, the individual to the collectivity”.¹⁴² In *antebellum* New England, “friendship was a linchpin of the culture of mutuality,

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

neighborliness, and reciprocity within the social sphere".¹⁴³ By highlighting the social activities of visiting we discover the spirit of community. The social work of everyday activities was spatially anchored by the spread of parlours on the vernacular level and its unique values of mutuality, reciprocity, voluntarism, and localism,¹⁴⁴ all contribute to a mode of inclusivity in society. Hansen's research is foundational for this study that considers diaries and oral history of Nova Scotian communities ethnically derived from New England. Further application of Hansen's social theory will be found in the following chapter on Simeon Perkins and the inclusive Liverpool Township.

A spirit of inventiveness both in their material culture and in their pattern of behaviour allowed the New Englanders to recreate a parlour culture that was vibrant, enjoyable and prosperous by embracing the talents and social support of all community members—its framework of gentility was the source of its power. It was a truly inclusive venture in social life that spoke to others and created friendly communities.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

Chapter 2: Simeon Perkins and an Inclusive Liverpool Township

Thomas H. Raddall¹⁴⁵ once said Simeon Perkins “was destined to be the heart and soul of the new settlement of Liverpool in the stormy years to come, and the historian of its early struggles”.¹⁴⁶ Perkins owned a trim white house nestled under lovely old trees¹⁴⁷ and in regard to the house, Allen Penney writes that it “may be interpreted as modest while exhibiting an awareness of social status, sophistication and prestige all of which were firmly established in the mind of a young merchant of thirty-one years of age at the time of its building”.¹⁴⁸ Simeon Perkins was a 27-year-old Yankee who came to Liverpool from Norwich, Connecticut. He was attracted by advertisements of free land and the bounty of fish and lumber resources in Liverpool as well as the fine harbour where he would be able to extend his company’s trading activities.¹⁴⁹ Having decided to make his home in Liverpool, Perkins was “soon recognized as the town’s leading resident, its foremost Justice... a pillar and critic of the religious community and a

¹⁴⁵ In 1936 the Simeon Perkins house was sold to the Queens County Historical Society of which Thomas H. Raddall was the current president and until that time, the house had survived one hundred and sixty-nine years under the ownership of only two families, through five generations. Raddall had carried on an extended campaign to have the house available to the public and made into a museum. In 1949, this dream would be achieved as the house was donated to the King for the Province of Nova Scotia in 1947. The house would be opened officially to the public as a Nova Scotian Historic House on June 29th, 1957. The house was then transferred from the Department of Trade and Industry to the Department of Education in 1960, when it became the earliest of the houses in the Nova Scotia Museum collection. Raddall fought a protracted battle with indifferent politicians and public officials as well as public apathy to get the house both open and furnished for the enjoyment of visitors. Thomas H. Raddall compiled a detailed account of the Simeon Perkins House, from its purchase by the Queens County Historical Society in 1936 to the celebration of Liverpool’s 200th Anniversary in 1959 as his personal diary records over this period. See, The Queens County Historical Society Records, 1929-1959 as compiled by Thomas H. Raddall (Archives, Thomas H. Raddall Research Centre, Queens County Museum). Also, see Allen Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: TUNS Architecture, 1987), 70-72, 148.

¹⁴⁶ Tom Sheppard, *Historic Queens County, Nova Scotia* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Nimbus Publishing, 2001), xi.

¹⁴⁷ Thomas H. Raddall, *Ogomkegea; The Story of Liverpool, Nova Scotia* (Queens County Museum, 1983), 15.

¹⁴⁸ Sheppard, *Historic Queens County, Nova Scotia*, 33.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 32.

loyal protector of Liverpool's rights and social order".¹⁵⁰ From his arrival in May 1762, Perkins was a prominent citizen, merchant and politician who came into contact with many of the leading figures in the province of Nova Scotia dining with Princes, Governors and military men.

Perkins' status as a widower, having left his infant son in America, meant that he had sole responsibility for his home and entertainment until his second marriage to a widow, Elizabeth Headley in 1775, which produced eight more children. Perkins was also very heavily involved in the affairs of the community of Liverpool in Queens County. He had been made Justice of the Peace and a Justice of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas in 1764 only two years after his arrival in Liverpool and held this position for thirty-two years. In 1764 he was elected to represent Queens County in the House of Assembly in Halifax and he held this position until 1799. He became Lieutenant Colonel of the Militia in 1772 and later he assumed the title of Colonel-Commandant until his retirement in 1807. He also held a number of municipal and county posts such as the Proprietor's Clerk, Town Clerk and County Treasurer. "So deeply did the life of Colonel Simeon Perkins enter into the first fifty years of the history of Queen's County"¹⁵¹ that such an important man was bound to participate and perhaps even be the centre of a colonial interpretation of the parlour culture brought to the new settlement.

¹⁵⁰ Douglas M. Brown, *From Yankee to Nova Scotian Simeon Perkins of Liverpool, Nova Scotia 1762-1796* (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University, 1978), "Abstract".

¹⁵¹ Robert James Long, *A Copy of the Annals of Liverpool and Queens County, Nova Scotia, 1760-1867* (West Medford, MA, 1926), 1278.

After Perkins death in 1812, his sons John Perkins and Simeon Leonard Perkins acted as joint executors and trustees of his last will and testament. He advises them to sell what they think fit in order to cover the debts he would have owed: “whatsoever and whensoever trust at their discretion to sell and dispose of the same at such time and times” and “in such manner and upon such carry on as they the survivors shall think fit; and out of the proceeds to pay all my just debts which I shall owe at the time of my demise in whole if proportionally sufficient”.¹⁵² Elizabeth Perkins, at first surrounded by her children, had continued to live in the house for another ten years after Perkins death. But during that time, a mere ten years, five of her eight children by Perkins, four daughters and one son, had died while another son chose to leave Liverpool and settle in Norwich. In November 1822, Elizabeth sold the house to Caleb Seely, the contents were removed and she went to New York with her two remaining daughters.¹⁵³ Seely, a Loyalist from Connecticut who had settled in New Brunswick, moved into the house with his family in 1822. The property eventually passed to Seely’s niece, Mary Edith (Nichols) Lynch, who did not live in the house but sold it to the Queens County Historical Society in 1936. Remarkably, “until this time, the house had survived one hundred and sixty-nine years under the ownership of only two families, through five generations”.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Public Archives of Nova Scotia. Queens County, Province of Nova Scotia. Will Books 1802-1812, Vol.2, Reel 20113, 76. I also reviewed Simeon Perkins estate papers, Public Archives of Nova Scotia. Queens County Co. Province of Nova Scotia. Estate Papers, A-122. Reel 20118.

¹⁵³ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-198*, 70.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 71.



Figure 2-1: Simeon Perkins Museum House, Liverpool, Nova Scotia. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

Therefore, as of 1822, no original furnishings belonging to Simeon Perkins existed in his old house in Liverpool and the furniture in the house today has come from a variety of sources.¹⁵⁵ These furnishings approximating the date and style of the original pieces were delivered to the Perkins House by the Nova Scotia Museum who purchased them from auctions or received donations from private estates. As well, some unspecified furnishings were given to the Perkins House by the Queens County Historical Society. And lastly, though the items have not been identified, there were some minor furnishings received from the Old Sturbridge Village Museum in Massachusetts. These material possessions will display links with the past through family portraits, wealth through furnishings, refinements through books, pictures, *objets d'art*, and musical instruments.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Some of these sources are indicated in 'Perkins House Collection: N. S. Museum Inventory Computerized'. Available from the Queens County Museum, Liverpool, Nova Scotia. More information to follow on the inventory in this chapter.

¹⁵⁶ Ward, *A History of Domestic Space: Privacy and the Canadian Home*, 62.

The only authentic items belonging to Simeon Perkins are now housed in the Elizabeth Perkins Museum in York, Maine in the United States: a compass, carved cane with silver tip, sampler made by Lucy Perkins in Liverpool, a Simon Willard tall case clock, Boston Block-Front chest of drawers, original portrait of Simeon Perkins, and original portrait of Elizabeth Headley Perkins (see figures 2-2—2-8). The following photographs of the last existing authentic artifacts belonging to Simeon Perkins were made available by The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA, through the invaluable assistance of its curator, Cynthia Young-Gomes.



Figure 2-2: Compass. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA. (H.1992.68)¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Of the last authentic possessions of Simeon Perkins in Old York Museum, Maine, U.S.A, in the Elizabeth Perkins Museum, the compass would have been a very personal and prized possession of Perkins—a means to find his way on land and sea. There “were no roads at first, of course”. See Sheppard, *Historic Queens County, Nova Scotia*, 95. In 1798, Simeon Perkins said in his diary that three gentlemen from Nictaux, Annapolis County, had walked through the woods to Liverpool to propose cutting a road linking the two communities. See Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1790-1796*, ed., C.B. Fergusson (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1961), 103.



Figure 2-3: Walking Stick. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA (H.1980.43).¹⁵⁸



Figure 2-4: Sampler. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA (H.1982.430)¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Perkins carved cane c. 1810 would have been his constant companion in his late years of illness; by 1807 he had resigned from all of his public offices.

¹⁵⁹ When decorating the parlour, it was the custom to prominently display the handiwork of daughters in parlours along with purchased commodities. Perkins daughter Lucy was only 12 years old in 1792 when she completed this skilled piece of artistry. See, Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 152.



Figure 2-5: Tall-Case Clock. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA (H.1982.137)¹⁶⁰



Figures 2-6: Boston Block-Front Mahogany Chest of Drawers. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA. (H.1980.16)¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Perkins tall case clock was a Simon Willard design, a much sought after product in New England. "Inside the case of the clock is the original printed label together with some added notes, stating the clock was made by 'Simon Willard at his CLOCK DIAL, in Roxbury St.'" It is thought to have belonged to Perkins and/or his son John c. 1800-1820. See, Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 152.

¹⁶¹ A major piece of furniture was an authentic "Boston Block Front Mahogany Chest of Drawers, ca. 1760-62 (H. 1980.16)", belonging to Simeon Perkins and which may have been in the Simeon Perkins House during his lifetime. The "block-fronted furniture was popular in Boston, Salem, Newport and Connecticut".



Figure 2-7 (Left): Portrait of Simeon Perkins. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA.¹⁶² **Figure 2-8 (Right):** Portrait of Elizabeth Headley Perkins. Available from: The Collections of Museums of Old York, York, Maine, USA.¹⁶³

History reveals the block-front design was original to America and a major piece of the Perkins furniture was an authentic Boston Block Front Mahogany Chest of Drawers (see figure 2-6 for this chest in the collection at York). Its origin may be traced to Job Townsend (1699-1765), who in collaboration with his son-in-law, John Goddard (1723-1785), developed block-front and shell-carved

See, Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present* (New York: R. Marek, 1981), 175. There are a few distinguishing features that had placed this piece in safe keeping for 250 years, and finally, in the York Museum, Maine. The shape of the front is a wave design that alternates, “in a very gentle way from the convex (curved outward) on the side panels to concave (hollowed) in the center”. See Fairbanks and Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 175. It is made of mahogany wood, there is elegant bevelling on the side and between the drawers, and it has classic hardware on the front and, of course, the distinctive block-front design. It is believed that this piece would have been in the parlour or perhaps Perkins’ office.

¹⁶² The original portrait of Simeon Perkins resides in the drawing room of the Elizabeth Bishop Perkins House in York, Maine. It is a small watercolor and has no date.

¹⁶³ The portrait of “Elizabeth Headley Perkins, the second wife of Simeon Perkins, was painted by J. Comingo in 1813. The original hangs in the drawing room of the Elizabeth Bishop Perkins House in York, Maine. The chair in which she sits is similar to chairs in the Liverpool house, as can be seen in the photograph of the Keeping Room, 182” See, Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 182.

Chippendale furniture during the mid-eighteenth century in Newport, Rhode Island.¹⁶⁴ “This style of cabinetmaking is possibly the most original of any made in colonial America. Examples of this cabinetwork are greatly prized by private collectors and museums”.¹⁶⁵ Block-front furniture in the “convex-concave-convex pattern” or wave design was not limited to Rhode Island.¹⁶⁶ That “most original style” was much sought-after throughout New England; the Perkins block-front chest of drawers even made its way to Liverpool, Nova Scotia for a time. In typical Connecticut style its legs form cabriole brackets or ogee shapes.¹⁶⁷ “Most often, blocking is accomplished by the shaping of a single plank of wood, sometimes as thick as 6 or 7 inches. Other times, the blocks are merely applied, thus saving the cabinetmaker time and energy”.¹⁶⁸ These descriptions of the construction of artifacts portray actual acts of invention in the craft.

It is important to consider what effect tendencies in craft invention have upon the whole culture of a period. The development of an original American style as in this case of the Chippendale branching into the block-front design was not a singular accomplishment in the construction of artifacts for furnishing. The Windsor chair development by American craftsmen is another example of innovation at the level of tangible material culture that confirms originality and the place of invention in a culture that did not slavishly copy English models. Such

¹⁶⁴ Robert Bishop, *How to Know American Antique Furniture* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1973), 70.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

originality and refinement of artifact design contribute cultural markers of change in the tangible, material level. Actions on the tangible level of a culture have reflections on the behaviours of the intangible level as well since the same people engage at both levels. A change on the tangible level brings a response on the intangible level. Imaginative creations on one level inspire invention at other levels. Like their material counterpart, parlour culture mores were also subject to change to meet new social conditions in the colonies.

This chapter will now examine five pieces of furniture, all replacement pieces, gracing the parlour of the Perkins House today: 1) a Windsor chair in the parlour and others in the house, 2) Sheraton style sofa, 3) two matching wing back chairs, 4) a side chair, and 5) apron leaf desk. In a comparison of these pieces and their positioning in the parlour, the view up to 2012 composes an identical picture to the one taken by Allen Penney twenty-six years ago for his study, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987* (see figures 2-9 and 2-10). While none of these pieces is an authentic remnant of Perkins' parlour, they will be shown to represent the furniture of Simeon Perkins time and to originate from the New England colonies that manufactured the prototypes sought after by the New Englanders and especially the New England immigrants who settled in what is today Nova Scotia. Commerce, as well as visitation, were fairly frequent on these Atlantic routes and were even accelerated in the event of privateering. The parlour of Simeon Perkins was very reminiscent of those early colonial times. Its furnishings, though not authentic originals of

Perkins' parlour, are authentic to that time; one step into the parlour brings a sobering realization of entry to a different era.



Figure 2-9: Simeon Perkins Parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.



Figure 2-10: Simeon Perkins Parlour, circa. 1987. Available from: Allen Penney's *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 170.

The Windsor chair is a prime example of an English artifact perfected in the American colony. The basic model is made of wood with the back and sides consisting of multiple thin, turned spindles which are attached to “a solid, sculpted seat; its straight legs splay outward and its back reclines slightly”.¹⁷⁰ Numerous chairs of this style were seen throughout the Perkins House. The name of the Windsor chair was taken from the town of Windsor, England, where it originated around the year 1710. By the 1730s, “the style of chair had crossed the ocean and began appearing in Britain's American colonies”.¹⁷¹ It was first crafted in Philadelphia, and then many other variations were seen throughout New England and other regions. The form of the Windsor chair was highly perfected in America. Colonial craftsmen eliminated the central splat featured in the original chair's back and they also slenderized the splats and legs and for some models, the 'continuous arm'—that is, the chair arms and back rim—was designed from a single, bent piece of wood (see figure 2-11, left).¹⁷² These alterations simultaneously strengthened the chair while giving it a light, airy appearance - "a delicate balance and harmony," as Hornung puts it.¹⁷³ Windsor chairs were constructed for a number of functional uses including armchairs, side chairs, rockers and even Windsor settees.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Troy Segal, “The Windsor Chair”, <http://antiques.about.com/od/furniture/a/WindsorChair013010.htm>. Accessed: 16 July 2014.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates. *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present* (New York: R. Marek, 1981), 287.

Among many variations in the design of the Windsor chair, six basic types may be used for identification: “low back, comb back, hoop back, New England arm, fan back, and loop back”¹⁷⁵, all having certain similar characteristics like the slender, round spindles generally tapering upward, the chair backs slanting backward, and the seats being made from a single plank and hollowed out in the fashion of a saddle seat. In parlour culture, an important marker of refinement was “a peculiar form of specialization, which had reference both to the world of technology and to the realm of etiquette”.¹⁷⁶ Popular understanding of refinement in artifacts was “always progressive and was equated with increasing complexity in the appearance of each object and with increasing specialization in forms within categories of objects”.¹⁷⁷ The term ‘refinement’ refers both to customs and material objects.



Figures 2-11 (Left): Windsor armchair, New England, 1780-1810. **Middle:** Windsor chair, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1785-1796. **Right:** Windsor settee, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1785-1807. Available from: Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates’ *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Clarence Pearson Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art* (New York: Harrison House/H.N. Abrams, 1986), 216.

¹⁷⁶ Grier, *Culture & Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930*, 159.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 289.



Figure 2-12: “Quintessential” Windsor chair, Simeon Perkins Parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

From the origin of the chair in Windsor, England in 1710 to its arrival in Liverpool, Nova Scotia, in 1775, Allen Penney notes “from the diary it would seem that at least fifteen to twenty chairs would be required for the members of the Perkins household”.¹⁷⁹ One is able to identify three different variations of the Windsor chair in the Perkins House (see figures 2-12, 2-13, and 2-14). The Windsor chair found in Simeon Perkins’ parlour has the same slim spindle rods and legs and the semi-circular hoop back with continuous arms as the “quintessential Windsor” crafted in New England (figure 2-12). Another version of the New England arm type can be found in Simeon Perkins’ office (figure 2-13). This chair is a statement in simplicity with its continuous slat for both back and arms. The third variation of the Windsor chair can be seen in Simeon Perkins’

¹⁷⁹ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 182.

keeping room. This version has a rectilinear back shape and is sturdy enough for everyday use (figure 2-14). Their chief feature, lightweight, meant that these extra Windsor chairs could be easily moved into the parlour for additional company.



Figure 2-13 (Left): New England arm type Windsor chair, Simeon Perkins office, 2014. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014. **Figure 2-14 (Right):** New England Rectilinear Back Windsor chair, Simeon Perkins keeping room. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

The second piece of significant parlour furniture in Perkins' parlour, the Sheraton Style Sofa, dates from about 1790-1820 and was named for the designer Thomas Sheraton (1751-1806). Sheraton pieces generally have slim straight legs and "are in a neoclassic style and fall within the Federal period in the U.S...later Sheraton styles tended to be simpler, more severe with a strong rectilinear silhouette".¹⁸⁰ The moderate style of the Sheraton style sofa compares

¹⁸⁰ Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates' *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 218.

favourably with the key features of the present sofa in the Perkins House (figure 2-15), especially the slim rectilinear shape and generally slim lines and the vertical wood front supports descending into the end legs.¹⁸¹ The slim lines of the Windsor chairs and the Sheraton sofa were a strong movement away from the earlier heavy Gothic styles.



Figure 2-15: Sheraton Style Sofa, Simeon Perkins parlour, 2014. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

The next prominent piece of furniture in the Simeon Perkins House is the wing back chair. The two wing back chairs gracing the parlour of Simeon Perkins (see figures 2-16 and 2-17) also compare favourably with 17th-18th century examples of New England easy chairs (see figures 2-18 and 2-19). “Federal style upholstery was tightly organized and box like. Precise edges at the borders were made by tightly sewing the horsehair foundation into what was termed a “French

¹⁸¹ Hornung also shows illustrations of the general style of Sheraton sofa having its linearity accentuated by the striped fabric and striations carving the legs.

edge”.¹⁸² These pieces termed easy chairs are outstanding for their “boldly flared wings” and straight rolled arms and considered to be late examples of the Federal Period and they compare positively with the Perkins chairs.¹⁸³ The first example (figure 2-18)¹⁸⁴ is very typical of the Perkins period sample in figure 2-16; the second example (figure 2-19) of a New England wing chair, upholstered in an East India floral design, with carved legs, feet, and stretchers, ca. 1725, reflects the heavier support structure of the 17th century¹⁸⁵ and suggests the smooth arm line and carved feet of the Queen Ann example in figure 2-17. Nevertheless, these easy chairs have a style that seems popular and modern even to the present day.



Figure 2-16 (Left): Chippendale Grandfather Country Wing back chair, square leg style, Simeon Perkins parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014. **Figure 2-17 (Right):** Queen Anne Wing back chair, cabriole legs, Simeon Perkins parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

¹⁸² Fairbanks and Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 215.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*, 202.



Figure 2-18 (Left): Easy Chair, New England. C. 1800, Mahogany, maple and white pine; yellow wool upholstery. Available from: Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates' *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*.¹⁸⁶ **Figure 2-19 (Right):** New England Wing Chair, upholstered with block-printed cotton of East Indian floral design. Turned bulbous stretchers, a survival from the seventeenth century, and boldly carved Spanish feet of forelegs, c. 1725. Available from: Clarence Pearson Hornung's *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*.¹⁸⁷

A fourth piece of furniture reviewed is the side chair, a very elegant chair that belongs to the revolution in seating design in the U.S in the late 17th Century. The solid heavy construction of earlier Queen Anne and Chippendale styles gave way to more “fragile, light and delicate chairs... easy to move about”.¹⁸⁸ This was not just a change in appearance but also a whole new approach in design—including the use of veneers, inlay, and carving—especially in the early Federal side chairs. One of these elegantly styled side chairs exists in the Simeon Perkins parlour today (figure 2-20). A few examples from this period (figure 2-21) show the great variation in styles such as the pattern of the geometric shapes or

¹⁸⁶ Fairbanks and Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 215.

¹⁸⁷ Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*, 202.

¹⁸⁸ Fairbanks and Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 211.

the shield design on the back of the chair. These three chairs are dated and originated (from left to right respectively) from Rhode Island, c. 1800; Maryland c. 1790; and Hartford, Connecticut made by Samuel Kneeland (1755-1828).



Figure 2-20: Side chair, Simeon Perkins parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.



Figures 2-21 (Left): Side Chair, Rhode Island, c. 1800. **Middle:** Side Chair, Baltimore, Maryland, c. 1790. **Right:** Side Chair, Hartford, Connecticut, Made by Samuel Kneeland (1755-1828) and Lemuel Adams (dates unknown). Available from: Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates' *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ Fairbanks and Bates, *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present*, 210-213.

The last prominent furnishing in the parlour is the replacement desk for Simeon Perkins; it is an elegant mahogany piece with fine brass, pullout knobs for vertical sliding boards, and arched feet. From *Treasury of American Design*, Clarence P. Hornung, 1950, a number of styles of desks contemporary with Simeon Perkins' furnishings are shown here to validate the main features of Perkins replacement desk for this time period (figure 2-22). Style 976- a slant-top desk, Chippendale style of 1760-85, illustrates the mechanics of the knobbed vertical pull boards to support the writing portion of the desk.¹⁹⁰ Style 977 resembles the brass mounts and flat mahogany front of the Perkin's model. It is a Maryland desk c. 1760-85. The claw-and-ball feet of both models shown here differ greatly from the bracketed, solid feet of the Perkins replacement desk.¹⁹¹



Figure 2-22: Replacement Desk, Simeon Perkins parlour. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2014.

¹⁹⁰ Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*, 293.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*



Figure 2-23 (Left): Style 976 Slant-top desk in the Chippendale style, with reverse serpentine front. Writing portion has eight pigeonholes, six drawers, and central door. Vigorous claw-and-ball feet, c. 1760-85. Available from Clarence Pearson Hornung's *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*.¹⁹² **Figure 2-24 (Right):** Style 977 with thirteen handsome brass mounts of Baroque design and open fret-work are a decorative feature of this Maryland desk of fine-grain mahogany, c. 1760-85. Available from Clarence Pearson Hornung's *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*.¹⁹³

It is most interesting to compare the research data of Design Surveys of Furnishings of the Perkins period with the official descriptors from the Nova Scotia Museum Furniture Inventory.¹⁹⁴ A general overview of both sources examined finds a high level of agreement in the style and detail between the two sets. The first object is the Windsor arm chair¹⁹⁵, with softwood oval plank saddle seat, legs visible in seat, ash bow back, 7 spindles, 4 half spindles, continuous arm. The item was purchased from Mr. Harris Pipes of Amherst; Cumberland County, N.S and its permanent location was in the Perkins parlour. The Inventory

¹⁹² Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art*, 293.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ "Perkins House Collection: N.S. Museum Inventory Computerized", Available from the Queens County Museum, Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 135.

specifications of the Liverpool Windsor chair having a “softwood oval plank saddle seat” matches the requirements of design that a good Windsor chair must have soft wood like pine for comfortable seating. Also, the inventory piece having an ash bow back satisfies the construction requirements of ash or hickory for the back bow, spindles and arms. Lastly, the inventory notes the “continuous arm”, a refinement in the finest Windsor chairs.

The sofa¹⁹⁶, 88cm high, 191cm long, and 66cm wide, described in the inventory as: “One Sheraton style sofa with 4 legs, front legs mahogany with brass cup casters with porcelain, stained back legs of birch? With square straight iron casters, arms have exposed wood at front, 2 strings of inlay”, front rail i.e. leg of arm is square with diamond inlay, old finish. The item came from the Department of Trade and Industry and its permanent location was in Perkins parlour. Also, both strings of inlay have been mended. The specifics of the Inventory descriptions of the sofa verify the linearity of design in its proportions of precise dimensions. The front “leg of arm” with diamond inlay places the Liverpool parlour sofa in the rank of the finest traditional Sheraton style.

The third object is the upholstered wing chair¹⁹⁷ and is 125cm high, 83cm wide, and 57cm in diameter. Queen Anne style, plain short front cabriole legs terminating with Dutch or “Pad” members, and the top of then upholstered back is slightly arched. The wings and arms are one piece of upholstery with the arms

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

turning out slightly and a separate seat cushion. The listed remarks were: re-upholstered again before being sent to Perkins, in Red Damask. The acquisition was a gift from Ms. Constance Carr, estate, Digby County, Weymouth, N.S. The boldly flared wings, slightly arched back, and straight rolled arms with a slight turn follow the easy chair design of the Queen Anne style. The Dutch members of feet of this piece are superbly carved.

The fourth object, a side chair and has no official descriptors supplied by the Nova Scotia Museum for furniture inventory of the parlour in Simeon Perkins house. The fifth object is the desk¹⁹⁸, 108cm wide, 55.5cm deep, and is described as one mahogany slope front desk with 2 brass knobbed pulls for desk top, 4 drawers beaded on front with original cut out Bat Wing Brasses, dovetail construction, pillars in front, feet ogee, molded in on front and back sides, inside pigeon holes, veneer inlay on small cupboard door, appears to have old finish. In the interpretation thus far, the feet of the desk have been described as arched or solid and bracketed; the Inventory description uses the more specific term, “ogee”, which in architecture means “any s-shaped curve used in construction; any arch having two s-shaped curves meeting at the apex”.¹⁹⁹ The term “ogee” is a far superior descriptor since a frontal inverse \mathcal{Z} meeting its mirror image \mathcal{S} vertically would create the Perkins desk terminus or ($\mathcal{Z}\mathcal{S}$) ogee shape of foot. Other inventory descriptors like “mahogany wood, Bat Wing, brasses, dovetail construction, veneer inlay, and brass knobbed support pulls” were all

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹⁹⁹ Funk & Wagnalls Standard Desk Dictionary, 4th edition, Vol. 2, 455.

characteristic of many examples of desks c. 1800. What is quite distinctive in the Perkins inventory of the desk is the mention of 'pillars in front', a feature that blends well with the sofa "leg of arm" on either side.

The Perkins ensemble of furnishings, in their accomplished detail and purpose, speaks of a time and place when the Nova Scotian colony and New England were closely connected by blood ties, unique aspirations, and the Atlantic Ocean. Considerable human purpose and enterprise for genteel culture are to be gleaned from the selection and disposition of the material possessions representing the era of Simeon Perkins in the Liverpool House today and from the last material vestiges of his life in the Old York Museum in Maine. There are many references to furniture in the diaries of Perkins that suggest he was concerned with the quality of the contents of the house which would be seen and used by his children, numerous visitors, relatives, servants and hired teachers who took up residence to teach his children.²⁰⁰ Simeon Perkins' possession of a Windsor chair that could be found in the American Congress or an elegantly styled side chair similar to the one found in the parlour of the Governor's Palace at Williamsburg, Virginia, attests to the high regard the colonists had for the fine craftsmanship of furniture produced in New England and their interests to enjoy some of its major innovations in their own homes. Typically, Simeon Perkins was using the artifacts of this newly grown material culture within his home and the

²⁰⁰ As well, furniture was often given to Perkins as gifts or payment, "a small stand table was sent as a gift from the Norwich merchant to whom his [Perkins'] son Roger had been apprenticed. On two other occasions chairs are referred to, two received from Mr. Bois of Boston in 1783 and six from Mr. Bond of Halifax in 1793" See, Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, 147.

common architectural design of the day in its exterior appearance to express his self-identity. Colonists in New England and Nova Scotia are seen through their collections of furnishings and their style of dwelling to be very supportive of the ingenuity of their own building skills industry. They were not harking back to the homeland in England but were well content with the vigorous and thriving material culture produced in the New World. Evidence of material culture possessions shows the colonists' interest to be part of a new distinctive society. As well, they acquired self-portraits (see figure 2-7 and 2-8 for portraits of Simeon and Elizabeth Perkins) as part of the new art forms of their own society. The historical significance of Simeon Perkin's last remaining material possessions and of the Liverpool Museum furnishings, approximating the date and style of the original pieces in his parlour, lies in their embodiment of the ideals and attitudes of early colonial society.

In respect to the intangible aspect of the Liverpool culture in Perkins time, diaries, letters and autobiographies are representative of a non-fictional genre of literature that involves classification of social facts and their interpretation from an individual perspective. These literary forms also "provide a vantage point for viewing work, social life, culture and religion" in a community.²⁰¹ The significance of Simeon Perkins' diaries is to "suggest the contribution of Perkins and others from New England in strengthening the position of Nova Scotia, the latest of the

²⁰¹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 171.

colonies, as an outpost of the Empire”.²⁰² Harold A. Innis, editor of the first volume of the Simeon Perkins diaries, describes the diary as “a report from a listening post in the Atlantic struggle. It reflects the self-confidence of a New Englander and, as a record of business and public activities, the methodical character of an individual worthy of appointments to responsible positions”.²⁰³ Perkins was always careful to “indicate in most cases the surnames of the individuals and in particular to suggest their status by referring to them as captains or esquires”.²⁰⁴ Dr. D. C. Harvey, editor of the second volume of Simeon Perkins diary 1780-1789, remarks in a rough summary of the diary that it is remarkably comprehensive with

meteorological reports, shipping intelligence, and vital statistics; recounts individual ills, epidemics, and accidents by land and sea; gives the names of medical practitioners and their prescriptions, as well as home-made remedies in vogue at the time; records a variety of torts and crimes and their punishments; and describes in considerable detail the religious experiences and aberrations of the entire community, by listing every transient preacher, stating when and where they preached, commenting on the character and effects of their preaching, and tracing the evolution of the sects that finally emerged from the original congregational church. In fact, the social and religious vicissitudes of Liverpool Township account for almost as many entries in the diary as those which record its economic activities, despite the fact that the latter involved its relationships with Halifax and the other townships on the South Shore as well as with New England, the West Indies and Europe.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1766-1780*, Vol.1, ed., Harold A. Innis (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1948), *xxxii*. It is scarcely “necessary to refer to the value of the diary as a quarry for the study of economic, political, and social institutions. In spite of strong family ties and business connections, Nova Scotia remained within the Empire”. *Ibid.*, *xxxiii*.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, *xxxiv*.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, *x*.

²⁰⁵ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1780-1789*, Vol. 2, ed., D. C. Harvey, (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1948), *xii*.

The more we delve into the diaries of Simeon Perkins “the more we wonder, how such a busy man could find time and opportunity to gather material and keep such a comprehensive record of events anear and afar”.²⁰⁶ Hansen concludes, in general, that it is the content of diaries that holds the biggest clue to motivation. The “diarists prominently documented the weather, work performed, and the people visited. In addition, they occasionally recorded their explicit motivations for keeping a diary, which entailed no small commitment”.²⁰⁷ Simeon Perkins had no small commitment; his interests, verified by his diaries, encompassed the whole community and his parlour goals extended beyond the home to all the people involved in industry, education, neighbourly affairs, and the town of Liverpool’s concerns for the House of Assembly and the Justice System.

Charles Bruce Fergusson, editor of volume three 1790-1796, volume four 1797-1803 and volume five 1804-1812 of the Simeon Perkins diaries, remarked that Perkins “continued not only to play a significant part in every salient aspect of the life of his community and in the relationships of his province to the Atlantic region as a whole, but also to record for posterity much that is both interesting and illuminating in peace and in war”.²⁰⁸ The third volume is an “illuminating chronicle not only of life in the community, but also of the economic, social and political history of a region occupying a crucial position in the development of the

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, xiii.

²⁰⁷ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 175.

²⁰⁸ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1790-1796*, Vol. 3, ed., C.B. Fergusson (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1961), xlv.

Second British Empire”.²⁰⁹ The fourth volume continued to shed light on the community, but also “provides fascinating glimpses of the war at sea and particularly of the stirring exploits of privateersmen of Liverpool and other parts of Nova Scotia”.²¹⁰ In the fifth volume, Perkins was the “patriarch of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, during this period of his life. Although he reduced his responsibilities in some measure with advancing years, he was still active in business and prominent in public affairs until a short time before his death”.²¹¹ The final volume also contains an appendix of Simeon Perkins’ letters and this type of correspondence Karen V. Hansen deems for historical purposes, “offers the advantage of suggesting interaction between individuals. A relationship constructed through letters can reveal more about a person than a heartfelt outpouring in his or her diary”.²¹²

Karen V. Hansen’s study of early New England society provides a rationale for extending the spatial dimensions of the parlour. “The parading of people in and out of households, making family business social business and creating social space out of a private home, effaced the physical barrier of the house and the arbitrary boundary constructed around the conjugal family. Visitors, gossipers, extended kin, and friends transformed household interactions into social relations”.²¹³ The social purpose of the home and parlour in the era of

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, xi.

²¹⁰ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1797-1803*, Vol. 4, ed., C.B. Fergusson, (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1967) xi.

²¹¹ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1804-1812*, Vol. 5, ed., C.B. Fergusson, (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1978), xii.

²¹² Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 173.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 167.

the colony is integrated in the whole community. That extensive social integration expressed in Hansen's study is derived from an interpretation of everyday life in *antebellum* New England that includes all the activities that make up the production of communal social life. Much valuable information, helpful hints and instruction, encouragement and support is passed among people at small and large gatherings throughout the community, especially at churches, schools, shops, and informal meetings.

My conceptualization of the social grows out of my interpretation of everyday life in *antebellum* New England. It embraces activities that transcend individual households and operate independent of the state, such as visiting, gossiping, churchgoing, attending lectures, joining political movements, baby-sitting a neighbor's child, and shopping. In addition, it encompasses institutions such as churches, schools and lyceums... The social's unique values included mutuality, reciprocity, voluntarism, and localism.²¹⁴

Most of Simeon Perkins' endeavours for his town fall into the categories of Hansen's descriptions of social life in *antebellum* New England. Social life was being promoted in the numerous niches of his community and was advancing mutuality, reciprocity, voluntarism and local welfare and happiness.

Visiting and gossiping incorporated "news, speculation, and judgments, and subjects expected no less. They organized their lives with an understanding that talk about their behavior was part of the social environment".²¹⁵ They gossiped "not in spite, but as a fundamental part of everyday life. They talked about good news, the price of grain, the misfortunes of kin, their neighbors'

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

²¹⁵ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 115.

marital choices, and everyone's reputation".²¹⁶ Simeon Perkins diaries show his dedication to recording a wide range of social gossip; his diaries included mentions of marriages, deaths, family visitations, parties, dances, church functions and political gatherings. There follows some examples of entries to his diaries, selected on a random basis from each of his five volumes; these entries serve to illustrate the scope and variety of Perkins' involvement in the social life of his community. On 16 August 1766, Simeon Perkins wrote that the "Nova Scotia" packet puts in and a "number of ladies and gentlemen come on shore. Benjamin Jackson, of Boston, Mrs. [Michael] Francklin, and Mrs. [Malachi] Salter, of Halifax, a daughter of Mrs. Salter, Nabby, and son James of Mrs. Francklin, I dine with them at Mrs. Snow".²¹⁷ On 2 February 1773, Perkins writes of the "Extreme cold, and much vapor upon the river and harbor. I went with several gentlemen, across the river, to dine with Doctor Lagord, when I and two others had our ears frost bitten".²¹⁸ On 19 October 1773, Simeon Perkins recorded the gossip that "a company of ladies and gentlemen meet at Ford's and have a genteel entertainment at their own expense".²¹⁹ On 5 January 1775, Simeon Perkins' social entry included his trip to "Herring Cove to a Christmas marriage entertainment at James McDonald's. James Ferguson, a north of Britain man, was married to Elizabeth McDonald."²²⁰ Simeon Perkins recorded in his diary for more than forty years describing the various social occasions, such as the

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 134.

²¹⁷ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1766-1780*, Vol.1, ed., Harold A. Innis, 9.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 59,

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 89.

visitations from nearby and as far away as Boston, in the early years of the Liverpool settlement.

A considerable inclusivity of society, involving mutuality, reciprocity and voluntarism, can be gleaned from other randomly selected entries of Simeon Perkins' diaries. On 22 August 1766, "Capt. Jabez sails for Halifax. The wife of Thomas Gordon dies in the afternoon, and he attempted to lay her out himself. I agree with Capt. Snow, of Cape Cod to give him 1qtl. of dry fish for 100 green fish to the amount of 30 qtls. I intend to make them myself."²²¹ And on 13 March 1767, "There is much want among the families. No fish to eat except what their neighbors as poor as they, help them day by day. Bread and meat very few can have them both."²²² On 11 June 1767, "Several people assisted Ebenzer Dexter to move a house at Herring Cove, at the upper mill, to where his house was burnt."²²³ On 8 April 1772, Perkins wrote "Today the Indians came with a dead corpse, that was shot near their camp in the head, by accident, as the boy was shooting at geese. It is Andrew Martin's daughter, 15 years of age. They are going to Port Mutton to bury the body".²²⁴ This entry also includes mention of a gift of 120 geese to Simeon Perkins as they sought his help on arbitrating the matter. On 4 May 1772, "Mr. Cheever desired to marry John Carroll, an Irishman, to Deborah Cuffe, a negro free woman. Mr. Cheever took the advice of the magistrates. Finally, Esquire Doggett, Samuel Freeman, Esq., and Myself, with

²²¹ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1766-1780*, Vol.1, ed., Harold A. Innis, 9.

²²² *Ibid.*, 18.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 24.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

other gentlemen, attended their house and told them that if they were determined to live together, stand up and take each other in our presence, which they did”.²²⁵ This reference rather poignantly expresses the view that rights of gentility and citizenship were open to all. On 1 January 1773, “Ebenezer Perkins, my brother, is sent by my parents to live with me. He came by Capt, Ford in a schr. Which Capt. Harding and I chartered and sent to Norwich, Dec. 15th, last, and arrived here with grain,--about 400 bushels,--not half enough for winter. I distributed what fell to his share among his workmen, though I could have sold it for cash, and also fish which I kept for supply them”.²²⁶ We see here Perkins magnanimous dealings with his fellow citizens. On 4 April 1774, there was a “Town meeting for the poor. Freeman, Esq., moderator. We agreed to raise £15”.²²⁷ Here voluntary charity was a definite part of the social work. Perkins’ diaries have offered a unique and largely untapped history that illuminates the spirit and importance of visiting and sharing in the creation of a community in Liverpool.

Overall, Simeon Perkins records a ‘very social time’ experienced by the pioneers in Liverpool; the following randomly selected entries strongly support the claim of diverse and frequent social efforts of the little town. His flow of relatives, visitors and servants included women hired to teach the children, visiting clergy men who were provided with room and board for months at a time, billeted soldiers, sailors who slept in the barn, members of the ship building crew also

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

boarded with the family, as well as, visiting officials, naval officers and even religious services would take place in the house as well as the occasional dance and singing school of thirty people.²²⁸ The Perkins family entertained guests at home, exchanged visits with friends or relatives near Liverpool, or paid visits to relatives in New England. On 12 September 1780, Perkins writes “Several Gentlemen & their wives go to the Falls to have a Dinner & a Dance at Mr. Barnabas Freeman’s. I go with my wife, among the rest”.²²⁹ On 17 January 1782, he wrote of a “Religious Meeting at Mr. Parker’s & a Dance at Mr. Bradford’s this evening”.²³⁰ On 1 February 1791, there was a singing school in the community that Simeon Perkins took an interest in and held at his own home, “We have the Singing School at our House. About 30 Schollars and Assistants attend. I think they have made Some proficiency for the time they have been engaged”.²³¹ A Friendly Society was organized at Liverpool early in 1795 and Simeon Perkins was a member of it; “On 10 March 1795, At Evening I meet with the Friendly Society lately Instituted. It Consists of Most of the Principal Traders. The design is to meet once a month & Converse of subjects of Trade, or any Subject tending to a General Benefit to the Settlement”.²³² We see in these entries his widespread interests from the aesthetic of music to the economic aspects of trade. C. B. Fergusson in his introduction to Volume 4 notes that Perkins’ diary gives us a “fascinating opportunity to study the character of this very busy and

²²⁸ Penney, *The Simeon Perkins House: an Architectural Interpretation 1767-1987*, Vol. 2, 54-55.

²²⁹ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1780-1789*, Vol. 3, ed., D. C. Harvey, 40.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 111.

²³¹ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1790-1796*, Vol. 4, ed., C.B. Fergusson, 81.

²³² *Ibid.*, 335.

multi-faceted individual. He shows himself to have been a moderate man, concerned with making wise decisions”.²³³

In the later years of Simeon Perkins life he is still a prominent figure in the community and is actively involved in the social life of the settlement. On 3 July 1797, Perkins goes to “See Mr. Collins. He is Sick, & does not go out. He had a Sore broke in his throat. I Breakfast at Mrs. Black’s, & dine at Mrs. Cochrans”.²³⁴ Perkins continues to record the social gossip of the community, 23 January 1801 “Anna Allen, Mrs. Jane Allens Daughter, is Sick, and has the Simptoms of the Small Pox, and is Said to have Some eruption”²³⁵ and 10 January 1802, “Capt. Joseph Freeman’s wife is in a low State. Suppose in Consumption. Now has watchers”.²³⁶ His reference to ‘watchers’ is a strong representation of Hansen’s claim of the value of mutuality in the New England community. But he still continued his rounds in society, on 2 September 1804, “Sprinkles a little in the evening. I Drink tea at Capt. Joseph Freemans my wife & Several Ladys. Capt. Freemans Mother is there”.²³⁷

As illustrated in Simeon Perkins’ diaries, the whole approach to visiting in the parlour culture of colonial America was directed toward beneficial results for the community in an open inclusive manner. Hansen’s timely analysis of New England visiting at home, church, or wayside provides sufficient evidence of the

²³³ *Ibid.*, 55.

²³⁴ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1797-1803*, ed., C.B. Fergusson, 36.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 277.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

²³⁷ Simeon Perkins, *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1804-1812*, ed., C.B Fergusson, 61.

often altruistic and voluntary character of its goals which were transferred to the Liverpool settlement. According to Hansen, the constancy of gossip was required to adjust to emerging social needs and to expedite assistance; Simeon Perkins steadfastly collected the important gossip of Liverpool over a period of some forty years and recorded its social events seen to be embedded with the inclusive values of “mutuality, reciprocity, voluntarism, and localism”.²³⁸ These behavioural acts over a lifetime yield one’s self-identity as expressed in his eulogy:

To sum up his character in general terms, we may say that his piety toward God, his affection and tenderness to his beloved wife and children, his loyalty to his King, his benevolence to the poor, his inflexible integrity, and uncommon usefulness in this county, has rendered the loss we have sustained irreparable.²³⁹

This transformation of the intangible behavioral culture evident in the New England and Liverpool sites was paralleled by a transformation, as shown in the previous analysis, at the level of material artifacts illustrated in the changes of the architecture and the furnishings, like the Windsor chair and the Block-Front Chest. Thus, innovation in material designs was accompanied by a restructuring of living traditions that would encourage the growth and security of new settlements. Inclusive colonial parlour culture was an imaginative reshaping of its English tradition.

²³⁸ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 9.

²³⁹ Long, *A Copy of the Annals of Liverpool and Queens County, Nova Scotia, 1760-186*, 1278.

Chapter 3: Hunts Point and White Point: Socially Inclusive Parlour Culture

The core of Chapter 3 is the effort to recover some understanding of the reality of parlour culture in the communities of White Point and Hunts Point.²⁴⁰ Following the initial suggestion of Beulah Waterman Smith as a source of information, I located others from members of the community. A major breakthrough arose during the discussions among friends and kin at the funeral of Lawrence Verge of White Point with Nina Frellick's disclosure of her grandmother Annie MacKay Frellick's diary. Later, the discovery of a treasury of New England furniture and details of an early stagecoach inn occurred in Edna Smith's spacious living room. Vibrant memories and significant artifacts began to reveal the complexity of a closing era.

Since the search for interviewees was directed by the parameters of their life knowledge of the early 1900's, the target population, being eighty to ninety year olds, was scarce. The selected population of six persons to interview for this thesis fell into two groups: one group of four persons whose lives spanned the twentieth century, from 1920 to the 21st century and the other group of two persons whose lives spanned the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the mid-20th century. Oral history interviews involved a block of common questions within an informal format that encouraged 'talk' of opinions, events, and people, that was followed up with phone calls and brief visits. An examination of norms of continuity of social customs and ethnicity revealed the clear lines of descent of

²⁴⁰ Compliance with Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board, SMU REB File Number: 13-225.

this population from the earliest settlers and founding fathers or proprietors of the Liverpool Township.

Not surprisingly, mores of New Englanders were continued, uninterrupted, in the lives of these two communities. The Nova Scotian counterpart of New England retained in like manner a distinct orientation of inclusivity of society. The term 'inclusivity' comes from a root word 'inclusion' meaning to make someone or something a part of something larger.²⁴¹ The text of the interviews was closely examined for the basic markers²⁴² of inclusivity in the social life of these two communities. These markers included various forms of social relations, volunteerism, word-of-mouth information (gossip), attitudes of respect, sharing, co-operation, reciprocity, and parlour traditions. The substance of all of the interviews coincided with these structural markers, but their agreement in form did not detract from the variety and diversity of experiences related in these communities. The sharing of social power in the framework of inclusivity maximizes the quality of life for all.

²⁴¹ "Inclusion." Vocabulary.com. URL: <http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/inclusion>. Accessed: February 6, 2015.

²⁴² These markers were taken from Hansen's analysis of *Antebellum* New England social life in her: *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 1994.

Beulah (Waterman) Smith

In terms of ethnicity, the Waterman family was part of the early settlement of Liverpool by immigrants from the Boston States. John Waterman's name is listed among the one hundred and forty-two proprietors in the grant of the township of Liverpool which finally passed November 20, 1764.²⁴³ Their first venture into the interior of Queens County began when "Zenas Waterman, who had been in the American Army, and a man by the name of Harlow removed from Liverpool and settled in Pleasant River in October 1802".²⁴⁴ Then, "the following spring Mrs. Waterman and her two sons, James and Uriah, removed from Liverpool and became the first permanent occupants of that position in the country".²⁴⁵

In respect to education, it is interesting to note that according to the school inspector's report for Queens County in the year 1872, "Two excellent and experienced female teachers Misses J. B. Waterman and H. Starrat, for several years employed in different departments in the Academy of Liverpool took their leave from us at the close of last term".²⁴⁶ Teaching is a special calling in the Waterman family. Beulah Waterman came from North Queens to teach school in White Point in 1940 in a one-room school of about twenty students ranging from grade primary to and including grade ten. Completing grade ten that year with Ms. Waterman was the student Lawrence Verge, who the next year rode his bicycle even in winter to the Liverpool Academy where he successfully completed

²⁴³ James F. More, *The History of Queens County*, 11-12. See a copy of a full list of proprietors on page 12.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

grade eleven. He had, obviously, received a good foundation from Ms. Waterman's teaching despite her obligation to teach all the students all of their subjects. Her greatest expertise lay in teaching primary students to read and write. It was uniformly held in the communities of Port Mouton, Summerville, Hunts Point and White Point, whose children she taught to read the rest of her long career, that she was an extraordinarily gifted teacher who never tolerated failure in the skills of reading. As a testament to her revered position in these South Shore communities, Beulah Waterman Smith was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in the year 2013 (see figure 3-1 for this award).



Figure 3-1: Beulah Waterman Smith's Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, 2013. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

Beulah Waterman Smith's conversation with us about community life during the period of parlour culture centres on a triad of social qualities: respect, happiness and friendliness. Her spontaneous opinions on the social culture of her time place these three fundamental qualities as the nucleus of social behaviours and she discusses them with intimate knowledge and examples.

Beulah Waterman Smith spoke of the distinctive attitudes that she observed among the people in the first half of the twentieth-century, attitudes that coalesced about the fundamental approach of respect to others. She says, "One thing we did have was respect years ago. Not that we demanded it but it just seemed to be there". She indicated that respect was ingrained from the teaching of the home, followed through at school and in all conversations so that it became a way of being careful not to hurt the feelings of others. Silence on hurtful issues was frequently applied. She notes the extension of this quality of respect even to people who had committed crimes and she gives credit to the chief law officer, known as Bob White, for taking offenders along with him in doing chores, making them responsible and rehabilitating them. Waterman Smith's comment on the enlightened attitude to crime in those days is worth consideration.

Beulah: Yes, I lived in North Queens and they'd come and pick up the rascals²⁴⁷ but they didn't have handcuffs or anything; they'd just walk them to the jail. It would be a cooling off period. It was an education for them to be with Mr. White. Now today if they were transporting a person who did something wrong, they'd have ankle chains and handcuffs and two

²⁴⁷ The term 'rascals' is not a pejorative one but shares the view that people make mistakes.

Mounties. Very dehumanizing. There was more respect shown in those days to everybody. It's so different today.

Karen V. Hansen often relates the quality of respect to kindness; she provides an example of a tenant farmer who had a reputation for kindness even to his animals and finds it was this quality that merited “the respect of his neighbours”.²⁴⁸ As Beulah Waterman Smith says her notion of respect is not something you demand as in the case of a superior, but it is a worthwhile quality for living together peacefully. It is the positive social effects yielded by the use of respect that made it a mainstay of community life.

For Waterman Smith, an equally important social characteristic of the people was their ability to be happy. In no case was this quality associated with wealth or fine circumstances. In fact, each of her mentions of ‘happy’ is linked to the simplicity of life. For example she says, “But it was a very simple life and everyone was happy and they were always busy doing something”. Her attribution of happiness in this instance is connected to people having goals and being contented with the work of carrying them out. She also says, “In the 1940s or before that it was very primitive around here but everyone was happy. They were satisfied with what they had. It was really a wonderful time”. In her estimation happiness involved the capacity to be satisfied with what they produced and had because it had personal meaning for them. Such things like a crop of hay, a good catch of mackerel, or a harvest table had meaning because they promoted the existence of the family and the community. Happiness today is

²⁴⁸ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 188.

much sought after but it is an elusive quality. Countries with the highest scores in gross domestic production (GDP) are finding themselves failing in their ratings on the happiness of their people, now surveyed by a census for gross happiness production (GHP).²⁴⁹ Things are now ready to throw away when the next fashion comes along since they have lost their place in community. Hansen characterizes and titles her study of *antebellum* New England as *A Very Social Time*; Waterman Smith characterizes life in these two communities: “it was really a wonderful time”. The nexus of these two statements is the quality of happiness found in both places.

A third social characteristic noted by Beulah Waterman Smith is that of friendliness. She tells of the many incidents of the friendliness and hospitality from the parents of her students. Today she marvels at the pleasure of meeting hundreds of former students who are “so pleasant to talk to”. One wonders if Waterman Smith ever considers that her teaching them during happy school days has helped to shape who they are today. Her last words emphasize this thought, “But it’s amazing the lovely people that I had in schools”. Teaching was the ultimate social activity because it helps to form a student’s outlook on life. Waterman Smith’s own engagement with her students could be the model that they are following.

²⁴⁹ Michael Weissenstern, “Poll: World’s Happiest People Live in Latin America” (Gallop Inc.), *The Chronicle Herald*, Thursday, December 20, 2012, B8.

Beulah Waterman Smith recalls memories of her grandmother's parlour, beginning with the use of the parlour for special events like the laying out of the dead, weddings, Sunday sing-songs and invited guests. Waterman Smith remembers that her husband's father was laid out in a parlour. She notes that all the parlours were carefully decorated and furnished usually in velvet with elegant lighting. After this description she expresses puzzlement that there were so many parlours in those days and wonders how they came into being. She went on to say, "I wonder how they communicated, how they got the word around, that it was the fashion to have parlours". The origin of the parlour she seems to sense must be lost in time, as is implied by her next statement: "There are a lot of people who have passed on and moved away. There aren't many people left here who know what a parlour is".

Hansen's examination of "visiting rituals as a form of 'social work'... acknowledges both the need to actively maintain neighborly friendships and the labor—mental, physical, and emotional that sustains them".²⁵⁰ When asked how these events were organized Waterman Smith remarked: "They didn't have organizations in those days. Just everyone sort of helped or word got around, we didn't have telephones. And then they told their neighbors and then the next neighbors and so on". Gossip in these communities was a means of advertising events and any other social news. Waterman Smith even mentions a type of community-wide visiting as social news like the traditions of Christmas bell-

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 112.

snigging and Halloween costumes and tricks; some of these tricks were retold over the years as gossip like the time a group had white-washed a heifer, purported to belong to Robert West, and exchanged it for one owned by another neighbour. Gossip of such events promoted a sense of generational knowledge. There was only one telephone in White Point owned by Angus and Mabel Doggett so there was a need for a mechanism permitting up-to-date information among the residents, which was gossip. Thus, all friendly relationships contributed to an inclusive mode of society through conversation, gossip, visitation and the organization of community events.

According to Karen Hansen, visiting often “took place in the church, at schools, stores, town meetings, virtually everywhere people congregated”.²⁵¹ Beulah Waterman Smith recalled many fond memories of events that took place in the Hunts Point Community Hall:

Beulah: So we were having this play and I was the maid and I got this dress for 99 cents from Simpsons that was gathered at the waist with full skirt and that’s what I was able to afford to perform in this play. Can you imagine it would probably be 99 dollars today!

Amber: And where did they have it?

Beulah: Up in the hall.

Amber: Is the hall still there?

Beulah: Yes, it’s still there now but at that time they had a stage that they removed about 20 years ago.

Waterman Smith also remembered the boys in the Verge family playing music for dances, pie and ice cream sales, as well as afternoon teas that took place in the Hunts Point Hall:

²⁵¹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 81.

Beulah: Yes, they had pie sales, ice cream sales after I came around here. They'd auction them off on the stage, you'd decorate your pie and hope no one knew it was yours, but you'd hope the right one got it because you'd have to eat with them.

Beulah: They had teas. Not too elegant. I don't remember who made the food, but they must have made it and brought it in for the teas. For the ice cream sales they made it and brought it in and sold it for so much a bowl.

The community hall, built in Hunts Point in 1917 (see figure 3-35 left), accommodated large social gatherings that were in size beyond the scope of visiting in individual parlours. These large gatherings brought families into close social communication and helped to advance the skills of the young people in the arts of dance, music, drama, culinary products, and sociability. The hall was also the early site of immunization clinics in 1940. Although the hall was a project that required major community effort, it was planned and erected for the good of the community.

Waterman Smith's contribution as an educator and leader in the community was evident in her involvement in invitational visits by the schoolmistress to homes in Hunts Point, White Point and Port Mouton:

Beulah: It was the usual thing to accept all invitations. You didn't think anything of it; you were happy to go. These visits gave some relief to the boarding mistress who had to produce meals every night...

Beulah: There were so many people in the community and [as a teacher] you had to visit all of them. When I was boarding in White Point, funny things happened. I remember one of the children taking meatballs off my plate and nothing was said.

Karen Hansen describes these occasions for social work as "opportunities for visiting, talking, sharing news, catching up on family gossip, and reinforcing ties—

in essence, reaffirming the interdependency of the community”.²⁵² Waterman Smith’s visits for which she felt a solemn obligation were a means of affirming the interdependence and good relations between the school and the community. Waterman Smith was a firm believer in the institutional value of the school in the community. She says, “When you take a school out of a place you take 90% of the history out of the community”. Her descriptions of funny things happening while visiting a family or the happiness of being invited to dinner are fond memories that she has kept all her life. To this day she still remembers the hospitality of the communities:

Beulah: And everyone was very hospitable. I remember at your [Amber’s great-grandmother’s—Honora Verge Power] house the table was just filled with pies, cakes, cupcakes, cookies and hearty food, the table was as long as this room. It was overwhelming. You see they all had to invite you when you were in the community. They probably worked for days. I [similarly] remember Mabel and Harry’s table in the community. But frankly they were very hospitable in the community; they thought they had to entertain you. Elizabeth West was also very hospitable.

Occasions for social work supported friendly relationships between members of the community and created an ongoing spirit of community life.

Beulah Waterman Smith recalls that her own family in Pleasant River, North Queens, likewise hosted many visits and their organ was the centre of singsongs on Sunday nights: “We’d have singsongs in my home with people from the church”. Waterman Smith even remembered her mother saying that “some of

²⁵² Ibid., 109.

the people didn't sing very well and it would hurt her ears when they'd hang over you to read the music. But today there's no real aptitude for music in the community". Ian McKay and Robin Bates' *In The Province of History* make reference to the parlour organ through the words of Will R. Bird in their chapter "All the world was safe and happy: The Innocence of Will R. Bird":

'The parlour organ belongs to a quieter and more flavourful era of our history'. The sight of such an instrument in the home of a sweet old lady brings back that elusive era when 'on a cold, starlit winter evening it was heart-warming as friends and family gathered around the organ and mother played old familiar home songs and cherished hymns. Voices were not trained, but were rich and true...'²⁵³

Waterman Smith's mother mentioned untrained voices such as the ones in Ian McKay and Robin Bates' book, not with malice but in support of the inclusive practice that all who came to sing on Sunday nights were encouraged to joyously read the music together. When Waterman Smith noted that today there is no aptitude for music in the community, she is referring to the disappearance of organs, pianos, and music lessons in the home in favour of electronic music. The value of music as a means of celebrating companionship has been often replaced by solitary listening.

Nevertheless, Beulah Waterman Smith is still an active participant in the social work of her community as a representative and organizer of the church:

Beulah: We're going to have a pancake supper... My job is usually calling the people to see what foods they're going to bring in. I'd be representing the church... When the men have their supper, a potluck, the women will

²⁵³ Ian McKay and Robin Bates. *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 162-163, quoting Will. R Bird, *Off-Trail in Nova Scotia* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1956), 19-20.

make the food, but the men will do the work, setting up and serving the food and cleaning up. We had a pancake supper, sausages, pancakes, hash browns and assorted desserts, and we made over \$1000 and we were only charging \$7 a plate.

Hunts Point and White Point were successful because of a long tradition of leadership. Waterman Smith acknowledged the importance of having community leaders: “You need someone to get people interested and to keep them involved”. Hansen notes that it is the women and men “within the social sphere [who] dynamically mediated the various forces of society—tying the family to the community, neighbor to neighbor, the individual to the collectivity”.²⁵⁴ Visiting and the organization of events by members of the community cemented the integration of an inclusive society in Hunts Point and White Point even to this day.

Hansen offers a useful observation in regard to community activities, visiting, and volunteering:

While informal activities in the social sphere modulated everyday life, their institutionalized counterparts—social-movement organizations and volunteer associations—had the most effective and sustained impact on the public sphere.²⁵⁵

Organization of social events were all done on a voluntary basis. Members of the community organized events in the hall, made finger foods, ice-cream and pies for teas and sales, all done on a voluntary basis. Waterman Smith took part in the organization and preparation for hall events and donated her time to spellbinding readings at evening church gatherings. But today she notes: “all the churches

²⁵⁴ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 109.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 164.

have gone except the Hunts Point church. We're getting low in numbers but we're still going. Age, moving away, not attending, the young don't recognize the church." This observation is in line with Hansen's description that "the church acted as an important social center in working-class and farm communities" such as those in *antebellum* New England.²⁵⁶ Women and men "involved themselves in the church to seek entertainment as well as mutual aid and spiritual solace"²⁵⁷. Volunteerism in the social sphere and church "engaged individuals with other people outside their households, shaping, influencing, and changing the community".²⁵⁸

Communities such as Hunts Point and White Point were successful because of their long tradition of leadership. Waterman Smith agreed on the need to "get people interested and to keep them involved" and that there were "no replacements for prominent people in the community". However, everyone in the community played a part, as Hansen notes, "visiting incurred reciprocal obligations, not simply to individuals but also to the group. The community logged individual visits into a kind of community trust to be used as a resource in time of need".²⁵⁹ Two instances of communal inclusion were recalled during this interview. Waterman Smith referred to the sad event of Charlie Hagan's house being destroyed by fire. Men of the community procured lumber and spent weekends putting up a new house; it was amazing how quickly they replaced the

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 84.

original house with a newer and better one. Waterman Smith concludes, “there was a lot of good hearted, thoughtful and considerate people here”. She also remembered Dora Frellick preparing her husband Harold’s best white shirt to be given for the burial of a man who had none. Help was constantly offered in the communities in many ways, perhaps a bag of lobsters, a home-made quilt, bottles of milk or cream, encouragement in difficult times, or farewell gifts for young people leaving for new lives—so many ways of doing social work.

Beulah Waterman Smith was quick to mention others in the community who made contributions to the society and she could still recall the relationships of various members of those families:

Beulah: Vera Doggett was one, Cecilia Inness in Beech Hill. She used to have a little post office up there. And Henry was her husband and Gerald was her son. He just passed away. Louise Inness was his sister. Dorothy, Hazel, were other sisters. And Roderick was a brother to Louise and Dorothy and Hazel...

Then she says, “A community leader...Today that would be Alexander Doggett”. Yet, Waterman Smith has continued to be an active member in the social work of the community throughout her life. She helped form groups for young people such as CGIT and Cubs as well as adult efforts like quilting, sewing circles, and visiting with the sick. Waterman Smith was also dedicated to the literacy instruction for multiple generations as a base for social life. She recalled: “I meet so many people on the street that I’ve taught and they’re so pleasant to talk to. You don’t have to have a top job to have an honest rich living to make a real contribution to life... it’s amazing, the lovely people that I had in schools”. The social was “important not simply because of the industry and pleasure it

facilitated, but because it in turn influenced the public on the one hand, and the private on the other”.²⁶⁰ These instances involved the family as well as the aid of members from the community. Hansen described how “Visitors, gossipers, extended kin, and friends transformed house-hold interactions into social relations. Their involvement in household functions meant that household members were not isolated...and that family problems were not individual problems”.²⁶¹ There was a sense of social power felt by individuals in the community when there was this interdependency by kin and neighbours.

As shown in *Chart 1*, “Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity in Social Life”, Beulah Waterman Smith’s interview relates closely with all of Hansen’s categories that organize the behaviours and attitudes of the social interaction that characterizes inclusive society. Waterman Smith’s awareness of this wider conceptual structure is evidenced, in the first place, when she speaks of the quality of volunteerism in the many contributions of food, clothing, and working skills like housebuilding. Volunteerism is a term she uses frequently to denote a willingness to help and share with others, much like Hansen’s use of the term. Secondly, Waterman Smith expresses a need for transparency of information if people are to co-operate in shared social goals. That transparency is accomplished in the community by ‘word-of-mouth’ in her terminology, an expression that is equivalent to Hansen’s term ‘gossip’. Thirdly, Waterman Smith attributes the harmonious development of the community to certain attitudes that

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 167.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

pervade all its social life: respect, friendliness and happiness. Her examples where these attitudes prevail show how they promote community wellbeing; again, these same attitudes are for Hansen the foundation of *antebellum* society. Fourthly, Waterman Smith discusses the special furnishing and uses of the parlour, as a visible, spatial reminder of the need to join the family with the exterior community; Hansen also records various uses of the parlour. Waterman Smith's comments on the parlour reflect both the habits of her birthplace of Pleasant River in North Queens as well as the knowledge from her teaching career and life in the communities of South Queens. Fifthly, Waterman Smith contributed to the visitations at the home, school, church and also the organization of a tremendous number of large social engagements in the hall. All these kinds of visitations were well known to Waterman Smith whose knowledge of these communities was encyclopedic and supported by a genuine wisdom about human nature. Her wisdom was recognized and honored by her peers over all the decades and her example as a model for others was, indeed, revered and was celebrated by her award of the 2013 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Thus, Waterman Smith's analysis of the parlour culture in the communities of South Queens coincided with the Hansen study of the ethnically related social behaviours of *antebellum* New England. In turn, Waterman Smith's analysis of parlour behaviours inspires the framework of the thesis chart 'Markers of Social Inclusivity' which will be used as a base for a comparison of the data from the interviews of the remaining five interviewees.

Beulah Waterman Smith has succinctly interwoven the elements of parlour culture within the discussion. Her words distil a long ago reality into a profile or model of parlour culture. Lending support to her description is the fact that it encompasses the primary categories of Hansen's analysis of the ethnically related culture of *antebellum* New England, and therefore, serves as a structure for examining all the other interviews to come. Thus, the elements of Waterman Smith's description have been reconstructed in a chart of this thesis as a summary of her transcript and as a model for analyzing and comparing other descriptions of parlour culture bound by the social orientation of inclusivity (see *Chart 1* for 'Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life').

The six charts titled "Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life" were devised by the author as a means for an objective comparison of the data from the interviews. Though the parlour culture expressed in the six interviews varies in detail among the subjects, the total results obtain a harmony when seen through the categories of the chart. The charts contain two types of information: 1) interview descriptions of individual parlour culture actions and 2) the organization of these descriptions through the chart headings or categories of the theoretical aspects of parlour culture. The aggregate of the first type or description for all six charts constitutes an overview of parlour culture behaviours in the two communities of Hunts Point and White Point. However, since these descriptions are individualized by family mores, the headings of the chart embodying Hansen's categories designate types of inclusive behaviours and are therefore theoretical constructs of parlour culture. The theoretical organization in

the charts serves two functions: 1) that the descriptions satisfy the definition of parlour culture, namely self-identity through social relationships and 2) that the norms of a society (like transparency through attitudes or gossip and reciprocity through sharing) are seen to be integral to the working of an inclusive society.

The interviewees evidenced an understanding of both aspects of community—the personal value of their actions and the good that was achieved for their community.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life

According to the Interview of Beulah Waterman Smith

Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Unannounced Home Visits	Organization of Social Events on Voluntary Basis	Means of Advertisement of Events and Other Social News	Respect included Everyone— Fundamental Social Attitude	A Special Place to Socialize
Visits by Invitation (The Teacher)	Need of Leaders in Society but all played a part	Need of Gossip in the time of Word-of-Mouth Information	Happy Acceptance of their Lot in Life and Expression of Joy in the Simple Things of Life	Beautifully Furnished and Decorated (As Circumstances Allow)
Informal Meetings at the Church, Shops, Roadways— Extension of Friendliness	Waterman Smith Donated Her Time to Spell-Binding Readings at Evening Church Gatherings	Forms of Young Peoples Groups— CGIT, Cubs and Adult Efforts like Quilting, Sewing Circles, Wood-Splitting, Sitting with the Sick	Generosity in Sharing Goods and Labour—Even their Homes. Homes rebuilt by neighbours after destruction by fire.	Parlours as Symbols of the Owner's Identity
Social uses of Community Hall for Plays, Pie Sales, Dances, Teas, Dinners, and Celebrations	Dedicated to the Instruction in Literacy for Multiple Generations as a Base for Social Life		No Crime— Emphasis on Redemption and Rehabilitation. Life View: People were not Perfect and Allowances were made for their Down fallings.	Loci of Life-Changing Events— Baptism, Weddings and Funerals.
				Place for Comfort and Music (The Organ)

Chart 1: “Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life”.

Edna Smith

I met Edna Smith for the first time when I called for the appointment of the interview concerning her experiences through a long life within Queens County parlour culture. Though in her ninth decade, she presented herself as a vibrant, gracious, articulate person (see figure 3-2). As she led us into her parlour or living room, all attention was immediately arrested by the contrast in the furnishings, since many of them obviously dated back through more than one century. Edna Smith explained that she and her husband, Donald, had preserved the parlour furniture from the old Smith homestead in Beech Hill in her own home. Her living room was a rare treasury of parlour artifacts manifesting deep roots in Atlantic history.



Figure 3-2: Edna Smith, Hunts Point, 2013. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.²⁶²

²⁶² All of the photography related to the Smith family was generously collected and provided to me for the study of parlour culture by Holly and Philip Smith following the sudden death of Edna in 2013. Their help in supplying family research, completing details of history, and correcting information obtained was of critical importance for a true representation of Edna's life.

The original Smith homestead was located near the juncture of the Beech Hill Road and the Old Port Mouton Road that was cut out of the forest following the 1759 incorporation of the town of Liverpool. That original road followed a direct, shorter route between Liverpool and Port Mouton than the later 1900's route that followed the coastline; the Old Port Mouton Road still in use though to a lesser degree following the 1920's improvement of the gravel road directed along the shore route towards White Point, Hunts Point, and hence to Port Mouton. A 2002 map (figure 3-3) shows the continued existence of the Old Port Mouton Road to Beech Hill Farms. The Smith homestead functioned as a regional stop for the stagecoach proceeding along the Old Port Mouton Road, west from Liverpool, and it offered accommodation, meals, and a tavern during the stagecoach period. This vernacular use of a residence might be considered an earlier Canadian colonial parallel to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's parlour in the *Wayside Inn*. Family history records the Beech Hill Smith Homestead as being a stagecoach stop likely starting with the ownership of Benjamin Smith (1792-1841), who was the son of John Smith, the grantee of land in Beech Hill.²⁶³ A comment on such country inns in 1830 informs the travellers that though many relay stops were farms where tired horses were replaced with fresh ones, there were informal amenities "for though there is no one to invite [him in], there is no one to forbid his entrance: a neat little parlour will then receive him; perhaps even

²⁶³ Information received in a memo 16 May 2014, from Philip and Holly Smith to Amber Hanrahan.

the ‘mistress’ will be sufficiently on the alert to perform the office of introduction in person”.²⁶⁴



Figure 3-3: Queens County map, 2002. The blue arrow designates the Old Port Mouton Road still in existence from Liverpool to Beech Hill. Available from: Addressed Roads of Queens County, Nova Scotia.²⁶⁵

The architecture of the Beech Hill homestead of the Smith family (figure 3-4) reveals considerable variations over different periods. Its initial structure seems to have been a full Cape Cod or New England Bungalow that received a major rear add-on from the central roof peak, probably to accommodate large families as well as guests from the stagecoach period. The spacious colonnaded veranda with a perimeter of wooden spindles and cornices and upper cast iron decoration, gabled dormers and front bay windows, all point to a final dominantly

²⁶⁴ William Scarth Moorsom, *Letters to Nova Scotia* (London, England: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 249.

²⁶⁵ Addressed Roads of Nova Scotia, 2002. URL: <http://www.novascotia.ca/snsmr/land/images/addroadssample.pdf>. Accessed: 14 November 2014.

Victorian style. That decoration can be more precisely attributed to the Rococo Revival during Victoria's reign (1837-1901),

Even though Pugin had designed a medieval court for the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851, the Gothic style was never as popular as the Rococo, or Louis Quatorze, as it was called in the 19th century... A great crystal palace of glass and iron rose up in Hyde Park in London; it enclosed 23 acres, including several full-grown elm trees. Queen Victoria opened the fair to the first of six million visitors who viewed 14,000 exhibits from all over the world... The 1853 New York Exhibition confirmed the supremacy of French culture. The United States wanted the world to see that it had come of age. Critics praised American industrial products and rated them with the best European had to offer.

Although the Gothic, Renaissance, and other furniture styles were exhibited at both the London and New York exhibitions, the Rococo revival predominated.²⁶⁶

The sprawling asymmetry and abundance of decoration featured in the Rococo revival furniture and architecture

appealed to the Victorian love of the picturesque, the delight in abrupt variations of form and line. Houses had an abundance of interesting details, such as gables, arched windows and doorways, cast iron balconies, marble fireplaces, frescos, Renaissance columns, balustrades, and cornices. All these elements contributed to a sense of roughness and rich texture, which also characterized the picturesque.²⁶⁷

An inspection of the Beech Hill residence in the photo (figure 3-4) readily identifies a vernacular architecture of Victorian Rococo revival as being consistent with its structure, decoration, and time. While the final presentation from the photo of this building points to a linkage with Victorian style architecture from the mid-nineteenth century, the initial structure is characteristic of an earlier

²⁶⁶ Oscar P. Fitzgerald, *Three Centuries of American Furniture* (New York: United States of America, Gramercy Publishing Company, 1982), 214-215.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 215.

vernacular form, typical of the Boston States. Family history also supports this earlier design origin for the Smith homestead.



Figure 3-4: Smith Beech Hill Residence, circa 1918. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

The considerable effort to identify the age of this iconic residence was undertaken, firstly, to establish the extent its duration and, secondly, to discover whether the period of the architecture would accommodate the range of styles of furniture taken from the home and preserved during the last century. Edna Smith and her husband Donald have been the last caretakers of this collection of furniture. The last three generations to dwell in this house are seen to be standing before its front verandah (figure 3-5), to the right, the grandfather Franklin Smith and, left, his son Clifford holding his first son, Donald. Figure 3-6 displays enfant Donald's christening gown. The history of the Smith family

occupying the old homestead from 1783 to the 1950's is given in a detailed genealogy.²⁶⁸



Figure 3-5: Left: Grandfather Franklin Smith and, left, his son Clifford holding his first son, Donald, circa 1919. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. **Figure 3-6: Right:** Donald's christening gown, circa 1918. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

While the family's genealogy starts with John Smith and his land grant in Beech Hill, the following research entry points to its descent from an original pioneer from the Boston states beginning this family in Nova Scotia in 1764:

Smith, Stephen.....LIVERPOOL, 1764. part owner of sawmill, poundkeeper, b. 1725, Chatham, Mass., son of Deacon Stephen and

²⁶⁸ Genealogy obtained from Philip and Holly Smith:

- Donald Franklin Smith (1918-1991) married to Edna Smith (1920-2013) having nine children, all with successful careers, at distant places on the American continent.
- Clifford Stanley Smith (1885-1951) in 1916 married to Myra Frellick—a graduate of Normal College, having five children, continuing the farm and meat processing business which supplied five communities.
- Franklin Smith (1851-1923) married to Ada Publicover (1860-1916) having seven children operating the farm, butchering business, store, and sales from a horse-drawn meat cart.
- John Publicover Smith (1818-1901) married to Eleanor Innis (1818-1908) having four children operating the farm and business.
- Benjamin Smith (1792-1841) married to Anna Margaret Collins (1791-1855) having twelve children operating a tavern and inn for the stagecoach stop.
- John Smith, father of Benjamin, received a land grant in Beech Hill on the Old Port Mouton Road in 1783.

Hannah Collins Smith, d. 9 Sept. 1807. M.c. 1746, Mehitable, dau. Of Nathaniel Eldridge, d. 1 Sept 1815. Ch: Jonathan Eldridge, Stephen, Hannah, Ludovick, Bethia, Tabitha or Dorcas, Sarah, Betsey, Mehitable, Nathaniel.²⁶⁹

There are a number of reasons for considering Stephen Smith to be the father of the John Smith connected to Beech Hill: 1) Stephen has children named Hannah, Stephen, and Jonathan; all of these names reoccur in Benjamin Smith's family. These name connections seem probable, since it was the practice in this family to repeat past names from the family tree, 2) another connection follows from the 'Eldridge', surname of Stephen's wife, Mehitable Eldridge, which reappears four generations later in the name of the first child, Eldridge (1843-1906), in the family of John P. Smith. As well, 'Eldridge' being a rather unusual first name and used for a first child, it likely held some family significance and 3) The time period fits with John's land grant falling twenty years after Stephen's arrival in Liverpool. The relationship of this Smith family to one of the first pioneers to Liverpool seems quite certain, especially in light of the family's ongoing connections with the Boston states.

Even without extending the family tree to a documented pioneer, the family is recognized to date back at least to the 1783 land grant in Queens County; that 1783 date establishes the coming of the Loyalists to the Maritimes and their receipt of land grants.²⁷⁰ That same date, not long after the building of Simeon Perkins Cape Cod design house, accommodates the design of the original

²⁶⁹ Esther Clark Wright, *Planters and Pioneers* (Hantsport, Nova Scotia: Lancelot Press Limited, 1982), 283.

²⁷⁰ Lucille H. Campey, *Planters, Paupers, and Pioneers: English Settlers in Atlantic Canada* (Toronto, Canada: Natural Heritage Books, 2010), 65.

section of the Smith homestead as a Cape Cod structure and later its typical additions to provide more room, until finally the decorative features of the architecture changed the house to a Rococo Victorian design in the 1800's, and as such it continued until it was destroyed in the 1990's. The multiple styles of the dwelling over the years are also matched in the variety of its designs in interior furnishing.

Edna Smith²⁷¹, explaining the quality and age of the antique pieces in her parlour, turns from them to the long wall, saying,

so, those three pieces are from the old house and actually the mantelpiece is from the old house. That was in the parlour of the old house. And when she [Myra] moved out of the old house she had that taken out and brought down here and put in here. Donald's mother.

As to the age of the furnishings, Edna Smith tended to associate it with Donald's grandfather, Franklin (1851-1923) who died a few years after Smith's birth in 1920. When pressed to give an estimate in years, she reluctantly said, "I would say in the 1880's at least or maybe the 1890's. And it was a very old house. It had a living room and a parlour". As to the origin of the purchase of this furniture Smith says, "they said that some of these came from the Boston area" and later in the interview she states firmly, "but I know they said this furniture came from the Boston states". When the issue of the Boston states is again revisited, she adds, "when my parents were furnishing their house a lot of it came from Boston", which would make this last acquisition to follow sometime after their marriage, 12 December 1901, and clearly within the experience of Edna Smith as she grew up

²⁷¹ Interview with Edna Smith. Hunts Point, Nova Scotia—Direct quotations from this interview are made in this chapter. In-person interview by Amber Hanrahan. Hunts Point, Queens County. September 21, 2013.

and listened to her parents speaking of their early life. Her date of the Smith homestead furnishing, however, is couched in ambiguous terms of '1880's' and 'maybe 1890's' with an immediate expression of personal doubt: "and it was a very old house". Another family source seemed to indicate that some of the furniture might have come from Boston by ship as far back as Benjamin Smith (1792-1841), the tavern keeper and manager of the stagecoach stop. A cautious approach is to begin with the strongest evidence which was that the furniture has a Boston origin and to examine the designs of the furniture and their recorded production dates.

The white mantle in Edna Smith's living room was arresting in its simple yet ageless elegance of quiet symmetry of line and curve. This first view caused my thoughts to revert to Ancient Greece in its different periods of columned architecture. The following views (figures 3-7 and 3-8) convey the mantle's basic structure:



Figure 3-7: Smith owned mantelpiece of Federal Neoclassical style from the Beech Hill homestead. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.



Figure 3-8: Close up view of pillar molding from same mantelpiece. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

When George Washington took the oath of office in April 1789 to uphold the new Federal Constitution, “he ushered in a new era in American history. The time coincided with the beginning of a new style in furniture that takes its name from the Federal period. The Federal style represents the first phase of neoclassicism in America”.²⁷² A neoclassicism would bring a return to the restraint and beauty of ancient designs based on geometric lines and shapes. From 1790 to approximately 1815, “straight lines and delicate ornament had largely supplanted the rococo curves and exuberant carving of the earlier period”.²⁷³ It is also noted that the carved detail of neoclassicism is

executed delicately in the same shallow manner as engraved Federal silver... Such delicate ornament reflects neoclassical taste, first introduced into the arts of this country at about the same time as the Revolution and growing more popular thereafter.²⁷⁴

The characteristics of the Federal style are quite evident in the presentation of the Beech Hill mantle from the Smith homestead. Therefore, it is in this first phase of Neoclassicism, the Federal period, that the origin of the Smith mantle must be sought.

²⁷² Fitzgerald, *Three Centuries of American Furniture*, 85.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Jonathan L. Fairbanks and Elizabeth Bidwell Bates. *American Furniture, 1620 to the Present* (New York: R. Marek, 1981), 149.

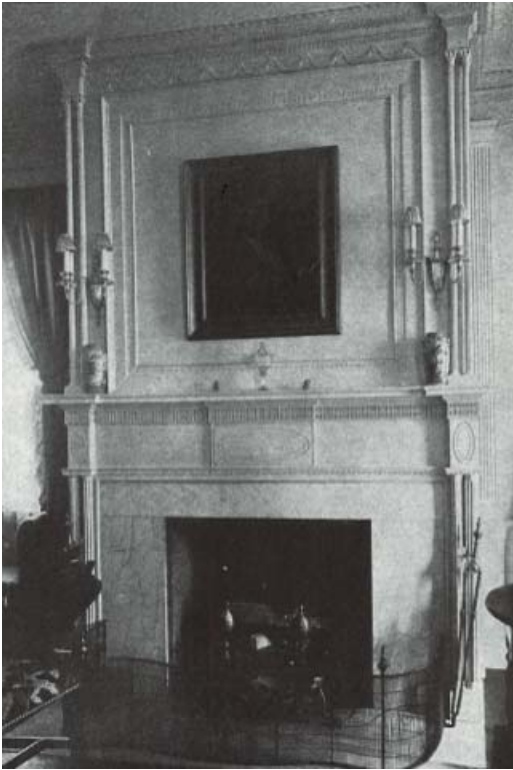


Figure 3-9: A mantle with delicate attenuated paired pillars, 1790. Available from: Wallace Nutting's *Furniture Treasury*.²⁷⁵

The photo of the mantle (figure 3-9) with slender paired pillars and delicate shallow carving circa 1790, reflects the spirit of the Smith carved mantle in line and proportion, though, it has much smaller pillars and its appearance is more austere. Nevertheless, the mantle conveys the elegance of simple geometric design that is found in the Smith mantle and both represent the Federal period.

It is further noted by Wallace Nutting that the Federal era encompassed several phases of artistic development:

It was not before about 1720 that decorative mantles were built, and they did not meet their full flower of decoration till the latter part of the century. The highest type in taste, however, were those with simple large molding of

²⁷⁵ Wallace Nutting, *Furniture Treasury (Mostly of American Origin)* (New York, USA: The Macmillan Company, 1948), photo 1441-43.

about 1750. Some of this date have appeared under the caption shell top cupboards, which coincided in date with the best mantles.²⁷⁶

This description relates well to the Smith mantle which contains the “simple large molding of about 1750” and “the caption shell top” display board above the fireplace, “which coincided in date with the best mantles”. Thus, the Smith mantle may be authoritatively categorized as among the finest of Federal mantles from about 1750-1800.

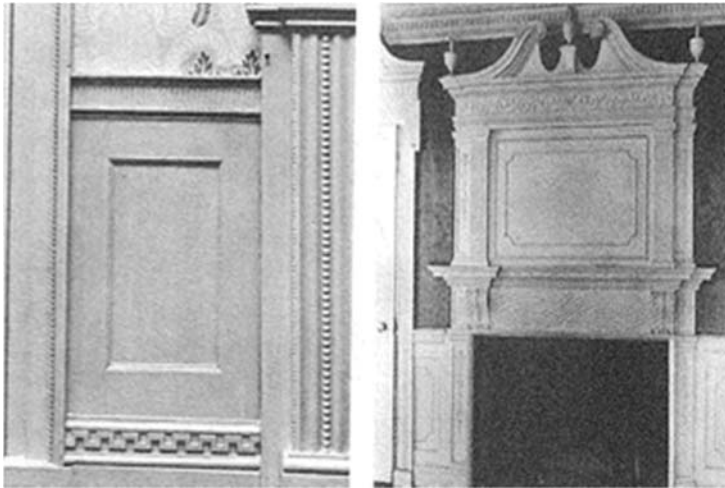


Figure 3-10 (Left): Federal details. Parlor, Salem Towne House, Old Sturbridge Village, 1796. **Right:** Federal style mantel and chimneybreast. Waterman House, Warren, R. I., ca. 1800. Available from: Abbott Lowell Cummings' *Architecture in Early New England*.²⁷⁷

Such Federal details and mantle as illustrated here (figure 3-10) “were inspired by the great classical monuments of ancient Rome, the temples, the coliseums and the arches”.²⁷⁸ The details of ancient ruins were domesticated but still conveyed their connections to these monuments. This renewed interest in classical style is thought to be related to the uncovering of Pompeii in 1755 which

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1444-46. A mantle of 1790-1800.

²⁷⁷ Abbott Lowell Cummings, *Architecture in Early New England* (Sturbridge, MA: Old Sturbridge Village, 1958), 19.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

revealed new classical buildings for architectural study.²⁷⁹ Also reminiscent of neoclassical style is this pictured Federal doorway of a Salem Towne House, 1796 (figure 3-11). Its full pillars with shallow molding and decorative blocks clearly resemble the design of the Smith mantle and help to authenticate the date and style of the mantle delivered by ship to the old Beech Hill homestead. The Smith mantle clearly belongs to the finest work of the Federal period 1750-1790.



Figure 3-11: Federal doorway. Salem House, 1796. Available from: Abbott Lowell Cummings' *Architecture in Early New England*.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

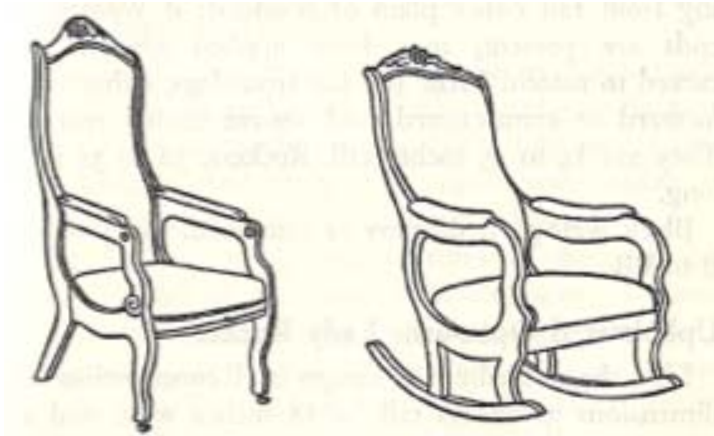


Figure 3-12: General Lee Armchair, 1860-1875. Available from: Thomas H. Ormsbee's *Field Guide to American Victorian Furniture*.²⁸¹

A chair as illustrated above (figure 3-12) was owned by General Robert E. Lee.²⁸² The matching rocker, also illustrated, is the design owned by the Smith family which closely follows the protocol given below:

Open-arm Upholstered Rocker

Has approximately the same lines as the General Lee armchair but arms are down curved. Is 38 to 40 inches tall by about 22 inches wide. The frame of the upholstered back has either a curved or arched top rail which may be surmounted by a carved cresting done in flower or fruit motifs with leafage or may be uncrested and finger-molded. With a curved top rail the back has an elongated U-shape and when arched is rectangular with slightly serpentine ends. The back uprights are either straight or slightly cyma-curved with fronts rounded or finger-molded.

Open arms either flat or slightly curved, equipped with overhanging arm pads; possibly supported by curved extensions of the front legs or may join the seat rails in boldly shaped and carved volutes. Upholstered seat rectangular with straight or slightly bowed front. Conforming front rail either plain or rounded; if voluted arm ends are present, may have applied central detail carved to match. Chair has flat front legs, either canted forward or cyma-curved, and square canted rear legs. They are 14 to 15 inches tall. Rockers, 32 to 34 inches long. Black walnut, mahogany or rosewood. Ca. 1860-1875.²⁸³

See figure 3-13 for Smith owned General E. Lee Rocker.

²⁸¹ Thomas H. Ormsbee, *Field Guide to American Victorian Furniture* (Toronto, Canada: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1952), 61.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 60.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 61-62.



Figure 3-13: Smith owned General E. Lee Rocker. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

The Smith owned General Robert E. Lee rocker has all the identifying features of its protocol—the carved crest, on the arched top rail, the boldly shaped and carved volutes on the front legs, slightly bowed front seat, volute arms with central carved detail, square canted rear legs, cyma-curved or wave shaped front legs, and elongated U-shaped back. The Smith’s rocker is in pristine condition and Edna Smith’s choice of fabric covering is highly complementary to the wood tones of the frame. It is a museum-quality piece.



Figure 3-14: Morris chair, 1875-1900. Available from: Thomas H. Ormsbee's *Field Guide to American Victorian Furniture*.²⁸⁴

The chair illustrated above (figure 3-14) is known by the name of William Morris who was a famous English artist, architect and poet.²⁸⁵ "It is claimed that this chair was first made about 1875 for Morris' own home. It subsequently became very popular in the United States".²⁸⁶ It had a mechanism for adjusted seating:

It is a large armchair about 38 inches tall by 26 inches wide, back and seat rectangular and either upholstered or fitted with thick conforming cushions. The tall, adjustable back is joined to the seat rail by a pair of hinges, and its slope is controlled by a metal cross rod that fits into grooves on the rear extensions of the arms.²⁸⁷

The description further notes that the arms may be flat or curved, with or without arm pads, the space between the arms and seat-rails is usually fitted with turned spindles, and the front legs may be square or shaped with molding.²⁸⁸ The Smith chair (figure 3-15), well upholstered in a green fabric, makes it a complementary

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

piece to the gold General E. Lee rocker. However, Edna Smith's model exhibits the more modest options of flat arms, without pads, and square front legs, but the space between the arms and seat rails has nicely turned spindles. The frame was black walnut or cherry; late examples oak or mahogany.²⁸⁹ Since it was a very popular chair, it was factory made in large quantities, circa 1875-1900.



Figure 3-15: Smith owned Morris chair, 1875-1900. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.



Figure 3-16: Smith owned Victorian Sofa, 1840-1880. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

“The Victorian Period is composite”, adapting eight earlier styles, such as the Gothic and Renaissance, into Victorian designs between 1840-1880.²⁹⁰ The first of these styles, Transitional Early Victorian, 1840-1850, used woods such as mahogany, rosewood and black walnut, also maple and other native hardwoods for country-made pieces, employed carved bracket feet and crestings for sofas, and fashioned carving in flower and leafage motifs, and mahogany veneer for pedestals and sofa skirts.²⁹¹ “The general design clearly reflects the American English period but with Victorian details, such as wavy molding, medallions and smaller details of applied carving”.²⁹² Another source refers to this period as the

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

Naturalistic Style, 1850-1865, where carved “fruit and flowers as well as the leaves of the grape, oak, or rose are prominent” and “carving is realistic, in contrast to generalization in the eighteenth century”.²⁹³ The Smith sofa (figure 3-16), originally a set accompanied by four matching chairs similarly carved, exhibits realistic carving of a rose, bunches of grapes and their leaves (figure 3-17). The culture of shipbuilding and furniture making generated similar skills of carving.



Figure 3-17: Close-up of carved fruit and leaves on crest of Sofa. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

²⁹³ Milo M. Naeve, *Identifying American Furniture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, Colonial to Contemporary* (Nashville, Tennessee: The American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 37.



Figure 3-18: Leg and foot of acanthus leaf design and extended arm and bracket foot of Smith sofa. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

The range of applications of the acanthus leaf motif is extensive in the colonies. The skill of the wood-carvers of ships' figureheads also includes this motif. The following portrait bust (figure 3-19), probably representing the ship owner, features "tastefully modeled decorative volutes and leaf forms of the acanthus".²⁹⁴ In the arrangement of the acanthus motif, there is a remarkable similarity of design between the Smith sofa (figure 3-18) and the bowsprit bust (figure 3-19). The culture integrated the skills of people, such as wood carving, into different areas of life.

²⁹⁴ Clarence Pearson Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art.* (New York: Harrison House/H.N. Abrams, 1986), 25.



Figure 3-19: Portrait bust, probably representing the ship-owner, and featuring an unusually handsome combination of tastefully modeled decorative volutes and leaf forms. Available from: Clarence Pearson Hornung, *Treasury of American Design and Antiques: A Pictorial Survey of Popular Folk Arts Based upon Watercolor Renderings in the Index of American Design, at the National Gallery of Art.*²⁹⁵

Time-line of Designs of Parlour Furniture Acquired from the Boston States by one multi-generation Family of Beech Hill

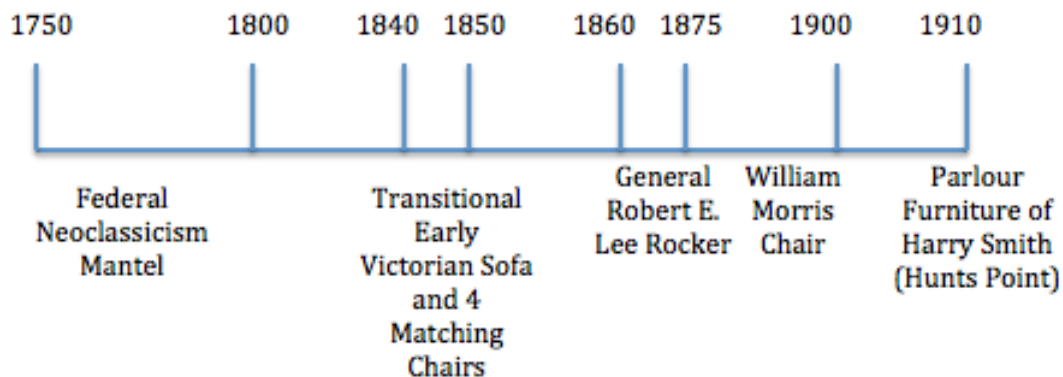


Figure 3-20: Time-line of Designs of the Smith Parlour Furniture Acquired from the Boston States.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 25. Figure 41.

The artifacts noted in the time-line chart (figure 3-20) were enjoyed by the Smith generations in a way of life that encompassed the habits and outlook of the parlour culture transported from the American colonies by the first immigrants to the region of Liverpool. It was not coincidental that the Acanthus leaf symbol should be found on both the parlour furniture in Beech Hill, Nova Scotia and the bowsprit of a Boston sailing ship.

Given that background, it was quite natural that the first topic of the interview was that of travel. To the question, “Do you remember how you traveled to other places?” Edna Smith’s response followed thus:

Question: Do you remember how you’d travel to other places?

Edna: You walked. When my mother and father were married in 1902, in Boston, she came home afterwards to Riverhead and [my father] when he was 13 he went on a fishing boat up to the Grand Banks and when he came home he had some money he had earned so his father suggested he buy some land with his money that was back in 1880s and he bought the piece of land where the house is built. My father bought that when he was 13 years old. He was 28 when he got married so they came here to build a house and he was fishing out of Boston so she had a horse and buggy so she travelled back and forth to see how the house was going but she lived over in Riverhead. So it was quite a trip every few days to see how the house was coming. And [my father and mother] when they were first married back in the 1900s until 1924 they travelled by horse and buggy, and they’d go to Bridgewater by stagecoach. But that’s how they travelled in those days.

Question: When did the railway start?

Edna: The railroad went through here in 1905-6 and went right through my father’s land and cut it in two. Went right by the house. It would have been much warmer when you travelled by the rail; you’d freeze your ears when travelling by the stagecoach. But I remember when my parents had a sleigh with the horse and had the red plush seats in it. Kept the seats in the house but set them in when they’d get ready to go. Had the fur muffs.

Question: So the rail 1905, stagecoach before that?

Edna: They were a long time because there were all these places that the stagecoach used to stop.

Edna Smith seemed very familiar with the use of the stagecoach. Her memories were generated both from her youth and from her experiences with her connections by marriage to a family that had taken an active part in the Liverpool to Yarmouth stagecoach route as well as that for local travel.

A glimpse of these stagecoach stops may be found in *Letters from Nova Scotia*

The common English chariot is used in travelling, by some persons; but the more usual vehicle is a light wagon, much the same sort of thing as the pony phaeton on four wheels we see at home, and, certainly, the best adapted to a country where an occasional windfall (a tree blown down across the road,) not infrequently reduces you to the alternative of lifting your carriage over the obstruction, or dragging it through the woods on either side. Posting is out of the question: every one travels with his own or with hired horses, or takes advantage of a stage, which plies on the two principal roads. The inns in the towns such as Windsor, or Annapolis, are much the same as those we find in the larger villages of England. The country inns are usually detached cottages, of which the owner having originally commenced as a farmer, and looking to that occupation as his chief resource, is a very different being from his accomplished prototype in England.²⁹⁶

The rigors of stagecoach travel were expressed in Smith's comment that "it would freeze your ears off". It is to be noted that the development of stagecoach travel was not the primary concern of the government of the day; "the establishment of stagecoach service in Nova Scotia, including that of government help, was to

²⁹⁶ Captain W. S. Moorsom, *Letters from Nova Scotia; Comprising Sketches of a Young Country* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 247-248.

setup a regular postal service in Nova Scotia”.²⁹⁷ Mail contracts were the requirement for setting up regular stagecoach travel. By 1833 Leonard D. Geldert established a stagecoach service from Windsor to Liverpool and later from Halifax to Liverpool and Yarmouth.

By 1848 the direct road from Halifax to Chester had been sufficiently improved to enable Geldert to inaugurate a direct service from Halifax to Lunenburg twice a week at a fare of £1. This Royal Western Mail Shore Line was extended next year to Yarmouth, running twice a week to Liverpool and once to Yarmouth.²⁹⁸

The stagecoach activity in Beech Hill was likely first associated with the families of Benjamin Smith and his son John P. Smith according to family records.

Edna Smith spoke most positively of the community life she experienced—“No, you never heard tell of crime, not around here. But all the entertainment was around here, you went from house to house, people played cards and...there were parlour games like Gossip”. As an example of more formal types of visiting, she notes, “They had weddings at home, funerals and christenings”. She mentions the use of the Beech Hill parlour for the wedding of the eldest daughter Ada in 1942, although she could not remember any special decorations of the room for the wedding there since “You felt that if you went in that parlour you had to sit up straight and be very proper”. She then remembered the wedding reception of Irene Doggett in the parlour in White Point, and she reiterated her comments about her friendship with Irene Doggett’s sister, Evelyn, “I was friends

²⁹⁷ Peter Landry, “Blupete’s History Page.” HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA: Book #3, The Road To Being Canada (1815-1867), 2003. URL: <http://www.blupete.com/Hist/NovaScotiaBk3/Ch24.htm>. Accessed 19 Sept. 2014.

²⁹⁸ R. D. Evans, “Stage Coaches in N. S., 1815-1867”, *Nova Scotia Historical Society*, #24, 114.

with Evelyn, we grew up together". It was at the home of this friend that a group of young people of her time gathered on a Sunday evening each week in the house of Herbert Doggett around the organ singing. She could not remember particular songs but thought one was "You are my Sunshine". For other activities,

When I was growing up we'd go to church in the morning if it was in the morning, in the afternoon from 2-3 was always Sunday school but if there wasn't church in the evening at 7 we'd go around to the houses and have sing-songs, we'd go to Herbert Doggett's and he had an organ. And at Angus Doggett's they had an organ. Another thing they did for entertainment, the community hall was built here in the 1917-1918, and the church would have pie sales. You'd go and pay 25 cents and get a cup of tea and piece of pie and play games and dance.

She then told how that same hall still puts on suppers that often clear more than a thousand dollars for each event now and that school concerts were always popular. It was evident from her enthusiasm that Edna Smith's youthful memories of happy times in her community were still very real to her.

Karen Hansen's title *A Very Social Time*, concerning *antebellum* New England, serves as a precursor of the varied activities Edna Smith is describing on the South Shore of Nova Scotia in the 1900's. Hansen says such "visiting...bound neighbours and kin"²⁹⁹ and "identified those visited as part of a community circle".³⁰⁰ Such visiting also supported reciprocal obligations and companionship, disseminated useful information, and sustained community institutions that were set in motion by individuals in interaction with others.³⁰¹ The

²⁹⁹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 84.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 84.

activities of such institutions as the church, community hall and school that Edna Smith mentions in Nova Scotia also had their beginnings in the social acts of visiting and engaging in the lives of others. It is interesting to find how closely the patterns of sociability of Nova Scotia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries coincided with those of the 1788-1908 documents of New England analyzed by Karen Hansen. Both sets of patterns reflected the joint ethnicity of those areas.

Another practice evident in colonial life is voluntarism. Hansen notes that

Community studies identify institutions, such as the church, the school, labor unions, and volunteer associations, as pillars of community life. While these are unquestionably structures that connect individuals to a larger society, I examine community practices at a more intimate level. Individual work, active engagement, and reaffirmation of ties with other individuals are required to set these larger institutions in motion. Human action made an organization an entity, a church a congregation, and abstinence from alcohol a movement.³⁰²

Edna Smith is a typical example of that intimate level of “individual work, active engagement in reaffirmation of ties with other individuals”.³⁰³ Edna Smith warned me that her weekends were all taken up with her visiting and charitable obligations when I asked for an interview appointment. In our interview, Edna at age 93 addressed the claims that community still imposed upon her. She details her volunteering at the Port Mouton community hall, her activities at home, and the purpose of this work in benefiting the community:

And the community played a big part. I volunteer over at the hall in Port Mouton now. Coastal Queens Place. I’m in the arts and crafts room. I do rug hooking and sewing, quilting. I have a table. And I’m involved in the church. I also participate in the Eastern Star. We earn money for education but a lot of it is social; we travel from one place to another. Liverpool closed because

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

we lost so many members but I belong to Milton and travel back and forth to Lockport each month. And Donald was a Shriner so I belong to Daughters of the Nile but the meetings are in Halifax and I don't travel to the city very often. But it is what keeps you going in life and I do like people.

It is interesting to note that while most old ways of living in the early nineteenth hundreds have disappeared, some aspects of volunteering have persevered, found funding avenues and housing in retired buildings like small schools, and have renewed their endeavours even in the present time. As Smith indicated above, she was able to promote her life-long endeavours in craft skills and volunteering well into her nineties because old community institutions were still intact and able to appropriate the old Port Mouton School for a community centre. That school now houses a hostel, craft and baked goods fair, art gallery and meeting rooms, all achieved by the local initiatives of community leaders.

Edna Smith spoke of the respect people showed each other, "Yes, growing up, you wouldn't hear gossip about one another; it was never mentioned about a neighbour. You'd never know if there was anything bad about people; you'd never hear it around the house". Smith uses the term 'gossip' as that kind of talk that had a negative effect on others. On the other hand, Hansen actually uses the term gossip to encompass all friendly talk.³⁰⁴ The two positions are not contradictory since Smith found talking and visiting to be enjoyable and positive pastimes; after all, the nature of respect among people prohibited speech that was injurious to others. When asked to describe in one word the people of her

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

time and community, Edna Smith considered a moment and said firmly, “Friendly”.

Karen Hansen’s research on the social mores of early New England is expressed in the following tenets:

In *antebellum* New England, friendship was a linchpin of the culture of mutuality, neighborliness, and reciprocity within the social sphere. It provided the bedrock of connection and caring between women and men, men and men, women and women, neighbors and relatives. Friendship was fundamental to building communities, to providing emotional, moral, and practical support, and to sustaining one’s sense of identity.³⁰⁵

It is worth repeating from Hansen that the qualities of friendship support and sustain one’s sense of identity, which was seen from the beginning of this thesis to be a fundamental goal of parlour culture since the Middle Ages. “Being friendly” characterized Edna Smith’s own demeanor, one she had learned from community interaction in her own generation.

In determining the definition of parlour culture for this thesis, the earliest evidence pointed to its main goal of creating a nexus of the interior culture of the home with that of the exterior community. The relationships thus created contribute to the growth of personal identity. This joining of the inner home to the wider community requires a social orientation of inclusivity. The inclusive activities for this achievement are gossip, visiting and friendliness, as previously noted. Support for this position is voiced by Graham Allan: “Informal relationships are not social luxuries, as they are sometimes portrayed, but are quite central in

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 52-53.

the organization of social life".³⁰⁶ Edna Smith's judgment of friendliness as the common characteristic of the people in her community points to her profound wisdom about the making of a happy and productive society.

Edna Smith spoke her own identity in her positive assurance of the value of life and of doing things that seemed a 'calling' to her—her crafts, volunteering work, church activities, and especially community and family visiting. That identity was one with her home which materially translated her life in every room, particularly in her parlour that displayed furnishings that manifested the craft and beauty of form and colour in styles that appeared over a two hundred year period. Edna Smith was the final curator of the family collection of treasured furnishings and could tell you the full history of all the houses and their furnishings in Hunts Point. She brought our attention to the architecture and history of the Beech Hill homestead and its connections to community life that included the style of vernacular architecture and furniture, the stagecoach period, church, school, and church hall. Her affirmation of life, concern for the community and family, pride in her home and social connections carries forward the ethos of parlour culture from its earliest medieval advent. But, most essentially, her interests express the inclusive outreach of the home to society closely associated in a manner with the early colonial culture of the Boston states as analyzed by Hansen. *Chart 2* provides a summary for Edna Smith's account of parlour culture and also aligns the great diversity of her stated activities with the reports of other interviewees.

³⁰⁶ Graham Allan, *Friendship: Developing a Sociological Perspective*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1989), 54.

This alignment is revealed through Hansen's categories for achieving inclusive social patterns. These categories, friendly relations and attitudes, volunteerism, gossip, and the use of the parlour, constitute the principle markers of inclusivity in social life. Therefore, it is possible to see an immediate correlation among the activities of all six interviewed families. The correlation of all these life activities through Hansen's categories strongly affirms the inclusive nature of social life in Hunts Point and White Point.

The elements of parlour culture from Edna Smith's interview are shown explicitly in *Chart 2* to conform to Hansen's categories which are markers of inclusivity of social life. Firstly, in respect to the forms of social relations, Edna Smith mentioned the adaptation of travel means, such as the stagecoach and family horse and buggy, to meet the social needs of the community. This was in line with Hansen's discussion of the difficulty of travel in *antebellum* New England that might have created barriers to visiting had people not so highly valued their contact with neighbours and kin. Smith also describes the many forms of visiting and entertainment that took place in Hunts Point and White Point such as card games, dances, Christenings, weddings, pie and ice-cream sales, dinners and dances with live music, and many locations for sing-songs as most houses had organs and expert players; these people did not even mind walking, in some cases miles on cold evenings. Secondly, Smith's lifetime contributions to volunteerism, varying in efforts from rug hooking, sewing, and quilting for a table in the arts and crafts room at the Coastal Queens Place, organizing church

activities, participating in the Eastern Star and Daughters of the Nile, were all essential efforts in keeping up the social life of the community. These acts of volunteerism, according to Hansen, “had the most effective and sustained impact on the public sphere”³⁰⁷ and contributed to an inclusive society. Thirdly, Smith recognized that people knew their communities well by word-of-mouth information and that this would help keep community institutions active. Hansen’s study also noted that “gossip affected and regulated daily life in the social and sometimes public spheres”.³⁰⁸ Fourthly, Edna Smith’s ethnicity can be traced back to the first Smith families in the founding of the Liverpool Township who came over from New England and just as their life-style was manifested in their artifacts and early heritage, so to Smith’s collection of furnishings emphasized her continuity with that deeply rooted history.

Chart 2, as well, indicated how closely Edna Smith’s outlook and social mores, such as respect, industry, order, neighbourliness, volunteerism, close community associations, and making choices for the common good, were aligned with those of *antebellum* New England. These acts of friendliness sustained identity through relationship, as noted in Hansen’s *A Very Social Time*. Unique to this chart is Edna Smith’s collection of vernacular artifacts belonging to New England furniture production lines from 1750 to 1900; these possessions make an emphatic statement about the continuity of ethnicity and its culture from the Boston States because of the specificity of her artifact designs ranging from the

³⁰⁷ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 164.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

Federal Neoclassicism of 1750-1790 up to period pieces in the time of the Civil War and the Victorian Era. Edna Smith's chart is distinctly different from Beulah Waterman Smith's, most notably, in its wonderful array of antique artifacts and her lifetime experiences in robust examples of social customs. Yet, these very differences extend the evidence for an inclusive society portrayed by Beulah Waterman Smith since they complement and strengthen her descriptions in each category of social life.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life
According to the Interview of Edna Smith

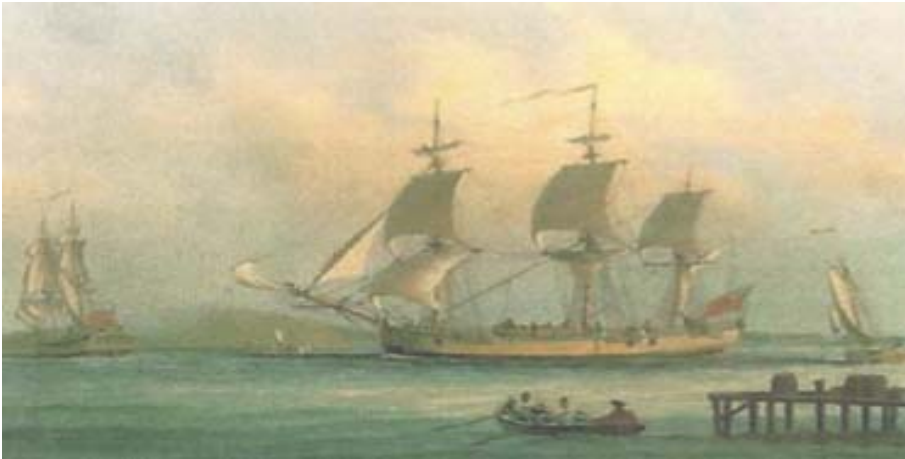
Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Entertainment—Card Games, Dances, Christenings, Weddings, Hall Pie Sales, Dinners and Dances with Live Music and A Life Full of Informal Meetings—Edna Smith’s Youthful Memories of Happy Times	Edna Smith’s Lifetime Contribution to Volunteerism Efforts Varied from Quilting to Management of Hall and Church Activities	Visiting was Her Foremost Pleasure and Duty	Just as Their Life-Style, Manifested in Their Artifacts, Emphasized a Continuity with Colonial History, So Too their Social Outlook held Closely to the Dominant Social Mores Inherited from the Boston States:	Vernacular Artifacts Inclusive of Style (1750-1900)—Preservation of Antique Furniture Obtained from the Boston States through Several Design Periods
Adaptation of Travel means to Social Needs (e.g. Stagecoach)	People Were too Busy to Engage in Crime	People knew Their Communities Well by Word of Mouth Information that Kept the Community Institutions in Motion	Respect, Industry, Order, Neighbourliness, Volunteerism, Close Association in the Community, Making Choices for the Common Good	Composite Styles Ranging from Cape Cod to Victorian Rococo Revival make up the Design of the Smith Homestead in Beech Hill and, likewise, the parlour
Many Locations for Sing Songs—Most houses had Organs and Expert Players			“Friendliness” –key to Sustaining Identity	

Chart 2: “Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life”.

Mary Ann Pingree (MacKay) Frellick

The study of the family of William James and Mary Ann Frellick of Hunts Point reveals its ethnicity derived from original settlers, a vernacular architecture in the instance of a unique Nova Scotian style of house, the health perils of cholera epidemics, and the inclusivity of their social structure in its variety of forms of participation.

The ethnicity of the William James Frellick family is of particular interest for this thesis since it involves the integration of Germanic stock, classed as foreign Protestants, into the culture of the basic immigrant strain of colonial Americans who settled in Queens County. This Frellick family descends from George Frolog who was born in 1718 in Hessen, Germany and died 1806 in New Dublin, Nova Scotia. George Frolog and wife, Julianna, were founding settlers of Lunenburg. George Frolog immigrated as passenger number 100 on the sailing ship *The Gale* in 1751 (see figures 3-21 and 3-22). From 1750-1752 twelve ships arrived at the port of Halifax bearing settlers from Germany, Switzerland, France and Montebeliard.



	Peoples Names	Age	Place of Birth	Profession	Sex
				Brought over?	93
99	Jacob Decker	20	Wiesenstein	Taylor	1
100	George Frolig	33	Haltsen	Farmer	1
101	Johann Christ. Bornman	32	Saxony	Schoemaker	1
102	Johann Horn	36	Strasburg	Butcher	1
103	Abraham Dupasquier				3
	20 of Mr. Dupasquier's people				20
	M. Le Bernier				1

Figures 3-21 (Top) and 3-22 (Bottom): First Immigration of the Frolig Family. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.³⁰⁹

According to the FROLIG document,³¹⁰ George Frolig arrived in Halifax in 1751 at the age of thirty-three years, disappeared after 1752 though he was

³⁰⁹ The genealogical information obtained from Nina Frellick Inness, Hunts Point. She provided a copy of the document: *A Foreign Protestant Family from Hessen, FROLIG, George Frolig and Wife, Julianna, were Founding Lunenburg Settlers*, researched by Muriel Farquhar Davidson.

³¹⁰ The FROLIG genealogy document includes the family line that moved to Hunts Point, Queens County.
 I: 1718-1806: George Frollick, age 88;
 II: 1754-1835 John Frollick m. Elizabeth Margaret Weil;
 III: 1780-1862 John George m. Anna Ferguson (1803);
 IV: 1818- : William Henry Frellick, tenth child in a family of twelve siblings;

thought to have married Julianna in Halifax. The rest of his life of eighty-eight years was spent in Lunenburg, he bought land at New Dublin in 1774, and he became a member of Zion Lutheran in Lunenburg in 1775. The passage of one line of the family to Hunts Point, Queens County occurred when Margaret, the widow of his son, John Frellick, accompanied her eldest son John George Frellick and his wife Anna Ferguson there. Margaret was buried in Hunts Point in 1835. A major contribution by John George Frellick to his new community of Hunts Point was the donation of land for the building of a church, 18' X 25' with a tower to be called Saint James by the Sea. According to church records: "1837 this year a church was erected at Hunt's Point on land given by George Fraelig".³¹¹ Their tenth child, William Henry Frellick, was born in Hunts Point in 1818 and had a son James Snow Frellick, born in Hunts Point and buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Port Mouton, Queens County. James Snow's son William James Frellick (known as Billie Jim), born in Summerville Centre, married Mary Ann Pingree MacKay, born August 1, 1889, in Summerville. She died in 1968 in Hunts Point where she had created her diaries. Mary Ann (Annie) MacKay was a descendant of United Empire Loyalists of Tarleton's Legion who were allotted land in Port Mouton and arrived in Port Mouton Bay (Port Mutton) in October 1783.³¹²

V: 1852-1914: James Snow Frellick d. in Hunts Point;

VI: 1887-1963: William James Frellick m. Mary Anne Pingree MacKay;

VII: 1922-2011: Donald MacKay Frellick, age 88, served in WWII from 1943-45 in Italy, Holland, and Africa.
1925-1968: Ronald Thomas MacKay, served in Merchant Marines, WWII, m. Eva Fairn.

³¹¹ James F. More, *The History of Queens County*. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Nova Scotia Printing, 1873), 99.

³¹² Thomas H. Raddall, "Tarleton's Legion." *Nova Scotia Historical Society*, 1949.

The style of the Frellick house in Hunts Point (see figures 3-23, 24, and 25) provides a key artifact for an understanding of the vernacular architecture of Nova Scotia. A study by Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth shows that vernacular housing in the Maritimes “reflected a continuity of traditional ways of creating shelter” and tended to replicate New England forms of construction.³¹³ Their study characterizes these housing forms beginning with Type I, the hall and parlour house (1750-1950)³¹⁴; Type II, the Cape Cod house (1770-1850)³¹⁵; Type III, the Maritime vernacular house (1800-1900), on a Cape Cod base with various kinds of dormers³¹⁶; Type IV, the two storey extension of the Cape Cod (1770-1850), a “Loyalist” or Georgian style³¹⁷; Type V, the ‘temple’ house (1830-1850)³¹⁸; and finally, Type VI, the hatch roofed house (1890-1920)³¹⁹. This analysis of vernacular housing in the Maritimes helps to distinguish the house forms in the region of White Point and Hunts Point and, in particular, the Frellick house as a hatch roofed house according to Type VI (see figure 3-26).

³¹³ Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth, “Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces—a Reconnaissance, 97.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 93.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 96.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.



Figure 3-23 (Left): Rear view of Frellick house, Hunts Point, photo circa 1939.

Figure 3-24 (Right): Front view of Frellick house, Hunts Point, photo circa 1939.

Available from: Amber Hanrahan.



Figure 3-25: A 1960's view of the Frellick house which was demolished in 1967 or shortly before Annie Frellick's death, according to Nina Frellick Inness. This old picture shows how isolated the houses were, whereas today there are many houses clustered along this road. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

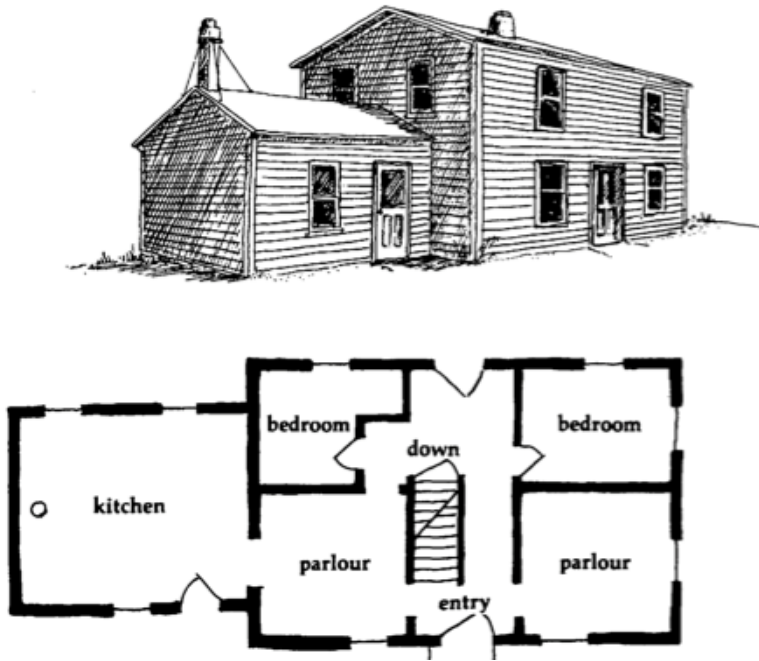


Figure 3-26: Type VI—the hatch roofed house (1890 to 1920). Available from: Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth, 's "Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces—a Reconnaissance".³²⁰

The authors find that the settlers of this region were not inclined to innovation in the design of maritime folk architecture.³²¹ However, they also assert that “the borrowing of New England technology and style was both selective and conservative”, meaning that the Maritimes did not copy every stylistic change developed in New England as instanced by the transfer of the Cape Cod to Nova Scotia but not the Connecticut Salt Box.³²² They note also that “Maritime houses all display an economy of materials and a plainness of decoration that is in striking contrast to American houses and one notices the difference as soon as one crosses the border”.³²³

³²⁰ Ennals and Holdsworth, "Vernacular Architecture and the Cultural Landscape of the Maritime Provinces—a Reconnaissance", 98.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 97.

³²² *Ibid.*, 100.

³²³ *Ibid.*

This difference in plainness of Maritime houses as compared with those across the border may likely derive from craftsmanship or economic standards. The authors of this study on vernacular housing in the Maritimes consider that the difference follows from a “more fundamental cultural distinction: Maritimers were less expansive, less given to displaying their wealth through their houses than their American cousins”.³²⁴ And this is the reason the authors give for Maritime Types of housing not rising to the level of the American prototypes. Yet, by the end of the century, despite these conservative tendencies, “a radically different new roofline”³²⁵ was structurally developing throughout the Maritimes because “a distinctly Atlantic house type emerged in the region as expressed as Type VI”.³²⁶ The most distinctive feature of these houses is the unusual roofline:

The roof is extremely simple to construct. The rafters are tied to a ridgepole and to a heavier (2” x 6” x 8”) joist which also supports the ridgepole. The whole unit then forms a shallow truss which rests on the top plate of the walls. Because it rarely spanned a width of more than about five metres the *structure* was both strong and cheaply constructed.³²⁷

After 1890, this hatch style of house was found widely throughout Nova Scotia, from Cape Breton to Halifax, to the South Shore and the Fundy Coast. The authors support the strong hypothesis that its roofline links shipbuilding and housebuilding.³²⁸ The link to shipbuilding lies in the striking similarity of the roofline “to the form and construction technique of hatch covers and the cabin

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, n. 26.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

roof of the nineteenth-century wooden sailing vessels. A low pitched roof would shed water but create little wind resistance or obstruction to the activities on deck”.³²⁹ The illustrated hatch cover on a ship (see figure 3-27) reveals a very low pitch, thus preventing both wind resistance to the speed of the boat and interruption in the ship’s routines. In the application of that marine metaphor, the hatch roof translated to a house that avoids the major wind resistance against its roof structure and presents only minor difficulties in house repair. The authors further note that “the unorthodox truncated roofline would not have been unusual to the nautical eye”³³⁰, especially since most of these communities had strong Maritime interests. Also, since this was “the period when shipbuilding was declining...it may be that shipbuilders turned to housebuilding”.³³¹ Such house construction as the Hatch House Type was cheaper and perhaps required less skill than traditional houses, but it did produce a house type “distinctive to Atlantic Canada”.³³²

³²⁹ *Ibid.*

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² *Ibid.*, 102.

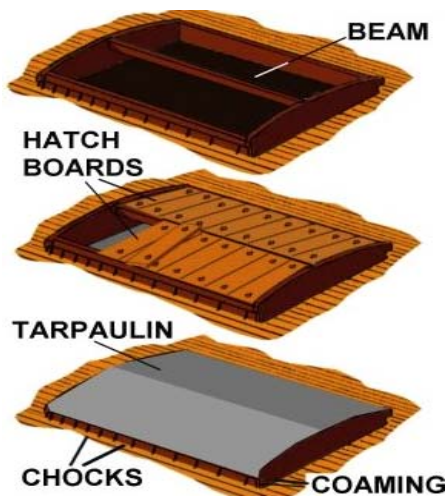


Figure 3-27: Hatch opening on a ship. Available from: Mike Smith's "Barges and Ship Types. Available from: Mike Smith's "Barges and Ship Types".³³³

Acting on a deeper curiosity about these hatch houses, I was attracted to one in Summerville sitting up on a hill above the ocean (see figure 3-28). Its owner, Marie Clancy, generously permitted picture taking and invited me in to look at its interior; I wanted to see if the marine metaphor might have translated to its inner design. My first impression approved of the spacious hall access to a cozy dining room and kitchen with bright view planes to the ocean and woods. Then I spied a set of stairs darkened from being boxed between walls such as might be found on board a ship but opening up above to a wealth of light as might be found on a deck of a ship. This impression was so strongly felt I came away with pictures (see figures 3-29 and 3-30) that are suggestive of that sense of a nautical flavor within the interior plan of the house. The designer of this house integrated the marine metaphor within as well as without the house.

³³³ Mike Smith, "Barges and Ship Types." *Lineside Industries*, 2003. URL: <http://mike.da2c.org/igg/rail/00-app1/001-index.htm>. Accessed: 21 January 2015.



Figure 3-28: The residence of Marie Clancy and formerly her husband, Willis in Summerville, a hatch house, which was previously the home of Jessie MacKay and Annie Mackay Frellick. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.



Figures 3-29 (Left) and 3-30 (Right): The design of these stairs suggests a hatchway in a ship. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

That new roofline from the 1890-1920 invention of the hatch house is presented in the Heritage Village model at Lake Charlotte, Halifax County (see figure 3-31), as a unique feature of vernacular architecture originating in Nova Scotia. The material economy and plainness of decoration is starkly evident in

this model. However, the great positive advantage of these houses is an interior one in that all of the floor space of the second floor is usable because of the straight walls extending floor to ceiling, undiminished by the traditional roofline slope. The Nova Scotia Hatch House offers the benefits of economy of material cost, ease in repair and maintenance, maximum living space within the footprint dimensions of the house, the satisfaction of having an artifact symbolizing the significance of the marine environment, and a unique claim to Nova Scotian architectural invention in vernacular housing.



Figure 3-31: Memory Lane Heritage Village Museum in Lake Charlotte, Nova Scotia 1940-1950. Available from Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2013.

Our knowledge of the William James (Billy Jim) Frellick family came from the lengthy diary written by his wife, Mary Ann Pingree (MacKay) Frellick, known as Annie Frellick, from the year 1941 to 1966; from interviews with her granddaughter Nina (Frellick) Inness (see figure 3-32 for Nina as a little girl with her grandmother in the parlour of the family homestead and figure 3-33 for Nina

today at the time of this interview); and from other interviewees and related documentation.



Figure 3-32 (Left): Mary Anne (MacKay) Frellick, with granddaughter, Nina, Christmas 1955. Available from Amber Hanrahan. **Figure 3-33 (Right):** Nina (Frellick) Inness, curator of her grandmother’s diaries, photo date 2013. Available from Amber Hanrahan.

The diaries of Mary Ann Pingree (Annie) MacKay Frellick are hand-written, arranged in five-year segments, and titled *My Personal Diary*. The segments constitute Vol. I 1941-45; Vol. II 1946-50; Vol. III 1953-57; Vol. IV 1964 which is the only single year volume and follows the death of her husband in 1963; and Vol. V 1965-68. Both Annie Frellick and her son Ronald died in the year 1968. The tone of her diaries is factual and informative with a care to offer a complete record of known events in the community. Where the reader might expect some personal slant, such a case was a rarity and where it does occur, brevity is more noticeable than any emotional impact in the expression. For example, Annie Frellick reports of the death of a close kin, “Dear sister Nina passed away 2:30

a.m. today in B.C” (March 15, 1944). Despite the emotion in the word “Dear”, the rest of the entry is simply factual. Annie Frellick’s style of entry is similar to that of the diaries of Simeon Perkins in that she is an observer whose presence is not allowed to obscure the truth of what she witnesses. The whole product of these volumes extends approximately one thousand pages.

In her diaries, encompassing approximately 25 years, Annie Frellick faithfully recorded the events of her own family, WWII as it changed community life, her relationships with her neighbours and friends largely through letters, certain international events beginning with “the Queen spoke at 4 o’clock this afternoon” (April 11, 1943), and finally an unbroken chronicle of the weather for all those years. These diaries gave voice to a woman who had suffered great personal tragedy in the loss of her three young children to cholera in 1920, as well as the early death of another son. The local newspaper describes the dreaded effects of cholera on the Frellick family and on the psyche of the community,

During the last month, the home of Mr. & Mrs. W.J. Frellick has been the scene of such crushing sorrow as few persons have been called upon to sustain. About four weeks ago the four children were all stricken with cholera infantum of the most virulent kind, and the disease took on the most serious proportion. The first to succumb was Hattie Catherine, age 3 yrs. 6 mos. on 25 Aug. The loss of the little daughter was a sore one and the cup of grief seemed full. On Sept. 15 the youngest son, James Warren, a bright little lad of 5 yrs. Went down before the grim reaper and was laid to rest amidst burning tears. Truly the cup of sorrow seemed to overflow, but how inscrutable are the ways of God. On Sept. 24, the second son, Alexander Shea, 8 yrs. Old, passed away, leaving the parents only one child. Heart breaking as the triple loss is, the parents are sustaining it with splendid Christian fortitude. Mr. & Mrs. Frellick have the deepest sympathy of all who know them and when these words are read that sympathy will widen. The three little graves in the God’s Acre at the St. James Church, Hunts Point,

have touched hearts deeply, and have been a reminder of man's mortality. May it also be a comfort to the sorrowing hearts that it is through the grave and gate of death that we all pass to our joyful resurrection, through his merits who died and was buried and rose again for us.³³⁴

An interesting notation appears on the cover of the first volume of Annie Frellick's diary, "Immunization for diphtheria 3 times. Last one Jan 26, 1940 at Hunts Point Hall". This event was so important in Annie Frellick's mind that she included it though it occurs before her diary began in 1941. It must have pleased Annie that these new inoculations gave people a chance to save lives. Fortunately, Annie Frellick's last two sons, Donald and Ronald (see figure 3-34) thrived and as they were becoming young men Annie Frellick gradually reclaimed her own voice through her joy in their existence and her written expression of life in her diaries.



Figure 3-34: Annie Frellick's last two sons, Donald (right) and Ronald (left) Frellick, circa 1927. Available from Amber Hanrahan.

³³⁴ *Liverpool Advance*, October 1920.

Just as Edna Smith spoke positively about the entertainment in small communities, Annie Frellick details in her diary the visiting and contacts with her neighbours and trips to town. Edna Smith's mention of the Sunday night singsongs around the organ at Herbert Doggett and Angus Doggett's homes in White Point supports Frellick's entry "Donald and John [Robinson] go to White Pt. for a singsong in the eve" (April 4, 1943). By Edna Smith's account quite a large group would walk to White Point for these singsongs but she could not remember any names from the group. Typically, Frellick had a wide collection of people visit her kitchen and parlour. A brief sample of this collection involves neighbours, kin, young people, and some who came for tea:

May 23, 1943—"Mrs. Wolfe came to tea"
 May 2, 1943—"Marcia and Lawrence [Verge] here this eve"
 April 17, 1943—"Jessie comes for over-night"
 April 9, 1943—"Friday, John and Marcia and Grant over for evening"
 March 2, 1944—"Dora and Harold here to-night"
 March 27, 1944—"Dora [Frellick] and Marcia [Robinson] here in eve"
 April 11, 1947—"Harry Verge here today".

All of this visiting was informal with no appointments made.

During our discussions about her understanding of the diaries, Nina Frellick Inness expressed her surprise at the frequent usage her grandmother made of the daily post, not only to keep the family links with both her sons serving far from home in the war zones but even to keep daily contact with her neighbours and family in the adjoining villages of Beech Hill and Summerville. Additionally, her entries indicate a mailing list to distant places as for example on June 23, 1944, "write to Sadie [Aunt in United States]; January 30, 1947, "Parcel

from Aunt Sadie”; March 13, 1945, “write to Mabel C. [Clancy in United States]; and August 11, 1943, “got a letter from Marion in California”. At first overwhelmed in sorting out all the connections Annie Frellick has to her respondents, the reader is eventually struck by the sheer number of letters she is writing and receiving. The following list enumerating the frequency of letters sent and received by Annie in *Chart 3* sets forth a single year’s production of letters. The total count of 491 letters for the year of 1944 was managed solely by Annie Frellick who was the single writer of outgoing letters from her home. Of these letters, 312 were directed to or sent from the war zone. Frellick tirelessly invested a large portion of each day to post office trips, reading and responding to the latest communications. Her reliance on the mail to keep social contacts in the community was nothing short of an imaginative invention; her relatives in Beech Hill and her sister in Summerville received and replied to her letters every few days according to her diary; yet they lived only a few miles away. So great was her strong drive to keep in touch with family that she must have walked to the post office each day to keep this chain of communication going.

Date	Total Letters Sent	Total Letters Received	Total of All Letters	Letters Received from Sons & Friends in War Zone	Letters Sent to Sons & Friends in War Zone
January 1-February 15	22	43	65	26	17
February 16-March 23	15	49	64	19	13
March 24-May 6	30	40	70	20	19
May 7-June 18	28	31	59	20	24
June 21-August 9	41	24	65	14	34
August 13-October 13	36	29	65	14	28
October 15-December 9	44	30	74	18	31
December 10-December 31	16	13	29	5	10
Totals:	232	259	491	136	176

Chart 3: Frequency of Letters Sent and Received by Annie Frellick: January 1, 1944-December 31, 1944.

For Frellick her novel use of letter writing to nearby kin and neighbours was a surrogate form of visiting. These local letters when added to her mailings abroad constituted a voluntary endeavor or in Karen Hansen's terms "social work". This characterization of "work" might not seem to apply to the letter writing to her sons, but even in that case her diary entries often involved multiple tasks like "wrote to Ronald, Donald, and then Jessie" (January 16 and 23, February 13 and 19, 1944...). Because of the frequency of needed responses, this letter writing acquired the appearance of an onerous duty.

Then, on February 22 and 23, 1944, both Annie Frellick and her son Ronald received letters from Louie Verge, fighting in Italy, and Frellick enters into

her diary on February 24, 1944, "wrote letter to dear Louie". Both Harry and Louie (Louis) Verge were known to her as orphan sons of Harry and Laura (Smith) Verge of White Point, their father having drowned when his fishing boat broke up on the ledge off shore in view of their home. Both boys joined the army at the onset of war in 1940 despite being under the age limit; Louie Verge was wounded four times during the course of the war and refused to be sent home while his brother was still fighting. It is likely that Louie Verge was in the hospital when he first wrote to Frellick in 1944. He also wrote to her May 4 and 18, 1944 and to her son Ronald Frellick from Italy on May 25, 1944. Frellick's entry for May 28, 1944 was "write Earl, Donald, Ronald, Jessie, and Louie". And on July 23, 1944 "Write to Sadie and Jessie and Louie, and Donald and Ronald". Louie Verge is now part of the permanent mailing list and Earl Frellick has just been added, making the letter writing more arduous. Numerous times she simply states "write to the boys", alternating with "write to the boys as usual on Tuesday" (July 18, 1944) or "write to the boys as usual on Sunday" (August 20, 1944). On July 8, 1944 she notes, "write to the boys, send boys candy [and] to Louie" and on August 30, 1944, "write to boys and Louie", and then, September 27, 1944, she says simply, "write to Louie in hospital in Italy". Among the boys on her writing list, Earl Frellick, a nephew, was added after March 3, 1944, when he first arrived in England. These entries illustrate her obligation to writing multiple responses in an evening, to increasing her correspondence according to the need of the boys in combat, to pledging certain days, like Tuesdays and Sundays for writing to them, and to accepting the burden of that commitment as reflected in her phrase "as

usual". Though these examples are only a few of her extensive entries on letter writing in the diary, they serve to show that she has committed herself to a demanding task, a labour of love but a labour nonetheless. Annie Frellick's diary is a testament to one person's sense of obligation to perform "social work", so necessary to the creation and preservation of community life in the nineteenth and twentieth century parlour culture as translated by the South Shore emigrants from the Boston States and also by the emigrants of Hessen, Germany, that they eagerly co-opted the new social instrument of the mail service.

Community is a 'social web', "a network of social relations marked by mutuality and emotional bonds. Community is dependent upon common purpose, shared understanding and values, a sense of obligation and reciprocity, and collective action".³³⁵ Large-scale inclusive gatherings required accommodations more spacious than the parlour. The colonial New England community's "network of linkages and interaction had a physical manifestation. The meetinghouse was the dominant feature of the settlement landscape, the focus of community activity".³³⁶ Larger "community gatherings—dances, parties, church services, town meetings, and fairs—stirred conversation and visiting. Communities planned events in advance (in contrast to routine visits) that included a wider range and larger number of people".³³⁷ These meeting houses were the precursors of the twentieth century community halls such as the one built in 1917 in Hunts Point,

³³⁵ Joseph S. Wood, "Village and community in early colonial New England" in *Journal of Historical Geography* 8:4 (1982), 333.

³³⁶ Joseph S. Wood, "The New England Village as an American Vernacular Form" in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* Vol. 2 (1986), 55-56.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 83.

Queens County (see figure 3-35), where all the members of society would participate in community events.



Figure 3-35 (Left): Community Hall Hunts Point, built in 1917. **Right:** Wesley United Church, Hunts Point. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: February 21, 2015.

In respect to that larger sphere of social life, Annie Frellick’s diary chronicled the numerous events that took place in the Hunts Point hall. The proceeds from these events went to the needs of the community and other charitable groups. Her son Donald Frellick contributed his help to the management of these events before he joined the services. On February 21, 1941, Donald “went up to the hall Friday night. Made \$14.25 at the door”, May 20, 1942, “Fire sale for Red Cross to-night. Made \$90”, October 21, 1943, “Pie sale and dance in hall for White Pt. School House”, and on February 9, 1944, “Made over \$87 last night to supper in hall”. There were numerous dances that took place in the hall: on April 1, 1942, Frellick writes that “Donald went to dance in evening”; January 7, 1948, “Donald and John go to dance in hall”; and on January 28, 1948, “Donald to dance in hall”. There was a “young peoples social”

on April 30, 1942; on November 15, 1943, “a Red Cross social in eve”; a “Valentine’s social in hall” on February 12, 1947; and on April 22, 1949, “Lobster supper in hall tonight”. These occasions for social work were “opportunities for visiting, talking, sharing news, catching up on family gossip, and reinforcing ties—in essence, reaffirming the interdependency of the community”.³³⁸ Though these highlights from the diary are selected from a wealth of social activities in the hall, visits, and greetings by mail, they illustrate the vibrant spirit of community in Hunts Point and White Point, as may be seen in *Chart 4*, an analysis and summary of relationships.

An analysis of *Chart 4* of Annie Frellick’s contributions to the social work of the communities of Hunts Point and White Point exemplifies some rather unique markers of inclusivity in parlour culture, as well as the types of activities mentioned in the charts of earlier interviews. Frellick’s interview has singular recognition for her diaries, her inventive use of the mail, her family’s volunteerism, and the architecture of her home. Firstly, her diaries, chronicling the stream of informal visiting in her home, trips to town and Halifax, the constant comings and goings of guests, relatives, neighbours, and friends in the community, activities in the hall and those in other homes over twenty-five years, were as Hansen describes the use of diaries, a ‘roll call’ of the whole community.

The sheer volume of visitors filtering in and out of everyday routines astounds the twentieth century reader. Looking at a diary can feel like reading a telephone book, calling roll for the community.³³⁹

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 109.

³³⁹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 79.

Frellick's diaries make a roll call of the community and catalogue the social work being done there. After the terrible loss of her children, Frellick's own identity was revived in its embrace of the lives of others in her records and her extensive diaries are a careful record of her community,. Thus, her diary entries of those many dimensions of social lives expanded her own awareness of her world and her personal identity. Secondly, in another form of written social relationships, the frequency of Frellick's wartime use of the mail for letters and parcels was a surrogate visiting by which she maintained community networks over vast distances. Her revival of life came into full force with her wartime efforts to cheer the overseas sons of the community. Thirdly, under the category of 'gossip', Frellick's form of conveying information and feelings in visits was made by thousands of letters and going to the post office each day. Therefore, her mailing endeavours fulfill the purposes of the category of gossip.

Fourthly, Frellick's volunteerism, a prominent category in her *Chart 4*, began with her family's donation of land for the building of the church; complete with community networks and entertaining activities, the church was one of the most important structures in the community according to Hansen. Frellick's undertaking of a diary to record the activities of her neighbours was a beneficial project for the future interests of the community. Frellick wrote to the boys on the front lines as a duty towards the community and as social work to keep mail contact with kin and friends. Her sons accepted the duty of volunteering at the hall and for other projects before and after the war; their war service was purely

voluntary. Fifthly, in respect to attitudes, Maritimers tend to be conservative in following New England styles of building as well as their styles of living. These qualities exhibit a common ethnicity and a continuity of lifestyle with *antebellum* New England. However, Frellick's parlour was found to be located, according to my most strenuous research for this thesis, in a home of hatch house design, that is architecturally unique to Nova Scotia. The Frellick hatch house structure was erected at the turn of the century when fire had demolished the original home. This unique style is incontrovertible evidence of the inventive imagination of Nova Scotians. The claim that the parlour in Frellick's house was always open to her friends and relatives brings to mind figure 3-32 of Annie Frellick pictured in her parlour during amiable moments with her little granddaughter Nina. In conclusion, Annie Frellick's parlour was a place of inclusive social orientation. *Chart 4* of Annie Frellick's interview is a strong and complex testament to the inclusive social links among individuals in White Point and Hunts Point and Annie Frellick's presence in that milieu.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life
According to the Interview of Mary Ann Pingree (MacKay) Frellick

Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Her War Time Use of the Mail for Letters and Parcels as Surrogate Visits	Family's Donation of Land for Building of Church	Conveying Information and Feelings in Visits by Thousands of Letters and Going to the Post Office Each Day	Maritimers tend to be Conservative in Following New England Styles of Building as well as Their Styles of Living—These Factors added Continuity of Lifestyle with the Boston States	A Scene of Active Visitation of Kin, Friends, and Friends of her Two Sons.
Her Diaries Amount to a "Roll Call" of the Whole Community Over 25 Years	Frellick's Voluntary Project of the Diary to Record the Doings of Her Neighbours made a Beneficial Project for All		Maritime Housing tends to be Economical of Materials and Show Plainness of Decoration	Parlour in Unique Nova Scotia Hatch House Design
Stream of Informal Visiting in Her House, Trips to Town, Trip to Halifax to See King and Queen	Her Factual Style Suited the Interests of the Community		Survival Despite Great Family Suffering	
Taking Part in Hall Activities and Those in Other Homes (e.g. singsongs)	Frellick wrote to the Boys on the Front Lines, as a Duty Towards the Community		Annie Frellick's Use of the Mail to extend Social Relations	
	Voluntary Duty or "Social Work" to Keep Mail Contact with Kin and Friends			

Chart 4: "Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life".

Irene (Doggett) Munyon

Irene (Doggett) Munyon, currently living in Worcester, Massachusetts, was originally from White Point, Queens County and is presently 94 years old. This interview was recorded over a period of three phone calls. She was known to be in her youth a kindly and gentle person and well liked in the whole community according to a number of interviewees. A story recalled about Irene Doggett Munyon was of her fondness for her pet cat. While she was at school one day she asked the teacher if she could go home to take her cat inside because she was worried the wild rabbits would eat it when in fact it would have been the rabbits that someone needed to look out for. When asked about the old school concerts, Irene Doggett Munyon responded by, "I sang my heart out at those concerts. I don't know if I was the worst but I remember singing 'Silent Night'". Interviews from these older citizens revived memories of past social events, which though seeming of small consequence, highlighted everyday life in those communities.

The house in which Irene Doggett Munyon grew up was built by her father, Herbert Doggett, in approximately 1920 since she remembered being two or three years old when they moved into it. He constructed this family home over a period of years with the help of some of his relations³⁴⁰ and neighbours. This was the house of Herbert and Ida Doggett and a family of three daughters and one

³⁴⁰ Another interviewee, Ivan Doggett noted that, Herbert Doggett was a cousin to his father, Austin, and his uncles Harry and Almon Doggett. Herbert was a brother to Eldridge and Carmen Doggett in the same community. These communities kept close ties of kinship.

son. The house sat on an intersection of three roads in White Point and was another example of the Style VI Hatch house that is unique to the Maritime region. The date of its building again confirms the advent of the hatch design in comparatively recent times. Although the Frellick house was built closer to the turn of the century, both houses were quite modern constructions. Herbert Doggett chose the hatch house design (see figure 3-36) which is formed from a nautical metaphor, the hatch roof on ships. Herbert Doggett's choice of design would likely have been motivated by his life work as a fisherman, so the home he constructed bore a resemblance to the ship he labored on each day.



Figure 3-36: The Herbert Doggett Hatch house built in 1920. The parlour lies to the right of the front door. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: February 21, 2015.

The first wedding reception that took place in the parlour of this home was that of Irene Doggett Munyon's oldest sister Ruby (see figure 3-37—also in the

picture are her aunt Josephine Doggett, her younger sister Evelyn and her mother Ida Doggett). This was the first of three wedding receptions that would take place in that parlour, first with Ruby, then Evelyn and finally Irene Doggett. Irene Doggett Munyon was married on June 4, 1949, the evening when The H.M.C.S. Magnificent, the Canadian aircraft carrier, went aground on the ledges off the shore of White Point. The picture of Ruby's wedding (figure 3-37) was obtained during my interview with Ivan Doggett, a cousin of Irene Doggett Munyon. Ivan and Florence Doggett, on first inspection of this picture, announced, "This looks like Evelyn. I think that's Ida...I think that's Joe Eldridge [Aunt Josephine]. Must be someone in that family who was getting married". Ivan and Florence Doggett had another photograph with just Ruby and Evelyn Doggett as well as a photograph of Ivan Doggett's sister Shirley Doggett leaving her own home to get married. Irene Doggett Munyon recalls that Ruby was not married at home where a reception was held for her, but Irene adds that her second older sister, "Evelyn was married in my mother's living room. I believe so" and notes that her sisters were "a little bit older than me. Evelyn was seven years and Ruby was ten years [older]". Three weddings or receptions for daughters were held in that house and involved all of the people in the community.



Figure 3-37: (Left to right): Aunt Josephine (Colp) Doggett, Ruby, her younger sister Evelyn, and mother Ida Doggett in her parlour, photo circa. 1939. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

Irene Doggett Munyon remembered quite a few people who often visited her mother's parlour: "Aunt Ella, Vera Doggett, Aunt Josephine and quite a few neighbours". While Josephine Doggett held her nieces Irene, Evelyn and Ruby in very high regard, Irene Doggett Munyon said of her, "She was like a grandmother. We didn't have a living one" and Irene then remembered visiting and sleeping over night at her Aunt Josephine Doggett's or as she particularly notes, Aunt Joe's house. "They had this little room between my aunt's bedroom and the two spare rooms but there was this little room in between with no windows and I used to sleep in there because she [Aunt Joe] wanted me close to

where they were". Irene Doggett Munyon concludes that the room was later made into a bathroom and a window was put in because she remembers the other rooms upstairs "were good size bedrooms".

Irene Doggett Munyon's home was the meeting place of a large group of young people who travelled from Hunts Point to White Point for a weekly singsong around the organ on Sunday nights after church. According to Irene, a favourite song that could be heard was "You are my Sunshine". Edna Smith spoke of these happy times and the group walking at night together for a couple of miles to enjoy the fun. Edna Smith said that Irene Doggett Munyon's older sister Evelyn Doggett was her best friend growing up and she would have played the organ on Sunday nights. Irene Doggett Munyon's response to the question of whether Evelyn was the organ player was "Yeah, my sister Evelyn". Annie Frellick's diary also reported some of the participants of these singsongs. On April 4, 1943, she notes that her son "Donald and John [Robinson] go to White Point for a sing-song in the eve". Indeed, each interview lends support and corroboration for the memories reported by other residents. When Irene Doggett Munyon was asked if she remembered the Verge girls who lived further down the lane being there, she said, "Yes, Nora, Mabel and, I don't know, they're probably not living". When told their brother Lawrence had died recently, she said "Oh yes, I remember. I went to school with Lawrence. I remember all those Verges, Marguerite was the youngest, I think". When asked whether the girls might have been part of the group at the singsong, she says, "I couldn't set a date. But I remember them being around the organ". Irene Doggett Munyon's reflections on

her days in White Point capture the youthful pleasure of living in a small place among people who are either your kin or your friends, as may be seen from *Chart 5*, a summary and analysis of the participation of the three sisters in the social life of the community).

Chart 5 of Irene Doggett Munyon's phone interview may be characterized as a revival of her youthful memories of past social events, which though seeming of small consequence highlighted her life and united her with life in the community. These memories bring to the foreground an array of friendly relationships, especially with her Aunt Josephine Doggett with whom she would often spend overnight visits and have an early experience of being away from home. Irene Doggett Munyon and her sisters were always known for their friendly, approachable manner and their conversations helped keep neighbours informed of events and performed the essential role of gossip. Irene was always known at school for her caring attitude toward younger students; she often walked the younger ones home from school and helped with projects like the concerts, displays and teas, all part of her volunteerism. Her father was also for some time a trustee of the school. Friendliness in the form of visiting, care taking of others, and support of the community was a part of the lives of this family. Edna Smith, from an earlier interview, when pressed to give a one-word-descriptor of the people in her community, said very firmly—"friendly". Irene Doggett Munyon and her family were known for their affable manner and welcome to others as *Chart 5* portrays them. Hansen affirms the critical

importance of visiting: “Visiting incurred reciprocal obligations, not simply to individuals but also to the group. The community logged individual visits into a kind of community trust to be used as a resource in times of need”.³⁴¹ Clearly, “friendly” is one of the three key attitudes that characterizes the inclusive parlour culture of White Point and Hunts Point. Thus, in terms of friendship, this geographical area of parlour culture is again aligned with that of *antebellum* New England.

Under the category of the parlour in *Chart 5*, Irene Doggett Munyon’s mother, Ida, received many calls there in the Doggett homestead, which was a second hatch roof designed structure built some decades after the similarly designed Frellick home. This parlour was the scene of happy receptions following the weddings of all three daughters. It is recalled by other interviewees that all of the community was invited to Irene Doggett Munyon’s reception. This parlour was also known as the gathering place of perhaps a dozen people for Sunday night singsongs around the organ that both Evelyn Doggett and her mother played. The Herbert Doggett parlour was in no respect an elitist, isolated, reception place. It was certainly an active scene for inclusive social visiting of which happy memories have surfaced from these interviews. A lasting impression from Irene Doggett Munyon’s interviews has been her approachable manner and friendly attitude, so characteristic of the people of her youthful community.

³⁴¹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 84.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life
According to the Interview of Irene (Doggett) Munyon

Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Irene Doggett Munyon and Her Sisters made Friendly Visits to Most Houses in the Community	Her Help Setting Up Chairs Collected from the Neighbours for School Concerts	The Sisters were Well Known in the Community and Charmingly Presented their Views on Events During Visits	A Caring Attitude for the Younger Students	A Scene of Happy Receptions Following the Weddings of Three Daughters. All of the Community was Invited to Irene Doggett Munyon's Reception
They had Strong Ties of Kinship, Especially with Their Aunt Jo Doggett	Herbert Doggett, a Fisherman, being a Trustee gave Many Hours to the Care of the School		Strong Participation in the Community	The Gathering Place of Perhaps a Dozen Young People for Sunday Night Singsongs around the Organ which both Evelyn Doggett and her Mother Played
Irene Doggett Munyon's Weekend Stays with Her Aunt Jo	Irene Doggett Munyon as an Older Student Undertook the Making of the Fire in the School House		A Friendly Receptive Attitude	The Mother, Ida, Received many Calls in her Parlour
	Evelyn's Care of her Aging Aunt Jo		Her Enjoyment of the Singing in the Christmas Concerts	

Chart 5: "Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life".

Ivan and Florence Doggett

This interview connects the Doggett family to the earliest English immigration to the Boston States and hence to Nova Scotia, showing a continuity of their ancient customs, as well as the major contributions of that family to the founding of Liverpool and the development of White Point. The common originating ancestor in Ivan Doggett's genealogy is Thomas Doggett, born in England in 1607, came to New England on the "Marey Anne", 1633; he completed his life in New England and after three marriages died in Marshfield, Mass., 1692.³⁴² The people bound on this ship for New England³⁴³ came, with few exceptions, from the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, England, where many were cloth workers of Norwich, while others were 'coopers', 'joyners', and 'a few were husbandmen'.³⁴⁴ A son John was born of Thomas' first marriage in Concord where he resided until 1642; the record notes that Concord was the first settlement above tidewater in the area and the nineteen-mile tract of land separating it from Boston was occupied by 300 Indians called Musketaquid. The first houses of Concord had thatched roofs and wooden chimneys and oiled paper for window glass; life was a hardship.³⁴⁵ Thomas then moved to Weymouth, next to Plymouth, quite an advanced settlement compared to Concord, where in 1643 he married his second wife, Elizabeth Fry, the widow of

³⁴² Samuel Bradlee Doggett, *A History of the Doggett-Daggett Family* (Boston, USA: Press of Rockwell and Churchill, 1894), 325.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 328. (As recorded in the N.E. Hist. Gen. Register, VOL. XIV)

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 326.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 328-329.

William Fry and became a landowner and was elected selectman in 1648.³⁴⁶

After Elizabeth's death, Thomas in 1654 married Joane Chillingsworth, a widow of some substance in Marshfield.³⁴⁷

In the following years Thomas Doggett has numerous posts named in the records: chosen constable, on the jury and became grand juryman 1666, appointed collector of taxes 1671 and inspector of liquor use.³⁴⁸ Thomas accumulated much land which in 1672 he distributed from his estate among his children, signing this testament 'Thomas Doggett of Marshfield, Planter'.³⁴⁹ He was last named in the records of 1684 when he was named constable of Marshfield; he dies in 1692. Thomas Doggett (1607-1692) became an affluent and powerful pioneer in the new country of the Boston States. Similarly, a fifth generation descendant, Captain John Doggett, became an industrious pioneer in the new town of Liverpool that he helped to create in 1760.

Captain John Doggett is especially remembered for persuading the first settlers to Liverpool in 1759 to remain there, even keeping some in his house the first winter.³⁵⁰ His services included appointment "as truckmaster to have the management of the trade with the Indians, and in 1764 he was appointed Justice of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas, Justice of Peace and a militia officer"³⁵¹;

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 329-332; See town records under his name until 1653—a year after Elizabeth's death. What is most interesting about these records is that they bear the family names that characterize the Liverpool area—Doggett, Smith, Harding, Rogers and Hunt.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 332.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 333.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 336.

³⁵⁰ More, *The History of Queen's County*, 144-145.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

later he was elected member of the House of Assembly and was the first registrar of deeds in the town of Liverpool.³⁵² Following a financial difficulty that was prolonged twenty-five years after his death in 1772 and not settled until “the bond was released to Ichabod Doggett [youngest son of Captain John] and Joseph Verge [his son-in-law] ... November 10, 1797 (Queens Deeds, 4-284)”.³⁵³ Even this brief summary of Captain John Doggett’s achievements reveals the extent of his efforts for others, often at the expense of himself. Inclusivity with his community was his natural orientation.

Ivan Doggett, a seventh generation descendant of Captain John Doggett, resided in the family homestead in White Point (see figure 3-38—Ivan and his wife Florence Doggett and figure 3-39—Ivan’s only sister Shirley Doggett Clattenburg on her wedding day in front of the old family home, a Cape Cod with addition). Ivan Doggett remembers the old house being the home of his great grandmother, Sofia Fitzgerald Doggett, where he often visited her. His understanding is that his great grandmother’s house could be the oldest in the community, dating back to at least 1800.

³⁵² S. B. Doggett, *A History of the Doggett-Daggett Family*, 396.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*



Figure 3-38: Ivan and Florence Doggett, circa 1965. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.



Figure 3-39: Shirley Doggett Clattenburg on her wedding day, circa 1952. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

Ivan Doggett inherited the old homestead from his father Austin Doggett, who had managed on the property a milking herd that supplied the Liverpool dairy for many years. Austin Doggett's livestock included a milk herd averaging at least fifteen Holstein cows, ox and horse teams that cultivated land in White Point and Hunts Point. Austin Doggett employed large heavy teams; haying was an essential part of his enterprise using both oxen and horses (see figure 3-40), in which Austin Doggett and his son Ivan are making hay on Farquhar's fields in Hunts Point, after which he would summer pasture his herd there. The sharing of goods and services was a way of life in the community and was an essential structure of material culture that promoted social inclusivity. His powerful horses conveyed heavy loads throughout the year and were often employed to maintain the lands of his neighbours (see figure 3-41). This load of construction material was probably delivered from Liverpool by his horse team for some neighbour's project. Later Austin Doggett was to use the mechanical horsepower of tractors. In addition to these physical contributions, Austin Doggett was elected and served as school trustee for a number of years in White Point. During his tenure of the property, Ivan Doggett developed a large serviced trailer court behind the old home.



Figure 3-40: Haying, circa 1941. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.



Figure 3-41: Heavy loads, circa 1945. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

When the talk of visiting came up, memories of his mother, Jean Coffin Doggett, caused Ivan and Florence Doggett to chuckle over the event of their surprise ‘house warming’. Jean Doggett was in charge of marshaling the new house owners into the hushed parlour and as she approached the door in a state of excitement she called out, “Hurry in, hurry in—the barnyard’s filled with cars!” The jovial crowd inside, who knew of Jean’s efforts to contain the secret for

weeks, erupted in laughter at her verbal slip. Not only the parlour but the whole house was bursting that evening with neighbours from as far away as Port Medway to Port Mouton. The news of such gatherings was informally spread by word-of-mouth and all were welcome, an obvious marker of inclusivity.

Horsepower also played a part in social visiting. Visiting within the community was a great source of pleasure and everyone was sure of a welcome at the door. Ivan Doggett's mother, Jean Doggett, so enjoyed talking with her neighbours that she found a means to journey from house-to-house despite her walking disability. Being a native of the Gaspé Peninsula she would return there to select her own ponies for her miniature buggy. A picture of one of her pony trips shows her undaunted on a blustery snow day excursion (see figure 3-42). At one point she went up to Gaspé and selected a matched team of beautiful Shetland ponies; they were admired for their gleaming brown and white coats and lively canter. Soon after their purchase, she came to visit the William Verge family one day at sunset and lightly attached her team near the kitchen steps. In the midst of the chatter and tea-drinking inside, a great clatter of wheels and flying stones signaled the escape of the team and the stunned family glimpsed a moment of equine flight on the main road. Fortunately, Ernest Harrington was horseback riding that evening and caught the little team. Jean Doggett and her pony cart were a welcome sight on the village roads for many years and a testament to the value placed on visiting there. Jean Doggett's solution to a visiting conveyance was much in the spirit of Hansen's evaluation of community activity:

The difficulty of travel—particularly in winter, by foot, horse, stage, wagon, or train—created barriers to visiting but did not deter visitors who highly valued their contact with neighbors and kin. It was through visiting, in fact, that they created their communities.³⁵⁴



Figure 3-42: Pony in snowstorm, circa 1943. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

Another type of visiting mentioned by Ivan Doggett was the custom of going around in disguise to houses in the village over the Christmas season. Ivan Doggett said, “They used to dress up and put on a mask and go around from door-to-door looking for food or drink”. His wife Florence Doggett added, “I remember doing it once...going around with Evelyn Doggett. No one knew who we were. I always called it ‘snigging’”. There was mention of a ‘snigging’

³⁵⁴ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 80.

visitation to the Verges' home in the late 1930's in which masked performers pantomimed and danced short jigs, all the while remaining mute. Guessing did not identify the group but some thought the main dancer might be Austin Doggett. Ivan Doggett, whose memories extended back eighty-six years, suggested it was more likely his Uncle Harry Doggett who was quite skilled at tap-dancing. There was agreement at our interview that this kind of Christmas celebration in White Point involved only adults, was called 'bell sniggling', and the custom had died out years ago.

Much of Ivan and Florence Doggett's description of the custom fitted the mummering tradition which was widespread in Britain and the Boston States before the immigration to Liverpool and has since continued in Newfoundland even up to the present in the Mummers Parade. Six characteristics can be discerned in the Newfoundland tradition: first, the Newfoundland tradition was most similar to the South Shore custom in that it takes place only during the Christmas season; secondly, like the South Shore it involves people disguised in outrageous gear and parading from house-to-house; thirdly, "the idea was to hide your identity by a mask and change your voice with 'mummer talk'³⁵⁵, fourthly, the visits did involve "dancing and drinking while the hosts guessed the mummers' identity"³⁵⁶. Candace Walsh also mentions that mummering was outlawed for some time because of violence, which became a fifth characteristic of the

³⁵⁵ Candace Walsh, "Mummering: A Newfoundland Holiday Tradition | Where.ca." *WhereBlog*. Published: December 14 2011. URL: <http://www.where.ca/blog/insider/mummering-newfoundland-holiday-tradition/>. Accessed: February 01 2015.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

custom. In 1861 legislation was introduced in response to the murder of Isaac Mercer in Bay Roberts by a group of masked mummers on December 28, 1860. In addition, violence was associated with the 'mumming' in Conception Bay in 1831.³⁵⁷

While the house visit is now the only form of mummering in Newfoundland, "years ago this form of mummering was often violent and unpleasant. Mummers often carried 'splits' or large sticks decorated and called 'ugly sticks' and they fought with other groups of mummers or attacked innocent people. Horns, tails and skins from goats, sheep, caribou and seals were all used in costumes of mummers... many people were afraid of them".³⁵⁸ It seems that a sixth characteristic of the disguise relates these mummers to nature through the use of some animal parts or through animal imitation. Such disguises in the presence of 'ugly sticks' would strike terror into the observer. Thus, some aspect of violence in conjunction with nature seems to have been incorporated in the recessive aspects of the mummer tradition.

In connection with the part played by symbols of animals and violence, Andrea O'Brien described a hobby-horse her uncle had used while mummering as being "a huge likeness of a horse's head made from Styrofoam covered by black fur, with Ping-Pong eyes, and a mouth that snapped open and shut on a hinge and the whole apparatus was propped on an axe handle while the uncle

³⁵⁷ Joy Fraser, "Mumming and the Law in Conception Bay and St. John's, Newfoundland" in *The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2009, 71.

³⁵⁸ Christopher Mitchelmore, "A Brief History of Mummering..." *Live Rural Newfoundland Labrador*. Published: January 05 2011. URL: <http://liveruralnl.com/2011/01/06/416/>. Accessed: February 01 2015.

enclosed himself in a blanket to form the horse's body".³⁵⁹ It is generally acknowledged that the ugly sticks and formidable replicas of animals veer away from the pleasure of social lunches to the edge of violence and a dark mystery embodied in nature.

A decoding of the 'bell-sniggling' ritual found in the research of the culture of South Shore, Nova Scotia, distinguishes its three rudiments as the physical disguise of the person thus prompting the guessing of his identity, the time of the Christmas season as the old year passes, and an atmosphere of some anxiety facing strangely garbed and unknown persons. The ritual of covering up identity forms a physical satire of the goals of the prevailing parlour culture which uses material artifacts to reveal personal identity, in other words a reversal of the smooth social process of ongoing self-identity. The positioning of this act of a social reversal at an intersection of time between the old and the New Year symbolizes an act of discarding the old self with its down-fallings and mistakes of the past to make room for a fresh start in identity, a change in the self. The early stages of mummering with its loss of identity in frightening disguises and a projection of fear used shock to encourage change in identity. Evidence of these ancient customs attests to the fact that parlour culture is centralized from earliest times on the project of self-identity. It is not surprising that memories of these old customs of visiting were found in Ivan Doggett's family. Indeed some residue of

³⁵⁹ The hobby-horse tradition comes from the community of Cape Broyle of the Avalon Peninsula and may related to the older custom of carrying a replica of a bull's head. See "A Newfoundland Tradition - Mummering At Christmas." *A Newfoundland Tradition - Mummering At Christmas*. URL: <http://www.uglysticksarei.com/mummering-a-nl-tradition>. Accessed: February 01 2015.

such old memories would be expected in a family dating back to the first days of Liverpool and having a long history in Massachusetts.

Ivan Doggett comes from a long line of founding people, the earliest going back to Thomas Doggett, born 1607, who took a major part in the growth of New England and Captain John Doggett in 1760, a founding proprietor of the Liverpool Township. His people helped build communities. In their management of various enterprises with a spirit of adventure, Ivan Doggett's immediate family contributed greatly to the physical prosperity and social ambience of White Point. He remembered the sharing of work and celebrations while enjoying kinship and neighborliness. Ivan Doggett's reflections demonstrate the ideal of parlour culture: the fulfillment of self-identity through endeavours aided by harmonious relations with others. The summary-analysis in *Chart 6* relates the theme of self-identity to its correlative behaviours in friendly relationships.

According to *Chart 6* Ivan and Florence Doggett were actively engaged in all the community affairs, both of social and productive relations. Firstly, as the category of social relations in the chart shows, this family always welcomed discussion and informal meetings in a jovial manner. They could be found at community hall socials and dances or other celebrations and were active participants in the different kinds of social work of the community. Secondly, like their interest in school concerts, such active participation recalls the volunteerism and exchange of labour that Hansen finds in the development of communities. Ivan Doggett was involved in many activities in the neighbourhood such as

planting, landscaping, haying, building, animal husbandry and other commercial enterprises; Ivan Doggett was always happy to help with his father's work and later his own ventures. The family also helped out with community projects such as the rebuilding of a house that had been razed by fire. As well, Florence Doggett was known for her art of homemaking, delicious cooking and her willingness to share all her recipes.

Thirdly, under the heading of gossip in the chart, Ivan and Florence Doggett kept ongoing contact with extended family, friends and neighbours. Ivan's mother, Jean Doggett, who found a unique way of travelling in her pony cart, was particularly a source of fascinating anecdotes that were always delivered enthusiastically. Fourthly, under attitudes in the chart, Ivan and Florence Doggett, having respect for others within the whole community, received respect in return. Both Ivan and Florence Doggett were pleased with the simple things in life and were always generous when they could be, especially with their time, and no one was ever ignored. Both Ivan and Florence Doggett were always hospitable to visits and contributed to the inclusive community culture of White Point and Hunts Point. And fifthly, the Doggett parlour was the scene of much visitation, holiday celebrations, wedding receptions, house-warmings and family enjoyment with musical performances—many joyful times in the parlour that welcomed at one time or another all the people of the community. Friendship, as Hansen notes of *antebellum* New England, “was a lynchpin of mutuality,

neighborliness, and reciprocity within the social sphere”.³⁶⁰ These parlours retained past relationships with their large collections of family pictures and antique furniture from ancestors, in this case going back to great-grandmother Sofia. The retention of memories was a staple of many parlours in these communities of Hunts Point and White Point. *Chart 6* portrays a zest for visiting, chatting, music, shared work, industry, and continuity of culture with a friendly demeanor to all. Its markers of social inclusivity tend toward an alignment with the ethnicity and cultural customs evidenced in the previous interview charts.

³⁶⁰ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 52.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life
According to the Interview of Ivan and Florence Doggett

Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Engaged in All Community Affairs, Customs, School Concerts, Etc.	Involved in Many Activities in the Neighbourhood, Planting, Landscaping, Haying, Building and Acting as School Trustee	Ongoing Contacts with Extended Family, Friends and Neighbours	Respect for Others within the Whole Community and Received their Respect	Scene of much Visitation, Holiday Celebrations, Wedding Receptions, House Warmings, and Family Enjoyment with Musical Performances
Welcomed Discussions at Informal Meetings in a Jovial Manner	Florence Doggett was known for her Delicious Cooking and her Willingness to share her Recipes	Jean Doggett was a Source of Fascinating Anecdotes Delivered Enthusiastically	Both Ivan and Florence Doggett were Always Hospitable to Visits, as they were to this interview.	Large Pictures of Family
Community Hall Dances and Socials	Austin helped in the Community Rebuilding of a House for Mr. Hagan after the Old Home was Demolished by Fire		Generosity with His Time for Others, No One was Ever Ignored	Antique Furniture from Ancestors
	Happy to Help in his Father's Work and Later his Own Entrepise			

Chart 6: “Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life”.

Honora Power Verge

The Verge families in Queens County, Nova Scotia, all trace their roots back to Jarman Verge, circa 1655 in Christchurch, Hampshire, England, where his grandson Joseph Verge, born 1720, migrated to Boston and hence to Liverpool, Nova Scotia, where he died February 20, 1780.³⁶¹ Joseph Verge erected a large cooper shop on the main street of Liverpool (see figure 3-43 for location of this shop). From his marriage, in 1755, to Mary Blewett in New North Church, Boston, Massachusetts, he had ten children, the first eight of which were born in Boston and the first child was Joseph Verge born in June 4, 1752 in Boston or Scituate, Massachusetts and died July 2, 1827 in Liverpool. The last two children, Sarah in 1771 and Mary in 1774, were born in Port Mouton, Queens County.

The second Joseph Verge, 1752-1827, married Abigail, the only daughter of Captain John Doggett and had ten children, including twin boys. Joseph Verge Jr. continued the Cooper Shop and was also involved in privateering. It was a time when the township was under great suspicion because of its ethnicity and cultural ties to New England. According to Simeon Perkins diary entry, July 26, 1775,

News comes that we have been represented to the government as a lawless and rebellious people, and the plan is laid to annex this town to Lunenburg, and to remove the courts to Yarmouth³⁶²

³⁶¹ Genealogy Document, "Descendants of Jarman Verge" and research by Tom Forbes, Stonewall, Manitoba, Canada.

³⁶² Perkins, *The Diaries of Simeon Perkins 1766-80*. Volume 1. Ed. by Harold A. Innis, 98.

Simeon Perkins entry of July 30, 1775 records a meeting for the reading of “the Government Proclamation [July 5] forbidding all intercourse with New England rebels”.³⁶⁴ On June 4, 1778, Perkins reports that privateersmen are constantly in sight and plundering their ships; “thus our coast is guarded after all the Promises we have had from Government. Our people are much Discouraged, and seem to be looking out to leave the place”.³⁶⁵ These conditions exist even though in 1777 the British Parliament gave Nova Scotian merchant vessels permission to arm under stated rules of warfare.

In respect to the inhabitants of Liverpool, the young Joseph Verge was subject to strong suspicion since he was born in the United States and because of his connections with Benjamin Cole who had joined forces with the Americans and led them into the town itself in 1776. On February 5, 1780, Joseph Verge refuses to carry dispatches unless he takes the recaptured Captain Cole to Halifax in his shallop, separate from the other prisoners; his request was rejected and Verge was replaced by Captain Godfrey according to Perkins entry on February 10 and 11, 1780.³⁶⁶ It was a dangerous time for Liverpool with privateers lurking in the harbour and many inhabitants feeling sympathy for their American cousins and brothers though being plundered by them and at the same time being misunderstood and abused by the government in Halifax. “The Privateer *Lucy* sails on a cruise...40 men on board. Several of the Prisoners

³⁶⁴ Perkins, *The Diaries of Simeon Perkins 1766-80*. Volume 1. Ed. by Harold A. Innis, 98.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 203.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 273.

enter on board and, one Cole” according to Perkins entry on February 12, 1780.³⁶⁷ Clearly, Simeon Perkins does not want to list Benjamin Cole as one of his prisoners. The strong ties to New England still resonating in the twentieth-century interviews in this chapter have a long intense history.

In the seventh generation from Jarman Verge, William Allen Verge, 1855-1928, of White Point, Queens County, a son of Henry Allen Verge and Mary Arthurs, spent considerable time in New England. He is recorded in the *Gloucester Directory* as being in residence in the city for some eight years beginning in 1882:

1. 1882-83 at 34 Duncan Street³⁶⁸ (See figure 3-44—Duncan Street circa 1917. Note the cobbled street)
2. 1884-85 at 7 Willow Street³⁶⁹
3. 1886-87 at 4 Willow Street³⁷⁰
4. 1888-90 at 5 Ivy Crescent³⁷¹

While in Gloucester, William Allen Verge married Honora Power of Dungarven, Ireland. The marriage was conducted by Reverend J.J. Heally³⁷² on June 20, 1884 in Saint Ann Church (see figure 3-45 for church). The registration for Honora’s marriage lists her father as John Power and her mother as Margaret Harrington, Ireland. Two births from this marriage were registered in the United

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 273-4. Note Simeon Perkins reluctance to list Cole as a prisoner.

³⁶⁸ *Gloucester Directory 1882-83*, 168. Gloucester Archives, Gloucester, Massachusetts. “Fisherman, boards 34 Duncan”.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1884-85, 33. “Fisherman, boards 7 Willow”.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1886-87, 35. “Fisherman, house 4 Willow”.

³⁷¹ *City Directory, 1888-90*. “Rental, 5 Ivy Ct”. No further mention of William Verge, but a Stephen Verge, fisherman, is still listed.

³⁷² They were married in Saint Ann Church by Rev. Father J.J. Heally who remains to this day famous for his “Noble Gift”, the Library of Gloucester, which he designed, planned and equipped with five thousand books; this Free Public Library he stressed must be non-sectarian and open from morning until night with equal privileges for all (see *Sacred Heart Review*—November 26-December 26, 1896).

States: Ambrose V(B)erge, November 6, 1885, place of birth, Willow St. 4 and the mother's name is listed as Nora as it is on her marriage registration and the father, William, is listed as having the occupation of mariner. The second birth in the United States was that of John W. Verge born April 8, 1888. The family then returned to White Point, Nova Scotia. Research for the Gloucester period was conducted by Patricia Verge Fairbanks, Long Island, New York (see figure 3-46).



Parade on lower end of Duncan Street, now Harbor Loop. Site of block building in center is now occupied by Building Center; buildings on right torn down for Fitz Hugh Lane Park.

Figure 3-44: Duncan Street, Gloucester, circa 1917 with cobbled stones. Available from: Gloucester Archives.³⁷³

³⁷³Gloucester Archives, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

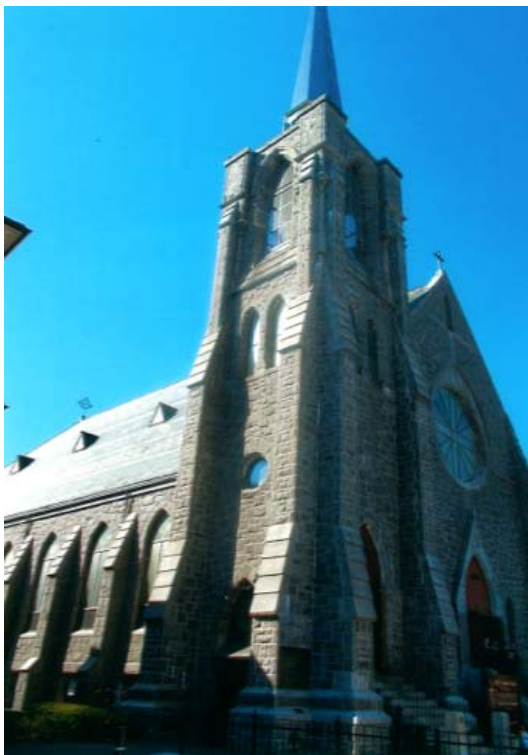


Figure 3-45: Saint Ann Church, Gloucester, dedicated 1881, where Honora's marriage took place. Available from: Patricia Verge Fairbanks. Photo date: 2015.



Figure 3-46: Patricia Verge Fairbanks on Ellis Island looking at Manhattan, 2014, researcher of the Gloucester period of William and Honora Verge. She is the great-granddaughter of Honora. Available from: Patricia Verge Fairbanks. Photo date: 2015.

The house in White Point had two very old ells from the original house belonging to the Lavender family.³⁷⁴ This old house was brought up the hill on rollers by a team of oxen to a new foundation and cellar. To this house a new ell was added before 1900, hence the roof configuration in figure 3-47. A picture of the roof formation shows a very complicated additive style, a vernacular technique tracing back to East Anglia. As time went on the number of children in the Verge family increased to twelve. The boys as they got older went to sea with their father to the Grand Banks and Anticosti Island. But the major work for all of them was maintaining the fields that were cleared and cultivated down to the sea, the cattle, gardens and especially their flock of sheep that flourished on Port Mouton Island.³⁷⁵ The boys would go over to the island by boat to shear the sheep for wool for grandmother's spinning wheel as well as for sale. As the oldest grandchild in that house, it was possible for Bette Verge Hanrahan to come to know the lives of three generations, which she describes in the following pages.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ A daughter, Rebecca Verge, had married a son of the Lavender family, the original owners, and moved to the state of Washington, U.S., leaving the old house to her brother, William Allen Verge.

³⁷⁵ Remnants of that Verge flock survived until the 1990's when they fell to a shooting party.

³⁷⁶ Granddaughter, Bette Verge Hanrahan, born in 1934 in her Grandmother's house, has strong memories of Honora and her parlour. I asked Bette, my Grandmother, to write some of the stories of her life with her Grandmother for this thesis, particularly the visiting and parlour activities in the old house.



Figure 3-47: Configuration of the roofline of the Verge homestead after its pre-1900 relocation. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

Visiting was a natural way of life that brought new interest each day. Neighbours and Liverpool townspeople from Saint Gregory's Church came especially to see Grandmother Honora. In the following picture (see figure 3-48), behind Grandmother Honora on the right holding granddaughter Bette, her two daughters Evelyn and Kathleen, and her grandson Hugh, there may be seen the striped awning that covered the parlour window to prevent fading of her furniture. Grandmother's parlour was well recognized in the community for its beautiful furnishings—its cathedral style organ with pillared levels about its beveled mirror, its bronze-green cut velvet sofa, chairs, and rocker set of mahogany East Lake style, and its tall side tables with glass ball and claw feet— all brought from the United States. Her record collection and gramophone brought hours of happiness

and even the kitchen hummed when the huge cream separator whirled and spun. All that remains today is a delightfully painted water pitcher and glass set of paper-thin glass given to me (granddaughter Bette) when I was very young (see figure 3-49). Also, in that parlour was the last mat that Grandmother Honora made as a gift for her daughter-in-law, May Verge (mother to Bette); together they dyed all the cloth for hooking to fit Honora's design of a black border enclosing huge Oriental poppies.



Figure 3-48: Verge family group, (from left) Hughie, son of Hugh Verge, Honora's daughters Kathleen and Evelyn, and Honora Verge holding granddaughter Bette. Note the striped awning in front of the parlour window to keep furnishings from fading, circa 1930's. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.



Figure 3-49: Grandmother Honora’s water pitcher set, circa 1900 or earlier. Design has definite Celtic aspect. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2015.

The last time I (Bette) visited Mrs. Mabel Doggett, our closest neighbour in White Point, she said, “Don’t go to the funeral.³⁷⁷ I want you to know what a wonderful friend your Grandmother was to me—always cheerful. Our days were filled with such things as chatting, quilting, or making new recipes”. There had been many indications from my father (William Morris) of this close relationship between Honora and Mabel Doggett, though he spoke of it in a complaining tone, suggesting her time might be better spent at home and that his father, William Allen, had to go over often and collect her in the evening. But, Mrs. Mabel, who had been a schoolteacher, had granted me the freedom in my teens of borrowing

³⁷⁷ Funeral of Dora Frellick, I had driven from the church funeral and had come to her house to see where the graveside service was.

from her library and I knew she would enjoy talking to another woman who had travelled about in three great countries. Both these women had produced large families during this friendship that probably sustained them through hard times. Strange events also revealed that Honora *did make* preparations for receiving visits. One story heard from more than one family member concerns a Christmas for which Honora had made a dozen or more Christmas fruitcakes, wrapped them and placed them in the alcove closet under the front stairs. Someone had left the front door unlatched and the loaves were found fragmented on the hall floor, even out on the steps along with hoof prints “of one wily, greedy, red and white heifer, too clever for her own good”. The complaints of that Christmas echoed more than fifty years since Grandmother Honora refused to remake that prized recipe.

One aspect of visiting in our old house was the transient nature of many of the callers. Some of these people were said to be “friends of Nora from the Old Country”. One, I remember, was called, “Paddy Redden”, who opened a large black suitcase bursting with hundreds of items, like combs and pins, for sale. His walking tour circled Nova Scotia and he seemed to have friends all along the way where he could spend the night; we saw him a few times even after Grandmother Nora had died in 1942. The numbers of road people increased during the Depression of the 1930’s, most of them needing a meal which was always prepared, even if it meant checking the hens’ nests for a few eggs, since turning a hungry person away was unthinkable. One week the burden of all these people caused my father to ask, “Why didn’t you stop at other houses since ours was the

Some visits to the house were those of 'mercy'. During Grandmother's last illness, all her old friends came to visit and sit with her. On other occasions, neighbours might stop by during the day on their way to the post office or some other errand. But when I was awakened late one night the year before I went to school and found our next-door neighbour bustling around organizing affairs, I was puzzled though dazed with sleep. Shortly, this neighbour Josephine (Colp) Doggett brought me in to see the new babies born that night. Years later I came to realize that this neighbour had come in as midwife of her own kindness for my birth as well as that of my brothers and sisters and that she always arrived before the doctor coming from town. Sadly, we took these acts of kindness for granted, as they were the norm in our community.

Large crowds of young people would come in during the evenings when I was young; some of them were our cousins, Nora, Mabel and Marguerite, daughters of Ambrose Verge. I remember they would poke sticks in the open grate of the old Empire Stove and these lights would glow in the dim haze of the kerosene lamp. All the while these young people would tell ghost stories, tales of returning mariners who were lost at sea or of the homes that had experienced the "three knocks". Grandmother would sit in her rocker. She enjoyed their stories but rarely spoke of her homeland except to say, "They'll always be fighting in Ireland". It was an exciting time for me that passed all too quickly as all my cousins were taken back to New York where most of the Verge family lived. Only

two of Grandmother Nora's³⁷⁸ twelve children stayed in Nova Scotia; the attraction of the American States was felt in every house along the shore.



Figure 3-51: Amber, Honora's great-great-granddaughter, and Bette, Honora's granddaughter, visiting one of their favourite places, Grand Pré. Available from: Amber Hanrahan. Photo date: 2011.

Sunday was also a busy time for visitors with many coming to bargain for my father's cattle while their wives took tea with my mother May and sometimes Grandmother Honora. One of these visitors was usually Bob White, the town's Chief Law Officer, who always brought some prisoners with him to help with the cattle he might buy. As well, whole summers were shared with our New York

³⁷⁸ I have slipped into calling her Nora, a name by which she was known all those years. Her real name, Honora, was discovered during my trip to Dungarvan, Ireland, in May 2010. She was one of three girls, all named Nora and born around 1865 according to their research. The Official asked for anything I might know of this Grandmother when she was young. I did remember her telling the story of running up a hill each day to see her father coming in his boat. The lady immediately identified Grandmother as Honora, born 1865 on 6A Strand Street, Dungarvan, Ireland. It seems there was only one girl born within the town on a hill, Strand Street, leading to the sea wall. Such a small fact to reveal a lifetime secret.

relatives and passed so swiftly until we returned to school to be teased for our “New York” accents. I am reminded that the memory of those visits continued as a lasting influence of Grandmother Honora who represented such a happy home to all of them that they returned to the old house, driving all the way from New York and even returning years after she had passed. A picture in the late 1970’s shows my father’s last small herd of cattle just returned from summer pasture (see figure 3- 52); my cousin Joseph (Joe) Verge from Oregon brought with him another cousin, Leo Langille, from New York to stay with my dad, William Morris, for a week. Joe said it was like old times and recently sent me copies of his pictures of this visit to White Point to enjoy when I was ill. The light of those memories of Happy Times has sustained generations of our family.



Figure 3-52: Picture taken by Joseph Verge, Oregon, of William Morris' Verge's last herd of cattle from summer pasture, circa 1977. Available from: Amber Hanrahan.

The activities characterized in *Chart 7* of Honora Power Verge reflect a set of attitudes that governed the family: happiness, industriousness, respect, hospitality and an ability to share generously with others. For example, activities under the category of volunteerism included charitable acts, work in the neighbourhood and at home generously performed by all members of the household, efforts for school and church, along with the art of making others feel welcome and comfortable in their home. Hansen's notion of power "can be described as the capacity to influence or affect other people's opinions and behaviour and to make a difference to the world".³⁷⁹ The adaptability to interpret everyday life in terms of this definition of power as "ability, capacity and competence" makes visitation, friendliness, and gossip..."powerful social instrument[s]".³⁸⁰ Such attitudes, found in Hansen's *A Very Social Time* in *antebellum* New England, contribute to a socially inclusive community. These family attitudes motivated other forms of social relationships such as having close friendly relations with neighbours, welcoming and providing nourishing meals to those in need, and, in Hansen's sense of reciprocity³⁸¹, receiving visits of mercy to the sick, companionship, and even the gift of midwifery at births. Their old house provided a cheerful gathering place for groups in the evenings and Sundays, as well as extended family visits from distant relatives. All of these activities attended Honora's genuine friendliness and respect for others. Her son

³⁷⁹ Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, 133. (Also see Stephen Lukes, et. *Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, *passim*; also Nancy Hartsock, *Money, Sex, and Power* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989)

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 84.

William's attribution on her grave-marker, "*With a cheery smile she waved goodbye*", sums up both her life and her death.

These activities provided companions for lively discussions on every kind of subject. A great array of topics, like the day's work, newspaper events, plans, family travels, and the content of letters from the war zone and from extended family abroad, were discussed in a leisurely fashion. The elegantly furnished Verge parlour, situated in the old home structure of the vernacular additive style with steep roofs, frequently received many guests as well as being the scene for the 'waking' of three funerals. Indeed, the Verge household was widely known as a welcoming site in keeping with the inclusive orientation of its surrounding communities.

Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life
According to the Interview of Honora Power Verge

Forms of Social Relations	Volunteerism	Gossip	Attitudes	The Parlour
Close Friendship Relations with Neighbours	Charitable Acts	With Many People on Every Kind of Subject	Industrious Workers	Old Home Structure of Vernacular Additive Style
Welcome to those in Need and Nourishing Meals	Work in the Neighbourhood and At Home	Even Supper in the Kitchen was a Leisurely Time to Chat of the Day's Work, Newspaper Events, Plans, Bible, My Father's Trip to the Panama, Our Relations, Content of Letters or the War etc.	Sharing with Others	Steep Roof
Visits of Mercy to the Sick and Midwife at Births	Efforts for School and Church		Hospitable	Elegantly Furnished Parlour
Cheerful Gathering Place for Groups in the Evenings	Making Others Welcome in Our House		Happiness	The 'Waking' of Three Funerals
Visits from Roman Catholic Church				Frequently Received Guests
Regular Extended Family Visits from Distant Relatives				

Chart 7: "Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life".

In conclusion, the results of these interviews are tabulated in *Charts 1,2, 4-7* “Elements of Parlour Culture: Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life”. These charts are geometrical devices that intersect the vertical content concerning the diversity of individual lives with the horizontal dimension of the common qualities shared in parlour culture. In the first place, the charts clarify the relationship between the diverse qualities of different people and the common ideals that guided these oral expressions of parlour culture. Unique life patterns described in the vertical columns profile different people while their commonality lies in the cultural goals of the horizontal qualities. The common qualities of the horizontal part of the grid attest to a unanimity of responses that supports a pervasive culture of social inclusivity in these communities. These supporting testaments of inclusivity rise from the respondents’ open and voluntary stories and assessments of life in their communities, despite the evident diversity of lives among the six families.

Adhering to the norm in oral history³⁸² for attaining fair representation of different social levels, the selection process for the subjects of this thesis was the random result of attrition from the aging process. Four of the subjects were found as the last surviving members and authentic voices of their generation in both communities. Two other subjects were profiled by diaries, artifacts and testimony from their granddaughters to obtain fair representation for each of the communities. Also, a common ethnicity could be traced for each of these

³⁸² *Vide supra*, see documented challenges for creating oral history, “Introduction”, 10.

respondents. Nevertheless, the profiles rising from the own oral testimonies show these respondents to be distinctly different individuals on many levels of comparison.

Furthermore, the respondents were not acquainted with the term 'inclusivity' during the interviews and most of the interviews were conducted in the early part of the thesis research before its theme was determined. In fact, the dominance of the theme of social inclusivity was discovered as the evidence of different historical periods progressed and as the results of early interviews were considered. There was no pre-knowledge provided during the interviews that could skew the responses of the subjects.

In conclusion, the evidence for social inclusivity was most apparent in the interview results of community members of White Point and Hunts Point who remembered well their own sharing in the power of social life. This evidence of inclusivity is also strengthened by having a shared ethnicity and continuity of culture with Hansen's subjects in *antebellum* New England.

A second result reflected in the interview charts, "Markers of Inclusivity of Social Life", is a systematic³⁸³ quality incorporated in the parlour culture tradition. This set of charts reveals the *modus operandi* of parlour culture social life to be systematic, rather than random, in application. All of the main categories of behaviour in the charts operate together, like a system, to generate peaceful and

³⁸³ *Vide supra*, as referred to by Karen Hansen, "Introduction", 6.

happy co-existence through the attitudes of respect and co-operation. The long period of parlour culture's success is founded on voluntary human relationships that were generationally inculcated to promote society. As a system centred in the home, the parlour symbol seamlessly joins the good of each home with the good of the community. This system did not require any bureaucracy to maintain the goodwill of all toward their community; these behaviours were all voluntarily yet systematically employed. The organization of these charts, driven by the oral data of the interviews, uncovers both the diversity of the interviewees' lives and, at the same time, their common ground of shared goals which encourages them to work together. This common ground does not detract from the unique differences among individuals. The results of the charts forcefully declare parlour culture to be a systematic, though non-bureaucratic, social structure that supported the goals of respect for others, sharing, co-operation, volunteerism, non-violence, and social happiness.

The authentic voices of these interviews collectively intertwine the tangible artifacts of architecture, furnishings, and mechanisms with their intangible customs honed in a long practice of a successful and gracious way of living and working with each other in a cherished community.

Conclusion

Interdisciplinary research of vernacular parlour culture has uncovered evidence for a social framework of reciprocity and inclusivity through the American parlour of New England, the Liverpool Township and the colonial settlements of White Point and Hunts Point. This research traced life behaviours related to place (*locus*), ethnicity, the vernacular architecture and artifacts, period literature, and the work and celebrations of social customs to identify the essence of parlour culture.

The American parlour heralded major changes in architecture to meet the needs of foreign climate and terrain conditions. There followed a new perception in the social use of the parlour that was imbued with community spirit and was mirrored in the symbols and themes of the native poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in a full democratization of parlour culture for a republic. Physical adjustments and inventions are usually accompanied by parallel shifts in social behaviour. Another architectural change was the creation of village meeting halls for participation of community-wide socializing. The migration to the New England colonies required the application of new solutions to new conditions that spearheaded the traditional parlour culture into the direction of welfare for the community at large. Mutuality, neighborliness and reciprocity now characterized social relationships according to the research of Karen V. Hansen.

In respect to the settlement of Liverpool, emigration of settlers from the Boston States initiated the grant of township in 1760 for Liverpool, Nova Scotia

and continued their customs there. Some of these settlers even brought their old houses by ship to be reassembled in the town. Largely through the efforts of Thomas Raddall, Simeon Perkins' modest home, built in Liverpool in 1767 where he lived until his death in 1812, has been restored and refurnished in a manner comparable to the surviving pieces of period furniture in the Elizabeth Perkins Museum in Old York, Maine, USA.

The restoration of this eighteenth century dwelling preserved an inexhaustible treasury of history. Since the owner of this dwelling catalogued all the events affecting the people in the settlement, this treasury encompassed the material artifacts of the home and the living patterns of the home and its surrounds cited in the diary over a forty-five year period. This cataloguing of events in the settlement was evidence in itself of an inclusive concern with the welfare of all. This feat amounted to a time capsule of both tangible and intangible data of what was a most formative period of parlour culture in Nova Scotia history.

The American spirit of innovation on the tangible level of furniture construction may be seen in the Windsor chair models of Simeon Perkins Museum House and in his block-front chest in Maine, the latter being considered the most elegant of American furniture designs. The whole collection of furniture attests to American craftsmanship and modification of traditional English styles. Similarly, a change in traditional parlour culture on the intangible level is made noticeable by the orientation of society toward the welfare of all. The diary entries

of Simeon Perkins identify the huge outreach of his active inclusivity with settlers, first peoples, officials, and mariners in various informal settings in the new township, as well as in his parlour. These entries concern visiting, gossiping, strengthening friendships, exploring problems in the prosperity in the town, commerce, the arts, and general welfare, and, finally, conveying useful information, timely intervention, and assistance in an overwhelming volume of evidence supporting social inclusivity. It might be said of Simeon Perkins that his attention to all the niches of the town's affairs was his stage for oversight and diplomacy.

Finally, research using oral history supported by documented history expands the study of parlour culture into the communities of White Point and Hunts Point during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In terms of ethnicity, all the principal interviewees traced their roots directly back to the founding settlers of the Liverpool Township or the Loyalist immigration—a fact noticeable in their family names of Smith, Waterman, MacKay, Doggett, and Verge.

These interviews yielded numerous examples of community forms of relationship, volunteerism, sharing of information and assistance, positive attitudes toward others, visiting, celebrations, and the uses of the parlour, all categorized as markers of inclusivity. All interview subjects concurred with the belief that their days were spent in happy times and that their neighbours experienced happiness in a life well-lived in a place without crime. There was an

evident transparency in community knowledge of what constituted a good life. All the evidence promoting community life in these villages is founded on the bedrock of relationships through which self-identity is formed. This central facet of relationship underpins every accomplishment that made these communities thrive whether it was haymaking, fishing, building, quilting, gardening, success in school, or social discussions. Twentieth century oral history evidence supports a framework of parlour culture relationships and self-identity that is aligned with social inclusivity.

An important question concerns the significance of the results of this thesis research from interviews and from corroborating data in the historical artifacts and mores. There is always the danger that the name 'parlour culture' will relegate the study in some minds to the status of an antiquated subject. Nevertheless, the achievements of parlour culture were long-term and effective in maximizing social security, stability, productivity, health and happiness and minimizing crime according to the reports of actual participants in the culture. Contemporary society is in dire need of these qualities, and parlour culture is a tried and true model of some eight hundred years that these qualities can be generated in society.

Thus, the significance of the study lies in the fact that these communities of White Point and Hunts Point assumed the duty of promoting a worthwhile life for all their members, and that is the duty facing the world today as global troubles threaten all co-existence. There is a global need for inclusion through

love, concern, and help for people suffering throughout the world: in Iraq and Syria and the whole Middle East, in the Ukraine, Nigeria and other parts of the African continent, the victims of Ebola, and especially the children whose lives are endangered over the earth. The most recent migrations of humans displaced from their homelands have raised the voices of the ordinary peoples of the world. The need for global inclusion is most urgent.

The parlour culture of Chapter 3 of this thesis eradicated possible indifference by applying explicit and voluntarily accepted behaviours of neighbourly commitment to their society, like showing respect and sharing with others. The structures for providing the inclusivity revealed here can and need to be translated anew to the needs of the present global society. Inclusivity is usually associated with social interaction goals but post-industrial society has also an essential need for economic inclusivity. And it is interesting to note that economic reciprocity was part of the social sharing of work and care for others in the study of the parlour culture of White Point and Hunts Point. The application of parlour culture norms to a threatened world must include economic as well as social inclusivity.

Parlour culture as *loci* of power presents the act of inclusivity as a framework for solving social and economic problems. *Atlantic Parlours: Loci of Power* revealed a social movement exhibiting extreme endurance over many eras, continuing to exist by self-generating management, and providing a sense

of good will, security, happiness, self-identity through interrelationships, and a harmonious way of life despite moderate economic diversity of population.

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