May 1862 was a challenging month for Martin E. Hapgood of Underhill, Vermont. On Wednesday the 14th he made the forty-five mile round-trip to Burlington. The following day he bought nails and materials, then spent the day repairing buildings. On the 16th he harnessed his team of horses to plow gardens and then mended fences. The travel, the purchases, and the work, were for his mother-in-law, Mary Green Hanaford, whose husband, the respected Captain Nathaniel M. Hanaford, had died earlier that month. Upon Hanaford's death, Hapgood was made administrator of the estate, a duty that he would execute until December of the following year when the estate was settled.[1]

Captain Hanaford, his wife, and their son, moved to Underhill from Enfield, New Hampshire in the early 1820s.[2] As such they were among the second wave of immigrants to the rocky hills of this small community in the shadow of Mt. Mansfield, Vermont's highest peak. The family moved several times, settling permanently in the southeastern corner of the town. When their daughter Mary married Martin Hapgood of the neighboring town of Jericho, the young couple took up residence next to her parents. Both Hanaford, a mason, and later Hapgood, a carpenter, would become active in the town, their names appearing in the Town Meeting and Selectmen's records. Hapgood would go on to become the town's state representative. However, their non-political contributions to the town are harder to trace. As tradesmen they appear neither in the U.S. Census reporting on products of industry, nor in that reporting products of agriculture. For a Vermont town of 1850, it is the latter contribution that would have been most usual.

Like many communities in Vermont, the area that would become Underhill was one of the land parcels granted to speculators by Benning Wentworth, Royal Governor of

the Province of New Hampshire, in 1763. Joseph Sackett, Jr. and his sixty-four associates, including several members of the Underhill family were the original proprietors. Lots in the town were distributed over the course of four divisions. The first three created 100-acre lots of mixed-use land in three distinct regions of the town, while the last created 22-acre woodlots along the flank of Mt. Mansfield. The original proprietors, none of whom actually settled in Underhill, were given lots in each of the four areas. This practice maximized their opportunities to obtain the desirable mix of cropland, pasture and woodlot so important to eighteenth-century New England farmers. According to the terms of the grant, lots were also set aside for the Governor, as well as "one share for the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, one for a glebe for the Church of England, one for the first settled minister of the Gospel, and one for the benefit of the schools in said town."[3] Contention with New York over ownership rights and the Revolutionary War would delay the settlement of Underhill, but by 1787 a small cluster of homesteads surrounded the first schoolhouse.

At 23,040 acres, or roughly six miles square, Underhill was similar in size to its neighboring towns of Jericho to the southwest and Westford to the west, which had both been granted on the same day. However, its topography would prove something of a challenge to town development. The town's borderlines frame a parallelogram that extends westward from the southeast/northwest running ridgeline of Mt. Mansfield. Directly west of Mt. Mansfield is the area known as Pleasant Valley. Further west, and covering the entire center of the town, is a region of rugged hills, narrow irregular valleys and ridges that effectively divides the town in half. The western section is another valley, albeit one composed primarily of swampy land and shallow creeks. The southern border is a broad alluvial plain through which flows the Brown's River.

Unlike its neighboring towns, Underhill's town center did not develop in its geographic center. The earliest inhabitants settled in the upland area of the western part of the town, along Poker Hill Road. [Map 1, A] This route, surveyed in 1791, was the major thoroughfare for travel between Cambridge to the north, and the towns extending to Burlington. Although the very first settlement arose in the area just south of the Cambridge border, the first true village soon developed several miles south of that point. The village center encompassed a common and parade ground, a store, a cemetery at its southern edge and a tavern at its northern edge where town meetings and Congregational meetings were held. [Map 1, B]

This village, at the time simply called Underhill, was built along the highest point of Poker Hill Road. According to Wilson, developing along a hill or ridgeline was not an unusual practice among early Vermonters. Underhill's western valley demonstrates why this is so, with its swamps and a tendency to flood in the spring. The valley vegetation is a mixture of tangled undergrowth, dense growing trees, and tree trunks downed by spring freshets. By contrast, the trees on the hillsides grow more sparsely and are easier to remove. The soil is better drained and, though rocky, could actually produce a crop of grain in a short amount of time, often within a year of being cleared.[4] Weather conditions are also superior on the hillsides. Deep valleys offer less sunlight, and temperature inversions usually mean that valley floors reach colder temperatures than hillsides. In the particular case of Underhill the extensive beaver ponds at the top of Poker Hill provided an added benefit to the first settlers: the land was already cleared of trees and was growing hay that could be used immediately to support livestock.[5]

When the primary occupation of early settlers was limited to subsistence farming, hillside farms, combined with community exchange networks, proved adequate to support families. As small industries that required water power were introduced to

communities, the situation changed. Uphill village centers began to move closer to river sites that could provide power for a mill, usually located in valleys.[6] Jericho, with its cluster of five mills along the Brown's River, provides the typical example.[7] The early settlement, called Jericho Center, was in the hilly region at the geographic center of the town. The later population center, simply called Jericho or Jericho Plains, grew up around the cluster of mills. Both Jericho and Westford experienced rapid growth between the years 1790 and 1820, while Underhill, with few centralized natural mill sites, showed only modest growth.[8]

That pattern of growth changed dramatically in the next two decades. While Jericho and Westford continued their steady pace, Underhill more than doubled its population, from 633 in 1820 to 1441 in 1840.[9] This growth was fraught with difficulty, leaving Underhill a town divided in several ways. Although the village center was solidifying at the top of Poker Hill Road, the area at the bottom of that road and spilling across the town line into Jericho, began to grow as well. Spurred by the establishment of a potash works and a store that served as a trading center, this area, known as "the Flatts" was attracting both settlers and investors. [Map 1, C] The store owners, John Tower and Henry Oakes, continued to develop the town by building a steam-operated starch mill in 1827. Contributing to movement away from the original village of Underhill, now called North Underhill, was the increase in traffic along the newer Creek Road, surveyed in 1827, and its designation as a County road in 1840.

The division between North Underhill and the Flatts was exacerbated by the growing population in the southeastern corner of the town. A small cluster of dwellings had been established at the base of Pleasant Valley. In 1820 a road was surveyed and built running from this settlement, called the "Center" on the survey map, through Pleasant Valley and on to the town of Cambridge. By 1827 this village boasted a

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cemetery, a store, sawmill, dwellings, and a meetinghouse. [Map 1, D] As in North Underhill and the Flatts, part of the population growth was the result of a number of families who emigrated to the Center together, in this instance coming from Enfield, New Hampshire. Nor were they the only group. The 1820s also saw the beginning of an influx of Irish families who, following on the heals of two earlier settlers named Doon, established a settlement north of the Center. [Map 1, F] Soon thereafter another group of families, this time from England, probably Yorkshire, settled to the northwest of the Center. [Map 1, E] Contributing to the activity in the eastern half of the town was the annexation of one-third of the town of Mansfield. This town, granted at the same time as Underhill, and occupying both sides of Mt. Mansfield, was divided in 1839 at the ridgeline with one third going to Underhill, and the remainder to the town of Stowe.[10]

This influx of settlers was diverse in both its geographic origins and its religious affiliations. The first generation of settlers to Underhill had come primarily from southern New England towns, either from Connecticut or from towns in the southwestern corner of Vermont. As such, their conception of a village was based on the model of a town common surrounded by dwellings, with a school and, more importantly, a meeting house, at its center. Outlying agricultural land would be divided according to use, with a family owning several parcels serving different needs: grazing, tillage, and fodder producing areas. The original settlers were Congregationalists, and, after a brief period of meeting in Birge's tavern in the Poker Hill Road settlement, they established a meeting house in that area that would remain Underhill's only church until the 1820s. As the population increased in the Flatts area, however, a second Congregationalist church was established on land donated by Deacon Jonathan Woodworth. While the members of the town were cordially split on which meeting house should also be the site of annual town meetings, the Woodworth family complicated matters by also donating land and supervising the

building of a meeting house in the Center. To make matters worse, the population in that area not being enough to sustain a congregation, Woodworth decided to ally with the recently formed Methodist Episcopal church of the Center to form a Union Meeting House to be shared by both.

Whether objecting to the location, to the alliance with a non-Calvinist denomination, or simply to Woodworth's precipitous act without input from the town's members, Underhillians objected strongly to the new location, even going so far as to raise yet another meeting house on the River Road closer to the Flatts. While these disputes occupied Underhill during the 1820s and early 1830s, events quickly overcame the town. In 1830 the last of the town's undivided lands was sold as Underhill adapted itself to the new model of personal, not communal, ownership of land. The population throughout the town increased rapidly in the last years of the decade from 975 to 1,441 by 1840. Nor was the population simply increasing. A comparison of the 1830 and 1840 census shows that a large number of families also left during this period. The Irish and English settlements near the Center continued to expand. The Freewill Baptist Church was established in 1832 and, by 1842, the Burlington Diocese was sending Rev. Father O'Callaghan to the area three or four times a year.

For a brief period, Underhill was swept up in the fervor of the Second Great Awakening by the return, to nearby Cambridge, of the revivalist minister Rev. John Truair. However, Truair's residence there proved short-lived. North Underhill continued in the care of conservative Rev. Samuel Kingsley, while Underhill Flatts hired the more fiery, formerly Methodist minister, Rev. Elihu Baxter. The perennial dilemma of which meeting house would predominate was effectively solved, in what might have seemed like divine providence, by a windstorm that severely damaged the First Meetinghouse. In the Flatts, Tower and Oakes, who had continued to dominate local politics, stepped in to

donate land for a cemetery and a new meeting house next to their store. A revival in 1840 held at this newly completed Congregational Church not only brought more members to the fold but seemed to resolve the divisiveness between the northern and southern brethren. Meanwhile, stage traffic through Underhill to Cambridge increasingly shifted to flatter, newer Creek Road. Birge's Tavern, the heart of the north village, closed, while in the Flatts, William Barney opened a new tavern in his home.[11] Over the next two decades North Underhill effectively disappeared as a village.

The 1850s began auspiciously for the town. When the original Center meetinghouse was rebuilt by the Freewill Baptists and Methodists as the New Meetinghouse, the decision to move the annual March town meetings there was an amicable one.[12] Other building followed. In addition to the public schools two new academies were established. In 1852 the Underhill Academy was opened in the Flats, followed by the opening of Green Mountain Academy in the Center one year later. Each had an enrollment of approximately one hundred students, teaching them English, French, music, drawing, penmanship, painting, and piano among other subjects.[13] Father O'Callaghan's visits to the Irish settlement were followed, in 1853, by a visit from the Rt. Rev. Louis DeGoesbriand, newly installed bishop of the Burlington diocese. He visited again the following year, using the Green Mountain Academy building to hold mass, then, spending several days "in the Irish Settlement where there are 60 families— appointed a committee to select a lot at or about the village."[14] One year later the lot was selected, a subscription raised to fund the building, and St. Thomas Church was built.

In addition to the Academy and churches, mid-century Underhill Center was home to a grist mill, two or more starch mills, a wheelwright shop, two blacksmith's shops, two stores, one housing the Post Office, and, by 1869, a small hotel catering to the newly developing tourist trade.[15] [Map 2] The more densely populated Underhill Flats

included a similar mix, although technically its hotel was just over the Jericho border.

The Flats also had a tannery which had been established early in the century and run

continuously throughout the period by the Humphrey family.[16] [Map 3] Other trades in

both village areas are indicated by the occupations declared for the 1850 and 1860

census. These include coopers, carpenters, masons, shoemakers, cabinet makers, one

carriage maker, two tailors (one from Ireland and one from England), and even two

attorneys.

By far the most prevalent occupation, however, was that of farmer. Of the 402

males who declared their occupation for the 1850 census, 333 are listed as farmers.

However, among these, at least a half dozen derived a large measure of their income from

lumbering. For example, in 1841, Luther Stevens, together with his Burlington partner

Henry P. Hickock, purchased 3,500 acres complete with a sawmill and buildings in the

area formerly part of the town of Mansfield. By 1860 approximately 30 families,

encompassing 100 people lived and worked here. The area was designated its own school

district and became known as Stevensville. [Map 1, H]

The mid-century farmers of Underhill, at least those who were successful enough

to stay, appear to have adapted well to the changing climatic and economic conditions

that characterized the first half of the nineteenth century. The colder weather of the first

two decades gave way to a warming trend that farmers initially assumed to be a

permanent change brought on by their own efforts to clear the land.[17] Unfortunately, this

trend proved temporary. Crops that had produced well a few scant years before became

difficult to grow. Nor were farmers immune to market pressures. Vermont farmers had

taken advantage of the completion of the Champlain Canal to ship wheat from the

Champlain Valley to New York. But the reverse quickly became true as the production of

wheat in Vermont became increasingly difficult and Vermonters found it cheaper to grow hay and import wheat.

In addition to wheat, most Underhill farmers grew oats, corn, potatoes, and to a lesser extent, buckwheat and a variety of legumes. Corn, a popular crop in southern New England, was grown in Vermont primarily as animal food. It, too, suffered from the vagaries in the weather as well as changing conceptions about the proper and efficient way to grow it. The early practice of sowing corn among other vegetables, all worked manually, gave way to the belief that ordered fields of rows would produce a better yield. Such fields could be created easily with mechanical assistance in the broad expanses of mid-west farms. For Vermont farmers, working irregularly shaped plots on stony hillsides with a hoe, such field arrangements were impractical. Even ownership of a team of oxen and a plow did not always guarantee success.[18]

The potato filled a number of roles. With its high caloric value it was a staple food for poorer farmers. As the slave population of the south grew, New England potatoes became an exportable cash crop. The creation of textiles mills created a need for starch that was filled by a growing number of local starch mills, dependant on the potato crop. Despite the fact that the potato blight reached Vermont in 1844, Underhill farmers still found it worthwhile to grow potatoes. All but one of the 178 farmers reporting their agricultural products in the 1850 census grew at least some potatoes. No doubt, many of these farmers used the potato for animal consumption as well. Also grown were peas and beans, although the limited numbers suggest these were for local consumption, as was buckwheat.

Some areas of the town appear to have been well suited to orchards. Slightly less than half of Underhill farmers report orchard products. Hiram Wells, a sheep farmer, appears to be the most prominent apple grower in the town, reporting 120 bushels in

1850, followed distantly by John Terrill with 40. A handful of farmers produced 20-25 bushels, but most produced closer to 10. Possession of an orchard may also have been related to the wealth of the farmer: although a few of the poorest farms contained orchards, the majority belonged to those with a farm worth over $1,000. Apples may have been exported farther afield, but it is more likely that they were used by the local community. In 1851 Martin Hapgood had recorded purchasing apples and eleven apple trees from John Terrill, but either they were not yet mature or he had little luck maintaining them.

Five years later he was buying apples, 5 bushels at $.50 per bushel, 2 at $.25, and ½ at $.17. The following year he was still buying them, paying $5.21 for an unspecified amount.

Hay was probably the most important crop to farmers. With a short growing season and associated need for winter fodder, Vermont farmers' hay yields had a direct impact on how many sheep and cattle they could maintain in a given year. Even the poorest farmers, those reporting only one or two milch cows, two or fewer cattle, and very few sheep, reported harvesting at least five tons of hay in 1850. Those that could not hired others to do it for them as the Widow Hanaford did in August 1862 when the estate paid "2.50 for two days haying."

As a town whose population was increasing dramatically just after the peak of the Vermont sheep boom, many Underhillians did not choose to build large herds. After a state-wide peak of 1,681,819 sheep reported in 1840, the total for the state in 1850 had dropped to 1,014,122.[19] Underhill's share in that year was a mere 2,311 but in keeping with their practice of diversification, that number was spread across 124 farms and most farmers reported some wool production.[20] Although Underhill had no woolen mill, the neighboring town of Jericho did. Nathaniel T. Stiles had, in 1836, enlarged a previous

woolen mill on the Lee River, equipping it for carding, spinning, weaving, fulling and finishing cloth. It was in use until some time after 1856 when, in the face of declining sheep numbers, it was converted to a wagon manufactory and wheelwright shop.[21] That decline happened fairly rapidly. By 1860, Underhill farmers only had 881 sheep, with a corresponding decrease in wool clip.[22]

Every Underhill farmer had at least one milch cow, and all but three reported producing butter. Forty-eight of the farms were involved in some amount of cheese production. The greatest number, 23 of 48, produced between 100 and 1,000 pounds of cheese in 1850. A small number of the wealthiest farmers produced quite a bit more. John Jordan and his 19 cows produced a surprising 4,800 pounds of cheese, but the record for 1850 goes to the family of R Parker with their herd of 25 cows which produced 7,800 pounds. In all, twenty farmers had expanded their herds to ten cattle or more and all were producing respectable amounts of cheese. As in much of Vermont, the 1850s saw an increase in the dairy herds in Underhill. By 1860 the number of milch cows more than doubled to reach 1,766, for the first time surpassing the number of the human population of 1,637. Cheese was produced by individuals, or in small home-based factories. Flynn notes that a "local cheese factory consumed much of the milk produced. This factory was discontinued in 1850 when it was possible to find a city market for butter."[23] Butter production involved less work and transportation improvement made shipment of this more perishable item possible.

Farmers also augmented their income in the 1850s by nearly doubling the amount of maple syrup produced, from 37,280 pounds in 1850 to 67,560 pounds in 1860. The "sugar," cheese and butter were sold both locally and exported. In some cases that exporting was to family members. In 1855, Mary Dinesmore of Woodstock had moved with her husband Henry to New York City. Although a doctor in Vermont, Henry

Dinesmore had opened a store on New York's 6th Avenue. Writing to her sister Elizabeth Savage of Stowe, Vermont in May two years later, Mary expresses her thanks for the packages they have sent: "They were landed at our door last evening all safe and sound and I can hardly tell you how acceptable they are, the sugar is perfectly delicious and I shall have to make Buckwheats every morning now we have something so nice to eat on them. Henry will sell two barrels of potatoes for what he can get and we shall keep the other." She also thanked them for some of her mother's famous butter and cheese that were included.[24]

Thus, by 1850, most residents of Underhill were families of farmers who owned their own land. Most practiced diversified agriculture, though some were increasingly focusing on dairy. A sufficient number of tradesmen supplied the needs of their respective communities. The population continued to grow throughout the next two decades, albeit at a slightly lesser pace than the boom of the 1840s. The town's mix of older Vermont families, new Vermont transplants, former New Hampshire, Massachusetts and even a few New York residents was balanced with immigrants from Ireland, England, and Canada. The Congregationalist, Episcopal, Methodist, Freewill Baptist, and Roman Catholic churches ministered to the spiritual needs of their congregations.

The concerns of the town as expressed in town meeting and selectmen's records of the decade show a community attempting to deal with its growth without undergoing excessive change. The warning posted on February 19, 1851 for a Town Meeting to meet "at the basement of the New Meeting house in Underhill on Tuesday the fourth day of March next at ten o'clock A.M." to transact the town's business, suggests that this was a quiet year. In the language familiar to such meetings before and since, the business included selecting a moderator for the meeting, choosing town officers, asking the town

to approve a tax "to defray town expenses" and an additional highway tax, and adding any "other business necessary and proper when met."[25]

The meeting that followed held few surprises. Although it is not recorded how many Underhillians attended, it was stated that they "met agreeably to the above warning & proceeded to do business."[26] After choosing the town's 30 year old, and single, attorney to be the moderator, the town heard and accepted the reports of the auditors and selectmen. One small objection arose over "Edward Farrell's account for work done on the road in School District No. 10" but the recorder did not see reason to offer further explanation. B.M. Burbank, a shoemaker originally from New Hampshire but married to a Vermonter, was elected Town Clerk and also given the responsibility of Sealer of Weights and Measures. The Selectmen elected were H. A. Naramore a farmer from the Center and father of seven, a slightly large family for Underhill at that time, along with A. L. Terrill of a local family with properties in all areas of the town, and J.H. Tower, Jr., merchant and son of the John Tower who had played and continued to play an important role in the Flats. Henry Harmon, a young farmer who shared a home with his parents, wife, and their 2 year old daughter, was chosen as fence viewer, along with prominent landowner L. W. Mead and again, A. L. Terrill. The listers, auditors, and trustees were also drawn from Underhill's more well to do farmers, while William Wells, Center shoemaker, was appropriately chosen "Sealer of Leather." J.S. Cilly, the one person in the 1850 census to declare himself as a teacher and the man who would soon establish the Green Mountain Academy in the Center, was selected, once again, to be Superintendent of Common Schools. He would continue to fill that role throughout the decade. Rounding out the list were John Story as Constable who, in customary fashion, was also voted to have jurisdiction of the County, Truman Sheldon, as Pound Keeper, whose barn yard was

also voted to be used for the pound and twenty-two other gentlemen to serve as Highway Supervisors, and grand and petit jurors.

Those present chose to raise "twenty-seven cents on a dollar of the Grand list to defray Town expenses," an amount in keeping with previous and subsequent years. The expenditures for the previous two years had amounted to $534.84 and $552.74, respectively. In a spirit of generosity not guaranteed to be repeated in all years, they also voted to raise twelve cents additional highway tax. By voting for the extra highway tax, the townsmen were either anticipating the upcoming thaw or had already experienced it: records for the following year indicate a rise in expenditures to cover nearly $100 in lumber and labor to repair an unusual amount of damage "after freshett."

Regular expenditures for the 1850s fell into three categories: reimbursing elected officials for their work and expenditures on behalf of the town, expenses related to bridge and road development and repair, and caring for the poor. Except for those years that required extra expenditures for road maintenance, the town expenditures were divided roughly equally between care for the poor and all other expenses combined. While the town records show only the sum total reimbursed to elected officials for one year of service, a record kept by M.E. Hapgood during his tenure as Selectman in 1865 provides an indication of some of these expenses. His duties for the town include such items as "to English Settlement to see about Road," to Stevensville to see about Bridge," "to laying road leading to the mountain," or going farther afield "to going to Williston to see about road." He generally charged $1.00 per day for his time, with lesser amounts if the task did not take an entire day. Other time was spent attending to administrative tasks: "to drawing bonds and taking same," or, for what must have been a more difficult and time consuming task: "to making town and Bounty tax bills & Certificate & warrant for same: $4.00."

At least half, often more, of the town's annual budget was spent in care of the poor. It is unclear whether Underhill followed the practice of other Vermont towns by "bidding out" care of the poor, but it is quite clear that citizens expected recompense for such care. For families verging on poverty themselves, keeping one or two of the town's poorest citizen's at the expense of the town may have been a way to make ends meet, although some of Underhill's poor were also kept by its wealthier members. In 1850, Anson Atchinson, a 33 year old farmer, along with his wife and four children all under ten years old, were paid $131 by the town for "keeping Hovey folks." The Hoveys, or, according to the 1850 census, Simeon Hovey, Abner Carr and Alma Carr, were among the town's oldest inhabitants, being 96, 85, and 77, respectively. For a farmer with a property valued at $450, one of the town's lower amounts, the added income must have helped.

The "pauper" to be kept may have contributed some labor to the family, as in the case of Davis Parker. Mr. Parker was lodged with the Burdick family, a fairly wealthy farm family of four, that also included a 17 year old Irish hand named Arthur Cavenaugh. In other cases, the people being cared for may have been relatives. Robert Prior, a 54 year old farmer with a moderately successful farm, was paid $25.00 for the care of two aged relatives, Herman and Lucy Prior. Herman was also listed in the census as being blind. Nor were the arrangements for care always permanent. The "Hodgmann girl" was boarded by William Larabee in 1850, who, with his wife and three young children, was one of the poorest families. The following year she was kept by another family, the Monroes.[27] In at least one case, Underhill was willing to pay for the keep of one of its citizens even if that meant he would leave the town. The 1854 March meeting includes instructions for the Overseer of the Poor to "do as he may judge best in Warren Bancroft

case, either hire him boarded in this town or send him to New York & hire his son to keep him."[28]

In addition to paying for board, the town paid for some goods and services. Underhill's physicians, Dr. Welch and later Dr. Benedick, provided the necessary health care for which the town reimbursed them. Sometimes payments were made directly to merchants for goods provided to the poor, or to tradesmen for services. This might take the form of payment made for boot repairs done by one of the local shoemakers, Joseph Burns, or for goods purchased from the Tower's store. Sadly, this also included purchase of gravecloths, the gravedigging, and the building of a coffin for, among others, "Irishman" Mr. Horn.

Supporting those members of the community who could not support themselves was a challenge faced by many towns. In 1836 Jericho had voted to form a committee to study the feasibility of joining with surrounding towns to buy and maintain a Poor Farm. Nothing came of that effort, but by 1859, when the town's expenses for the poor had risen to $647.51, they tried again. They joined the efforts of Essex, Williston and Shelburne in creating the Union Poor Farm Association. This time they succeeded, and in 1869 their share of the expenses was a mere $69.50.[29] Underhill attempted a similar undertaking, charging the committee to "confer with other towns relative to a poor farm (so called) & report the results of their investigations at a future meeting." The following year another committee was appointed to purchase land for such a farm "in company with other towns or alone as the committee deems best" but the effort failed and the committee was dismissed the following year.[30] At a later attempt, however, Underhill did establish a Poor Farm on what is now Range Road in the Center.

Questions related to the poor were not the only concerns of the town. Meeting records from the 1850s reflect the recent growth of the town. In addition to dealing with

petitions for new roads and maintaining existing ones, Underhillians needed to address the growing school-age population. The town was divided into districts within each of which was built a schoolhouse. As this needed to be within walking distance, there were quite a few districts. The town voted each year whether to add districts, move districts, or acquire land to be used for schools. However, the members of each district were responsible for equipping the school. The town also elected a Superintendent of Common Schools to oversee hiring and examination of teachers, tracking the number of students, and report back to the Selectmen. J. S. Cilly, who would also open and run the Green Mountain Academy, fulfilled that role for Underhill in the 1850s. By the time the decade was over Underhill had apportioned 13 districts.

Along with concerns about an expanding town came one other issue: temperance. Burlington newspapers such as the *Courier* and *The Weekly Tribune*, as well as other regional papers such as Swanton's *American Journal*, routinely included articles on temperance. The Courier announced a temperance meeting to be held in Underhill in the early part of the decade.[31] The town did not act upon the issue until 1853 when the question of the newly passed Maine Liquor Law was brought before the town at a special meeting in February. Calling on citizen's to "give in their ballots with the words yes or no written or printed thereon in accordance with an act approved November 25 1852, called the Maine Liquor Law" the town met, selected Capt. Nathaniel Hanaford to be moderator, and cast their ballots. The yes vote garnered 166 ballots while a sizeable minority, 79, voted no. At town meeting the following month the town followed up by voting " for a County Commissioner in accordance with an act approved November 25th 1852 called the Liquor law."

Voting did not necessarily turn Underhill into a temperance town automatically. The Jan. 19, 1854 Burlington *Courier* carried this article titled "The Maine Law in Underhill:"

> "A while since two rummies in this town employed a man of their own kidney to buy a jug of rum to be drunk at his house by the three on Sunday. When the thing came off "mine host" became so groggy as to mount a horse and ride shouting through the streets to the great annoyance of the people. Meantime his wife broke the jug, spilling the contents. Our poor, duped friend, after becoming sober, not only rejoiced at the destruction of the creature, but felt abundantly ashamed and penitent for his conduct, and pledged himself to better fashions. He became a strong supporter of the Maine Law, hence see the need of it."

Underhill would continue on its even keel for the next few years. The Civil War would take its toll. Underhill would send 123 men to represent the Union where twelve would die in battle. Another nineteen would die of disease or in "rebel prison."[32] After the war Underhill would begin to experience the same massive outmigration that other Vermont towns faced. By the time the new century arrived the population was heading to the 1,000 mark and would, by 1950, reach its lowest point of 698. By the time the population rebounded to its former heights Underhill would be a community that, while still dotted with farms, would be predominantly a "bedroom community" for Burlington.

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[1] During those nineteen months Hapgood kept a record of the credits and debits related to the estate. These are listed in a small account book that also includes notes on some purchases made over the course of twenty years, a list of the expenses incurred while acting as Selectman, and some biographical listings of men associated with Underhill who served in the Civil War. Hereinafter referred to as "Hapgood."

[2] Jericho-Underhill Bicentennial Committee. *They Left Their Mark,* p.23.

[3] Flynn, *History of Underhill*, p. 1.

[4] Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England*. pp. 128-130.

[5] Hemenway, *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, p.886.

[6] The later creation of railroad routes through these valleys cemented their position as bustling village centers.

[7] Jericho Historical Society, *History of Jericho,* p. 16.

[8] Carlisle, *Look Around Jericho, Underhill, and Westford*. p. iii.

[9] U. S. Census, *Population Schedules*, 1850.

[10] This town, more than many others, indicates how little was known about the geography of the area when it was divided into grants. To get from one side of the town to the other required either crossing over the long peak of Mt. Mansfield, or traversing the slightly less, but still daunting, Nebraska Notch. While Mansfield citizens seemed unconcerned with giving away that portion of their town that was almost

inaccessible to them, they did battle with the state for some years in an attempt to retain their town status before succumbing to being absorbed by Stowe.

[11] Each of the town's histories add that Barney, a Tory, had been absent from Underhill for some years after removing to Canada after the Revolutionary War. Apparently all was forgiven as he became a leading figure in the town after his return.

[12] One brief attempt to move the meeting back to the Flats in 1855 was summarily dismissed at the March meeting. Underhill Town Meeting Records, vol. 1, hereinafter UTMR, Warning for March 1855 and Minutes from March 1855 meeting.

[13] Carlisle. p. 19.

[14] Diary of Bishop DeGoesbriand, excerpted in Dwyer, *History of Underhill* and in Underhill Town Records: Miscellaneous documents.

[15] Corey, *An Archaeological Phase I Survey of the Underhill Proposed Bridge Improvement Project,* p. 36.

[16] Beers *Atlas*, Map of Underhill.

[17] The Colonial belief of a permanent and positive association of deforestation with climatic change is described by a number of Colonial authors and summarized in Demeritt's "Climate, Cropping, and Society in Vermont, 1820-1850." pp. 133-135.

[18] The competition with midwest farming practices and its impact on Vermont farmers is explored in Barron's *Those Who Stayed Behind*. Vermonters reactions to and anxiety about the promised ease of midwest farming is expressed in numerous newspaper articles of the time.

[19] Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England*, p. 81.

[20] U. S. Census *Schedule 4. Products of Agriculture,* 1850.

[21] Flynn, pp. 262-263.

[22] U.S. Census *Schedule 4. Products of Agriculture*, 1860.

[23] Flynn, p. 26. Also see McMurry, *Transforming Rural Life* for discussion of cheese production and the transition to butter production in upstate New York.

[24] Letter to Elizabeth Savage from Mary Dinesmore, May 16, 1857, from the Savage Collection, University of Vermont Special Collections. This reminder from home was perhaps even more poignant at this time. Soon after moving to New York in 1855 they lost their only child, a boy of three, to yellow fever. They returned to Vermont, briefly, to bury him "back home." By the time this package arrived, the Dinesmores were happy to be the new parents of a baby girl. They would return to Vermont several years later and settle in Woodstock.

[25] UTMR, warning and minutes for March 1851 meeting.

[26] ibid.

[27] The record keeper for the year 1852, though writing with a clear hand, established a new system that noted only the name and the reimbursed. No details for what the funds were spent on are recorded. By the time that person was replaced with a more satisfying recorder the Hodgmann girl disappeared from the records.

[28] UTMR, 1854. In an earlier case the town had voted to pay to send an elderly gentleman back to Ireland so that he might end his days and be buried in his homeland. UTMR, 1843.

[29] *History of Jericho*, pp. 132-134.

[30] UTMR, 1861, 1862, 1863.

[31] *Burlington Courier,* February 21, 1850

[32] The actual number varies depending on the source. These numbers are drawn from Hapgood's records. Later local historians put the number 1t 157. The difference might be related to whether these men were actual Underhill citizen's, were Underhillians who had recently moved to other towns and were registered there, or who had recently moved to Underhill and were registered under the names of their home towns.

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