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The birth of American tourism : New York, the Hudson Valley, and American culture, 1790-1835.

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THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN TOURISM:

NEW YORK, THE HUDSON VALLEY, AND AMERICAN CULTURE, 1790-1835

A Dissertation Presented

by

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History

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ABSTRACT

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN TOURISM: NEW YORK, THE HUDSON VALLEY, AND AMERICAN CULTURE, 1790-1835

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This study describes a moment when tourism was created in America, and how, in the decades after, it was discovered by a broad swath of American society. Beginning as an infrastructure created for the recreation of wealthy, the tourist world created in the Hudson Valley became increasingly more accessible and visible in the years after 1790, most particularly after 1817.

This new visibility heavily influenced artists such as Thomas Cole and writers like James Fenimore Cooper, who created for the tourist market. By the late 1820s, these images combined with the rising prosperity of the period and the falling cost of travel spurred thousands of Americans to travel to these storied sites. By 1830, all classes of Americans had became exposed to tourists and tourism.

All this happened in the context of the changing society of American cities, especially New York. There, rapid growth led to increasing social disorder. A search by the gentry for safe enclaves resulted in the tourist sites, but the very infrastructure they created to facilitate their travels was later used by the very classes they had wanted to avoid.

The large numbers new tourists from non-wealthy classes began to overload the traditional tourist sites, causing increasingly visible cultural tensions. By eighteen-thirty the Hudson Valley was being written of by the cultural avant-garde as being overexposed. A search for other tourist sites ensued. Exclusivity would be briefly found in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, but others in the gentry sought longer-term solutions including private clubs, summer homes, and semi-private resorts such as Newport. Places such as Saratoga, too, would find ways to reinvent themselves, especially in the light of the decline of other formerly exclusive sites like the nearby Ballston Spa.

This study uses a large body of cultural evidence supported by dozens of diaries and letters to demonstrate that by eighteen-thirty the idea of tourism had penetrated deep into American culture, affecting art, literature and commerce. Although it would take another generation before tourism became a truly mass activity, by 1830 the basis of American tourism had been set.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To begin with, this is the story of how tourism began in the United States. The emergence of tourism was a sudden and surprisingly rapid event: in 1790, it did not exist; by 1830 it was a flourishing industry. Tourism began at a crucial place, the Hudson River Valley. It became America's first tourist region through several historical accidents: its proximity to New York City, its remarkable scenery, and its closeness to some of America's most-sought destinations. By 1830, it connected the nation's fastest-growing, wealthiest city to the nation's largest and most fashionable resorts. It was the heart of an exclusive tourist route that was known as the "Fashionable Tour."

The tourism that developed in the Hudson Valley marked a radical break with the past. In both England and America, tourism had always been an aristocratic luxury restricted to the very few who could afford the time and money to travel.[1] However, in the eighteen-teens, classes aside from the gentry

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[1] For example, only 452 visitors were recorded visiting Newport, Rhode Island, one of America's only Colonial-era resorts, from 1767 to 1775. Carl Bridenbaugh, "Colonial Newport as a Summer Resort," Rhode Island Historical Society *Collections* 26 (1933): 23. For examples of aristocratic non-travellers, see the private diary of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, 1792-1802, MS 209, Maryland Historical Society. Carroll rarely spent more than a week away from his plantation, and took no major trips. Francis Dallam, another Maryland land and slave owner, only took only two leisure trips from 1815 to 1833 (MS 1250, Dallam Papers, Maryland Historical Society). Likewise, Henry D. Gilpin, who took his first tourist trip in 1825, despite years spent in England at school and extraordinary family wealth in Delaware and Pennsylvania; he would not travel as a tourist again until 1835 (Box 59, Gilpin Family Papers, Historical Society of Delaware). Another Philadelphia resident, J Fisher Leaming, a Quaker businessman, took no vacations from 1813 to 1833, despite a great deal of travelling (Leaming Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania). The number of frequent travellers even into the antebellum era is quite small in

began to travel along the routes developed in the Hudson Valley and beyond.[2] A trickle at first, by 1830 they had flooded these formerly exclusive places. Their presence made Hudson Valley tourism unique in America.[3]

In this way, the presence of tourism signified large structural changes in American society. For example, there had been a tradition among the northern

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surviving collections compared to those who took one or two trips in their lifetime. Examples of frequent travellers include William Elliott, who took northern trips from his South Carolina home a number of times from 1806 to 1839 (Ms. Collection 1009, Elliott and Gonzalez Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection). An analysis of a later period which is probably still relevant for this era is Jane Pease, "A Note on Patterns of Conspicuous Consumption Among Seaboard Planters, 1820-1860," *Journal of Southern History* 35, no. 3 (Aug 1969), 391-92. Pease describes the European tour as a rare event, used, for example, to "finish" a young man or to present a daughter to society.

[2] Class in Colonial and Early Republic America is difficult to define. Throughout this study, I will use the word "gentry" to denote not only those with significant amounts of money, but those with long-standing power. Merchants, wealthy lawyers, successful businessmen fall into this category. They tended to be the leaders of their communities in a pattern stretching back a hundred years or more. But in the 1810s and 1820s a new class of wealthy persons emerged. These usurpers were seen by the old order as gauche and uncultivated, and they represented a significant threat to the traditional conduits of power. Standing behind this new group was a small but rising upper middle class, the true threat to traditional power.

[3] Although there were destinations for leisure travel in the south, they continued being restricted to aristocrats until after the end of the Civil War. Prior to the 1830s, the southern resorts were on a much smaller scale than those of the north, and they were carefully organized to separate exclusive from common spaces, as described by Charlene Marie Lewis in "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display" and Thomas Chambers in "Fashionable Dis-Ease." These southern resorts did undergo significant growth after the mid-1830s but were always on a smaller scale than the northern resorts. There is also some debate as to the frequency of travel among wealthy Southern families: a stereotype before recent literature was that they travelled a great deal, and some still argue that. In general, it is safe to assert that by the 1850s a large number of these families left home regularly. However, there is little evidence to point to large numbers of Southerners leaving home for the entire summer or for long periods as a regular activity before that time: rather, it becomes clear that this was an evolving activity, with relatively few leaving for long periods at the turn of the nineteenth century, many more doing so by the mid-1830s, and relatively large numbers doing so by the 1850s. Finally, given the relatively small size of the southern gentry, especially compared to the northern gentry, the raw number of southern travellers was low. Those who did travel, though, were much more visible and noticed by others, given their wealth and ostentation.

American gentry that discouraged consumption.[4] Tourism, however, is nearly pure consumption, the purchasing of experiences that leave little in the way of tangible products. The increasingly widespread practice of tourism in the eighteen-twenties marked a turning point in America as it shifted to being a modern consumer society. This was a process that would not be fully complete until the 1880s or 1890s.

Tourism emerged at a decisive time in American history, a period where Americans were seeking for a new definition of their nation. Travel played a vital role in that process by valuing American scenery and locations and by asserting an equality between America and Europe. The most visible and profound components of this shift were America's first major artistic and literary movements. America's first successful authors played to the tourist market, a market composed of their best customers, the gentry. Like these authors, the artists who founded America's first significant artistic movement, the Hudson River School, were directly influenced by tourism and created works for the gentry, tourist class. As the works of these writers and artists became widespread, they became vehicles for tourist ideas.

This outpouring of American culture in the 1820s came at a pivotal time. In the 1810s, critics had seen American culture as just a pallid imitation of those

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[4] David Jaffee, "Peddlers of Progress," and the Transformation of the Rural North, 1760-1860," *Journal of American History* 78, no. 2 (Sep, 1991), 511-535, contends that the 'traditional' resistance to consumption was in fact a part of a general, post-Revolution, resistance to what was seen as British excess, a resistance that was in part broken down by the omnipresence of consumer goods by mid-century.

of France and England. Americans took their cultural cues from overseas, importing books, paintings, theater, and music. American artists and writers, the few that were able to support themselves by their art, usually attempted, somewhat unsuccessfully, to imitate what was already being produced in England and Europe. An American artist was not entirely schooled unless he had gone to Europe to study. Of course, some Americans objected to the sense of inferiority all this engendered, but that attitude was not yet widespread. Although all of these attitudes would take generations to entirely disappear, they began to change in the 1820s. Tourism, by creating a venue for the celebration of American scenery and a market for American scenes was pivotal in beginning that process.

By 1830, all literate classes knew what tourism was, where it happened, and how people should react to it. The transmission of information about tourism closed the circle: Hudson Valley tourism became emblematic for all American tourism. This was a particular type of tourism, with traits that were products of their time and the unique situation of the Valley: pilgrimages to wild-seeming scenic spots that were, in fact, well tamed; a fast pace of travel for the time, where the illusion of leisure was balanced by the desire to move onward; the use by these tourists of very specific pieces of art and literature to interpret their surroundings; and the tourists' insistence on recreating an atmosphere at their lodgings that as closely as possible reproduced the comforts of home.

This idea of tourism was defined and dominated by northerners, especially New Yorkers,[5] and it was successfully propagated through all the nation's sections through a wide variety of media. This version of tourism became central in the American consciousness and would be the model for all later American nineteenth-century tourism.

This study is more than a simple description of this early era of tourism. This period witnessed fundamental transformations in American culture and society that profoundly shaped who Americans were and what Americans have become. One key element of this story is the ultimately unsuccessful attempt by America's aristocracy to maintain its traditional and exclusive control of American society and, by extension, American culture. Tourism was an expression of and an agent in these dramatic changes. Prior to those decades, the genteel class had been generally successful in keeping control of American society, despite the struggles of the working and artisan classes in the years after the Revolution. The gentry held sway over the organs of power, ensured through a closely held franchise and a careful vetting of candidates. Socially,

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[5] Although this is not a definitive measure, the vast majority of tourist narratives in my research came from New Yorkers. The second largest group was composed of travellers from the South (an admittedly large region), mainly slave-owning aristocrats. Much smaller numbers came from Philadelphia and Baltimore, the country's largest cities after New York.

Conspicuously missing, though, was Boston. Although I searched through all the major Boston-area archives, Bostonians (and New Englanders in general) rarely participated in the tourism of the 1820s. This might be a sampling error: their travel journals or letters may not have survived. On the other hand, perhaps Bostonians did not see leisure travel as necessary, important, or, perhaps, even moral, or they did not see any need to travel.

gentry control was solid across most classes. Within the gentry itself, control was firm: newcomers were closely observed, their credentials carefully scrutinized, and were then quietly approved or rejected, given access to gentry society only if they could prove a close and trusted connection to other members. The system worked well and generally kept out adventurers or phonies. But the intense pace of economic and social change over the next thirty years would shake these carefully defended structures.

Tourism was a major arena in which this transformation was played out. Tourism began as an effort to maintain control in the face of challanges, but within a few decades, ironically, tourism had become an agent in the decline of their traditional dominance. The tourist industry began in an effort to provide an exclusive site for the privileged classes, but before long the very infrastructure that had been built to speed them there was made these fashionable spas too accessible for others. The early markers of gentry status – dress, diction, and behavior, but most particularly connections – began to break down in the face of so many legitimate new arrivals and a tidal wave of others, legitimate or not.[6] By the early eighteen-thirties, the gentry's close control of society in the formerly exclusive tourist locations had been lost in the flood of newcomers.

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[6] The desire of the newly emergent American middle class to emulate gentry behavior has been well documented. Richard Bushman has argued that the purchase of the "correct" goods was seen by them as a way to become gentry (quoted in David Jaffee, "Peddlers of Progress," 524). By this point tourism had become another commodity. Members of the rising middle classes saw dressing, acting, and being a tourist as a way of becoming gentry (or so it was hoped), something that the traditional gentry found obnoxious, to say the least.

This loss of control was not limited to resorts; in most American cities, gentry control across American society had begun to slip in the eighteen-twenties. No city was more affected than New York, the epicenter of this change. It was there that the gentry saw their rule most directly challenged. This was a direct outgrowth of the remarkable changes the city underwent in this period, beginning with its stunning growth, from 33,000 in 1790 to 202,589 in 1830. The city became a dirtier, crowded, more dangerous place, particularly compared to the small town of just a generation or two before. By the early 1830s, there was a sense among the gentry that their world was collapsing, that all the old checks were breaking down.

The formerly elite tourist areas lost their air of exclusivity as a result of the increasing numbers of tourists and the correlating increase in images and writings influenced by the Tour. Some in the fashionable set began to lose their enthusiasm for those places and by the late 1820s were seeking out new, unspoiled tourist sites. In response to this trend, places like Saratoga sought to reinvigorate themselves in a contradictory effort to both to regain their exclusivity and increase business. For Saratoga, this was remarkably successful, as the spa entered a period of expansion in the eighteen-forties; gambling and horse racing proved to be the key. But some fashionable people would begin to look for a more permanent solution: enclaves like private homes or country retreats that were much easier to control, areas that could be more readily safeguarded.

The literature on tourism has changed dramatically in the last generation. The very notion that there was any tourism in America before the Civil War did not exist until the publication of John Sears' *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (1989). It was the first to systematically place tourism earlier into the nineteenth century than the previous consensus. For Sears, tourism was fully manifest by the 1840s and 1850s, depending on the region. His analysis came at nearly the same time as several others, such as those by Bruce Robertson and Kenneth John Myers. Both of those historians identified the trend toward tourism before the 1840s, particularly in the Hudson Valley.[7]

A number of scholars produced works which built on the pioneering effort of John Sears. One of the very few to describe pre-Revolutionary leisure travel as tourism was Barbara Carson in her essay "Early American Tourists and the Commercialization of Leisure," in *Of Consuming Interests: the Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman and Peter Albert, eds. (1994). In that, she stands alone. More common in the post-Sears literature was the approach taken by Dona Brown in *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (1995). In her chapter, "Tours, Grand and Fashionable," Brown sought to place the roots of American tourism in the generation after the

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[7] Bruce Robertson, "The Picturesque Traveler in America," in *Views and Visions: American Landscapes Before 1830* (Washington, D.C.: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1986), 189-211; Kenneth Myers, "Selling the Sublime: The Catskills and the Social Construction of Landscape Experience in the United States, 1776-1876." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1990.

War of 1812. The bulk of her book dealt with the spread of tourism beyond the Hudson, to the White Mountains and beyond, a process that happened after 1830. But Brown was the first to place early tourism (from before 1830) in a larger framework. She saw tourism as a trend that grew organically from its earliest roots in the Hudson Valley to the region discussed in her study, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and onward. Published soon after Brown, Lynne Withey's *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750 to 1915* (1997) described American and British tourism as part of an even larger framework, synergistically linked between home country and (former) colonies. As for the question of when to precisely fix the date of the creation of tourism, Withey suggests that this may be a near-impossible task, one that is as much in the mind of the observer than anything. For example, she finds that some set the manifestation of tourism in Europe as late as the 1880s or as early as around 1800 (its first appearance in the *Oxford English Dictionary* was in 1811; the word 'tourist' in 1780) but ultimate decides that although it began with the European Grand Tour as early as the sixteenth century its truest manifestation came in the eighteenth century.[8]

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[8] Lynn Withey, *Grand Tours and Cook's Tour*, x. Outside the American context, a number of recent important works on tourism have been written describing its appearance in Europe, most especially in Britain. Some of the most useful are James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to "Culture," 1800-1918* (1993), Ian Ousby, *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism*, (1990), and Eric Leed, *The Mind of the Traveller: From Gilgamesh to Global Tourism* (1991). Marguerite Schaffer's *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (2001) openly rejects the idea that what it calls "national tourism" existed before the Civil War. In it, she defines the early phase as "regional tourism," important but not, in her eyes, "national tourism." (pp. 11-15).

In all of the aforementioned works, the basis of tourism – those trends occurring before 1830 – is only briefly sketched. Although they recognize the earlier period as having some importance, they mainly deal with it as just a prelude to the mass tourism of later eras. This study relies on much of their organizing structure. Sears outlined the connections between the aesthetic movements of the early nineteenth century with tourism and a new appreciation of nature; Myers successfully connected Hudson Valley tourism with art and literature; Brown identified the guidebook's influence in drawing tourists into the Valley and linked Valley tourism into White Mountain tourism; and Withey placed all into a greater, international structure.

Where this study differs from them is its assertion that all of the elements of American tourism, the fundamental assumptions of almost all Americans about leisure travel - its form, destination, and content – were in place before 1830. Further, it demonstrates how the ideas of tourism were transmitted and details their modes of transmission. It links tourism into the greater framework of the remarkable societal changes of the 1820s. It explicitly links tourism to the remarkable changes happening in New York City and argues that the Hudson Valley tourism system, fully developed by 1830, could not have existed without the unique society New York had developed over the preceding generation. And it postulates that a unique combination of physical infrastructure (roads, steamboat lines, hotels, resorts) and cultural infrastructure (art, literature, poetry,

drama) not only transmitted the idea of tourism to Americans but broadened, through tourists' patronage, both infrastructures.

One of the challenges of writing about tourism is to somehow define it. Definitions range from breezy (John Jackle's "tourism is a state of mind"), broad (Lynn Withey's "travel for pleasure"), to elusive (Dean McCannell avoids ever explicitly defining tourism in his seminal 1976 work).[9] I will then offer a more comprehensive definition.

Modern tourism requires several elements to be fully in place. Tourists need to sleep in comfortable hotels or inns, accommodations that approach what they are used to at home. They need safe and comfortable, relatively fast and predictable transportation. And they need carefully structured locations to go to which offer some form of entertainment, whether that is purely hedonistic or more didactic. Finally, they need something to see, some sort of spectacle. And of these latter two, although an element of fear – a frisson – is acceptable, there cannot be, in fact, any real danger. The experience must be entirely controlled.

A key aspect to this definition of tourism is the role played by transportation. The main framework for this discussion is based on George Rogers Taylor's *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860* (1951). For hotels and inns outside of Saratoga and Ballston the discussion begins with Dolores King's essay, "The First-Class Hotel and the Age of the Common Man,"[10] but in general

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[9] Jakle, *The Tourist*, 1; Withey, *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours*, x; McCannell, *The Tourist*.
[10] *Journal of Southern History* 23, no. 2 (May, 1957): 173-188

little work has been done since on that subject. There is, though, a huge outpouring of recent work describing the construction of the crucial facilities at Saratoga Springs and Ballston Spa. This includes Jon Sterngass's *First Resorts: Pursuing Pleasure at Saratoga Springs, Newport & Coney Island* (2001), Thomas Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-Ease: Promoting health and leisure at Saratoga Springs, New York and the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860" (Ph.D. dissertation, William and Mary, 1999, and a forthcoming book from the Smithsonian Institution Press), and Theodore Corbett, *The Making of American Resorts: Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa, Lake George* (2001). A similar body of literature describes the building of the facilities at Niagara Falls, most especially William Irwin, *The New Niagara: Tourism, Technology, and the Landscape of Niagara Falls, 1776-1917* (1996).[11] Likewise, Carol Sheriff's excellent *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (1996) gives a comprehensive account of the creation and meaning of that work. Finally, a group of works describes the scenery of the Hudson River. One good overview is Raymond O'Brien, *American Sublime: Landscape and Scenery of the Lower Hudson Valley* (1981); likewise, Kenneth Myer's works on the Catskills offer important insights to the changing

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[11] Other recent books discussing the cultural meaning of Niagara include Elizabeth McKinsey, *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime* (Cambridge University Press, 1985); Jeremy Adamson and Elizabeth McKinsey, *Niagara: Two Centuries of Changing Attitudes, 1697-1901* (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1985); Patrick McGreevy, *Imagining Niagara: The* Making and Meaning of Niagara Falls (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994); and Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999). A more popularly written book describing Niagara is Pierre Berton, *Niagara: A History of the Falls* (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1992).

attitudes of Americans toward nature and their identification of the Hudson as being uniquely scenic.

Paralleling the growth of this physical infrastructure was the rise of a cultural infrastructure tightly keyed to tourism. Composed of key elements of American artistic and literary expression, it came at a definitive time, and its contributions would form what many scholars understand as the basis for American literary and artistic culture. This study uses works which outline the remarkable changes of the 1820s and relies on much of their interpretative framework. Probably the most influential of these works on the subject of fine art is James Flexner's *The Light of Distant Skies* (1969). Flexner's work has been the basis for a large body of art and cultural history that describe the artistic changes of the time. His arguments are reinforced and expanded by Kenneth John Myers, in "Selling the Sublime," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale, 1990), and Myers' book, *The Catskills* (1987).[12] Ronald Zboray's *A Fictive People* (1993) describes the rise in interest in fiction in America, an interest that was met, eventually, by native writers. The spread of American fiction is described in William Gilmore, *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life: Material and Cultural Life in Rural New England, 1780-1835* (1989).

The tourist culture of the 1820s was happening in a newly emerging consumer culture, at least in the main centers of finance and commerce, most

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[12] A rare dissenting voice can be found in J. Meredith Neil, *Toward a National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence* (1975). Although he argues that a distinct national taste had developed long before 1815, in the end he concedes that American painting and other arts had not become fully fledged by 1820.

particularly New York City. This study argues that tourism was a direct outgrowth of the consumer revolution of the 1820s and 1830s, and in doing so it allies itself most closely with a group of writers including Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas* (1996), and Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (1992). Other historians place the origins of consumer culture even earlier, in the eighteenth century. These include T.H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century,"[13] Timothy Shannon, "Dressing for Success on the Mohawk Frontier: Hendrick, William Johnson, and the Indian Fashion,"[14] and Gloria Main and Jackson Main, "Economic Growth and the Standard of Living in Southern New England, 1640-1774."[15] This study argues that consumerism reached a critical mass in America only in the 1820s, and that it was a developing process emanating from the centers of finance.[16]

This critical mass came with the broadening numbers of those of the well-to-do along with a newly emergent middle class. The interpretations of Stuart Blumin, particularly *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (1989), and Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (1991), were particularly influential here. Blumin

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[13] *Past and Present* 119 (1988); 73-104.
[14] *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 53, no. 1 (Jan, 1996), 13-42
[15] *Journal of Economic History* 48, no. 1 (1988), 27-46
[16] Arguments for a much later date in the nineteenth century include William Leach, *Land of Desire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993) and Richard Butsch, "Introduction: Leisure and Hegemony in America," in *For Fun and Profit: The Transformation of Leisure into Consumption* (Philadelphia: Temple U. Press, 1990), 3-27.

neatly lays out the arguments both for and against the beginnings of a middle class in America in the antebellum period in "Hypothesis of Middle-Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century America: A Critique and Some Proposals,"[17] in arguments that are both persuasive and relevant. The debates over antebellum class formation seem to have reached a climax of sorts in the early 1990s, as the literature since has rarely engaged it. Blumin, of course, was building on and modifying ideas found in the works of Sean Wilentz and Bruce Laurie, who document the continuing efforts of artisans and others to share power in this era.[18]

Tourism was a manifestation, a cause, and an effect of the breakdown of the traditional power structure of the Early Republic. Understanding of that breakdown came from the work of historians such as Ronald Schultz, who describes in *The Republic of* Labor (1993) the continuing hold of the "restored ruling class" of Philadelphia in the years after the Revolution (arguments that can be applied to New York) and their mixed success by the 1820s.[19] Other important contributions by Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America 1815-1840* (1995), Robert Wiebe, *The Opening of American Society: From the Adoption of*

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[17] *American Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (Apr, 1985), 299-338

[18] See Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1984); Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989). Laurie's earlier *Working People of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Temple U. Press, 1980) describes the efforts of workers to unify in the face of the economic changes of the Jacksonian era, in a process that parallels the beginnings of the middle class.

[19] Ronald Schultz, *The Republic of Labor: Philadelphia Artisans and the Politics of Class, 1720-1830,* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1993), 139.

the Constitution to the Eve of the Revolution (1992), and Marvin Meyer, *The Jacksonian Persuasion* (1960) contribute to this understanding. The elite's cultural responses to their loss of power were explored in Steve Nissenbaum's *Battle for Christmas*, (1996), esp. chap. 3, "The Parlor and the Street," and by Paul Gilje in *The Road to Mobocracy* (1987). The loss of political authority by the old elites was detailed by L. Ray Gunn in *The Decline of Authority: Public Economic Policy and Political Development in New York State, 1800-1860* (1988).[20]

A group of theoretical works about tourism itself provided important conceptual ideas for this work, although all of them were written to describe twentieth-century tourism. This literature began with Daniel Boorstin's acidic "From Traveller to Tourist: The Lost Art of Travel," in *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1961). This essay, although it has been endlessly

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[20] A few others, however, argue that the breakdown of the old order happened closer to mid-century. These include Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order, 1820-1920* (1978), and Richard Butsch, "Introduction: Leisure and Hegemony in America," in *For Fun and Profit: The Transformation of Leisure into Consumption* (1990). Edward Pessen argues this too. He offers a number of highly persuasive statistics in *Riches, Class, and Power Before the Civil War* (1973) to contend that there never was a loss of control, that the ruling class remained intact and in place. Although his figures are useful – they prove, for example, the ultimate persistence of the wealthy – in the end, his brand of statistical history ignores a heavy weight of cultural evidence to the contrary.

Some of the most theories of the transmission of ideas from ruling classes to others - 'hegemony' - are based on the ideas of the Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci, who argued that ruling groups within society used their power to shape the social order, particularly through social and economic means. His highly theoretical framework has had its validity tested in a number of historical situations and has proved to be useful in certain times and places. However, there is always huge amount of negotiation and compromise between those groups. T. Jackson Lears, for example, argued in "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *American Historical Review* 90 (June 1985): 567-593, that there had to be a willingness on the part of the 'receiving' party to this cultural hegemony or it risked being entirely rejected. This study keeps the idea of cultural hegemony alive, but with the clear notion that there was a great willingness among the less-than-gentry to participate in these highly attractive tourist activities as much for hedonism as for any other reason. Further, tourism offered definite advantages for their status and search for power.

debated, dissected, discredited, and criticized, has formed the basis of academic debate about tourism. Its model of "traveller" (one who adventures) versus "tourist" (the seeker of home-like familiarity regardless of location) remains highly influential and that influence is reflected in this study.[21] John Jakle's remarkable work, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (1985), was highly influential here. Tightly bound to real-life examples, it offers several chapters whose ideas are directly applicable to early nineteenth-century tourism, especially his discussions of "Tourists in the Landscape" and "Nature as an Attraction." Although Jakle writes of another era, there are strong similarities between his manufactured tourism of the twentieth century and that of the early nineteenth.

A number of theoretical works show how tourism itself helped create a national self-definition, an important idea used here. John Urry's *The Tourist Gaze* (1990) brilliantly analyzes how tourism affects national self-definition. "How social groups construct their tourist gaze," he writes, "is a good way of getting at just what is happening in the 'normal society.'"[22] The ideas of Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1979), and Margaret Hunt, "Racism, Imperialism, and the Traveler's Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England,"[23] were quite useful in conceptualizing the

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[21] Another seminal work that was less directly useful but nonetheless compelling in its insights was Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976), which has been the foundation for almost all theoretical discussion of tourism of the last generation.
[22] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 2.
[23] *Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 4 (Oct. 1993), 333-357.

experiences of early American tourists. Americans of all sections who travelled began to see what they shared, but more importantly, what they valued within their own section that was missing in another.

The discussion of tourism's impact on antebellum anxieties, described in the last chapter, rely heavily on the interpretive framework of Karen Halttunen's *Confidence Men and Painted Women* (1982). Supporting it are studies of antebellum society such as Christine Stansell's *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (1992), which gives an important understanding of the change in the character of New York before 1830. Other important studies of antebellum society relied on here include Ellen Rothman, *Hands and Hearts : A History of Courtship in America* (1984) and John Kasson's *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century America* (1990).

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST TOURISTS: BALLSTON SPA, 1790-1814

One day in 1792, Nicholas Low, one of New York's wealthiest merchants, learned some striking news. Something unusual was happening adjacent to a large tract of land he owned in upstate New York. Deep in the forest, at a small cluster of cabins a full day's ride from Albany, a substantial inn was being built, the kind of inn rarely seen outside of major cities or important commercial routes. Low knew money, and the idea of someone investing so far from any form of civilization piqued his interest. What could lead someone to put good money so far from all civilization?

This isolated hamlet had been named Ballston after Eliphalet Ball, its first pastor and had been founded in 1770. In the village were mineral springs supposed to have medicinal properties and originally used by the Mohawks. A few miles from the village was another set of springs, also reputedly health-giving, called by the Mohawks Saraghoga ("the Place of Swift Water"). Finding that unpronounceable, the settlers were calling them "Saratoga."[1]

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[1] Henry Sigerist, "The Early Medical History of Saratoga Springs," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 13 (1943): 540-41. Ballston Spa should not be confused with the village of Ballston, which is several miles away from the springs. In this study, "Ballston" or "Ballston Springs" inevitably refer to Ballston Spa. Eliphalet Ball, for whom the town was named, brought his parishioners to Ballston from Bedford, New York in 1770. Hugh Bradley lists several of the many differing phonetic renderings of the Mohawk name for Saratoga in *Such Was Saratoga* (New York: Doubleday, 1940), 2-3. Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York* (1822; reprint, with notes and edited by Barbara Miller Solomin, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1969), 3: 293.

Word of these springs had been known for some time among enthusiasts. They formed a small but steady trickle visitors to Ballston. Enough strangers had come looking for lodging that by the late 1780s one settler began to call his cabin an inn, and in 1787 he and his neighbors built another hovel they deemed a tavern. A 1790 visitor found these very poor indeed and he had to step through the "quagmire" he found around the spring. When Timothy Dwight, an inveterate traveller but also the president of Yale College and a noted theologian, came to Ballston in 1792 he found just "a miserable cottage or two" surrounded by "an absolute forest, spreading every way to a great distance."[2]

Despite these poor conditions, visitors kept coming. And many of them were people of standing, as demonstrated by Timothy Dwight. Consequently when the Aldridge House, the frontier inn that had so startled Nicholas Low, was begun in 1792 it was designed to evoke a large gentry home. It had a plain but elegant Georgian façade and its two large public rooms downstairs emulated the parlors of the most fashionable. Upstairs were four bedrooms. A long, broad porch or piazza extended across the front. From it, guests could receive visitors or display themselves.[3]

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[2] Timothy Dwight, *Travels*, 3:293. "Quagmire" was used by Elkanah Watson, quoted in Nancy Goyne Evans, "The Sans Souci, a Fashionable Hotel in Ballston Spa," *Winterthur Portfolio* 6 (1970): 111.

[3] The house became known as the Aldridge House in 1795; it would function as a hotel until 1846. It is the only one of the early hotels still extant, and has become Brookside, the Saratoga County History Center. The piazza became so popular it was a standard feature of nearly all the major resort hotels of the antebellum era. A description of its early character is in Nathaniel B. Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County, New York: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches* (Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878), chap. 30.

Nicholas Low owned most but not all of the land surrounding the springs at Ballston. The construction of the Aldridge House pointed to the glimmer of an opportunity. More than just profits, he saw the chance to create a European-style spa at Ballston.

In Great Britain and Europe, springs and spas had a long history. Ancient beliefs ascribed healing powers to mineral waters, attracting large numbers of the sick. But spas also drew the wealthy and those able to pay for their leisure. By Roman times a spa culture had developed in Europe, creating places where the wealthiest and most privileged would come to heal and, not incidentally, to socialize. In Britain, this culture had gone into a steep decline during the Middle Ages but it was revived in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. By the mid-eighteenth century spas were practically an industry. A large number of well-frequented, highly developed sites were available for the British gentry including Bath (the haunt of kings and queens), Tunbridge Wells, and, to a lesser extent, Harrogate and Bristol Hotwell.[4] In America, people were known to have frequented mineral springs in America as early as the 1660s, but there was no real vogue for them until the 1760s. Even then, the numbers of people visiting the springs remained small. Some of the earliest used were in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.[5] Nicholas Low would have known that a developed

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[4] See Phyllis Hembry, *The English Spa, 1560-1815: A History* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), for the most complete account of the British spa industry.

[5] Carl Bridenbaugh, "Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America." *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 3, no. 2 (Apr, 1946): 151-181. Many of these springs became famous in the nineteenth century, especially the Virginia Springs, which became the prime tourist site for

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spa at Ballston not only would enhance the value of his otherwise poor and sandy land, it would further cement his status.

He ordered a survey of his tract. He had inherited a huge swath of land in Saratoga County from his father and as a consequence he held most, but not all, of the land adjacent to Ballston's main spring. The survey laid out the plan of a village including streets and lots available for sale or lease. To complement or counter the Aldridge House he built his own guest house complete with a detached bathhouse. Through his influence in New York society, he could populate it with his friends and colleagues: he could create an American spa culture.[6]

When Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse visited Ballston in 1795 he described the area in generally positive terms. He found "a pretty large house for entertainment, with neat bathing-houses, and shower-baths for the convenience of invalids" and that the surrounding forest was composed of "lofty pines, which are overtopped by others," that "cover and ornament the hills." The trees near the springs, which were located "in the bottom of a valley, or excavation, forming a kind of bason[sic], of about 50 acres in extent," had been cleared. But beyond the mineral water, there was very little else to draw a visitor. And

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southern aristocrats. Unlike Saratoga and the northern springs, though, Virginia Springs worked hard (and generally successfully) to exclude non-aristocratic visitors.

[6] Nancy Goyne Evans, "The Sans Souci," 111-112. Washington Irving, *Journals and Notebooks Vol. 1, 1803-1806*, Nathalia Wright, ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 7 (fn. 20). Robert Ernst, "Nicholas Low: Merchant and Speculator in post-Revolutionary New York." *New York History* 75, no. 4 (Oct, 1994): 371.

although his report was upbeat, he hinted at the many deficiencies of the springs:

> The valley of Ballstown and its environs may be made an enchanting spot, equal, nay superior in some respects to any of the watering places in Europe....[One of the springs] may be converted by the hand of taste into an ornamental fountain. A little higher up orchestras for musick may be erected, and even houses for entertainment built.[7]

Waterhouse was pointing one major shortcoming in Low's hopes for creating an European-style spa: although the first elements were in place, Ballston still lacked even the most rudimentary fashionable elements. Despite that, Ballston began to draw persons of wealth. James Read visited the spa from Delaware in August, 1797, and "in general" the fifteen fellow visitors at his inn were "Genteel men." Almost all were from New York City save a gentleman from Trenton and a Virginia congressman, Richard Brent.[8] He stayed several weeks and reported a steady stream of visitors and that the "company at this place changes often, there being a constant succession of comers & goers." They were all from his genteel class and were people he felt comfortable with: "I have not discovered," he reported, "any thing uncommon in point of character amongst them."[9]

Despite the still-poor conditions Nicholas Low's social set was coming to Ballston. This is not surprising given the facts known about Nicholas Low. His investments ran broad and deep across America's commercial terrain in his role

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[7] Benjamin Waterhouse quoted in Jedidiah Morse, *The American Universal Geography*, 5th ed. (Boston: Thomas & Andrews, 1805), 492-95.
[8] James Read to Susan Read 9 August 1797, Box 36, Folder 1, Read-Eckard Letters, Historical Society of Delaware.
[9] James Read to Susan Read, 18 August 1797, Read-Eckard Letters.

as merchant, investor and speculator. He was a director of the country's two largest banks, the Bank of New York and the Bank of the United States. And he was one of New York state's largest landowners. His joint investments touched the range of America's wealthiest families. When Nicholas Low invested, people noticed.[10]

Between 1795 and 1800 Aldridge's house was expanded to add a dining room and more bedrooms. The dining room was extended in 1800 by twenty or so feet and more bedrooms were added above it. After the 1800 renovation its total length had been extended by one-third, to sixty feet. The new rooms above the addition were basic, "proper for gentlemen only," in the words of a visitor, Abigail May, as they were furnished only with "a window, bed, table, and chair." Once the extension was complete, May noted, Aldridge claimed that he could "entertain one hundred people," but she was skeptical of this.[11] One hundred could, possibly, be crammed sardine-like into the inn at an average of about three to a room. But although this inn was still, by modern standards, small and quite cramped, by the standards of America in 1800 it was of standard comfort and uncommon size: it was one America's largest inns. Nicholas Low's

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[10] Ernst, "Nicholas Low," 357-372. See also Sue C. Patrick, "Low, Nicholas," *American National Biography* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1999).

[11] Abigail May, 26 May 1800 (Morn), Abigail May Journal, Goddard-May Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. (Hereafter referred to as Abigail May Journal). The New York State Historical Society (Cooperstown, NY) has three different transcriptions of this journal, all of which alter the text in some manner, whether by adding a paragraph structure, changing the orthography, or by adding modern punctuation.

inn was run by two brothers who gave their name to it, "McMaster's," and in the same period it, too, was dramatically expanded to meet the pressure of visitors.[12]

By 1800 Ballston had been renamed. Its grand new name, Ballston Spa, demonstrated Nicholas Low's hopes for his village. Despite this, though, it remained a scruffy little place. Abigail May described it as "peculiarly wild and rude." She suggested that "art might do a great deal here, without destroying its wildness. The half burnt trees and stumps, and decayd logs, might be moved much to the advantage of the prospect."[13]

But even though this little outpost of half-burnt trees and stumps lacked any kind of amenities and was not much to look at, Ballston had become the summer destination for the cream of the New York gentry. Visitors to Ballston in 1800, for example, included the governor of the state, the New York attorney general, several generals active and retired, and a scattering of prominent foreign visitors. The village could hold something in excess of two hundred visitors at the season's height, mid-August. In addition to Aldridge's and Low's inns, a scattering of privately rented cottages were available for visitors.[14] The season was distinct: nearly no one before late May, small numbers of invalids in June and early July and then a steady increase through late July. Its peak was mid-August and by early September the houses were again nearly deserted. By

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[12] Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County*, chap. 30.
[13] Abigail May Journal, 1 June 1800.
[14] August estimate, Abigail May Journal, 12 August 1800. Although Waterhouse's 1795 description had claimed that "thousands" came to benefit from the spas, in fact the number of visitors per year probably was on the lower end of that range - perhaps two or three thousand visitors came per year, including locals.

the time Thomas Handasyd Perkins, one of Boston's wealthiest merchants, arrived at Ballston Spa in mid-September of 1800, he found "but few people at Aldridges," with only twenty-four in residence; he noted to his disappointment that "it is but 3 weeks since they numbered upwards of an hundred & there were as many more at Mc Masters." Still, he found that the company was "genteel & I think I can pass a few days with pleasantly."[15]

We know a great deal of the character of life at Ballston in the summer of 1800 because of the survival of a marvelously detailed journal written by Abigail May. She arrived at Ballston in late May of that year and would not leave until the end of the season at the end of August. The daughter of Col. John May and Abigail (May) May of Boston, she came from the same Boston family that would later produce Louisa May Alcott.[16]

When she arrived there were very few guests, a number small enough that she described many of them individually and recorded their names in her diary. She stayed at Aldridge's house. But after several weeks the numbers of visitors, both long-term and transient, had risen so steadily that she chose instead to record "only those for whom I feel invested."[17]

Probably the best marker for the beginning of the social season was June 24th. That evening, the first dance was held. The most crucial factor in deciding

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[15] 10 Sept 1800, Perkins Bound Vol. 7, Thomas Handasyd Perkins Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. A profile of Perkins can be found in Freeman Hunt, *Lives of American Merchants* (1856; reprint, New York: August M. Kelley Publishers, 1969), 33-102.
[16] She was a distant cousin of Louisa May Alcott. Louisa May Alcott's mother, also Abigail May, was given the same name as her cousin.
[17] Abigail May Journal, 23 June 1800.

to have a dance was the number of women at the springs, since before then the population had been overwhelmingly male. The female contingent that night was still only a "small set," May noted, and was composed of "all the young ladies from the other house [McMaster's] added to the such of us who could dance." And they were danced to exhaustion by the larger number of willing men.[18] As the season progressed the frequency of these dances accelerated, from weekly in mid-July to nearly daily in mid-August. Fortunately, the population of dancing women also increased. Dances were generally held in the new long room at Aldridge's, the dining table pushed to one side. The character of the visitors changed, too. In late May a fairly large percentage of the visitors were invalids of one form or another, but the shift from sanatorium to vacation resort was complete by early August when Abigail May described the population of the springs a "present[ing] an epitome of mankind."[19] But of the young men, she found most of them too flirtatious and all too prone to posturing. And some of them were simply "very wild," including the New York attorney general, a Mr. De Peyster, scion of a prominent and wealthy New York family.[20] By mid-August the social life at the spa had become so intense that she declared, "this is no home for invalids."[21]

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[18] Abigail May Journal, 25 June 1800.
[19] Abigail May Journal, 12 Aug. 1800.
[20] This was probably Frederic De Peyster, a lawyer from New York City, father of the General Frederic De Peyster (*Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: The Press Association Compilers, Inc., 1918-1931), 2:43).
[21] Abigail May Journal, 14 August 1800

May, who had come to Ballston Springs to heal a serious medical condition in her hand, counted herself among the invalids. But life at the Spa was much more social than healthful and she had serious reservations about this. Because of her illness, she told herself, she could not participate in flirtation or socializing. She had steeled her heart: she wrote that her mind had "been tried and purg'd from [of] all thoughts which might lead me to look on any man other than as my friend and my brother." But she was quickly drawn away from these somber resolutions. Her first distraction came in early June with the "series of small quiet attentions" rendered her by a young Mr. French, probably a student at Yale. It began one day when he favored her with a "delightful stroll." The next, they took another walk together. After the time they had spent together on the day following, she confessed to her diary that she found him "one of the most pleasing interesting young men I ever met with." He would soon leave, to her sorrow, but there would be others. There was the handsome young doctor attending her, Dr. Anderson; later, she would be taken with a widower, Mr. Cain.[22]

Flirtation was not the only entertainment available to the visitors. Major activities included rumor-mongering and gossip. All this was typical of the instant-small-town atmosphere of this small society of some two hundred visitors, not counting servants and children.[23] Newcomers were met with

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[22] Abigail May Journal, 6, 7 & 8 June 1800.
[23] Abigail May Journal, 14 Aug. 1800.

intense curiosity and their behavior was closely followed. Every new arrival was quickly categorized. In this atmosphere, rumors could quickly grow and fester. May herself became subject to a rumor that left her fuming for days: she was reported to be the "intended" of a young man, Mr. Howard, who had travelled together with May and her mother through Massachusetts and New York. He had only stayed a week before returning home alone. "I was quite shock'd when first told of it, and now find tis current all round – even in Troy," she wrote, "I hope in mercy Mr. H. will never hear of the report…it really (I am such a fool) makes me unhappy. I never would have consented to his coming if I had surmised it would lead to such reports."[24]

May was experiencing the extension of drawing room culture that characterized life at the Springs. This was a culture shaped by the ever-changing cast of characters, the thrills of flirtation and the entertainment that the visitors created for themselves. There were risks to leisure, temptations that could lead visitors out of their normal circles.[25] For example, May always found it difficult to observe the Sabbath as she had done in Boston. She was not a very pious woman, but she did want a measure of decorum and she found it vaguely

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[24] Abigail May Journal, 4 June 1800.

[25] This is an expression of the phenomenon known of as "liminality," a process where people shed some of their traditional roles and mores, offering brief expressions of freedom in a relatively safe setting. (Of the dangers of this, see below.) Jon Sterngass, in *First Resorts: Pursuing Pleasure at Saratoga Springs, Newport, and Coney Island* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 2001), gives a fine analysis of this phenomenon in the context of nineteenth-century vacation areas; see esp. 121-138 in the context of antebellum Saratoga. Charlene Boyer-Lewis's *Ladies and Gentlemen on Display: Planter Society at the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860* (Charlottesville: U. Press of Virginia, 2002), discusses this in a Southern context.

unsettling that "there is nought here to remind one to keep holy the Sabbath day – no bells call to worship – piety here has no monitor, except those innumerable benefits which fill emotion and ought to awaken it." This telling phrase, "ought to awaken it," is demonstrated by her Sabbath behavior: she describes in the same paragraph that "3 Beaux kept with us thro' the day and we read eat [ate] drank talk'd walk'd…"[26] And she was not alone; visitors constantly complained that people simply were not pious on Sundays at the Springs.

The temptations of being away from more sobering models affected many visitors. May noted disapprovingly that "by all accounts" there was gambling at "the other" (i.e., McMaster's) house, where it was "carried on with a high hand." Fortunately, her own house was more sedate: "tis that," she noted approvingly, "which makes the distinction between the houses very proper." It was logical that Nicholas Low's house would allow for such activity, so common among the gentry in New York, since his inn was intended to be a social outlet for his set. As for drinking, many drank more than just water at these places, but often reassuring letters were sent home declaring that abstinence was the order of the day. For example, James Read wrote his wife that "scarce any thing is drank at either house besides the spring water," and that "we live very regular."[27] But in 1804 Low's business agent reminded him that his bar at McMaster's, also a

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[26] Abigail May Journal, 8 June 1800.
[27] James Read to Susan Read, 9 Aug 1797, Read-Eckard Letters.

billiard room, brought in "about $10 p Day in the season." Obviously, not everyone lived "regular."[28]

But more dangerous vices loomed: threats to virtue abounded at the springs. People were put into situations in this place that seemed so far removed from their homes, and like vacationers everywhere, in every time, they could do things that they would eventually regret. For example, Abigail May tells of the (possible) fall of a Miss Kissam, a young woman staying alone at the spa. She had been living at McMaster's without being "under the protection of any gentleman," and she was seen consorting with "those high blades Bowers Baldwin &c." Although she dressed with "great taste" and moved "like a fairy," May detected in her a "voluptuousness and expression in her every look" that was "not exactly characteristic of delicacy or even decency."[29] And, it turned out, her concerns were justified. Several weeks after Kissam's arrival, May noted that the young woman had fallen into the "most improper situation."

One of the men at the spa – "a man – a villain – by the name of Gilliam" – had been paying "very particular attention" to Miss Kissam, and she had returned his interest: "she imprudently walk'd rode and conversed with him frequently." But when he "offered himself to, and was rejected by her," he began spreading gossip about her. Gilliam "told the gentlemen round, scandalous – (I hope) falsehoods about her." May records that he claimed that "he could have

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[28] James Hawkins to Nicholas Low, 10 Feb 1804, Low Collection (undocumented), Library of Congress, quoted in Nancy Evans, "The Sans Souci," 115. Abigail May Journal, 22 July 1800.
[29] Abigail May Journal, 9 July 1800.

her whenever he chose, for she loved him to distraction." A family friend of Kissam's, Randeleer Schuyler (a member of the prominent Schuyler family of Albany[30]) heard these stories and warned her away from Gilliam. Schuyler told her that Gilliam was "a needy adventurer....induced by her little paternal fortune" to seek marriage, that he was a "gamester debaucher, and every thing that was bad." Societal restraints swung into action and the situation was quickly remedied. May tells us that Schuyler "sent for an officer and put [Gilliam] under arrest for a £1,000 he owed him," and then sent for Kissam's mother. With no delay, the young lady was bundled southward and was returned to her mother's arms in New York City. May hoped that she had remained "an innocent artless girl, as I wish to think her, and believe she is." In her journal, she went on to chastise the girl's mother, questioning how she could "place a child (an only child) in such a situation."[31]

Society at Ballston was a direct extension of the small circle of acquaintance, rumor and kinship of the upper classes of New York and Boston. It is possible that Miss Kissam had been rescued just in time from the arms of an adventurer and avoided a major scandal. She was protected at Ballston just as if she had been in the drawing rooms of New York. The brief sense of freedom she had experienced at Ballston Spa had been illusory: she found that the embrace of society was very close indeed.

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[30] May renders his name as "Skuyler."
[31] Abigail May Journal, 22 July 1800.

Although the social aspects of spa life were prominent, health drew, and would continue to draw, thousands to the springs. The tension between these two objectives were acutely observed by May early in her stay there:

> It is and ever has been a strange circumstance to me, that people should resort to a watering place for pleasure – That they can dance and sing, while disease and death continually stare them in the face… I think I never could be very merry here – perhaps I shall get habituated to seeing these objects [the sick], and the impression will gradually subside, I hope so.[32]

The tensions these caused would continue to trouble visitors for decades. But May herself was acutely aware of the dissonance. Outwardly she was quite healthy save for the cloth she wrapped around one hand, but she had come to Ballston Spa for a deadly serious reason. The cloth hid an incurable disease (perhaps cancer?) that had disfigured her hand and made it painful for her or others to manipulate it. Using the best knowledge of their day, the doctors at the springs prescribed a standard treatment: she had to douse the hand in mineral water once a day. She was also to take daily shower baths in mineral water, wetting herself entirely, and although initially they had been quite a shock, by August she had come to enjoy them. The shower was a primitive apparatus and basically consisted of a bucket that dumped water on the hapless invalid. Penciled graffiti covered the inside and outside walls of the old bathhouse, and May recorded some of the couplets describing the terrors of the shower:

> What freezing terrors chill the soul before you pull the wire

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[32] Abigail May Journal, 24 May 1800 (Morn)

As o'er your head the waters roll – you're ready to expire.

And

Tis hard to think that it must come –
Sooner the better for twill make you run
I did not make a very long stay
Before I pulled the wire, and ran away.[33]

Although the water was supposed to be heated, obviously it was a rare occurrence to have it at a comfortable temperature. The bathhouse itself was a radical departure for most Americans, who rarely washed more than their faces and hands, and then not more often than once a day. Only the lures of a health benefit could induce most to bathe more than the customary amount, and the concept of a daily bath, or shower, was not one that people could even conceive of. The encouragement of a daily bath, for health or not, was a part of a social movement begun in the late eighteenth century and spreading among the gentry of the country. Full immersion baths, though, had already been in use at other American springs for more than fifty years since immersion was considered another therapeutic use for mineral waters.[34]

Finally, to complete her therapy, on a daily basis she was to drink several tumblers of mineral water. In addition to these remedies her doctor, the attractive young Dr. Anderson would, on a bi-weekly basis, manipulate her hand, a practice that left May weak with pain for the rest of the day.

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[33] Abigail May Journal, 15 June 1800.
[34] Richard L. Bushman and Claudia L. Bushman, "The Early History of Cleanliness in America." *Journal of American History* 74, no. 4 (Mar, 1988): 1213-1238; Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790-1840* (New York: Harper, 1988), 163-66.

It might seem strange to later generations that mere mineral water could be seen as such a panacea as to draw sick people from hundreds of miles away for treatments that seem almost laughably inadequate. The answer lay in the medical needs of the time. There has been quite a bit written about the respect held for mineral springs,[35] and the waters of Ballston Spa were reputed to be some of the best, "beneficial in an innumerable variety of maladies."[36] Abigail May found that her fellow sufferers "daily drink the waters" to cure "Salt Rheum, Schropila, Rheumatism, and various other disorders." And the treatment may have been effective: at least, May reported, her fellow sufferers "seem[ed] to feel a reverential surety of relief." [37] The springs were so popular that a "catalogue of human infirmities" visited them, composed of

> The nervous Rheumatic spasmatic crazatic stehatic hypatic goutatic somatic and all the atics – besides scurbatic, scrofulous, head aches – one is almost tempted to say with Milton – 'a lazar house it seems wherein are laid; numbers of all discard, all maladies, ghastly mansion of racking tortures, qualms of heart sick agony, all feverous kinds, convulsions, epilipores, fierce catarrhs, intestine stone and ulcer; colic pangs, demonic pleurisy, dropsies, and asthmas, and joint racking rheums'.[38]

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[35] See, for example, Marshall Scott Legan, "Hydropathy in America: A Nineteenth Century Panacea," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 267-280; Henry E. Sigerist, "American Spas in Historical Perspective," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 11 (1942): 133-47; Carl Bridenbaugh, "Baths and Watering Places," 151-181; Jonathan Paul de Vierville, "American Healing Waters: A Chronology (1513-1946) and Historical Survey of America's Major Springs, Spas, and Health Resorts…" (Ph.D. diss., U. of Texas-Austin, 1992); Charlene Marie Lewis, "Ladies and Gentlemen on Display: Planter Society at the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860," (Ph.D. diss., U. of Virginia, 1997), esp. 192-3; Thomas A. Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-Ease: Promoting Health and Leisure at Saratoga Springs, New York and the Virginia Springs, 1790-1860," (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1999), *passim.*, but esp. 108-158.

[36] *Port Folio*, 30 Oct. 1802, 340, a reprint from an undated piece in the *New-York Morning Chronicle.*

[37] Abigail May Journal, 26 May 1800.

[38] Abigail May Journal, 7 June 1800.

Every Sunday the out-of-town visitors were joined by great numbers of sick residents from local communities as far away as Albany who would bring their battered bodies to the spring to drink the water: "They flock'd in wagons[,] on horseback and on foot…the seats round the spring were instantly filld and resembled a booth upon the Common [on] Election day."[39] But it is not known how effective these treatments were. For those with chronic conditions, mineral waters could not have done much. Thomas Handasyd Perkins described one of his travelling companions, a Mrs. Magee, as "labor[ing] under the effects of a stroke of Parylitic." Although they had come all the way from Boston to visit Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs in the summer of 1800 with "hopes [that] the waters woul'd prove efficacious," all indications are that Mrs. Magee did not find the relief she'd sought.[40] May herself had been very cautiously hopeful about the possible efficacy of the treatment. But several times in her writing she covertly alluded to her despair of ever being cured, moments that she quickly covered by optimistic comments probably intended to reassure not only her correspondent but herself.[41] By the time she had arrived at the spa, though, she had been suffering from her affliction for about two years and having exhausted all other remedies she was at the end of her rope.

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[39] Abigail May Journal.
[40] 3 Sept. 1800, Thomas Handasyd Perkins Papers.
[41] For example, see Abigail May Diary, 18 June 1800: "I wish I could feel more encor.[agement] – but let me stop the subject – I always avoid speaking of it."

Water was prescribed for more than just disfiguring diseases. It was often used as a substitute for a more pernicious drinking habit. Dr. Adam Alexander, a Scottish emigrant to Georgia, seems to have gone to Ballston Spa in June of 1801 in order to bring his alcoholism under control. He used the waters on his arrival, "& got immediately fonder of them, than of any Liquid I ever tasted." But he "contracted a violent cold" six days after his arrival, "& could use them no longer." He spent several more days there, and after a total of eleven days he left for Schenectady. He reported that he had "tasted no kind of Spirits since my being at the Springs – One Glass of Wine & a Hopp & a few Glasses of Porter in the whole of the last six days, is all I have drank," and he goes on to assert that he had a "sudden distaste of Strong Drinks" that "has been attended with no inconvenience that I can perceive." For the remainder of his trip, though (he wouldn't return home until late November), he mentions neither drinking or not drinking alcohol, implying that his remarkable cure had been merely temporary.[42]

The treatment the doctors at Ballston prescribed followed the most learned medical advice of the day. We now know that mineral water probably won't cure cancer, but, in fact, the topical use of acidic or astringent water probably

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[42] Dr. Adam Alexander diary, 29 Jun 1801, No. 11, Subcollection 1, Subseries 3.3, Folder 40, Alexander-Hillhouse Papers, Southern Historical Collection. See the Finding Aid for biographical information on him. His experience is a foretaste of one future for Saratoga, as a site of the temperance movement. See Chapter II.

was quite efficacious for some skin diseases.[43] In May's case, though, the treatment was tragically useless; in late August, with no discernable improvement in her condition, she decided to leave Ballston Spa and return to Boston. On her way back, she decided to try one last regimen that had been proposed to her by a Dr. Stringer in Albany. These treatments used an exciting new discovery, "Oxygen Gas, or vital air." It was, she wrote, one of the "most approved method[s]," and she hoped hers might be another of the "several extraordinary cures" attributed to it. But it was as ineffective as all of the rest. She returned safely to Boston in early September but died just days later.[44]

While Ballston Spa was being built, the nearby springs at Saratoga remained quite rustic, although they were reputedly more powerful.[45] They had first come to the attention of Euro-Americans through a legendary 1771 visit by Sir William Johnson, when the High Rock spring supposedly cured him of the consequences of an old war wound, a cure so efficacious that the previously crippled hero purportedly walked back to Schenectady. His accommodations at the springs were a Mohawk hunting hut covered with hides.[46] An attempt at

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[43] As advocated, for example, in a 1752 essay by Dr. Tobias Smollett, "An Essay on the External Use of Water..." (1752), reprinted with notes by Claude E. Jones in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 3 (1935): 37-82.
[44] Abigail May Diary, 13 Aug 1800. A short obituary was run in the *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), 10 Sep 1800.
[45] Care needs to be taken to distinguish Saratoga Springs from the nearby town of Saratoga, just as Ballston Spa is distinct from the village of Ballston. All are in Saratoga County.
[46] Sigerist, "The Early Medicinal History of Saratoga Springs," 541. Thomas Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-Ease," more fully describes the Johnson legend, its uses, and inaccuracies, 79-80.
con't.

settlement in 1773 was abandoned, but in 1783, with the end of organized Indian resistance in New York, white men came to settle permanently.

The springs gained a small amount of attention because of their proximity to the 1777 battlefield known as Saratoga (even though the battle had actually been fought at Bemis Heights, several miles distant). After the war, some famous visitors to the battlefield diverted their routes to visit the waters, including Gen. Philip Schuyler, who spent the summer at the springs in a walled tent, and, reputedly, George Washington. In 1787, Samuel Latham Mitchill, a famous chemist and author, visited the springs. His published analysis of the waters would become a standard work for boosters of the springs and was reprinted in a wide variety of later works. At the time of his visit, Saratoga still consisted of only a single log cabin, the first settler's home, built in 1773. But the steady stream of visitors inspired the new owner, Alexander Bryan, to modestly expand it, and in 1789, two other settlers came. One was a Vermont transplant, Gideon Putnam, who moved from Middlebury and then Rutland and finally to a leased three-hundred acre tract near the springs. He immediately began logging the tall old-growth pines and transported them to the Hudson to sell in New York City. Several other New England families settled nearby. A visitor who came in 1791 found "but three habitations and those poor log-houses." Despite these wretched conditions, they were "almost full of strangers, among whom were several ladies

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Most evidence points to Johnson's cure being effected at the nearby Lebanon Springs. All pre-1988 literature incorrectly dates Johnson's visit as 1767.

and gentlemen from Albany." He "found it almost impossible to obtain accommodations." All around lay the tall trees "for many miles," and during the long ride there they had been through nothing but "perfect forest." [47]

And so while Ballston Spa was the destination of a high-class, high-spending clientele, Saratoga remained entirely a backwater. There were hints, though, that it might someday overtake Ballston among the many connoisseurs of mineral water. For example, a 1793 analysis of the Saratoga waters by Dr. Samuel Tenney described the springs as a valuable resource. But he was puzzled: although it should have already gained "the attention of the physician, the chemist and the philosopher," to date it had only "attract[ed] the notice, and excite[d] the admiration of the illiterate." The springs, he reported,

> Have been considerably frequented by the poorer sort of people, ever since their discovery; but for want of medical directions, and necessary accommodations, their usefulness has been hitherto much confined. I think they want only a suitable introduction to the world, and some convenient houses for boarding and lodging patients to render them...of very important service to the country.[48]

Tenney correctly identified one of the two major stumbling blocks to Saratoga's expansion: it lacked the most basic gentry needs and was without any decent facilities. But it also lacked the frisson of Ballston; without the fashionable word of mouth its neighbor had gained (a word of mouth that had overcome most of

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[47] A "friend" quoted in Theodore Dwight, *Summer Tours: or Notes of a Traveller through Some of the Middle and Northern States* (New York: 1847), 110. This "friend" was almost certainly his uncle, Timothy Dwight.

[48] From the *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 2, no. 1 (1793): 43-61; quoted in Sigerist, "Early Medical History," 543. The analysis had been written in 1783 but took ten years to come to print. Another analysis of 1793 was Valentine Seaman, *A Dissertation on the Mineral Waters of Saratoga* (New York: Samuel Campbell, 1793).

Ballston's major deficiencies), it would forever be destined to be the poor man's Ballston. And although by 1797 a visitor would describe "five or six excellent houses" at the springs, there were "very few visitors." Part of the reason was that, compared to the facilities he'd used on an earlier visit in 1791, he "could not discover that the accommodation (as to food) was much better."[49]

But some of the scientific praise stuck. When Dr. Samuel Mitchill wrote his treatise on Saratoga Springs, it gained a national renown, particularly when that work was broadly excerpted in Jedediah Morse's popular and widely sold *American Geography*.[50] Despite these praises, though, Saratoga remained backwards and deserted.

Ballston continued to prosper, no doubt helped by the word of mouth among Low's fashionable friends in New York. An example of that is an 1802 piece printed the *Port Folio*, one of the nation's leading magazines. It described the village as "an agreeable place of summer resort." This was despite its location, one "totally destitute of natural advantages" and in a "dreary and marshy hollow, surrounded by high and barren hills." Visually, then, the spring "presents little to invite the curiosity." But it was the company that made the

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[49] Samuel Mitchill, "Medicinal Springs of Saratoga, Report on Experiments, Description of High Rock Spring" *The Rural Magazine or Vermont Repository* 1 (Sep, 1795): 351-53. James Read to Susan Read, 19 Aug 1797, Read-Eckard Letters.

[50] Jedediah Morse, *American Universal Geography, or, A view of the present state of all the empires…* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1796). Morse's geography went through many editions, including abridgements such as *Geography Made Easy* (Philadelphia, Matthew Carey, 1798 and onward). It became the standard reference work for travel writers and geographers and was widely excerpted (both credited and uncredited) in numerous later works.

place: "where a number of persons are collected, determined to make each other happy, they will rarely miss their object." The article noted, probably hyperbolically, that the area was now drawing visitors from outside the state: "the eastern and the southern states vie with each other in transmitting their brightest beauties to enliven this barren valley." But it also hinted at what might come: nearby Saratoga Springs, it claimed, might have "a prospect of their rivalling" Ballston Spa.[51]

When the nineteen-year-old Eliza Southgate of Salem, Massachusetts visited Ballston Spa in late August of 1802 with her family friends the Derbys (Martha Coffin Derby and Richard Derby),[52] she described the lifestyle as "one continued scene of idleness and dissipation." For many observers of that era such a society would be fatally flawed: as she noted, "we do nothing that seems like improvement ." But rather than condemn it, she found it fascinating. "I think there is no place one may study the different characters and dispositions to greater advantage," she wrote to her parents, noting that she had met "the most genteel people from every part of the country." A kind of informality reigned, where "ceremony is thrown off and you are acquainted very soon." In this environment, where it was safely assumed that all were of the same class, the formal strictures of parlor life were loosened. From this group she had no problem finding "some agreeable, amiable companions." She, like so many other

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[51] *Port Folio*, 30 October 1802, 340.

[52] Richard Derby was the second son of Elias Haskett Derby, a prominent Salem merchant known as "America's first millionaire."

visitors, observed the highly transient nature of the society, with visitors "continually going and coming." And whereas in the first week of her visit she had shared the long table at Aldridge's "every day with 60 or 70 persons," she now was eating with only 40 others. But despite the constant excitement of the place, which "may please for a while by its novelty," she found that "it soon satiates," and she reassured her parents that although she had not been doing much lately, she had "never been in the habit of spending my time in idleness." She had to learn leisure, unlike "the Southern ladies," who "seem more at home here" since unlike "Northern ladies [they] do not appear to think industry necessary to happiness." The wealthy Southerners visiting the spa, coming as they did from a society that venerated aristocratic ways and mores, were much better prepared to play the role of spa guest. Northerners like Southgate were just being introduced to the ways of leisure. For some that was a process that would take decades, but for much of the gentry it would be widespread by 1820.[53]

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[53] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *A Girl's Life Eighty Years Ago: Selections from the Letters of Eliza Southgate Boyne* (1887; reprint, Williamstown, MA: Corner House Publishers, 1980), 128-31. Cindy Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1999), 34-43, describes a northern resistance to recreation and vacations that extended well into the 1840s. (See Chapter V for a discussion of this as related to Theodore Dwight, who exemplified that resistance). However, in Chapter II there is clear evidence that by 1820 the gentry had a widespread acceptance to the concept of travel for leisure. This is supported by Bruce Daniels *Puritans at Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), which asserts that discomfort toward leisure and play was not a universal trait in eighteenth-century New England, attitudes that probably persisted to some extent into the nineteenth century. Perhaps the greatest objections were the most vocal, thus making them seem most prevalent.

Of course, although there was a kind of informality, the people Eliza Southgate met there were safe enough so that she never felt threatened. The environment that had been created to ensure that only the right people would appear there; others would be ostracized or shunned. But while staying at Ballston the young woman encountered a life-changing event. In a letter to her mother, she said that at the springs she had "received more attentions [from men] than in my whole life before… [And] among the many gentlemen…was one I believe is serious."[54]

The group she was travelling with had initially run into a Walter Bowne of New York City, who happened to have been at the same accommodations in Albany with them. He, like them, had planned to go onward to the Springs, and by happy coincidence they all left Albany together. While at the springs, they were in close enough proximity for them to bump into each other and when the party went on a jaunt to Lake George he joined them. Eliza Southgate, in her letter explaining all this to her mother, was interestingly circumspect about what her chaperones, the Derbys, felt about this: "Mr. And Mrs. Derby were all very much pleased with him, but conducted towards me a peculiar delicacy, left me entirely to myself, as on a subject of so much importance they scarcely dared give an opinion."[55] Bowne was now a full-fledged member of their party, and on their departure from Ballston he travelled southward with them. They spent a

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[54] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *A Girl's Life*, 140.
[55] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *A Girl's Life*, 140.

few days together at Lebanon Springs near Albany. By the end of this period she had spent every day for four weeks with him and in doing so she had been given "probably had a better opportunity of knowing him than if I had seen him as a common acquaintance in town for years." Because springs society was so much an extension of New York society she came to know people who knew him: "there are so many New Yorkers at the Springs who knew him perfectly that I easily learnt his character and reputation." He was, she told her mother, "a man of business, uniform in his conduct and very much respected." And she noted that despite her relative vulnerability so far from the parental embrace (a situation she described as "truly embarrassing"), his conduct had been perfect. It was "such as I shall ever reflect on with the greatest pleasure, - open, candid, generous and delicate....he advised me like a friend and would not have suffered me to do anything improper." Eliza Southgate and Walter Bowne were married in late April of 1803, eight months after they'd met.[56]

Their honeymoon tour took them to New York, where they spent several weeks, and then to a spring at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. They then came back to Ballston Spa, where they spent several weeks. On their return, she and her new husband settled in at his home of New York City. Eventually, Bowne would be elected Mayor of New York for one term between 1828 and 1832. Their marriage was the perfect product of the Springs experience: two wealthy families were

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[56] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *Girl's Life*, 139-40.

united in a way that probably would have never happened before the creation of Ballston.[57]

Just as with the British spas, Ballston Springs had become an ideal location for the young elite of America to shop for mates. For example, Southgate described in a letter from 1805 how John R. Murray, the eldest son of the wealthy New York businessman John Murray was "at last" in love (he had turned 30 and Eliza Bowne had worried that he would ever marry) with a "Miss Rogers from Baltimore, whom he met at the Springs" – a woman who he would marry the next year.[58]

Most of the travel descriptions of Ballston that have survived were optimistic and even cheerful about life at the spa. One, though, was a bit more cynical about life there, written by a young man in 1803.

That summer, the skeptical eye of a twenty-year-old author and indifferent lawyer, Washington Irving, was cast on the scene at Ballston. Irving's future as one of the most famous of American authors was far off; at the time of his arrival in Ballston that summer, he was only an apprentice in the New York City offices of Josiah Ogden Hoffman, a prominent and successful lawyer. Irving was from a large, literate, aspiring and comfortable but not aristocratic family, the youngest of four brothers and three sisters. He had been an apathetic student and had

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[57] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *Girl's Life*, 177-82.
[58] Eliza Southgate Bowne, *A Girls Life*, 182. John Murray (Sr.) was also father of Mary and Hannah Murray, whose travel narratives are described below.

skipped college to enter law. But he was now finding the law, too, somewhat tiresome, and in his spare time he was writing the occasional odd satirical piece with his brothers for the local newspapers. When he came to Ballston Spa in 1803, consequently, he did not have a great deal to parade: no status (other than the reflected glory of Josiah Hoffman), no real money of his own, and no position. His overall prospects must have seemed mediocre at best.[59]

His record of this trip survives as his first known journal, indeed as his first known extended piece of writing. He travelled with his boss, Josiah Hoffman; Hoffman's wife, the former Maria Fenno; Hoffman's daughter Ann, who "kept him laughing endlessly;" Hoffman's partner in land and business, Thomas Ludlow Ogden; and Ogden's wife, the former Martha Hammond. They were probably joined by Ogden's cousin, Eliza Ogden, and accompanying them was the 8th patroon, Stephen Van Rensselaer, who had long been a regular visitor to the springs.[60]

Outside of Irving, this party represented one of the greatest concentrations of money and power in New York State. Stephen van Rensselaer was the embodiment of the old Dutch feudal power structure still highly influential in upstate New York. Josiah Hoffman was a former attorney general of the state and a prominent and very well-to-do lawyer in the city. And Thomas Ogden

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[59] Biographical details come from Stanley William's *The Life of Washington Irving* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1935); it remains the definitive biography of Irving. Williams argues for Irving's status as "middle-class," a characterization contested by later biographers who note that he did not have to earn a living until he was well into his thirties and point to his nearly two years in Europe, 1804-06.
[60] Williams, *Life of Irving*, 1:29.

was one of the largest landowners in New York. With his brother David A. Ogden and Hoffman he co-owned the entirety of Madrid Township in St. Lawrence County, an enormous plot of land around present-day Ogdensburg. Through their wives they were connected to most of the other wealthiest New Yorker families.

The party's itinerary took them up the Hudson to Ballston Springs, northward to Montreal, and back. About two days after their departure from New York City they arrived in Albany. There they met with Irving's sister Sally, who had just returned from Ballston Spa with her mother-in-law, Mrs. Dodge. While Messrs. Hoffman and Ogden stayed in Albany to conduct court business, Irving and the female members of the party set off the next morning for the springs. They arrived that evening, having stopped only at the "highly picteresque [*sic*]" Cohoes Falls on the Mohawk River.

The next morning Irving drank some of the spring waters, but found that they "did not agree" with him. That day and the next he turned his eye to the society around him. For example, he acidly described a flamboyant and wealthy social climber from Boston, a Mrs. Smith, who was proud and vocal about her rise from poverty. Irving's distrust of social climbers was a typical attitude among his contemporaries, and the fact that he took time to mention Mrs. Smith's presence and flamboyance at the springs is evidence of the rarity of her position. Smith, though, was the forerunner of what would be perceived by the

old guard as a tidal wave of new money and *arrivistes*, a trend that would grow through the late eighteen-teens and eighteen-twenties.

Irving's tart pen also profiled "several Ladies at the springs who mounted some high airs & afforded us infinite amusement," but it also described a "very pleasant" evening dance ball that was "of course highly amusing." In all, though, he found the springs "intollerably stupid" owing to what he characterized as "the miserable deficiency of female company" – in other words, young and available women. Most likely the young lawyer-to-be offered little for them and they, most likely, did a good job of ignoring him. At any rate, after this short stay, Irving and party, reunited with Hoffman and Ogden and continued northward. They toured new land holdings of the principals of the group, arrived in Montreal in early September and eventually returned to New York City by late September. Irving's 1803 visit to Ballston was his second and probably last stop at this fashionable destination.[61]

With the continued and eager patronage of crowds of New Yorkers and an increasing number of Southerners and a smattering of foreigners, Ballston Spa continued to prosper. Nicholas Low, who made nearly yearly visits to Ballston, decided to enhance his investment. [62] In early 1803, George White, Low's agent

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[61] Irving, *Journals*, 1:4-8. Irving had visited Ballston one previous summer, in July, 1802, Stanley Williams, *Life of Washington Irving* (London: Oxford U. Press, 1935), 1:28.
[62] Low annually visited his northern and eastern New York land holdings; he definitely came to Ballston in 1802, but probably came other years. Ernst, "Nicholas Low," 369.

at Ballston, was instructed to prepare for the construction of America's first large resort hotel, which was to be called the "Sans Souci."[63] By midsummer, the outlines of the project were visible, as noted by Washington Irving: "Mr Low is building a new house for the accommodation of Boarders[.] it will be very large & on the most commodious style[.]"[64]

The Sans Souci was a substantial structure. It was about 160 feet wide with two wings, or pavilions, extending about the same distance back, and it had enough rooms to hold 150 or more guests.[65] It would be an impressive building, painted white with verdigris shutters. It was supported by a number of outbuildings: a kitchen, icehouse, washhouse, bakehouse, stables and a coach house, and a laundry. During construction, James Hawkins, the supervising carpenter, suggested that a small side building he had nicknamed "The Temple" could contain a bar and billiard tables. A bar there could generate substantial income, White wrote Low, just like the one at McMaster's. Low quickly agreed.[66]

Low's investment in the hotel was significant, and the existing receipts show that even furnishing the rooms to a minimum level - two or more chairs, a bed either 3 ½ feet (single) or 5 feet (double) wide, a table and a side table –

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[63] Evans, "The Sans Souci," 112-113.
[64] Irving, *Journals*, 1:7.
[65] John Melish, in his *Travels Through the United States of America in the Years 1806 & 1807, and 1809, 1810, & 1811* (London: George Cowie and Co., 1818), 552, claims that the hotel cost somewhere between $30,000 to $60,000 to build. This was later cited in Henry Dilworth Gilpin, *A Northern Tour: Being a Guide to Saratoga, Lake George, Niagara, Canada, Boston, &c. &c.* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1825) and quoted in Evans, "The Sans Souci," 113. This figure is at best apocryphal: it sounds far too high.
[66] Evans, "The Sans Souci," 114-115.

meant that by the time of its opening for the summer season, 1805, the hotel was equipped with 425 chairs in all and about 110 single and 32 double beds, costing $270 in all. The grounds around the hotel were landscaped with newly planted elms, shrubs, lawns and gravel walks. In all, Low had created a structure that aspired to the level of comfort available at the European spas. But he aimed for more, as his investments in landscaping demonstrates: he wanted to create a resort spa on the British model, one where an entire experience could be purchased, where members of the gentry from across the country could travel in and sleep in style.[67]

As for the primitive bathhouse Abby May had experienced, it was renovated and expanded. New equipment was purchased including a number of bathing tubs and a new "showering bath" to replace the previous primitive apparatus.

In the autumn of 1805 five new billiard tables were hauled from Albany to join the backgammon table in the Sans Souci's newly constructed gaming house. This facility would prove to be quite popular and lucrative for the hotel, as evidenced by the 1812 season's receipts.[68] The bar in the west wing of the hotel completed the picture. Once built, the hotel was pronounced "uncommonly superb" by John Melish, an Englishman whose *Travels* was widely read throughout the United States and England.

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[67] Evans, "The Sans Souci," 117.
[68] Evans, "The Sans Souci," 120-21, cites revenues from the gaming house as $170 in the 1812 season.

Melish's 1811 account is interesting, because in it he noted a range of available accommodations at Ballston. While none of them were cheap, their costs ranged in-season from between four dollars to eight dollars per week. This implies that there was at least a de facto sorting by class going on amongst the visitors, and that while the poor certainly weren't visiting for the week, it is probable that there were a least a few visitors from classes other than the wealthiest (the costs, though, would have strained their pocketbooks: a laborer might earn a dollar a day then). The spa had begun the process of class mixing, something that its patrons had wanted to escape. This would continue and by the late 1820s would be perceived as a serious problem in these upstate spas. Melish counted about 70 houses in the burgeoning village.[69]

With Ballston Spa playing an increasingly important role in the social life of New York City, one of the major publishing centers of this time, its appearance in literature is not surprising. There was, for example, an 1806 pamphlet that contained a paean to Ballston.[70] In satirical counterpoint, an essay about Ballston Spa was published in 1807 as a part of Washington Irving's popular publication, *Salmagundi*. *Salmagundi*, a new magazine, was the talk of the town. Gossipy, filled with inside jokes, and funny even to this day, each issue was enthusiastically received and discussed over the dining tables and at salons of the city. It was co-authored by Washington Irving, his brother, William, and by

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[69] John Melish, *Travels*, 552.
[70] Thomas Law, *Ballston Springs* (New York: S. Gould, 1806).

James Kirke Paulding. The issue about Ballston Spa was run on October 15, 1807, and it drew heavily on the impressions Irving had gleaned during his 1803 visit to the Springs. He had not been back since, but he certainly had heard of it from his New York peers.

In "Style at Ballston," Irving took the resentments and slights he probably felt in that fashionable and high-connected crowd and slung them back in satire. It took as its theme the idea that the Spa had initially been a place that "originally meant nothing more than relief from pain and sickness." Over time, though, Ballston had gone through a metamorphosis. At first, the pleasure found there was like that of "a sober unceremonious country-dance." The village in this halcyon time had been "emancipated from the shackles of formality, ceremony and modern politeness;" it was a "charming hum-drum careless place of resort." Everyone was "at his ease, and might follow unmolested the bent of his humour – provided his wife was not there."

But this bucolic and simple place had undergone a baleful change: "Lo! All of a sudden *Style* made its baneful appearance," and pleasure that had "taken an entire new significance:" now it meant "nothing but STYLE." This state of affairs had been created by "the worthy, fashionable, dashing, good-for-nothing people of every state" who flocked there "not to enjoy the pleasures of society, or benefit by the qualities of the waters, but to exhibit their equipages and wardrobes, and to excite the admiration…the *envy* of their fashionable competitors." This probably reflected Irving's 1803 experiences at Ballston. He likely had not been

able to present a stylish wardrobe and the over-precious manners of the aristocracy. His criticisms target those pretensions. The butts of his wrath included southerners, who, the essay asserted, were much better equipped than northerners to make stylish displays:

> The lady of a southern planter will lay out the whole annual produce of a rice plantation in silver and gold muslins… The planter…who drives four horses abroad, and a thousand Negroes at home, and who flourishes up to the Springs [with] half a score of black-a-moors in gorgeous liveries, is unquestionably superior to the northern merchant, who plods on in a carriage and pair; which being nothing more than is quite *necessary*, has no claim whatever to *style*.[71]

The article describes the occasional scene where a "tyro of fashion" from the south finds himself broke and having to slip away in the common stage coach – exposing the sham and hollowness it sees as lying behind these displays of conspicuous consumption.

Irving is also cutting about the relatively desolate and scrappy location of the spa. For entertainment, "every one chooses his own amusement," whether it is taking "a ride into the pine woods [to] enjoy the varied and romatick scenery of burnt trees, post and rail fences… scrambl[ing] up the surrounding sand hills…[to] take a peep at other sand hills beyond them," or taking a "stroll along the borders of a little swampy brook… watching the little tadpoles, as they frolick right flippantly in the muddy stream." Others "play at billiards, some play the fiddle, and some – play the fool – the latter being the most prevalent amusement at Ballston." In all, the place offers "a delicious life of alternate

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[71] Washington Irving, *History, Tales and Sketches* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States – Library of America, 1983), 287-88.

lassitude and fatigue, of laborious dissipation, and listless idleness." But he proposes improvements: all Ballston needs is "good air, good wine, good living, good beds, good company, and good humour." If it had them it could become "the most enchanting place in the world – excepting Botany-bay, Musquito Cove, Dismal Swamp, and the Black-hole at Calcutta."[72]

Irving's cynicism was of a piece with all of *Salmagundi*, which was intended to strike a world-weary pose against the frenzy of the popular. Indeed, this description of Ballston Spa as a victim of fashion could be seen as a metaphor for New York City itself, which by 1807 had already begun the process of its transition to the frenzied commercial heart of the United States. Irving's distress with the rapid pace of change in his home town and the Hudson Valley would distinctly mark his later literature, with the tinge of nostalgia coloring all of his most important stories.

While Ballston Spa was gaining the lion's share of attention, Saratoga Springs remained literally a backwater. Saratoga finally got a genteel hotel, though, in 1803, the same year the Sans Souci was built. Gideon Putnam's Union Hotel was a substantial structure some three stories tall and twenty-four feet deep.[73] He also made major improvements to Congress Spring, the most

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[72] Washington Irving, *History, Tales and Sketches*, 286-292.
[73] *Port Folio*, 30 Oct. 1802, 340. Putnam's house is described in Bradley, *Such Was Saratoga*, 48-49. Hanging in front of it was a famous sign showing Putnam's relative, Gen. Israel Putnam pulling a wolf by its ears from its den. Some discussion of this legend is found in Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-ease," 2-3.

celebrated of Saratoga's waters. Although it had mysteriously stopped flowing in 1804, he dug into the strata that produced the water, enclosed it in a box and erected a bath house nearby. Despite these improvements, most fashionable visitors stayed at Ballston and visited Saratoga Springs only as a day trip, returning to their lodgings by nightfall. For example, Abigail May had visited Saratoga only three times during the three months she was at Ballston Spa, each time as a day trip.

But Saratoga's rise was still a potential threat to Ballston Spa. As early as 1802 the *Port Folio* had noted that "there appears a prospect of [Saratoga] rivaling" Ballston.[74] In 1804 one partisan went on the attack. Timothy Howe, of Brattleboro, Vermont, published *A History of the Medicinal Springs at Saratoga and Ballstown*. It attacked Saratoga as being a place where "drunkenness and profanity...vice and vulgarity" ruled, and where "decent and respectable" inhabitants were scarce. Further, he claimed that the climate of Saratoga was tainted with "air...infected with...effluvia that rise from the neighboring mill ponds," air that makes "the inhabitants universally...pale and sickly," affecting their "moral faculty" and creating the "general indolence and intemperance which characterizes the place." These criticisms, though, appeared to be class based: Ballston was still the most fashionable spring, and if Dr. Samuel Tenney's

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[74] *Port Folio*, 30 Oct 1802, 340.

1783 comments still held, Saratoga was more hospitable to the poor than Ballston.[75]

Ballston Spa did have some reason for concern: the neighboring spa was growing. Steady good business led Putnam to expand his hotel in 1804, and in 1805 he purchased a 130-acre tract of land that contained most of the major springs in the area. He was quite aware of its commercial potential, having seen the growth of nearby Ballston, and in 1808 he laid out a village, including, grandly, a 140-foot wide main street named "Broadway." He platted sites for a cemetery, a church, and a school. Each of the springs now lay in main streets that curved around them on either side, like a roundabout.[76] The side streets were huge, too, nearly as wide as Broadway. In 1808 another hotel was built by Jotham Holmes, the Columbian, which was smaller than both the Sans Souci or the Union. Benjamin Risley, one of the other original settlers in the area, expanded his small tavern into a new hostel, known rather prosaically as "the yellow house." Private homes in the area, like those at Ballston, began to add rooms to create in-season accommodation. In 1811, Putnam once again expanded and built the grandest edifice to date in Saratoga, Congress Hall,

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[75] Timothy Howe, *A History of the Medicinal Springs at Saratoga and Ballstown, being a brief account of the situation, composition, operation, and effects of those celebrated waters…* (Brattleboro, VT: 1804); quoted in Sigerist, "Early Medical History," 563-568.
[76] This traffic scheme did not stand the test of time, and by the early 1820s the streets had either been re-routed or terminated before they reached the springs.

which was a Sans-Souci-sized hotel. Just after its completion, though, he died of a lung inflammation in December 1812.[77]

Despite this expansion, Ballston Spa remained preeminent until the late eighteen-teens. For example, while Ballston Spa had gained some of the attributes of a small city, there is no evidence that Saratoga had yet done so. For one, Ballston was larger: one visitor claimed that Ballston could house nearly one thousand guests. Although that figure is highly exaggerated, a rough estimate would bring the number closer to 500, roughly twice that of Saratoga.[78] And the evidence of the surviving diaries and letters of travellers overwhelmingly supports the primacy of Ballston Spa. And by 1809 there were at least two newspapers operating at Ballston, while Saratoga struggled to support one.[79] A lending library had been opened in Ballston in 1808 by John Cook, open to both residents and visitors. It quickly suffered the problems of all libraries: in October of that year Cook ran an advertisement in one of the two local newspapers that announced that he had "lost several BOOKS...and as it is probable boarders may have left them in some of the houses," he requested owners to return them.[80]

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[77] Bradley, *Such Was Saratoga*, 51-53.
[78] The 1,000-person estimate is in Timothy Bigelow, *Journal of a Tour to Niagara Falls* (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1876), 14. A closer reckoning can be guessed at. The Sans Souci could house 150 relatively comfortably; Aldridge, as we've seen, could put up maybe 100. Figures for McMaster's (later Resolved Given's, 1809) are difficult to come by, but his house by all accounts was smaller than Aldridge's, so maybe 75 there, and White's boarding house was about the same size. Rooms in private homes were also available, but could not have exceeded 100 to 150, as the permanent population of the village was only 800 in 1805.
[79] Saratoga had six newspapers from 1804 to 1818, none of which lasted for more than a few years; the longest printed for six years, as per the holdings of the American Antiquarian Society.
[80] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 10 Jan. 1809, p. 4, col. 1; the ad was dated 1 Oct. 1808.

Until 1808, just getting to the springs could be an ordeal. While summertime travel from Albany to Saratoga or Ballston was predictable enough – the roads were rough and dusty but they were passable – travel up the Hudson River from New York to Albany could be quite a trial. Isaac Weld, travelling from New York City in 1797, was lucky enough to reach Albany (about ninety river miles) in only two days with the wind and tides favoring him; others were not so lucky. Dr. Adam Alexander, travelling in 1801, took a total of six days to make his way from Albany to New York: two days waiting for any wind and another four days beating against it down the river. And John Pintard, a prominent New Yorker early in the nineteenth century, wrote of two brothers who sailed from New York, one for Albany and the other for England. Both arrived at their destination at the same time, twenty-four days later. Finally, prior to 1807 there were no regularly scheduled sailings and no established shipping lines. A traveller had to hope that a vessel was available and heading to a reasonable destination.[81]

The Chancellor of New York State, Robert Livingston, had experienced these delays and frustrations. Hs estate, Clermont, lay on the river, and he had regular business both in Albany and New York. Undoubtedly he had often been

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[81] Isaac Weld, *Travels Through the States of North America* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968; original edition London: John Stockdale, 1807), 267-271. Dr. Adam Alexander Journal, 23 July 1801, Alexander Hillhouse Papers, No. 11, Subcollection 1, Subseries 3.3, Folder 40, Southern Historical Collection. James Flexner, in *Steamboats Come True* (New York: Viking Press, 1944), 25, asserts that an average journey up the Hudson was four days from New York to Albany. Pintard, John, *Letters From John Pintard to His Daughter* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1940), 1:321.

frustrated with the vicissitudes of Hudson River travel. Livingston longed for something that would transport him upriver with certainty, a boat driven by something other than the wind. In short, Livingston yearned for a steamboat.

America had already seen one successful steamboat. For one summer in 1790, John Fitch, a mercurial inventor, had built and operated a steamboat on the Delaware River between Philadelphia and Trenton. It was a technical success – it maintained a schedule, had relatively few repairs, and did not, for example, blow up, like so many of its contemporaries – but it was a commercial failure. The reasons for that were complex, but there were two main factors. One was that the boat was extremely primitive, consisting mainly of a steam boiler set amidships with the smoke-belching contraption churning only feet away from the passenger's heads. Fitch, interested only in technical perfection, even resisted putting an awning over them for protection from the summer sun. The other factor was Fitch himself: he tended to alienate backers, who, as members of Philadelphia's gentry, would have been the boat's main customers and promoters. [82]

But Livingston had noted Fitch's efforts and closely followed later developments in steamboat technology. Looking ahead, in 1798 he pushed a bill through the New York legislature that granted him exclusive rights to run a

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[82] A colorful account of Fitch's life and personal problems is Flexner, *Steamboats Come True*, *passim.*, but esp. 144-207. A brief description of Fitch's Delaware River company is on 186-87. Fitch's quirky and self-justifying autobiography was reprinted in Frank D. Prager, ed., *The Autobiography of John Fitch* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976).

steamboat operation on the Hudson. Those rights had originally been awarded to Fitch, but the failure of the Philadelphia line in 1790 and his suicide in 1798 meant that the way was clear. Although the governor objected to the bill as an unwarranted monopoly grant to a politician, Livingston worked the legislature, got his monopoly, and then overrode the governor's veto.[83]

In the first years of the new century, Livingston was in Paris as the U.S. Minister Plenipotentiary. There, he encountered a vigorous and inventive young man, Robert Fulton. Fulton was somebody who had always tended to be in right places at right times. An ambitious and multi-talented artist, engineer, and visionary, he had bounced about Europe at the turn of the nineteenth century in occupations ranging from the pet portraitist of a British aristocrat to itinerant weapons designer to inventor. It was in the latter role, as he ran his first experiments in steam navigation on the Seine, that he came to Robert Livingston's attention. He had already funded one attempt at a working steamboat built by Nicholas Roosevelt, but it had failed. Livingston thought that Fulton, though, was on the right track. Fulton had used and modified Robert Fitch's plans, and although his Seine boat was a failure, Livingston felt that with bit more tinkering Fulton would succeed. With that in mind, Livingston approached Fulton and proposed that they build a boat in New York. He sketched out a vision for a steamboat line on the Hudson. Fulton, eager for

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[83] Maurice Baxter, *The Steamboat Monopoly: Gibbons v. Ogden, 1824* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 8.

official backing and deep pockets, readily agreed. In 1806 they returned to the United States and Fulton promptly began building his new boat. Livingston quickly returned to his post as Chancellor.

Livingston's connections meant that on the morning of September 4, 1807, when the *North River Steamboat* began its maiden voyage, it would be loaded with the elite of New York City.[84] Fulton did not disappoint: it made the run quickly and without breakdown. Of course, its destination was the Chancellor's estate, Clermont. And because of the distinguished crowd and well-publicized effort, he was crowned the inventor of steam navigation in the United States. Finally, to complete his triumph, Fulton would soon marry Harriet Livingston, the chancellor's niece.[85]

The company that was formed around this first steamboat was the North River Steam Company. The technical near-perfection of Fulton's boat and the company's protected status as a monopoly meant that Livingston and Fulton would prosper mightily, and until the monopoly could be broken the company would live a charmed life. And although the steamboat would need extensive reconstruction at the end of its first season's work (six weeks after its maiden

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[84] Flexner, *Steamboats Come True.*, 319-320, notes that Fulton's boat was only later renamed the *Clermont*.

[85] The best recent biography and solid description of the tangled relationship between Fulton and Livingston is in Cynthia Owen Philip, *Robert Fulton: A Biography* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1985), 120 onward.

voyage), within eighteen months, by March of 1809, the company had earned profits of $16,000.[86]

With this stunning success, his connection to Livingston, and the 28,000 acres of fine upstate land that had come with Harriet Livingston's dowry, Fulton had immediately joined the gentry class. His high status and instant celebrity helped to make steamboats fashionable. But he was also able to make them look fashionable. He operated them in manner that appealed to the genteel. Where Fitch had been interested solely in the engineering problems of his design, Fulton worked to create a comfortable atmosphere for his passengers, who were paying the princely sum of $7 each way. In addition to a cabin with bunks, he offered good meals, and a well-stocked bar. He paid special attention to the comfort of his passengers. To maintain decorum, he issued a set of rules that demanded cleanliness and order and the company charged violators fines. In all, he worked to make value for money. And the boat was fast: its maiden run was 30 hours, 15 minutes, and subsequent runs kept to that rate. Fulton ensured that the line kept on schedule and it gained a reputation for reliability. And it was safe.[87] The passengers' main complaints were caused by the plumes of smoke and soot from the wood-fired boilers that would occasionally sweep over the deck. But this was easily overlooked: after all, this was an era in which every inhabited site in

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[86] Flexner, *Steamboats Come True.*, 332; John Morrison, *History of American Steam Navigation* (1903; reprint, New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1967), 26.

[87] There were a series of minor accidents and collisions with other vessels which were probably deliberate, caused by river men who rightly saw the steamboat as the beginning of the end of their traditional way of life. Philip, *Robert Fulton*, 205-6; Fulton's rules, 226.

the world was more or less overwhelmed with soot from cooking and heating fires. In all, Fulton was wildly successful, and he would add another four boats on the Hudson River route before his death in 1814. Finally, the success of the North River Line was ensured by the continuing patronage of the wealthiest classes, since the route it serviced served their needs as much as any, since it connected the two centers of power in New York State: the political (Albany) and economic (New York City). And, of course, any of the tourists bound for Ballston or Saratoga from New York City would take the steamboat.

With the inauguration of steamboats on the Hudson one of the most important elements of a tourist experience was in place: fast and comfortable travel. And it was on an inherently dashing and fashionable medium, the steam boat. Surrounded by his own class, the tourist would also be entertained by the view: it turned out that Hudson Valley was remarkably scenic. When passengers chugged past the "romantic and ever-varying scenery" of the Hudson Highlands, skirting the Catskill Mountains, the experience could be nothing short of sublime, as so many recorded.[88]

The steamboats linked Albany and by extension Ballston and Saratoga to the major seaboard cities of the country. And so it is not an accident that only a year after the first full season of steamboat service up the Hudson, for the first

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[88] Robert Fulton as quoted in Alice Crary Sutcliffe, *Robert Fulton and the "Clermont"* (New York: The Century Company, 1909), 203. The quote, however, may be apocryphal. See chap. III for a discussion of the sublime, especially in connection to the Hudson Valley.

time, travelling commercial entertainment arrived at Ballston Spa. The historian Peter Benes has described the patterns of itinerant performers and has noted that the vast majority of them "limited their tours to principal seaboard cities, secondary ports, and deepwater up-river ports." Although rural Americans had been generally resistant to the concept of paid entertainment as late as 1816, entertainers nonetheless made their way to Ballston, so far into the countryside. It was as viable a venue as any of the more sophisticated ports.[89]

The first recorded professional entertainment arrived in Ballston in August, 1810. It was a travelling panorama of the Battle of Arcola, one of the battles between Napoleon's troops and the British in the titanic war then being fought in Europe.[90] The idea of the panorama had been invented in Scotland in the 1780s and had been institutionalized in London with the building of a specialized building for their exhibition in 1794.[91] The first recorded appearance of a panorama in the United States had been in 1798 at the Gardner Baker museum (predecessor of the American Museum, the predecessor of P.T. Barnum's famous museum).[92]

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[89] Peter Benes, "Itinerant Entertainers in New England and New York, 1687-1830," in *Itinerancy in New England and New York: The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife Annual Proceedings, 1984* (Boston: Boston U., 1986): 126.
[90] Advertised in the *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 21 Aug 1810, p. 4 col. 1 and *The Advertiser* (Ballston Spa), 21 Aug 1810, p. 3, col. 2.
[91] Ralph Hyde, *Panorama! The Art and Entertainment of the "All-Embracing" View* (London: Trefoil Press, 1988). See also Thomas Lawson, "Time Bandits, Space Vampires," *Artforum International* 26, no. 2 (Jan, 1988): 88-95.
[92] George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1927), 2:33. Wolfgang Born mistakenly claims that it was Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat, who painted and exhibited the first U.S. panorama in 1807 in *American Landscape Painting: An Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1948), 77.

The painting of the Battle of Arcola itself has not survived, but this is not unexpected. Most of these travelling panoramas took a fair amount of knocking about while in transport. Once the painting had arrived at its destination it was unrolled and exhibited in a wooden, stage-like frame hidden by curtains. When paying customers came to view it, care was taken to conjure an aura around the viewing, to create an "experience." For example, the audience would be ushered in a group into the exhibition room. It might be darkened, only the curtains illuminated. A dramatic explanation may have been performed, and then, at a crucial point in the oratory, the curtains would be flourished aside. The presenter then would explain specific portions of the painting, perhaps illuminating them with a directed lantern. The Battle of Arcola, the advertisements promised, would be "brilliantly illuminated." The whole process could take forty-five minutes or an hour. For the Battle of Arcola admission was set at twenty-five cents, which, although not dear, was also not cheap. Although this kind of exhibition would have been rare in a place as far afield as Ballston or even Albany, it was commonplace, even old hat, in New York. There, variations had appeared: for example, in 1808 a new panorama had opened of an ideal commercial and manufacturing town. The painted backdrop was enlivened with a mechanical foreground of moving boats, carriages, and factories.[93]

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[93] Odell, *Annals*, 2:303. One of the few surviving panoramas from this era is exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of New York, John Vanderlyn's 1818 *Panorama of the Palace and Gardens of Versailles*, described in Eleanor Heartney, "A Room With a View," *ARTNews* 88 (Mar., 1989): 18-19.

In the summer of 1811, a number of entertainments arrived in Ballston at the height of the season. In the last week of July the town witnessed the "Equestrian Feats" of "Mr. Stewart, who has just performed to the admiration of all present."[94] And the day before, "Signor Victoriani, a native of Italy," had walked "about 100 feet on a rope fastened to the top of the chimneys of two of the principal buildings," forty feet above ground without a net. And he would do it again the next day.[95]

Another of the standard diversions of the time opened in town in early August: an "Exhibition of Natural and Artificial Curiosities."[96] It was exhibited at "McMaster's Long-Room." This was typical of the "cabinet of curiosities" style of travelling exhibition from this period, and it included a number of wax figures, "as large as LIFE." One of the most intriguing was "one of the *Wonders of the World*, being a striking Likeness of DANIEL LAMBERT, aged 39 years, who died in Stamford, England on the 28th of June, 1809. At his death he weighted 739 lbs...he measured 9 feet 6 inches round the body."[97] This figure of Lambert would have quite a long reign, as it is mentioned in advertisements as much as

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[94] This may have been the "Mr. Steward" who performed "different *pas de danse* and feats of horsemanship" exhibiting in New York City, June 23, 1810. Odell, *Annals*, 2:346.
[95] *The Advertiser* (Ballston Spa), 30 July 1811, p. 2, col. 1. This is probably the rope-dancer, "Victorian" who performed in New York City in July, 1809. Odell, *Annals*, 2:325.
[96] Andrea Stulman Dennett has described the formation of these "Cabinets of Curiosities" in America in her book *Weird & Wonderful: The Dime Museum in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 1-22; these are also related to the circuses and menageries described in Richard Flint, "Entrepreneurial and Cultural Aspects of the Early-Nineteenth-Century Circus and Menagerie Business," *Itinerancy in New England and New York* (Boston: Boston U. Pres, 1986), 131-149.
[97] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 6 August 1811, p. 3, col. 4. The advertisement mentions that handbills were to be distributed in the village.

twenty years later. It must have been quite a mound of wax, perhaps molded over a wood frame and transported in sections. The whole show was announced in the village with handbills. [98]

Finally, the first travelling theater troupe came to town in early August, the "Company of Comedians." They performed "the laughable entertainment of 'The Lying Valet.'" The following week they presented "The Tragedy of George Barnwell or The London Merchant." [99] Both plays were staples of the theater in the Early Republic. *George Barnwell*, by George Lillo, had been a hit since its premier in 1731, and had been produced hundreds of times in England and America. The play had gone through several periods of decline and revival but would be performed regularly in America well into the nineteenth century.[100] The play told of the luring of Barnwell, virtuous apprentice, into vice by the seductress, the evil Millwood. Barnwell's end is miserable, indeed, but he regains a measure of redemption before he is hanged. Its popularity lay not only in the familiarity of the story, but also that there was enough salaciousness in the mechanism of his fall to entertain the prurient combined with enough morality to

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[98] Either the same figure or a duplicate was being exhibited at the American Museum in New York City in July, 1811, and advertised in the *Columbian* (New York), 3 Jul 1811, p. 3, col. 3. The figure would continue being exhibited there for at least twenty years, as evidenced by an 1823 catalog, "A Companion to Scudder's American Museum," in the collections of the New-York Historical Society (acc. Y 1823 .Ame). See also mention in Lloyd Haberly, "The American Museum from Baker to Barnum," *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (July, 1959): 278. The figure of Lambert would become a synonym for all obese performers: see Odell, *Annals*, 2:537, 2:567.

[99] Theater performances in the *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 6 Aug. 1811, p. 3, col. 3 and 13 Aug. 1811, p. 3, col. 3; Exhibition in the *Independent American* 6 Aug. 1811, p. 3, col. 4.

[100] Odell, *Annals*, notes productions in New York City in 1800, 1801, 1804, 1805 and 1813 in the period from 1798 to 1821.

assuage the prudes. It not only warned rising apprentices of the consequences of vice but also ennobled the work of merchants.[101] *The Lying Valet* was another old warhorse written by David Garrick in 1742 and, like *Barnwell*, having been produced literally hundreds of times on both sides of the Atlantic before 1800. Unlike *Barnwell*, it was a rollicking farce featuring sharp-tongued servants with an essentially virtuous (albeit somewhat clueless) hero. Unlike *Barnwell*, it delivered a happy ending.[102] It hadn't been produced in America as much as *Barnwell*, at least since 1800, but like *Barnwell*, it would have been familiar and comfortable summer entertainment for Spa visitors. Both plays were performed either in a tent or in one of the great rooms of the Sans Souci or one of the other lodging houses. Both plays had four or five male parts and three or four female parts (depending on the script used). This meant that the company had to have some degree of organization and coherence, and it had to expect some significant return to cover expenses. Each performance was advertised as if it were running only one night, but they probably ran more performances depending on the take. And while there is no obvious connection between the two productions (one is presented by "The Company of Comedians;" the other is unbilled), it's likely that this was a single resident troupe that had taken up residence in Ballston for the weeks of the performances. Finally, at least in the newspaper advertisements,

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[101] A concise description of the play and its text are in James Steffenson, ed., *The Dramatic Works of George Lillo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 113-209.
[102] Phyllis Dirks, *David Garrick* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985), 13-17, offers a succinct summary of the play.

none of the actors were billed, which meant that they had no "star power:" they expected they'd be unknown to the crowds at Ballston. This may be the first appearance in America of the phenomenon known as "summer stock".

With the appearance of professional entertainment, Ballston Spa was now ready to stand with the best of the British spas. The presence of these professionals also meant that spa now had both the prominence and its visitors the available wealth of medium-sized towns, despite its small permanent population: the 1810 census listed only 2,155 permanent residents. This was the fulfillment of Nicholas Low's dream of a perfect gentry refuge.

However, events beyond the spas would force a change on this idyllic scene. The summer of 1811 was the last flush of prosperity for Ballston Spa and Saratoga for some years. The 1812 season was cut short: in June, war was declared between the United States and Great Britain. This proved to be disastrous for leisure travel as blockades and economic disruption cut deeply into the revenue of both rich and poor. Especially hard hit were the wealthy of New England, but traders and businessmen from New York also suffered.

The country had already been going through an unusual economic time. Thomas Jefferson in his last years as president had placed an embargo on all overseas trade in 1807 and tried to strengthen it in 1808, but widespread smuggling meant that these measures were ineffective. Mary Murray, a traveller trying to get a night's sleep at Niagara, found that "sleep approach'd not my

Eyelids…I heard a great noise all night, which I could not account for, but which I afterward found, was occasioned by smuggling, Flour Potash &c."[103] The merchants and businessmen who habituated Ballston Spa were able to function and even thrive despite these legal measures, in large part because of the tiny number of customs inspectors nationwide. Still, there was an economic pinch, particularly among New Englanders, and the embargo was repealed in the last days of the Jefferson administration. The ensuing economic expansion was short-lived, though, when the War of 1812 began. Both Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs were badly hurt as the nation's economy, cut off from its traditional sources of capital, goods, and trade overseas, stumbled badly.

The war was a disaster for the spas in one other way: tourism effectively came to a end in New York State for its duration. Throughout 1812 and 1813, battles were fought across the Canada-United States border, disrupting the peacetime lines of travel and closing the Niagara Falls area to leisure tourists. By 1814, the British were making raids down Lake Champlain. The few visitors of 1812 disappeared entirely in succeeding years and tourist businesses and tourist towns were hurt accordingly.

Some histories of Saratoga claim that its decline during these years was due to the "restraining influence" of a temperance group that may have been founded there in 1808 and which grew in influence in subsequent years. Its

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[103] Mary Murray, Journal from New York to Niagara, June 18, 1808, BV Sec.: Murray, New-York Historical Society.

dreary restraints, they claim, drove away fashionable and fun-loving visitors to nearby Ballston Spa, which had no such qualms.[104] But the evidence is clear that both villages suffered equally during this period. One indicator of this is the disappearance of all forms of paid entertainment from the villages. A "Panorama of Rome" was exhibited in the summer of 1812 but it was the only entertainment offered that summer.[105] Likewise, there were no other advertisements that indicated tourist traffic. In prior years, boarding houses had run advertisements in July and August; there were none in any of the local newspapers from 1812 through 1815. One intrepid soul, a Mrs. John Heard, who made the journey in 1815 (the first summer after the war), found "about fifty"

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[104] The temperance society (the Moreau and Northumberland Temperance Society founded by Dr. Billy J. Clark), is claimed to be the first in the nation in Saratoga-printed sources such as W. Hay, *A History of Temperance in Saratoga County* (Saratoga Springs, 1855). These assertions are repeated Bradley, *Such Was Saratoga*, 55, George Waller, *Saratoga: Saga of an Impious Era* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966): 62, Myra Beth Young Armstead, *Lord, Please Don't Take Me in August: African Americans in Newport and Saratoga Springs* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 11, and in Theodore Corbett *The Making of American Resorts: Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa, Lake George* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 191. Although there is no confirmation beyond the memories of Saratogans that this was, indeed, the first in the nation or as to the date of its creation, it's possible that this was indeed one of the nation's first temperance societies. None of major works about early temperance mention this society: Ian Tyrrell, *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800-1860* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979); Thomas R. Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998); John Rumbarger, *Profits, Power, and Prohibition: Alcohol Reform and the Industrialization of American, 1800-1930* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); or Joel Bernard, "Between Religion and Reform: American Moral Societies, 1811-1821," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 105 (1994): 1-9.

[105] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 4 Aug. 1812, p. 3, col. 3. This was, not incidentally, paralleled by "three seasons of hardship" in the New York theater, causing a re-ordering of that entertainment world. Odell, *Annals*, 2:397.

In the interim, the villages attempted to diversify their economic bases: the nearby town of Milton opened a factory; a shoe factory was opened in Ballston Spa, joining a very successful cotton mill there owned by Nicholas Low; and wool carding operations opened in both Milton and Ballston.[107] In 1816, the printer of the *Independent American* noted that "because times are peculiarly hard," all accounts had to be settled, and that although this warning had run for a month, "few, very few have complied with its easy requirement." He finished with a warning: "Mark it – this is the last."[108]

Despite the years of economic suffering, the spas remained in a state of suspended animation, ready for the return of their customers. And visitors did begin coming back, a trickle in 1815, as we have seen, but the beginnings of a flood in the summer of 1816. After all, almost all of the elements for successful commercial tourism were in place in the Hudson Valley. Not only had a modern and efficient transportation infrastructure had been erected to bring tourists north from New York City, but the social network, based on the moneyed gentry of New York City and elsewhere, was well developed. They knew the value and rewards of a visit to Ballston Spa and Saratoga had for their social lives, social status, and courtship.

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[107] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 6 Aug. 1813; *Saratoga Patriot*, 20 July 1812, p. 1, col. 3, p. 1, col. 4. Ernst, "Nicholas Low," 371.
[108] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 3 Jul 1816, p. 3, col. 1.

CHAPTER III

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NIAGARA FALLS, AND THE FASHIONABLE TOUR, 1816-1822

"The facility and economy of traveling, produced by the introduction of steam-boats into our waters," read the *New York Herald* in July, 1816, "is a matter of surprise and felicity." A traveller, the article went on to report, could now journey from Philadelphia all the way north to Quebec City in as little as five and a half days, at an expense of only $50. Of course, that was a cost that put this kind of travel beyond all but the wealthiest: that amount of money could support a working family for months. But for the tourists of the time, this meant that there was now the possibility of spending just a week or two travelling to and from some romantic place rather than being absent from normal life for the entire summer.[1]

By 1816, the country's economy was beginning to recover from the economic disasters of the preceding five years, and there were signs of revival at Ballston Spa. First, in May, a circulating library run by Reuben Sears advertised; then, in July, an advertisement for another "Library and Reading Room" specifically directed to the "gentlemen and Ladies, Visitants at Ballston Spa."[2] However, the summer of 1816 turned out to be a particularly unfortunate one for

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[1] *New York Herald*, 31 July 1816, p. 2, col. 4.
[2] *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 15 May 1816, p. 4, col. 3; p. 3, col. 3.

tourists and travellers. Known as the "year without a summer," the weather was as savagely un-summer like as possible. The year began mildly enough, with a warmish winter and less-than-average snowfall, but this meant that forage for cattle was lessened due to drought conditions. A warm, wet May, though, ended with frosts that extended as far south as New Haven, Connecticut, frosts as late as May 30th.

There were snowstorms and frosts in early June. In mid-June, the Catskill Mountains were still covered with snow; the weather there, the *New York Herald* reported, was "very cold, winds high, and frost severe." Deep frosts reoccurred in early July and again in mid-August, followed by killing frosts in late August and early September. All of this combined to make a dreadful growing season as farmers lost all hope for any kind of crop with each successive frost. The cause of all this had been a titanic explosion of Mt. Tambora, a volcano in the Indonesian archipelago, in April 1815.[3]

For many travellers, the immediate impact was to suppress any desire to travel to the springs, although some successfully did so during those few weeks of warmer weather. William Appleton, for example, arrived at Ballston Spa from Boston in mid-July after two leisurely weeks travel. He stayed at Ballston for almost a month and made a number of trips to Saratoga, recording only that it

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[3] *New York Herald*, 16 June 1816, p. 2, col. 4. A detailed meteorological survey of 1816 and discussion of its impact on the farm economy is found in Joseph Hoyt, "The Cold Summer of 1816," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 48, no. 1 (Mar, 1958): 118-131. Henry Stommel and Elizabeth Stommel, in *Volcano Weather: The Story of 1816, the Year Without a Summer* (Newport, R.I.: Seven Seas Press, 1983), detail the social and economic effects.

was "very rainy" on August 4 and that August 14 was "rather warm."[4] Nonetheless, the number of tourists visiting the spas remained down as evidenced by the complete lack of entertainment advertisements for that year. Southern spas did prosper, though, as tourists from that region stayed closer to home.[5]

But bigger changes were occurring. Travel for leisure was an idea that had been slow to reach most Americans. But this notion, unusual for most in 1790, was, by 1816, spreading rapidly, especially among the gentry. There were several conduits for these ideas, but a major one was the steadily increasing number of travel books. As William Gilmore has noted in his study of antebellum reading patterns, travel books only began to appear in the Vermont subscription and personal libraries he studied after 1790. The number of published travel books grew in the subsequent decades: by 1810 they had become steady, if not necessarily spectacular, sellers – "medium appeal" books.[6] Initially, only a small number of these books described sights in the United States, but that would increase dramatically after the War of 1812. And although writers' descriptions were often examined with a skeptical eye by their American audience, their

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[4] William Appleton Almanac, 1816, Folder 64, Box 34, Appleton Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
[5] See Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-Ease," 18, for evidence of prosperity at White Sulfur Springs, VA during 1816.
[6] William Gilmore, *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life: Material and Cultural Life in Rural New England, 1780-1835,* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 192. The post-1790 growth of travel books, p. 26.

books were nonetheless purchased and read.[7] These books made the Hudson and all of the main routes of travel in upstate New York increasingly prominent in the minds of people as writers depicted their beauties and described accommodations and travel conditions. Most readers of these books were of the armchair variety, but a growing number were using travel books as guides for their own travels. And many of those who did not purchase or read travel books were exposed to travel literature through secondary sources, extended excerpts in newspapers, journals, and newspapers. The increasing output of travellers' accounts helped the reading public to become acclimatized to the idea of tourism.

Travel literature gave Americans a self-referential gaze through descriptions of the cultural and natural American landscape, a process that helped Americans not only define themselves but also define what in America was scenic, worthwhile, inspiring, or worth visiting. Travel writers in these years usually tried to give a panoramic view of the country, but in addition to the major cities a remarkable number of them visited Saratoga or Ballston. Generally, they offered brief sketches of the Spas. Usually the medicinal qualities and chemical composition of the springs themselves were detailed.[8] Beyond

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[7] Roger Haydon in *Upstate Travels: British Views of Nineteenth-Century New York* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1982), xii, describes the surge of British travellers writing and publishing their travels after the War of 1812. Many of these accounts were contested by Americans and they soon began to publish and purchase their own travel accounts.

[8] For example, William Darby's appendix on Ballston ran to seven pages. William Darby, *A Tour from the City of New York, to Detroit* (1819; reprint, New York: Quadrangle Books, 1962), Appenda No. III.

these specific places, this new body of widely available travel literature exposed Americans to new ideas about scenery, wilderness and nature.[9]

For the travelling class another major conduit for information beyond travel books were the journals, letters, and verbal accounts of their peers. Of course, we can't know what people were verbally saying to each other, but a significant body of travel-related letters and journals still survive. This was a generation and a class of people who were supposed to record what they had seen when they traveled. Their model was British tourism, which dictated that travellers write and draw what they had seen. In America, enough travellers had been doing so that it was expected behavior. For example, in 1808 Mary Murray and a travelling companion were taking a break halfway between Albany and Niagara to record their impressions when a local man approached them. Looking at their diaries, he asked, "are you keeping a kind of journal like of your travels?"[10] The sum effect of the steady repetition and wide distribution of all these travel accounts was to increase the acceptance of travel and tourism among the gentry. In time, this attitude would begin to spill over to others. In the years after the War of 1812, these gentry travellers would come to flood the main routes of tourism, especially in upstate New York.

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[9] Chapter III discusses the impact of travel literature not only on the gentry but on the newly forming middle class.
[10] Mary Murray Journal, 20 June 1808.

For Ballston Spa and Saratoga, the end of the war, the increasing acceptance of travel and tourism, and a warm summer meant that better times were ahead. The best indication of this was when the professional entertainers reappeared. One day in August 1817, the "most Grand, Rich and Rare Collection of LIVING ANIMALS," including a "real Red African Lion" and an "almost full grown; The Royal Tiger," all housed in "strong iron cages" came to Ballston and announced its presence in an illustrated advertisement. This show, "just arrived from Philadelphia," included "Good Music on King David's Cymbals and other instruments." And the tourists were back: by the end of the season, the newspaper reported that "near 1600" guests had visited "the four principal boarding houses, from the 18th of July, to the 10th of September." That number that included some of the glitterati of the United States: General Winfield Scott, a hero of the recent war, another American general, Henry Dearborn, the Russian minister, Mr. Daschkoff, "together with a considerable number of people from various parts of Europe." Ballston and Saratoga, the paper asserted, were "no doubt the most celebrated Watering places in America." In fact, it claimed (although with a bit of hesitancy) that "perhaps Europe cannot boast greater." Ballston Spa was ready for business.[11]

But although Ballston did not realize it, it was quickly eclipsed by its neighbor, Saratoga Springs. Saratoga was better positioned for the dramatic

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[11] "Circus," *Independent American* (Ballston Spa), 13 Aug 1817, p. 3, col. 4; "Spa Guests," *Independent American*, 10 Sept. 1817, p. 3, col. 1.

changes in the character and volume of tourism that were coming. The main reason Saratoga was able to adapt to these changes was that it was led by a remarkable group of people. Their ceaseless promotion of the town and remarkable efforts to build Saratoga would quickly lift the town past Ballston Spa into the nation's pre-eminent "place of fashionable refuge" for tourists by the early 1820s.[12] Although Ballston Spa would always have its champions, its unchanging nature meant that it would steadily slip behind Saratoga. One early indication of its was the 1816 divestment of Nicholas Low. That Low would pull out of Ballston points to its future.[13]

Of this group of leading Saratogans one man in particular would be instrumental for its coming prominence, lifting the resort's name to a national audience. Gideon Minor Davison had originally come from Vermont, a state hit particularly hard by the "Year Without a Summer." Agricultural losses pushed thousands of Vermonters into upstate New York and beyond. In 1817, probably as a part of that great outward migration, Davison, then twenty-six years old, left Rutland, Vermont, for Saratoga Springs. He was beginning a great adventure: for the first time in his life, he would be his own boss and would own and run his own newspaper.

Davidson had been born in 1791 in Middleton, Vermont, and at the age of twelve was apprenticed to William Fay in Rutland, the printer and publisher of

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[12] Gideon Davison in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, 2 June 1819, p. 3, col. 2.
[13] Ernst, "Nicholas Low," 371. Another factor influencing Low's his divestment his weakening health. He would die in 1818.

the Rutland *Herald*. At the end of Davison's apprenticeship he went to New York City for several years, working with printers including the Harper brothers. He then returned to Rutland and went into partnership with Fay, co-publishing the *Herald* and printing popular books, pamphlets and broadsides.[14]

There is some uncertainty about what drew Davison to Saratoga Springs. It's possible that he knew, or knew of, Gideon Putnam (the builder and proprietor of Saratoga's Union Hall), who had grown up in Rutland. But it's also possible that some other connection brought Davison to Saratoga. Perhaps he was solicited by the leading men of the village to start a newspaper. However it happened, when he arrived in town he was already well connected. On his first visit he met with its leading citizens including the owners of the main hotels, the town's leading lawyer, and a medical doctor, John Steel, a widely quoted resident expert on the spa's water. These entrepreneurs probably funded Davison in his new venture, since in a remarkably short time he had not only an entirely new set of type but his own printing press – considerable investments of

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[14] Barnes Frisbie, *The History of Middletown, Vermont, in Three Discourses, Delivered Before the Citizens of that Town* (1867; reprint, 1976, Middletown Springs Historical Society), 24-26. Fay's wife, Lydia, had been born and raised in Middletown, and it's probably through her that Fay found his apprentices, who included not only Gideon but Davison's cousin, Ovid Miner. William Leete Stone, *Reminisces of Saratoga and Ballston* (New York: R. Worthington, 1880), 313-317. Biographical information also on the Printer's Cards at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA. Davison and Fay co-wrote a guidebook and history of the War of 1812, Gideon M. Davison and William Fay, *Sketches of the War, Between the United States and the British Isles: Intended as a Faithful History of all the Material Events From the Time of the Declaration in 1812* (Rutland, VT: Fay & Davison, 1815).

capital. On the 26th of May, 1819, the first issue of the *Saratoga Sentinel* appeared.[15]

The front page of that first issue proudly announced that the eight-page weekly paper would be printed "on a handsome sheet of large royal paper," and one can imagine the relish Davison felt as he typeset those grand words. But not only was he going to produce the newspaper, he was going to create

> ...as an important appendage to our newspaper establishment...a competent *Circulating Library*, composed of valuable, various, and well selected books; also, spacious *Reading Room*, where will be deposited most of the important daily, semi-weekly, and weekly newspapers of our country; thus variegating and improving the pleasures of those who visit the place.[16]

Through his reading room and library, Davison planned to bring the world to Saratoga. But he would also take Saratoga to the world by printing its newspaper. At that time in America, most of the text of newspapers consisted of material derived entirely or in part from other newspapers, journals, or books. In effect, the country was a kind of echo chamber for anyone who could put original material into print, as stories bounced from paper to paper. By creating a new, local voice, Davison could ensure that the news from Saratoga – his news, and the news his backers wanted to see – would reach the world. And with his connections in New York he could ensure that his paper would be distributed there, thus putting it into the hands of publishers and giving it a much wider

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[15] *Saratoga Sentinel.*, v. I, no. 1, p. 1, col. 2. Dr. John Steel wrote *An Analysis of the Mineral Waters of Saratoga and Ballston* (Albany: E.& E. Hosford, 1817). It widely quoted in later geographical and travel literature and was important in spreading the reputation of Saratoga.
[16] *Saratoga Sentinel*, v. I, no. 1, p. 1, col. 2 (emphasis in original text)

distribution than the small newspapers that preceded his. Although Davison's newspaper wasn't Saratoga's first – there had been at least six predecessors – it was the most successful: it had the longest period of publication to date and had the most consistent tone and contents of any of its forerunners. It also, arguably, had the widest distribution of its forerunners. In any case, it was much more widely quoted in New York and other newspapers.[17]

Davison was representative of the cohort leading Saratoga. Most were self-made men or from lower-tier gentry families. Few of them were directly linked to the kind of New York elite represented by Nicholas Low. But because of the superiority of facilities at and more effective publicity about Saratoga that elite would steadily be drawn away from Ballston with a speed that surprised many.[18]

Saratoga's rapid change was signaled by the opening, in 1819, of a hotel larger than Ballston's Sans Souci. It would join Saratoga's two existing large hotels, Congress Hall and the Union Hotel, along with the much smaller Columbian Hotel. Henry Walton, owner of much of the town of Saratoga Springs, had contemplated a new hotel as early as 1815 but was forced to wait

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[17] The American Antiquarian Society holds runs of the six surviving Saratoga newspapers in its collection. They date from 1804 to 1818: the Saratoga *Advertiser, Patriot, Journal, Courier, Republican* and the *Rural Visiter* [sic] *& Saratoga Advertiser*. None of them lasted more than six or seven years, and most folded after a year or two.

[18] Another factor was the strength of Saratoga's springs. Ballston Spa had problems over several years maintaining the water flow of its springs and they lessened year by year. But as important as the mineral water was, the social factors were at least, if not more, important. Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 37-38, describes Ballston's water problems.

until the business climate improved.[19] As soon as he could he drew up a design. It would be patterned along Federal lines and would be built and run by Nathan Lewis, a master carpenter. It was completed in late 1818, and The Pavilion took its first guests in the early summer of 1819. Walton, who had been educated in England during the Revolution, brought with him much of the British and Continental Spa sensibility, and that is reflected in his careful consideration of the grounds surrounding the new structure. An extensive garden, some one hundred thousand square feet in extent, was planned; one historian has called it the "first park" in the United States. The hotel was two-and-a-half stories high in the front and three in the rear, built on the edge of an escarpment. It had – the standard feature – a long piazza extending down the front. Its opening was announced in New York newspapers with large display advertisements depicting the hotel. They ran for several weeks, occasionally on front pages. "The extensive improvements introduced will render it worthy of patronage," trumpeted the advertisement copy. It touted the "ample stock of choice WINES, and a variety of LIQUORS," and beds that "are large, and of the best quality." Ladies might be "assured that constant care" would be taken: the hotel would be "distinguished for neatness." It is revealing that the advertisements appeal to women, since, as May had noted, the population of the spas had, in its earliest

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[19] Walton, a wealthy lawyer. His family had been loyalist during the Revolution, and he had been educated in England. He returned afterwards and lived in Ballston until 1808 at on lands his family had held since before the Revolution on an estate five miles from the springs. After living in New York for seven years he moved to Saratoga in 1815. Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 16-17, 37.

days, been tilted toward men. However, the Pavilion sought to broaden its appeal, probably in recognition of the fact that significant numbers of women were already visiting Saratoga Springs.

These advertisements also noted that a "fashionable CIRCULATING LIBRARY and READING ROOM" were located "contiguous to the establishment." These latter two amenities were probably the ones operated by Gideon Davison and announced in his newspaper. And until the United States Hotel was built in 1824, the Pavilion was the leading hotel in the area, attracting large numbers of visitors, many of them from the South. It was, in the words of one historian, the "favorite residence" of Southerners.[20]

It was more than just one hotel that heightened Saratoga's reputation: it was the presence of three high-style hotels that gave it the synergy for greater growth. The rivalry between the hotels meant that they competed with each other to create the most stylish atmosphere, the most opulent furnishings, and the most glittering balls and entertainments.

Saratoga's reputation was also being marketed in ways beyond just publicity. Saratoga mineral waters from the Congress Spring had been bottled as early as 1810. A strong effort was made to distinguish that spring's water from

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[20] Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 16-17, 76, 87, 238. See the Pavilion's large display ads in *New-York Evening Post*, for example 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 July 1819; the largest front-page advertisement was on 10 July 1819. Corbett states that the Pavilion burned down in 1821, but tourist accounts continue to mention it that year and in following years – see, for example, Charles West Thomson Diary, 31 July 1824, Box IV, C.W. Thomson Papers, New-York Historical Society, or Elias Ball to Isaac Ball from Saratoga Springs, 23 July 1823, Folder 55a, Ball Family Papers, South Caroliniana Library, Univ. of South Carolina. There is no mention of any such fire in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, 1819 to 1830.

all others, a very early example of product branding. This was lucrative enough that in 1811 Gideon Putnam issued rules requiring payment of a surcharge for each dozen bottles filled. Saratoga water was exported far beyond the springs: in 1817, one traveller wrote to his sister that he would "return the compliment [of her letter] by a Bottle of our Spa – I find that they put it up not only for many of our southern cities, but even for the W.I. Islands." Congress Spring water was sold in New York at the first soda fountain opened there, in 1819. The trade in bottled water proved enormously lucrative and was a built-in advertisement for the village. This extension of brand name – not only of Congress Spring but of Saratoga Springs itself – was another key element in Saratoga's rise over Ballston Spa. Indeed, even other spas sold Congress Water. For example, an advertisement for New Lebanon Springs in 1823 declared that the "SARATOGA WATERS will be kept constantly for the use of the boarders."[21]

Although it's difficult to quantify the numbers of tourists now visiting the spas, the best estimate comes from Gideon Davison. In June of 1819 he presented a compilation of the number of the previous season's visitors as taken from the registers of Saratoga's hotels, boarding houses, and inns. Davison realized that his system had shortcomings:

> It is evident…that this mode of computation must fall considerably short of the actual number, as there are many who merely call or remain

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[21] Chambers, "Fashionable Dis-Ease," 44-45. Samuel Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 3 Aug 1817, Folder 13, Subseries 1.2, Mordecai Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection. "New Lebanon Springs," *New York Post*, 18 June 1823, p. 3 col. 3. Both Ballston and Saratoga touted and sold their waters; Saratoga's marketing campaign, though, was ultimately more successful. See also Gerard Koeppel, *Water for Gotham: A History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, 121.

> but for one night, whose names are never entered on the books. Besides, there are a great number of itinerant visitants, who board themselves, or stay at a considerable distance from the fountains.

But in his role as booster he could then reasonably claim that these figures were conservative, that his spa had, in fact, many more visitors. Having qualified them, he delivered the numbers:

> The actual number entered on the books at the different houses stands thus:

Congress Hall, - - -	1476
Union Hall - - -	823
Columbian Hotel - - -	496
Dr. Porter's, - - -	295
Mrs. Sackrider's, - - -	113
Mr. How's - - -	189
Mr. Sadler's - - -	216
At sundry places at High Rock, -	259
At sundry other places, -	346
Total,	4213

Of course, this was a seasonal total. But given the nature of small towns and the potential for rivalry between the various houses there probably was a fair amount of accuracy to these figures. Nonetheless, even if Davison had exaggerated by, say, ten or even twenty percent, it is clear that by 1818 significant numbers of tourists were visiting the Spas. Ever the booster, Davison concluded the accounting with a ringing endorsement: "I cannot resist the idea that this [place] must become one of the first watering places in the universe."[22]

On a more prosaic level, a government action in effect raised it from a hamlet to a village. The mails, which previously had been running only three times a week, were increased to five days a week, excluding Fridays and

[22] *Saratoga Sentinel*, 2 June 1819, p. 3, col. 2.

Saturdays.[23] By August of 1819 Davison was able to trumpet in the pages of his newspaper that "[n]otwithstanding the scarcity of money and the universal complaint of *'hard times,'*" (the country was going through a major recession), the streets of Saratoga were filled with "a greater throng of visitants" than had been seen "since the settlement of the country." Further, the large number of "distinguished citizens" from not only "our own country… [but] …numbers from Europe," had "render[ed] this favoured spot not merely the resort of invalids, but, during the summer months, the splendid abode of gay and fashionable life."[24] This, along with his estimate of 1818 visitors, was the second of what would become a series of reports headed *"The Springs"* that Davison would issue in coming years several times a season. These reports were intended mainly for consumption beyond Saratoga, for although it was nice for visitors at Saratoga, and were reprinted, first in New York and then elsewhere.[25]

Davison's campaign to increase Saratoga's prominence took a new form when he wrote and produced what is probably America's first tourist guidebook, published in the spring of 1822: *The Fashionable Tour, or, a Trip to the Springs, Niagara, Quebeck, and Boston, in the Summer of 1821.* [26]

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[23] *Saratoga Sentinel*, 21 July 1819, p. 3, col. 2.
[24] *Saratoga Sentinel*, 11 August 1819, p. 3, col. 1.
[25] For example, Davison's report from 2 August, 1820 (including the line "about one thousand strangers partook of the waters of the Congress Spring on Sunday morning last") was printed verbatim in the *New-York Evening Post*, 6 August 1820, p. 2 col. 4.
[26] Davison, Gideon M. *The Fashionable Tour: or, a trip to the Springs, Niagara, Quebeck, and Boston, in the Summer of 1821.* (Saratoga Springs, N.Y.: G.M. Davison., 1822).

Davison was the first to commit to print the concept of a "fashionable tour" in America. The idea was based on a British tradition of having wealthy young men, mostly, travel along a standard route on the continent of Europe as a kind of finishing experience before returning to their homes and (hopefully) a productive life. The European grand tour had been based on much earlier pilgrims' routes and was fully developed in the seventeenth century. It flourished until the French Revolution. The generation of continent-wide war that followed crushed continental tourism. But the European grand tour was revived, somewhat modified, in the mid-nineteenth century, and in some ways it survives to this day. Historians have analyzed the side effects of the tour, noting that it could be highly influential. In the minds of many of these young travellers, suddenly plunged into foreign environments, the notion of an England was created; among them, it helped foster a sense of national self-definition.[27]

Americans in the first decades of the nineteenth century were also striving for national self-definition and on that basis and in a period of rising prosperity it

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[27] There is a wide and valuable body of academic work on the Grand Tour. A concise and coherent explanation can be found in Fred Inglis, *The Delicious History of the Holiday* (New York: Routledge, 2000), see esp. chap. 2, "The Invention of the Holiday," 14-35. Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992) provides hard data and a cogent analysis. Lynne Withey's *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750-1915* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1997) gives a good overall survey of worldwide travel, including American and the European Tour. Christopher Hibbert's *The Grand Tour* (London: Thames Methuen, 1987) is lively and colorful. An important earlier work is William Edward Mead, *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914). Explorations on the idea of nation by leisure travellers are found in Russell Chamberlain, *The Idea of England* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), and Margaret R. Hunt, "Racism, Imperialism, and the Traveler's Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 4 (Oct. 1993). Much more on national definition through tourism in Chapter 3.

is logical that they would want to define their own grand tour. This came at a perfect time: the rising tide of travel books helped define what was uniquely American and relatively near the centers of population, and the significant improvements in the conditions of travel made that plausible. At those destinations a rush was on to "develop" the scenery to make it safely accessible. Although the wealthiest travellers would continue to travel to Europe, with the new conditions and atmosphere surrounding American travel, many would choose to remain in North America.[28]

Davison's "Fashionable Tour" was based on a route that travellers had been following for the preceding decade or so. A series of letters by the South Carolinian Isaac Ball describe a journey that he and members of his family made in 1806. They travelled north from New York to Albany and then up the Mohawk River toward Niagara. Once having seen Niagara, they took a ship eastward across Lake Ontario to Kingston, now in Ontario. There, they purchased a "batteau" (a small boat paddled by "6 Canadians who were to work their passage"), and they travelled down the St. Lawrence through rapids made "more terrible" by an impending thunderstorm to Montreal. There they stayed a

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[28] One significant shift in travel literature prior to 1815 happened in American magazines. One study of travel articles and review in American magazines found that in the period from 1782 to 1810, the vast majority of articles (132 total) described travel in all parts of Europe (114, 86%), with an emphasis on Grand Tour sites (64). Only 6 articles discussed New World travel in that entire period. But in the four years from 1811-15, the overall frequency of travel articles increased (81 in those four yeas alone), the percentage of European articles decreased (52, 64%), and the number of articles on New World travel tripled, to 18. Furthermore, they shifted emphasis toward picturesque areas rather than the highly developed Grand Tour sites. J. Meredith Neil, *Toward a National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1975), 247. See his "From Grand Tour to the Romantic Traveller," 236-266.

few days before sailing in a sloop to Quebec City. Several days later they returned to Montreal and headed south, probably down Lake Champlain, to the Hudson and Albany. There, they took the post road across Massachusetts to Boston, where they visited friends and family. After, they travelled to Newport, Rhode Island and back to New York. On their homeward leg they passed through Philadelphia and Baltimore, finally arriving back home. The expedition took the entire summer and more: they left South Carolina in June and did not return until some time in October.[29]

Of course, this journey was taken by a family whose extensive holdings in South Carolina allowed for the leisure time and money to be able to spend an entire summer travelling. And the Balls were unusually adventuresome: few gentry tourists would have put up with a jouncing boat on the rapids of the St. Lawrence, for example. Only after the infrastructure of travel was improved would this route ever be more than sparsely travelled. The Northern gentry would be the key to that, and in this era few wanted to be gone from their homes for more than a few weeks. Unlike their wealthy Southern peers, most of the gentry were still merchants, especially those from New York City. They would have acutely felt a long absence from their business. [30]

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[29] Isaac Ball to John Ball, Jr., 29 June, 11 July, 3 Sept, 13 Sept, and 6 Oct 1806, Folders 28 and 29, Ball Family Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

[30] See, for example, the travels of Jonathan Pintard, who rarely left New York for more than a week or two. *Letters From Jonathan Pintard*, (New York: New-York Historical Society Collections, 1937-1940), v. 1-4 (1816-1833). Edward Pessen, *Riches, Class and Power Before the Civil War* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1973), 46-75; see esp. Table 4-1, p. 47. Pessen found that 78% of the wealthiest New Yorkers remained active merchants. It was frowned upon for southern

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But some of the New York gentry did travel. One was Mary Murray, a daughter of the wealthy New York merchant John Murray. She left her father's comfortable home at Murray Hill on the island of Manhattan in early June of 1808, accompanied by her sister, Hannah.[31] The Murrays sailed north from New York to Albany. From there, they followed the same route as the Balls to Lake Ontario and on to Niagara. Throughout their passage of New York State, the party had to hire carriages or wagons, depending on the state of the roads and available transport. The roads were, in general, quite rough, and accommodations, although available, were sketchy. About half of the nights they spent on the road were at the homes of friends of the family or other acquaintances.[32]

They were able to pass the border into Canada, although they were not, for obscure bureaucratic reasons, able to take the wagon they'd hired, and a day later arrived at Niagara Falls. There was just one lodging house there, but Murray was able to use her influence to lodge at the governor's residence several miles from the falls. On both shores the "improvements" were few, and the

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plantation owners to leave their estates for the summer, but the very presence of such complaints in the literature of the time indicates that this was a not entirely uncommon occurrence.

[31] Biographical information on the Murrays is found in Sarah S. Murray, *In the Old Time* (n.p., 1894). Hannah and Mary Murray were the fifth and sixth children of John and Hannah (Lindely) Murray. Eliza Southgate Bowne, *A Girl's Life,* reported 24 Aug 1804 that "Mary Murray is engaged & all matters settled," p. 191, and 30 Mar. 1806, "She is to be married next week," p. 210, but Murray remained unmarried (evidenced by her not changing her name and separate listings in New York directories) until her death in the 1830s.

[32] Mary Murray, Journal from New York to Niagara, 8 June to 7 July 1808, B.V. Sec.: Murray, New-York Historical Society, June 18, 1808. Hereafter referred to as Murray Journal.

Murrays had to struggle to do the most basic things: a trip to the Falls, for example, took them all day and more, despite their proximity.[33]

Murray's party returned the same route they had come. On the way back, though, they detoured to Ballston Spa. Although several weeks had passed since their leaving home, it was still early in the season and they had "no difficulty in procuring rooms" at the "Big House" (the Sans Souci). The emphasis she gave that phrase betrays an expectation that accommodations would have been full. One drawback to coming out of season, though, was that the fashionable crowd wasn't there. They spent only a short time before "hearing there was good Company at Aldridge's," and so they packed up and went there. But again, they didn't find a fashionable crowd. To their disappointment and perhaps distaste they found instead "a Company of Invalides." Giving up, they decided to head home, "not finding things exactly to our taste."[34]

Although the difficulties Mary and Hannah Murray encountered, at times, for uncomfortable travelling, they were nonetheless able to complete their journey in a relatively short period of time, taking only about a month. Despite that relative speed, the difficulties of travel and the time involved limited the chances for very many others to get to Niagara in 1808.

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[33] Murray Journal, 18 June 1808.
[34] Murray Journal, 3 and 4 July 1808.

The numbers of significant travellers along all parts of the Fashionable Tour began to swell in the years after the War of 1812. In 1818, for example, one writer complained to her friend that summer in the city had become boring: too many of her peers had gone travelling, including her best friends, "the two J. Le Roys," who had "gone to the Springs [and] they intend proceeding to Niagara, Montreal & Quebec."[35] The main factor was a large number of substantial improvements in the travel infrastructure. Travellers like the LeRoys were now able to covered the distance significantly faster than the Balls had a decade before. They were assisted by, for example, regularly scheduled coach and mail lines that replaced most of the ad-hoc arrangements Isaac Ball and his party had been forced to work out in 1806. The new speed of travel meant that tourists had a wealth choices in destinations. One traveller in Saratoga wrote in 1817 that he faced an exciting prospect: that he could "move in no direction from this spot without having something interesting in view to invite...attention. In less than ten days I could be at Boston, New York, under the walls of Quebeck or in view of the Falls of Niagara."[36] A synergy was occurring on these heavily travelled routes as travelling technology begat more travellers, and not only tourists but emigrants, traders, and businessmen. And as more travellers used them even more

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[35] Catherine Bayard to Sarah ("Sally") Ogden (later Codman), 13 July 1818, Item 3, Folder 320, Box 21, Codman Family Collections, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (Boston, Mass.)

[36] Solomon to Rachel Mordecai, 13 August 1817, Folder 13, Subseries 1.2, Mordecai Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

improvements were instituted in an organic process that accelerated in the years after the war.

By 1821, products were being marketed in New York to these travellers. In May, advertisements for A.T. Goodrich's store in New York offered maps and geographies intended "for travellers to the Lakes." By June the advertisements were directed to "travellers to the Springs, Lakes and Falls." By late summer that had been changed to "travellers to the Springs, Niagara Falls, &c &c."[37]

Davison created his guide to respond to this market and he was clever in the form he chose for his new product. Physically, it was small, pocket-sized, and the first edition was printed cheaply as evidenced by its uncut and not well-matched page edges and lack of illustrations. It was not really a piece of travel literature, intended to be pored over by armchair readers: in effect, Davison was acknowledging that it would be a "throw-away" piece, intended to be used once or twice in the field. New editions would soon supplant it. In that form and function it resembled the omnipresent almanac, another major type of ephemera typical of the era. He acknowledged in his preface that the book was written for a rapid and cursory reader,

> That it might serve the purpose of a small pocket volume of references[.]

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[37] Examples of this generally known tour are found in, for example, Philip Stansbury, *A Pedestrian Tour of Two Thousand Three Hundred Miles in North America* (New York: J.D. Myers & W. Smith, 1822), v. C.C. Sebring, in *Prominent Features of a Northern Tour*, (Charleston, SC: Printed for the Author, 1822) described following the Fashionable Tour in 1822. See also Catherine Maria Sedgwick to Henry D. Sedgwick and Jane Minot Sedgwick, 22 June 1821, "We have begun the grand tour..." Catherine Maria Sedgwick Papers I, Massachusetts Historical Society 3:2-15. Goodrich ads are in, for example, the *New-York Evening Post*, 2 June, 9 July, 14 Aug. 1821. Perhaps not coincidentally, Davison sold his guide at Goodrich's New York store.

> [S]uch facts only have been collected as will render it more particularly interesting to the tourist; who seldom commands leisure for a more detailed description.[38]

To help sell his product Davison wanted to explicitly link his book to travel literature and so he subtitled it "A trip…in the summer of 1821," which implied that it was a record of a particular trip at a particular time. A reading of the text, though, shows that it was nothing of the sort and in later editions he dropped that conceit. The form the book best resembled came from one of the other major genres of the time, that of the gazetteer or geography, which gave small capsule descriptions of places. But while those books were basically dictionaries of places, Davison rearranged the entries from the alphabetical to the geographical. Davison's unique creation (for America) was his book expected the tourist to follow a dictated, set path. In doing so he established what was in effect a new form, a sub-genre perhaps, of American travel literature, the tourist guidebook. Davison's other unique contribution was that his book was specifically directed at *leisure* travellers, rather than, say, commercial travellers, and it is the first to do so.[39]

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[38] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 3.

[39] There are a number of discernable influences on Davison. For example, a few road books had been published that described a particular path, its mileage and maybe some of the better inns or taverns along the way. Perhaps the earliest American example was printed in 1802, S.S. Moore and T.W. Jones, *The Traveller's Directory* (Philadelphia : Mathew Carey, 1802). It gave small capsule descriptions of the places encountered along the road between New York City and Philadelphia and was generously illustrated with map plates of the road. Other such books published closer to the time Davison was writing and widely distributed in the United States were John Melish's *A Description of the Roads in the United States* (Philadelphia: G. Palmer, 1814), or Melish's *The Traveller's Directory Through the United States* (Philadelphia: T. & G. Palmer, 1816), both of which gave mileage and some general descriptions. However, these books limited themselves to mileage and broad descriptions of large areas, states and regions. Davison drew on

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But who among leisure travellers, specifically, was Davison's book directed at? The title gives a hint. The book promises to direct a traveller along a "fashionable" route. But for a tour to be fashionable, that implies that there already exists a group of fashionable people following that same route. Those people presumably would already know where they'd been, where to stay, and what to see, and they would, presumably, return on their own steam. So they weren't Davison's market. The form of the book itself provides another clue. It lacked the kind of high-style enhancements that would appeal to a wealthy audience, such as the trimmed page edges, gold leaf edges, or lithographs or other illustrations found in later editions.[40] Its cheap printing standards point to the likelihood that the audience to whom the book was directed was less the

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them and other geographical literature to fill in data and to help him describe places he had not personally visited.

He also cribbed selections from other works with just enough change to avoid outright plagiarism. For example:

> (From Moore's *The Traveller's Directory*, 1802, 27-8)
> NEW BRUNSWICK
> Is...on the south-west bank of the Rariton river, partly in Middlesex and partly in Somerset Counties... This city lies low, and disagreeably, being at the foot of a hill which rises behind the town.
>
> (Davison, *The Fashionable Tour*, 1822, 8)
> The city of NEW-BRUNSWICK stands on the south west side of the Raritan River... -- Its situation is on the bank of the River, at the foot of a high hill, which rises back of the town rendering it rather low and unpleasant.

Other traceable influences included popular travel books like Darby's *Tour*, which was advertised in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, June 9, 1819. In places Davison simply tipped in lengthy attributed excerpts, such as a description of the geology of the Hudson River valley by Dr. Samuel Mitchell, *Picture of New-York* (New York: I. Riley and Co., 1807), quoted in *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 11.

[40] No real conclusions can be made from its bindings because at the time most books were sold in sheets (either loose paper or lightly stitched). Purchasers would then pay to bind them together.

'fashionable' visitor to Saratoga Springs than to the striver, a newly wealthy traveller unfamiliar with the 'fashionable' routes and sites.

This might have been a reflection on Davison himself. He was, of course, just a job printer – not in and of itself a high-status position. Although he was also the editor of the local newspaper, that, too, was not that significant a position. But he had aspirations. The combined reading room and circulating library was a good place to start. There, he would inevitably come into contact with the fashionable crowd that was coming to the Springs. And he was making efforts behind the scenes to raise his status, particularly through a series of canny real estate purchases that would, by the time of his death, make him a very wealthy man indeed in Saratoga Springs.

But Davison and his book represent the rise and appearance of a class of people at the spas who the founders of these exclusive spaces had hoped, in some ways, to exclude. The appearance of his little guidebook is an indication that the market was going to intrude on what had been an exclusive space. Saratoga was not Ballston: for one, the sheer size of its tourist facilities meant that it would be very difficult to exercise the kind of control society at Ballston had. Saratoga represented a new world.

Improvements along the route to Niagara came fast after the War of 1812. In 1817, in an historic initiative, the governor of New York State, DeWitt Clinton, decided that he would build a canal to connect the Hudson with Lake Erie. A

long-dreamed-of project, the canal had initially been envisioned just after the Revolution, but a coherent plan was not drawn up until 1807, when James Hawley, an upstate merchant, commissioned one. This plan was put before the state legislature and in 1808 a ground survey was completed that laid out a potential route. But at that point the whole project ground to a halt. The legislature was stymied by political objections from sectors of the state opposed to the unequal expenditures this huge and expensive project represented and there was some question where all the money would come from. The War of 1812 further blocked progress, but with the return to prosperity in 1817 Governor Clinton petitioned the U.S. Congress for this funding. Congress approved the petition and authorized funding, but that bill was vetoed by President James Madison for various reasons, including pique: Clinton had contested Madison in 1812. Faced with this refusal, a determined Clinton pushed a Canal Bill through the New York legislature that appropriated starting funds and authorized an enormous borrowing campaign based on state bonds. Construction began at last on July 4, 1817, at Rome, New York.[41]

The distant dream of Niagara had long beckoned travellers, both Indian and European. The very first accounts were relayed back to Europe in 1604 by Champlain, who heard of but never saw the falls. The first witnessed record of them by an European, René Brehan de Galinée, stressed both their immensity

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[41] Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), 18-22.

and grandeur. Galinée called it "one of the finest cataracts or waterfalls in the world," and subsequent visitors such as Galinée's contemporary Louis Hennepin noted that although they were "the most Beautiful" falls in the world, they also were "at the same time most Frightful." This theme of fear commingled with beauty would become a mainstay of descriptions of Niagara for centuries to come.[42]

Travel to Niagara had been difficult through most of the eighteenth century as it involved crossing the territory of the Iroquois Six Nations Confederacy, who maintained a close guard on their lands. Despite that, intrepid artists and travellers made their way there and their paintings and illustrations of the falls were widely duplicated. Paintings such as those by Thomas Davies (1766) and Richard Wilson (1774) became symbolic of the grandeur and possibility of the American wilderness. Niagara shimmered in the distance, a place where the impossible had become manifest. On the other hand, the falls had became so regular a stop for any travel writer describing North America that by the 1770s some were refusing to describe the falls, claiming such passages had become clichéd.[43]

After the Iroquois were defeated in the Revolutionary War their lands in Upstate New York were steadily constricted. The area was opened to Euro-

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[42] Galinée and Hennepin quoted in Elizabeth McKinsey, *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 8, 11.
[43] McKinsey, *Niagara Falls*, 19-21. See Patrick McGreevey, *Imaging Niagara: The Meaning and Making of Niagara Falls* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 17-40; see esp. chap. 2, "The Distant Niagara."

American settlement. However, even for the hardy traveller, getting to the falls was a long and uncomfortable process. The situation began to change in the first decade of the nineteenth century as settlers began slowly filling the region. Once a traveller arrived at Niagara the British Canadian side offered much more in the way of accommodations and villages since it had been settled for a much longer time. This variety, though, did not necessarily represent any variation in quality: most were still primitive. On the American side there was only a small village, Lewiston, along with a scattering of tiny settlements associated with the chain of small American forts that lined the frontier. In 1805 the State of New York designated lots for sale in the formerly closed one-mile-wide margin of land it owned adjacent to the cataract. These lands were bought by entrepreneurs intending to harness the water power from the fast-flowing Niagara River. These industrial goals meant that the property adjacent to the falls, where the water flowed fastest, garnered premium prices. But development was slow to come despite this great potential because the main market for America goods lay far to the south, something that the Erie Canal was intended to remedy. Further obstructions to development came from the Embargo of 1807 and the War of 1812.

There already had been some change before 1812, as witnessed by Mary Murray. She had found stretches of road near Utica "excellent," but when her party settled down for the night at a "Coffee House" there, she wrote that she could not "say much, particularly as it respects sleeping. We found Bugs plenty,

and were oblig'd to put our beds upon the floor." Soon after Utica the road deteriorated significantly. For example, outside Lima, on a terrible road they'd been told was "fine," they were unable to reach their accommodations before nightfall. Now travelling through the night, they

> ...pursued our way with Caution, almost continually through the wood, till at length night came on, and clouds oercast the sky, and we could no longer discern the Road. We got into an ugly hole which nearly overset us & threw the Driver from his seat between the horses, but he fortunately received no injury. We then made Thomas get out & walk before, that he might give timely notice if dangers threatened, but he was soon deceived himself and we got out of the Road, this was what one may call rather an "ugly predicament" and we all determined upon leaving the Waggon, We however soon regained the Road, but the night was dark, we were in the woods, and knew not how far we had to go.

Entirely lost, they spent a few anxious hours wandering through a dark landscape occasionally lit by the moon. At one point, "We perceived a light at some distance and supposing it to be a House," but "death to our hopes! it proved to be a large stump burning in the woods." Several more times they ran across this method of deforestation, but they finally emerged from the woods at an inn where they "rec'd a most cordial welcome, a comfortable dish of tea." This episode sounds far more dramatic than it was: seemingly cast into a remote wilderness, they had been, in fact, only several hours away from a "comfortable dish of tea."[44]

By 1810, there were at least 118 separate places of accommodation along the 325-mile road from Albany to Niagara at fifty-six different locations, an average

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[44] Mary Murray Journal, 14 and 15 June 1808. Note that this method of stump removal gives a different twist to the traditional phrase describing this region, the "Burnt-Over District."

of about one per six miles. This is attested to by a printed "Way Bill" folded into a travel journal probably owned by a member of South Carolina's Drayton family. Of course, there was no guarantee that these distant inns would offer anything worth visiting – at Vandeventer's Inn ("43 miles from Genesee river") Drayton found the "fare wretched." Still, as this attests, there was a well developed travel infrastructure. Under perfect conditions, a traveller would never have to spend a night under the stars. And the very existence of such commercially printed "way bills" points to a market that was being exploited by some entrepreneur. In any case, though, in 1808 or 1810 this was not a journey casually undertaken. Mary Murray spent eleven days getting to Niagara from Albany in 1808, from June 10 to June21, while the Drayton family traveller, less inclined to dawdle, took eight full days to get there in 1810, from July 13 to July 21.[45]

But armchair travellers could dream of Niagara through the large body of secondary literature and artistic reproductions, and this art and literature shaped the hopes and expectations of those adventurers who actually made the journey. Both Murray and Drayton, for example, already had high expectations about what they would see and experience once they had arrived. Murray's "great" expectations were not disappointed as they "seem'd as nothing compared with the awful the sublime reality." For her, the sight of the falls "sets all language at

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[45] Attributed to a member of the Drayton family, "Journal of a Tour No. 1," 19 July 1810, Item 34-36, Drayton? Mss., South Carolina Historical Society. Hereafter referred to as Drayton.

defiance, and fills the wrapt beholder with mute amazement." But for the Drayton traveller the hype did not meet the reality: "accounts much exaggerated," he groused, "painters not correct in the representation of the horse-shoe falls."[46]

Even though there was only a relatively small number of travellers visiting the falls in this period, the environment in the area was not pristine. Entrepreneurs and others had been busy shaping the area. For example, the number of inns was increasing yearly: Mary Murray wanted to see as much of the area as possible and so moved daily from inn to inn on both sides of the border. In one case, she decided that she did not like the look of the inn she found at Black Rock on the American side, near the mouth of the Niagara at Lake Erie, and so she crossed back over to the Canadian side to find accommodations near Fort Erie. Part of the reason for this bounty of small inns was due to the Niagara frontier's special status. Lying between American and British law, it was the perfect location for smuggling, an occupation that had been given a huge boost by the Embargo of 1807. But as more legitimate visitors came, this existing infrastructure was changing to appeal to them.

Efforts were also being made to domesticate the falls themselves. Both Murray and Drayton, for example, noted that a ladder had been constructed to allow visitors access under the sheet of water. This ladder, originally made of notched logs and installed in 1795, had been "improved" in 1805, although not

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[46] Murray Journal, 21 June 1808; Drayton, 21 July 1810.

enough to inspire confidence in many who saw it. One visitor found it "so old and crazy as almost to make me give over the attempt...this ladder, which is eighty feet in length...[is] spliced and bound together in several places with grape vines."[47] Another called the splice a "bread & cheese" repair, and declined to use it.[48] Murray, perhaps sensibly, wasn't allowed to go down it by her brother, who felt a parental responsibility toward her; the Drayton traveller, though, descended the "32 or 3 rung" ladder placed "at some distance north from the falls," and from there "continued over rock, sharp & rugged, & winding along the bottom of the canyon for nearly a mile to the falls." Once under the falls, he found that "the prospect is really grand & awful." At any rate, this small improvement was the first in what would eventually result in a huge reshaping of the entire region for tourist consumption.[49]

The future character of the area would be determined by these early ventures. The Canadian side had been geared to small-scale farming and was not heavily invested in manufacturing. Access to the Niagara River itself was limited by a sixty-six-foot-wide easement restricted to the military. On the American side, though, manufacturing was a very early and prominent feature and later commentators would come to celebrate this as an example of American

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[47] Patricia Jansen, "Romanticism, Modernity and the Evolution of Tourism on the Niagara Frontier, 1790-1850," *Canadian Historical Review* 72, no. 3 (Fall, 1991): 297, dates the ladder to 1795. Irwin, William. *The New Niagara: Tourism, Technology and the Landscape of Niagara Falls, 1776-1917* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 3. Shultz, Christian. *Travels on an Inland Voyage through the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Virgnia* (1810; reprint, Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1968), 1:58-83.
[48] Isaac Ball to John Ball, Jr., 3 Sep. 1806, Ball Family Papers, South Caroliniana Library.
[49] Murray Journal, 23 June 1808; Drayton, 21 July 1810.

inventiveness. (Of course, the current sad state of the American side of the falls owes a great deal to the decline and ruin of this industry.) Still, there were some efforts to create non-industrial tourist sites on the American side.

The progress in developing the American side was reported by Drayton in 1807, who noted that several manufacturing ventures including a mill had been established on the Niagara River.[50] But other entrepreneurs were looking for profits beyond manufacturing. In 1805 Judge Peter Porter and a partner had purchased the prime properties on the United States side that overlooked the falls. In 1807 he told a traveller, Christian Shultz, that he intended "as soon as possible" to "build a house near the best view of the falls," with the goal of keeping "a genteel tavern for the accommodation of the curious." Shultz had already observed that he was "much surprised" that "some enterprising person" had not yet built "a convenient house" for the accommodation of the "no inconsiderable number of ladies" visiting the Falls. Porter told Schultz that he also intended to remedy the precarious descent by building a stairs "sufficiently safe and easy for ladies to descend to the foot of the falls." But Porter's plans were slow to be realized. Perhaps he had problems raising the money, but in any case the War of 1812 shut down every commercial venture on the Niagara Frontier. Still, it's revealing that as early as 1807 Porter was wanting to build

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[50] Mentioned by Schultz, *Travels*. See also Carroll D. Kepner, "Niagara's Water Power: The Pioneers, Part I" *Niagara Frontier* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1968): 97-105, and "Niagara's Water Power: II, The Long Frustration," *Niagara Frontier* 16, no. 2 (Summer, 1969): 33-45.

something "genteel": he accurately perceived the tourist market that was developing even then.[51]

The region, perhaps more than any other in the United States, would be deeply impacted by the War of 1812. The area was the site of most of the major land battles. Several were fought quite near the falls, including the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane. Tourism to the falls, naturally, came to a complete halt, and destruction was widespread. This included the burning of Lewiston, the sacking of several farms, and the razing of Buffalo, then just a village. Mrs. John Heard, who made the upstate trip in the first summer after the war, 1815, found that she was travelling through a war zone. She reacted to this with a curious mix of dismay and fascination. Buffalo was destroyed: "ruin & devastation mark its walls – not a house (only one excepted & that owned by a widow woman) remaining." Many of the bridges were destroyed, and the town of Chippewa had "not a house or barn but what was burnt – or the inside destroyed so as to render them uninhabitable." However, she noted the tourist value of these sights: they were, she wrote, "well worth travelling five hundred miles to witness."[52] Of course travel conditions were not improved by the war: roads were even more impossible than ever, "enough to dislocate every limb," and the inns were worse, if that was possible. At one she found "a great share of dirt – a large number of bugs & as many fleas," at another "bugs and fleas by the bushel." But she also

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[51] Schultz, *Travels*, 1:79.
[52] Mrs. John Heard Journal, 5 August 1815.

found some things to her liking. At an inn in Queenstown, she stopped to dine at a "Black Gentleman's tavern," where she expected to receive "abominable impudence" from the Afro-Canadian family, but, to her surprise and pleasure, she "did not meet with any."[53]

She took some time to explore the battlefields around the Falls. These battlefields, Chippewa, Lundy's Lane, and Queenstown, were to become mandatory tourist stops. They offered a grisly kind of thrill: as late as four or five years after the war tourists reported that the bones of soldiers still poked from the earth where they had fallen. Only after some time would they be given a proper burial.[54]

When John Duncan travelled to Niagara in October of 1817, he described a region that was rapidly revitalizing. Buffalo had been rebuilt and was now housing about six hundred people, and the only signs of its former destruction he could find were a bullet-riddle tavern sign and the ruins of a brick house.[55]

"The Falls of Niagara have been so frequently described, and the whole vocabulary of sublimity so completely exhausted in the service," wrote Duncan, that he mostly declined to describe the falls themselves. Instead, he focused on the "wondrous changes" that "time...that silent but most innovating of reformers," had wrought on the region. It's interesting that he ascribes these

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[53] Mrs. John Heard Journal, 2 August, 23 July, 27 July, 4 August 1815.
[54] William Dalton, *Travels in the United States of America and Part of Upper Canada* (New York: Appleby, 1821), 184-85.
[55] John M. Duncan, *Travels Through Part of the United States and Canada in 1818 and 1819*. (Glasgow: Hurst, Robinson & Co., 1823), 2:12, 28.

changes to an impersonal time, since this displays a sense that this kind of change would be inevitable and unstoppable. He presciently looked to the future: he envisioned that "in a few years…the noise of the cataracts may be drowned in the busy hum of men; and the smoke of clustering towns, or more crowded cities, obscure on the horizon the clouds of spray." Overall, though, his expectations had been raised to such an extent that his first glimpse of the falls caused "disappointment," which he claimed was "a very common feeling when strangers first visit these cataracts." The outpouring of travel literature describing the sublimity of the scene had "fatigued…all the parts of speech, and degrees of comparison" in describing them.[56]

Duncan, though, like all writers of this period, noted the utter lack of good accommodation at the falls. The shabby inns that earlier travellers had experienced fell far short of the standards that were being set at Saratoga, Ballston Springs, and the major cities in America and Canada. Some of the better connected travellers could avoid them by making arrangements to stay at the local military post, and the lucky few, like Mary Murray, were put up several miles further away at the governor's residence. But any of the accommodations, high or low, were miles from the falls, at least several hours journey if not more. Obviously, much more needed to be done to simplify the process. Not only was there the need for better accommodations, but the quality of all the infrastructure

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[56] Duncan, *Travels*, 2:33-34, 38.

around the falls had to be upgraded before a steady and sustainable tourism could be brought there.

One of the most significant and fascinating entrepreneurs to emerge during this period was William Forsyth. He would soon transform the Canadian side of the falls into a tourism machine, one that would eventually make him quite wealthy. Forsyth's father, a loyalist, had moved to Stamford Township in Upper Canada in the early 1780s. There, in 1789, aged twenty-eight, William was tried for a felony, acquitted, but then immediately re-arrested for a capital offense. The next day he escaped from the jail but was recaptured while trying to cross into the United States. Despite this record, he escaped all punishment. It is not known how this happened, but historians have suspected that a mysterious absolution may have come through the intervention of a powerful local figure, Robert Hamilton.

Perhaps understandably, Forsyth's local reputation was not good: a neighbor is quoted as calling him "a man of uncouth behavior." Forsyth fought in the militia during the war, but his record there was mixed. His commander later recalled that he caused "some displeasure and trouble to my Officers by leaving his duty and going home at nights," but he also fought well at the battle of Beaver Dams. Overall, though, the commander reported that "Forsyth is a man not generally liked." And there were persistent rumors that he had profited greatly during the war through smuggling, but having grown up in the region he undoubtedly already had long experience in this borderland tradition. In any

case, soon after the end of the War of 1812 he was able to purchase a prime tract of land just above the falls on the Canadian side. In short order he had built an inn there, the first on either side of the border to be adjacent to the falls. Forsyth's land encompassed what was considered to be the premier viewing spot of the falls, a large overhang known as Table Rock.

His inn received mixed reviews: although Darby praised it, the Duke of Richmond had problems there, including an ugly dispute over his bill that tainted Forsyth's dealings with the authorities in the area for some time after. Nonetheless, its prime location inevitably drew visitors. Forsyth, though, was not willing to sit still. He made other improvements intended to both increase his revenues and to help tame the falls for tourists. Around 1818, for example, he erected a covered stairway down to the gorge and charged a shilling for its use.[57] And, as Lt. Francis Hall, a British officer, discovered in 1819, the footpath leading from the walkway to the base of the falls, formerly uneven, slippery, and treacherous, had been leveled. These improvements increased the value of Forsyth's property, but, as with so many things with him, there was a cloud over them: they had been constructed without permission on the sixty-six foot easement adjacent to the river reserved for military use. Only after he was called to account for this trespassing did Forsythe try to lease that land from the

[57] Capt. Richard Langslow mentions having to climb down "the ladder," presumably the old one, and notes that "the road onward toward the Falls was so bad, steep and wet" that he couldn't approach them. Incidentally, he stayed at Forsyth's. Capt. Richard Langslow diary, typescript, 25 Sept 1817, New York State Historical Society.

Executive Council of the province, but permission was denied. He had angered many prominent persons, not the least being the Duke of Richmond. But he was not so out of favor that action was taken against him either to remove the stairway or force him to operate it for free.

In the end his inn was a huge success. Catherine Maria Sedgwick, the famous antebellum writer, visited it in 1821 and examined his register for the period from August 1815 to June 1816. In it, she found that the number of guests for this ten month period was "upwards of 1400" – an especially significant number when one remembers that only three of those months were in season.[58]

Forsyth's efforts were part of an accelerating process of development occurring on both sides of the falls. On the American side, entrepreneurs were effecting changes that would create a tourist-safe environment. In 1817, a bridge was built by Peter Porter across the river to Goat Island (just above the falls), and although it was swept away by ice in the winter of 1817-18, it was rebuilt in 1819.[59] Tourists could cross the bridge, or, if they were feeling particularly adventuresome, pay for a fast boat ride down the river to it.[60] Once on the island, tourists could pass the time at a billiard hall and drinking room run by Porter, or they could wander the island and cut their names on the trees. One

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[58] Robert Fraser, "Forsyth, William," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 7:311-315. Darby, *Tour*, 163. Francis Hall, *Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816 and 1817* (London: Longman, 1818), 230-38. Catherine Maria Sedgwick Journal 1821, [n.p., 43rd page], Roll 7, *Microfilm Edition of the Catherine Maria Sedgwick Papers.*

[59] "From the Niagara Patriot, Aug 3," 11 Aug 1819, *New-York Evening Post*, p. 2, col. 2.

[60] Frances Wright, *Views of Society and Manners in America* (1821; reprint, Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1963), 125-26.

young traveller from New York proudly did so, but he had to search to search to find one that hadn't already been entirely covered with graffiti. He eventually did, finding "room on a small one" for his mark, and in his journal he described precisely where that was, presumably for a future traveller to witness. (One such future traveller, in 1826, would note that "a number of trees…have been cut to death in recording the full names or initials of…[those] who have visited this charming spot… almost every tree…has some…memento of some visitor's employment.") Porter's improvements would soon be copied on the Canadian side, as Francis Hall predicted in 1819: "in a few years travellers will find a finger post, 'To the Falls' Tea Gardens,' with cakes, and refreshments, set out on the Table Rock."[61]

"The Falls of Niagara," John Pintard wrote his daughter in 1818, "has become a fashionable place of resort."[62] But Niagara was still missing two major elements before it could be a fully fledged tourist site: a stylish hotel and reasonable transportation.

William Forsyth would soon provide the former. He understood the potential his land had for commercial use and he was determined not only to exploit it but also to monopolize the Canadian approaches to the Falls. In 1820 he expanded his holdings upriver by purchasing the property of his neighbor,

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[61] David Prall Journal, 21 July 1821, BV Sec: Prall, David Prall Papers, New-York Historical Society; David Hillhouse Travel Journal, 1825, Item 11, , Folders 75-76, Subchapter 2, Subsection 6.1, Alexander-Hillhouse Papers, Southern Historical Collection, p. 118; Francis Hall, *Travels*, 238.
[62] Pintard, John, *Letters*, 1:144.

William Dickson, whose farm lay at and just above the falls. Forsyth now owned about four hundred prime acres straddling the Canadian access to the falls. He exploited this monopoly by charging visitors for access to the prime view from Table Rock. He then began planning and building Niagara's first tourist hotel. It was completed in time for the 1822 season. He named it the Pavilion Hotel, perhaps in emulation of the Saratoga Springs hotel. Its design, too, was evocative of its cousins at the springs. For example, it had long piazzas on either side of it from which guests could gaze upon the falls, and, like most of the Saratoga Hotels and the Sans Souci in Ballston, it would eventually be expanded by having long wings added to it. This imposing, white, three-story structure became its own best advertisement, perched just atop the best tourist view possible and clearly visible from the American side.[63]

The second major element, transportation, would soon be manifested: construction of the Erie Canal was moving with record speed.

With the expansion of tourism in late eighteen-teens and early eighteen-twenties the number of travel accounts surviving to the present increases. Windows are opened into the tourist experience. Some valuable narratives survive, and each tell us something of what travellers wanted from their journeys, what they encountered, and the nature of the society they moved in.

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[63] Patricia Jansen, "Romanticism, Modernity and the Evolution of Tourism on the Niagara Frontier, 1790-1850," *Canadian Historical Review* 72, no. 3 (Fall, 1991): 301.

Almost all of the surviving accounts from this time are from people who wealthy. There are several reasons for this. Of course, the vast majority of tourists then were, in fact, rich. But there is a distortion related to the ways that historical societies and archives have kept materials: until relatively recently, most of these institutions were only interested in the elite. As a result, many of the stories of non-elite travellers have been lost. But a few diaries and letter collections survive from those from those "other tourists," those from classes that heretofore had never travelled.

Of the fascinating stories that have survived, the most vivid come from people, mostly in their early twenties, who used the newly convenient tourist experience to create voyages of self-definition. These travellers tended to travel alone, or with one or two other companions of their own age. Some travelled alone. All hoped for, and some found, the life-changing event that tourism promises.

Sarah ("Sally") Ogden came from the aristocratic class that had traditionally populated the routes of the "fashionable tour." And although it was not necessarily *the* defining moment of her life, her 1820 trip to Saratoga Springs would cause her a fair amount of turmoil. Sarah Ogden was considered to be one of the most eligible young women in New York. Her father was one of the state's largest landowners, Judge David Bayard Ogden. He was tightly connected to New York's elite – for example, his brother had been one of the party that had

travelled with Washington Irving in 1803. With his brother, David Ogden owned thousands of upstate New York acres around the present-day Ogdensburg. On one part of his holdings, Ogden's Island (originally Isle au Rapide du Plat), he built a mansion. There he lived with his wife, Rebecca Cornell Edwards, Sarah, their eldest daughter, and ten other children. Sarah and her siblings went to school in New York City where the family kept a stylish townhouse. After school, although Sarah lived upstate, regular visits kept her in the thick of New York society. And when she was out of town she was kept abreast of events through regular letters from her cousin, Catharine Bayard, also from one of the city's most prominent families. These two young women were members of as much of a native aristocracy as America had produced to date.[64]

Such an eligible young woman would have been pursued by scores of suitors, but Sarah was famously choosy about her potential mate, something that provoked gentle teasing from her cousin. They had hoped to spend the summer of 1820 together at Saratoga but Catharine Bayard went to Europe instead. Consequently, the twenty-year-old Sarah went to the springs with other

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[64] Finding Aid, Codman Family Papers, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Another indication of the regal status of Ogden and her circle comes from a watercolor by John Searles, *Prominent New Yorkers at the Park Theatre, Nov. 1822*, held at the New-York Historical Society and reproduced (with key) in Edward Pessen, "The Egalitarian Myth and the American Social Reality: Wealth, Mobility, and Equality in the 'Era of the Common Man,'" *American Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (Oct, 1971), 1002, and in his *Riches, Class, and Power Before the Civil War* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1973), 20. It is also reproduced in Foster Rhea Dulles, *A History of Recreation* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965), following p. 106. Ogden sits prominently in a central box, her scarf dangling from the rail, surrounded by her Bayard and LeRoy cousins and relatives.

friends of the family, the LeRoys. They all stayed at the Saratoga's premier hotel, the Pavilion.

Sarah's letters to her cousin have not survived, and we have to infer this story from those that were sent to her. But it's clear that at least two poetic and sensitive young men had made an impression on her that year, since their missives are preserved. One is a longish unsigned poetical work, light in tone entitled "Cupid's visit to Saratoga in August 1820." It begins:

> Cupid, who found it dull at home,
> Expanded recently his wings,
> Awhile resolv'd abroad to roam,
> And make a visit to the Springs.

It goes on to describe how Cupid is lured away from Congress Hall to the Pavilion, where he finds that:

> When the assembling charms drew nigh
> The god in silent wonder gaz'd
> He scarce could lift his dazzled eye
> The halls with such effluence blaz'd.[65]

The poem is careful to extol Ogden only obliquely. The poet must have known that a woman as beautiful and celebrated as her would have found overt praise too ordinary; instead he places her as just one amidst a glittering group of immortals. Nonetheless, its intent is clear, and that Ogden kept it in her papers indicates how much it meant to her. Another anonymous poem, "The Stricken Deer," likened the author to a wounded deer who is told by a "maid of matchless charms" that she "cannot love thee stricken deer." Regardless of its poetic merits,

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[65] Anon., "Cupid's Visit to Saratoga in 1820," Item 11, Folder 321, Box 21, Codman Family Papers, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

it's evidence that Ogden was at the center of a whirlwind of attention. But it is only in retrospect that the summer of 1820 at Saratoga Springs would be the height of her participation in this serious world of youthful courtship.[66]

That is borne out by a letter marked "Private" sent to her father by his brother, Charles L. Ogden, in late August, 1820. In it, Charles reported that "my dear Niece, your Daughter Sally has made a serious impression on one of my Southern Friends Mr. James Potter of Charleston, So. Carolina." Ogden described the young man as having an "amicable disposition and correct habits," who was "less addicted to fashionable dissipation than most." He had just returned from an European tour, where he had "ample time & resources to make his tour as advantageous as possible," having acquired "a better knowledge of the world, and a more refined taste in the arts and sciences." Having gotten that out of the way, he went on to note that this young man was quite wealthy indeed: his father owned a rice plantation near Savannah for which he "paid in cash between 2 & 300000 Dollars," and he had deeded half of it to his son. That half would be his once he came of age, so that "he is therefore quite independent already without looking forward to the Death of his Father." [67]

When Catharine Bayard wrote Sarah Ogden in late August, she reported that New York society was buzzing about the events of the summer. She wrote

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[66] None of the previous letters surviving at SPNEA mention suitors which either Sarah nor Catharine Bayard (their author) take seriously. Anon., "The Stricken Deer," Item 9, Folder 321, Codman Family Papers.
[67] Charles L. Ogden to David A. Ogden, 23 Aug 1820, Item 15, Folder 321, Codman Family Papers.

that she was "frequently asked" about Sarah, and demanded of her friend and cousin, "are you or are you not to be Mrs. James Potter?" By October, the answer was becoming clearer. Bayard wrote that the courtships around Sarah "at present form one of the most fashionable topics of the day – causes of all sorts are attributed as reasons for Mr. P's unsuccessful negotiation." Potter was out, but Bayard reported that gossip in New York was suggesting another suitor, a "Mr. Betts" as the new, "pre-eminent" candidate. But beyond these two, there was at least one other suitor that summer. A poem signed "ES," entitled, "To Miss S.O. on returning to her the Ballston poetry," survives in the Codman family papers. This surviving copy shows evidence of long and frequent examination, since although it is in good condition, the paper it is written on is folded and worn, discolored from frequent handling. It portrays Sarah as living "in solitude…as frank, as free from earthly care,/ As deaf to flattering fame." And it imagined her suitors only being successful:

> When they had dared a nobler strain
> Beyond the flights of fashion
> And learn'd at last, to feel not feign
> Love's deep domestic passion. [68]

But Sarah would ultimately reject all of them. We will never know why. Perhaps her family had disapproved of the one she really loved. We cannot know for sure, but one letter to her from her mother in 1822 seems to hint at the latter:

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[68] Catharine Bayard to Sarah Ogden, 30 Aug 1820, 23 Oct 1820, Codman Family Papers. E.S.?, "To Miss S.O. on Returning to her the Ballston Poetry," Jan, 1821, Item 8, Folder 322, Codman Family Papers.

> I would prefer seeing you married, to man of Talents and respectability, with a mere competency to support you, than to a person possessing the former, without the latter – Where both are united, so much the better.... I would however recommend to be slow in deciding, & to reflect well – For it is better for you to remain under the Protection of your parents, single, & without the superfluous things of an expensive City, than to marry a man, whom you do not respect & love.[69]

The message in this is mixed – on the one hand, seeming to support her free choice; on the other, warning her to make a good one. The record is not clear, but apparently she did not return to Saratoga; at least no letters exist that mention another vacation similar to the one in the summer of 1820.

In the end, Sarah Ogden would not marry until she was, by the standards of the day, quite old. In 1836 she met a prominent Boston widower, Charles Russell Codman. They married and she would have four children by him in what to all accounts was a happy marriage.[70]

Sarah Ogden came from a class for which travel was so typical as to be almost commonplace. But there was a class of new tourists emerging in this period. These travellers were rising in status. In the past they would have been nearly entirely shut out of fashionable circles including the tourist sites. But the new tourist infrastructure gave them the opportunity to enter these circles without an introduction, and although they were not necessarily welcome, neither were they entirely rejected.

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[69] Rebecca Cornell Edwards Ogden to Sarah Ogden, n.d. 1822, Item 1, Folder 323, Codman Family Papers.
[70] Finding Aid, Codman Family Papers. Sarah Ogden Codman would, however, die young, of consumption, forty-three years old.

A prime example of this new trend is found in the story of Solomon Mordecai. He documented his journey in the summer of 1817 from his home in Warrenton, North Carolina, to Saratoga Springs in a series of remarkable letters. The Mordecai family initially came from modest circumstances, emigrating from Germany in 1760. The patriarch, Jacob, had gotten a good education in Philadelphia, and in the 1790s moved to North Carolina, where he ran a store. After some business reverses and a short stint at a local male boarding school, in 1808 Jacob Mordecai was approached to set up a female boarding school in town. Mordecai's Female Academy was quite successful. The family's Jewish heritage was associated in the minds of parents with academic rigor, and the family was happy to use this as a major selling point for their school. It drew students from across the south, the vast majority from Christian households, and it continued to prosper despite the economic disruptions of the eighteen-teens, nearly doubling in size. Its success made the Mordecai family relatively well-to-do.[71]

Solomon Mordecai, twenty-five years old in 1817, taught at the school with his older sisters and brothers and was one of the mainstays of the faculty. But he had been suffering from a number of stomach or digestive ailments and intended

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[71] Sheldon Hanft, "Mordecai's Female Academy," *American Jewish History*, 79, no. 1 (Autumn 1989): 72-93. Further information about this fascinating early Jewish-American family can be found in Ruth Nuermberger, "Some Notes on the Mordecai Family," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 49 (1941): 364-373 and William Barlow and David O. Powell, "A Dedicated Medical Student: Solomon Mordecai, 1819-1822," *Journal of the Early Republic* 7 (Winter, 1987): 377-397.

to make a journey to the springs for his health. But a somewhat hidden subtext in his letters reveals another item on his agenda: he was seeking a wife.[72]

He travelled north from Warrenton and planned his route to touch at the homes of relatives in Richmond, Baltimore, Washington, and New York. At each place he spent several days visiting but he was also carefully examining the available young women there. As a Jew, his choices in the small American community were limited, but he was open to possibilities. At Richmond, for example, he found that although "Miss H. looks thin, and in appearance is much improved, she is serious & looks interesting as in my ken she never before did." To give himself the maximum flexibility, he deliberately had not settled on a destination once he had left New York City, as evidenced by a letter his sister Ellen wrote soon after his departure. In it, she wondered whether he intended "going to Rhode Island, or the Balls Town springs?" His flexibility, she wrote, came from the fact that he had no "engagement to oppose the dictates of inclination, unless the pleasing attention of our Richmond friends should allure you." But no one thing, or person, caught his eye, and by the time he had left Philadelphia he had decided on Ballston – "either that or Saratoga – or both."[73]

It's revealing that he chose to travel to the Spas immediately after his inspection of the marriageable women in America's major cities. There was

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[72] Solomon Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 3 August 1817, Subseries 1.2, Folder 13, Mordecai Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection. (Earlier appetite comment in 20 July 1817 Solomon to Caroline Mordecai). Solomon to Ellen Mordecai, 10 July 1817, Mordecai Family Papers.
[73] Solomon Mordecai to Ellen Mordecai, 10 July 1817 ("Miss H."); Ellen to Solomon, 24 July 1817 ("Balls Town?"); Solomon to Julia Mordecai, 30 July 1817 ("Saratoga – or both"), all in Subs. 1.3, Folder 12, Mordecai Family Papers.

definitely a perception among people of this era that Saratoga offered a "marriage market," that the Spas allowed a high level of flirtation and offered the chance to meet someone outside the familiar social circles of home. Whether those dreams were founded on reality or not is irrelevant as far as it affected people's behavior. And as we have seen with the story of Sarah Ogden, there was the possibility that something significant could happen.[74]

Mordecai arrived at Ballston Spa intending to spend several days or weeks. But once there he was very soon persuaded in "a conversation with some gentlemen who had been in the habit of visiting these springs" that a move to Saratoga, whose waters "are a more powerful mineral," would be best. He did so, and although he found when on his arrival that "the houses are all so full already (for it is deemed early in the season)," he was nonetheless able to obtain "a quiet room in a house not connected with the main building," (referring to Saratoga's only major hotel at the time, Union Hall).[75]

Mordecai eventually spent several weeks at Saratoga. While he was there, he made a careful inventory of the women he saw. From the accounts in his letters he appeared to be not particular about finding a Jewish woman, at least once he had left the circles of his extended family. All of the unmarried Mordecai men faced this central problem, frustrated by the small numbers of

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[74] Theodore Corbett, *The Making of American Resorts*, 220-222, "The Myth of the Marriage Market," argues that this did not exist, that spa life was based mainly on "chivalry, the display of manners, rather than the serious business of marriage." This may have been true in the years after 1830; the evidence, though, does not support this claim before 1830.
[75] Solomon to Ellen Mordecai, 3 August 1817, Mordecai Family Papers.

available Jewish women. His brother Moses had given up that search and had become engaged to a Gentile. Now in his last summer as a bachelor, Moses was spending the season at the Virginia Springs. From there he wrote Mordecai a letter which cryptically referred to all of his brothers' problem:

> On your return thr NY. Phila. & Balt. do not let your investigations be confined to the works of the trowel, the chisel or the pencil – but search out among the fairest of natures work some specimens from which your brothers & yourself may stock their cabinets – Were I alone in the world I believe I could even furnish my own…it is time we should act instead of speak.[76]

Solomon wrote to his family on the same day, addressing this very topic:

> The Coles and Skipworth party left here a few days after the date of my last, and I believe I was more than half in love with the fair one of their Susie[?] – she is a fine girl & improves so much upon acquaintance that nothing but Mrs. S's. indisposition which was slight on the morning of their departure prevented my accompanying them to New York – I am by promise bound to meet Miss S. in Norfolk.

Later in the same letter he wrote of his brother Moses:

> By this time his opportunities of losing his heart at the Virginia Springs have I found been as limited as my very own nothing but my greater susceptibility can account for my having proved more successful: it begins to be high time for some good to come of it:… perhaps some fairer fair one may dispose of her heart to me *à bon marché*.[77]

But in the end, no romance came for Solomon. At the springs, he complained that he had only been:

> Introduced to but one young Lady, and her I have seen since only *en passant* and at Meal times – this is not my fault for I have no other opportunity of being in their company; and then soft looks is not the order of the day – Of her name and of the polite manner I received my introduction and that too from her father, I will let you know after the first frost of October.[78]

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[76] Moses Mordecai to Solomon, 8 Aug 1817, Mordecai Family Papers.
[77] Solomon to Caroline Mordecai, 8 Aug 1817, Mordecai Family Papers.
[78] Solomon to Caroline Mordecai, 10 Aug 1817, Mordecai Family Papers.

It's possible that his reference to the "first frost" is a coded reference a cold shoulder from the girl's parent, perhaps as an expression of anti-Semitism. If Solomon Mordecai encountered anti-Semitism on his journey, he generally did not mention it, other than in the excerpt above. Either it was so common as to be expected and thus was not considered remarkable enough to mention, or he knew it would be upsetting for his extended family group and reserved it for private conversation. Or, perhaps more remotely, he did not find it at all.

It would seem odd that Mordecai would have stayed at Saratoga if the "hunting" there was so poor. However, there was an unexpected draw, one that would eventually help dictate the choice that Solomon made for his profession. A travel companion he had met on the Hudson River steamboat fell ill. Solomon cancelled his inchoate plans to go on to Niagara or elsewhere. He remained at Saratoga for several weeks to nurse his friend. And although there's no direct evidence linking this episode with his eventual decision to become a doctor, it's intriguing that in 1819, soon after his father sold their school for a substantial amount of money, Solomon entered the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he received an M.D. in 1822. As for the problem of a wife, in the end, Solomon married a gentile, Caroline Waller, in 1824.[79]

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[79] Barlow and Powell, "Dedicated Medical Student," 377. Ruth Nueremberger, "Some Notes," 369.

Mordecai was lucky that for him travel proved to be, if not a life-changing, then a life-influencing event. Others travelled, too, hoping for that event. One was David Prall, a New Yorker, twenty-two years old. He, like Solomon Mordecai, was from a rising group. Prall had been apprenticed to his uncle James Masterson, a mid-level New York merchant. When he reached his majority he was named junior partner. In May of 1821, his uncle died, and Prall received the bulk of the estate including the dry-goods store on Pearl Street. In July, he took what was probably his first ever vacation, a "jaunt" to Niagara, with two of his friends, "Chas. Bostwick & Capt. Forman." The three young men took the steamboat north, and his journal-keeping earned him the nickname from his fellow travellers of "Scratchatary." Prall was thorough about some details: he noted, for example, the names and attentions of every young woman he encountered and recorded in detail several of the jokes told aboard the coaches they rode.

Prall and his friends took a boat along one of the first completed sections of the Erie Canal. They rode for only three miles on the canal boat *Montezuma* before they disembarked at Utica, where they visited one of Prall's cousins. They then returned to the canal on another boat, the *Oneida Chief*, taking it another thirty-four miles. He noted that the boats averaged four miles an hour but recently had been allowed to go as fast as five miles an hour. Although the canal would not be completed until 1825, this exceedingly short trip represents the beginning of what would become quite an industry. The Canal began offering an

increasing number of passenger vessels, some of which, by the end of the 1820s, were quite elegant.[80]

Once at Niagara, he "put up at Forsyth's," which he described as "a very indifferent place." (This was Forsyth's inn, not the soon-to-be-built hotel.) There, he toured the battlefields and later tried to go under the falls on the path created for that purpose but was "compelled to return for fear of loosing [his] breath by the violence of the wind caused by so immense body of water falling." Like so many other travellers, he found his pen inadequate to describe Niagara, which he thought "utterly out of the powers of man to represent." After other adventures, at Rochester he finagled an invitation from his landlord to a local ball, where he danced "a country dance." At midnight they all ate "supper," and they continued dancing "until day light by which time we were all pretty well tired and soon broke up…I retired by the light of morning and arose…at 8 very stiff which continued for 2 days." But despite his best efforts Prall did not encounter a life-changing event nor the woman of his dreams. The trip was just a jaunt, and in the end he settled into the life of a respectable shopkeeper, eventually becoming a druggist and dry goods merchant. He married a New

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[80] David Prall Journal 13 July 1821 ("Scratcharary"), New-York Historical Society. Estate notice for Prall is in the *New-York Evening Post*, 15 May 1821, p. 1, col. 3; Genealogical information about Prall is in Mrs. William Prall, "Manuscript Notes of the Prall and Allied Families," (CS 71 .P899 no. 1), New-York Historical Society.

York woman in the 1830s, and his name appeared in New York City directories well into the 1840s.[81]

Although both Mordecai and Prall were living in fairly privileged situations at the time they travelled, neither was from the typical genteel class that has come to be associated with tourism of this time. That these young men were able to travel at all shows how the cost of tourism had dropped from astronomical to, if not reasonable, then at least accessible. This trend, begun in the late eighteen-teens, would accelerate through the 1820s and into the 1830s, and would cause a fair amount of discomfort among genteel travellers, who would begin to complain by the late 1820s that they were being swamped by their lessers.

By the early eighteen-twenties, the "Fashionable Tour" had already assumed a significant place in the summer social life of the class of travelling Americans. But its heightened prominence and steady promotion in written materials meant that the dream of travel and the future it represented was being transmitted to other classes. The eighteen-twenties would be a time when those ideals began to appear in other forms, in literature, art, and drama, and through them, the tourist dream would become a motif in the life of upper-middle-class

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[81] Quotes: David Prall Journal, 20 and 26 July 1821, New-York Historical Society. Prall, incidentally, may have been the kind of person that Catherine Maria Sedgwick remarked upon in her first major work, her 1821 travel diary (discussed in Chapter 3), one of the "Greenwich Village shop-keepers" that she found incapable of experiencing Niagara in a sufficiently solemn manner.

and these forms of transmission would also move these aristocratic ideals of travel and leisure disguised as improvement into the mainstream of middle-class American thinking. The gentry would react to these changes with dismay. Of course, the central irony of these developments is that so many of them were made by people like Davison and Forsythe, people without gentry credentials. What they had built for the gentry would soon be crowded with strivers such as themselves.

CHAPTER IV

WASHINGTON IRVING, JAMES FENIMORE COOPER AND THOMAS COLE: TOURISM, ART, AND LITERATURE IN THE EARLY 1820S

> 'What see you, when you get there?' asked Edwards
> 'Creation!' said Natty, dropping the end of his ram-rod into the water, and sweeping one hand around him in a circle – 'all creation, lad.'
> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* [1]

By 1820, tourism was becoming widely accepted among the gentry as a summer diversion. People planned their trips months or even years in advance, and they carefully chose their routes and destinations drawing on an ever-expanding body of information from commercial sources and their neighbors and family. [2] The tourist infrastructure swelled to not only meet but anticipate what might appeal to this group of people. As the numbers of tourists grew these attractions also drew increasing numbers of writers and artists. Their work was in turn affected by what they saw, particularly by the natural beauties of tourist sites. The resulting depictions provided an idealized view of American scenery, one that played to the expectations of purchasers, expectations shaped, in large part, by a vision created by tourism. The paintings and writings

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[1] James F. Cooper, *The Pioneers* (1821; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), 293.
[2] For an example of tourist planning, see Catharine Maria Sedgwick (CMS) to Henry Dwight Sedgwick: "Last August were drinking tea together at Lyons. Something was said of Niagara and Robert said – Well Kit, at any rate, you & I will start the 20th of next June," 22 June 1821, Catharine Maria Sedgwick Papers III, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter CMS III). Also to CMS from Susan Higginson Channing, responding to CMS's invitation to travel, 14 April, 1821, CMS III.

celebrating American scenery helped further a new appreciation of American nature, a nature which had heretofore been seen as too wild, raw, and untamed to allow for artistic depiction or appreciation. And as these works were more widely disseminated they became, in effect, advertisements for the tourist sites themselves, in turn laying the basis for mass-marketed American tourism.

By 1820 the epicenter of American tourism had shifted decisively toward Saratoga Springs. With surprising speed it had built itself into a thoroughly developed tourist destination, from just one hotel in 1812 to four in 1822. This was the single largest grouping of hotels in America outside the cities of New York and Boston and would remain so through the 1820s.[3] Not counting the rooms available at large boarding houses, Saratoga's main hotels alone could accommodate more than five hundred guests. The largest hotel, Congress Hall, could sleep at least two hundred, with the Pavilion able to put up at least 110. Gideon Davison's 1822 tourist guidebook listed a range of accommodations graded from the most fashionable and expensive - ten dollars per week at Congress Hall - down to the cheapest, $2.62½ per week, at Sadler's boarding house. This was, incidentally, a greater range than John Melish had reported for

[3] See Doris Elizabeth King, "The First-Class Hotel and the Age of the Common Man," *Journal of Southern History* 23, no. 2 (May, 1957): 173-188. She describes the Boston Exchange Hotel, opened 1809 with 300 rooms, as "the most significant and prophetic" of its time; New York hotels, she contends, had nothing to rival it until the late 1820s; Baltimore's City Hotel (Barnum's), opened 1826, had 200 rooms.

Ballston Spa in 1811, where room prices had ranged only from four to eight dollars per week.[4]

The growth of entertainment for guests was slower than the expansion of rooms. Ballston remained the destination for entertainers in 1817, and from 1819 through 1820 Saratoga was visited only rarely by travelling entertainers, if evidence from the local newspaper is any indication. But by 1821, entertainers were bypassing Ballston, making Saratoga their sole destination. On the Fourth of July of that year, a Mr. Christiani, who had been advertised in New York as a "professor of music" and composer to "all the Theatres of the Court of Spain," performed a number of unspecified "Italian" or "French" songs; perhaps the highlight of the evening was the singing of "Yankee Doodle," "with variations."[5] His was the only advertised entertainment for that season. In 1822, a "Grand Caravan of Living Animals" stayed for a week with an admission price of 25 cents, with children given a discount. But the 1823 season saw a number of entertainments: paintings by John Dunlap and John Sully were displayed in the village; a panorama of the city of Boston was exhibited along with views of ten named cities and "40 other Cities and Views, too tedious to mention, which are very interesting." Capping the season was "Mr. Frederick Brown, of the New-York, Boston and Charleston Theaters," who, in a one-man show, did his

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[4] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 53. See chap. I for Melish's figures. Ballston Spa had remained static: The Sans Souci and Aldridge's remained the principal accommodations. Although the village would grow some in the 1820s, adding another hotel, this was mainly from spillover from Saratoga Springs.

[5] "Mr. Cristiani's Musical Entertainment, at the Pavilion," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 4 Jul 1821, p. 3, col. 3. Christiani had performed at least twice in New York, in 1819 and in May of 1821. George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 2:541, 604.

celebrated "Mail Coach Adventures," a description of the experiences of travellers, interspersed with comic songs such as "Mail Coach" and "An English Song Sung by a French Gentleman." Brown's appearance in Saratoga is a sign of how much the village had grown in importance, at least in the eyes of entertainers. Brown was a "name," a popular New York actor and mainstay of the theater who had appeared in plays throughout the 1820s in roles ranging from Macbeth to impersonations of other actors.[6]

As for venues, with the exception of the circus which was housed in its own tent, all of these entertainments took place in various rooms at the major hotels. In 1824 Saratoga finally got a permanent theater. The local newspaper praised it as having with "a pleasant, tasty appearance."[7]

It was now increasingly easy to get to the springs. In 1821, an article in the local newspaper noted, "A person may leave Philadelphia at 6 o'clock in the morning, and arrive at the Springs the next day, at 4 P.M."[8] Once in Albany, tourists could choose between several competing coach lines. In 1824 one such firm touted that its coaches of "beauty and strength" were now equipped with a remarkable advance: "elastic or spring cushions."[9] One passenger described her coach as being "lined on the inside with read [sic] Morocco and cushions of the

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[6] "Grand Caravan," 30 Jul 1822, p. 3, col. 2; "Dunlap's 'Picture of the Christ Rejected,'" 8 Jul 1823, p. 3, col. 2; "Celebrated Painting of the Capuchin Chapel, by Mr. Sully," 15 Jul 1823, p. 2, col. 4; "Museum of Fine Arts...Grand Panorama" 12 Aug 1823, p. 3, col. 3; "Mr. Brown at Home," 12 Aug 1823, p. 2, col. 5; "Concert by Mr. Keene," 19 Aug 1823, p. 3, col. 3. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 2:559-60, 3:153, 162.
[7] "New Theatre," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 11 Aug 1824, p. 3, col. 3.
[8] "Rapid Travelling," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 8 Aug 1821, p. 2, col. 4.
[9] "To the Editor," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 11 Aug 1824, p. 3, col. 3.

same with spring seats, the out side was painted red with a deep border of green, yellow and a great deal of gilt." Clearly, this was more than just functionality at work, and she knew it: "This was merely done to induce Passengers to go in this line instead of the other."[10]

But all this physical tourist infrastructure was paralleled, in the late eighteen-teens, by the rise of a kind of cultural infrastructure for the Hudson Valley. This new infrastructure sought to enhance the visual delights of the Valley with stories and legends and to create idealized visions of its beauties. Probably the first signal of this movement came from Washington Irving. By the late eighteen-teens he had travelled widely outside the United States, spending years in Europe and elsewhere. He was already an experienced writer and had achieved some success with the humorous sketches from life printed in the magazine *Salmagundi* (1807-08). His full-length historical parody, *Knickerbocker's History of New York* (1812), was quite a success. But, having been raised in wealth and comfort, he never *needed* writing. And his early attempt at the law certainly did not catch fire; in any case it was not vital to his survival.

Irving was a member of a small group of New Yorkers who had taken their name, the Knickerbockers, from his famous 1812 book. This group of New York gentry feared the changes coming over the nation as it moved, in the 1810s and 1820s, ever more decisively away from the old hierarchical structures inherited from Britain and refined in America toward those of a society that allowed for far

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[10] S. A. [Sarah Ann] Merry to Robert D.C. Merry, 28 Jun 1828, Letter 1, Folder 79, MC 424, Bradley Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

more social mobility than they felt comfortable with. It is no accident that they were based in New York City, which was experiencing explosive growth during this period. Irving expressed this conservative Knickerbocker attitude in his writing. For example, the "Style at Ballston" segment from *Salmagundi* (discussed in the previous chapter) was a recognition that tourism was a symptom of the beginning of the breakdown of the old order, as it allowed social mixing in a setting where the carefully structured protocols of city society were not easily maintained.[11]

Irving faced a crisis when his family's business went bankrupt in 1818. His career as a dilettante was cut short: for the first time in his life he had to support himself. So he decided to become a professional writer – a radical step, since no other American had heretofore been able to earn enough solely from the pen to survive. But he pushed forward, and through the summer and fall of 1818 he wrote a series of stories that were collectively published as *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*[12]

The *Sketch Book* was an immediate success, bringing Irving fame and fortune. Its stories of New York life and its colorful characters hit notes that resonated within American society. Several of the stories have become classics, particularly "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The New York locations of these stories were particularly relevant for the travelling

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[11] Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas* (New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1996), 55-65 and *passim*.

[12] A good short sketch of Irving's writing career can be found in Ralph Aderman, Herbert Kleinfield, Jenifer Banks, eds., *Washington Irving: Letters, Volume 1 (1802-23)* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978), xxiii-lvi.

audience since they added a romantic gloss to the very countryside travellers passed through on their way north from New York City.

Irving knew that these travellers represented the book-buying public of New York. And he knew that they would find these locations evocative. He as much says so in the opening paragraphs of "Rip Van Winkle:"

> Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are…seen away to the west of the river swelling up to noble height and lording it over the surrounding country.

Once he set a scene that would be familiar to his readers he began his tale:

> At the foot of these fairy mountains the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle roofs gleam among the trees… It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early times of the province.[13]

This is the village of Catskill, which lies just across the river from the town of Hudson, a passenger stop on the steamboat line. Travellers along the river would have seen Irving's "magical hues and shapes" of the mountains. Especially prominent was the grand escarpment that rises above Catskill, a geographical feature often noted in travellers' diaries. Further, in this passage Irving added a layer of mystique by describing the village as being of "great antiquity." This description would have been laughable to Old World visitors, but for Americans it gave it an authority and authenticity many found missing in their relatively new country.[14]

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[13] Richard D. Rust, ed., *The Complete Works of Washington Irving*, (Boston: Twayne, 1978), 29.
[14] See, for example, the Mr. & Mrs. Sipple Diary, 27 July 1821, BV Sec.: Sipple, New-York Historical Society.

Irving used a Hudson setting for another popular story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." He placed it at a precise location in the Hudson Valley some miles south of Catskill, "in the bosom of one of those spacious covers which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson," on the shores of "the Tappaan Zee…at Tarry Town." Irving used geographical identifiers based on river landmarks because he had come to know the river well during the many hours he had spent chugging slowly up and down the river. And he knew his audience would know them, too, for precisely the same reason. His stories instantly made formerly obscure sections of the Hudson River journey famous. Tourists travelling upriver now began to anticipate moment when Rip's home, the Kaaterskill Clove (derived from the Dutch word for 'valley'), came into view.[15]

The fame of Kaaterskill Clove grew even further with the 1821 publication of Timothy Dwight's *Travels in New England and New York*. Dwight, a grandson of the famed revivalist and evangelist Jonathan Edwards, had been president of Yale College where he had reigned as one of America's cultural arbiters, producing sermons, inspirational works, and various other commentaries. Dwight had died in 1817, but his nephew, Theodore Dwight, had taken up his uncle's letters and had collected and edited them for publication.[16] The resulting

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[15] Irving, *Complete Works*, 272. Irving had spent many summers at the Hudson Highlands home of a friend, Capt. Frederick Philipse. Irving writes from or about Philipse's home many times in his letters; see, for example, Irving to Henry Brevoort, 22 Sep. 1810, *Letters*, 1:288-89; Philipse was a close member of Irving's circle of friends, which included Henry Brevoort, James K. Paulding, and Henry Ogden, *Letters*, 1:219n. There is a large literature about the various origins of the stories in the *Sketch Book*; see, for example, Walter Reichart, *Washington Irving and Germany* (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan Press, 1957), 23, or Williams, *Life of Washington Irving*.
[16] Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New-England*. Much more on Theodore Dwight, who wrote a popular tourist guidebook, in chapter IV.

book, published in four volumes, consisted of accounts Dwight had written of his travels spanning more than twenty years, from the 1790s to the 1810s. They were published as if they were a series of letters to a friend, a common device in the travel literature of the day, and they contained a vast amount of information not only statistical and geographical, but also concerning the houses of his hosts, the towns he visited, and the prominent sights.

Dwight had been a master traveller: he made many journeys across New England and New York State and his notes were voluminously detailed. Of all the many places he described, though, he was particularly admiring of the Catskill Mountains, which he mentioned more than a dozen times across three of the four volumes. Dwight's book became a standard reference for the region and remained in print for many years, not only because of its thoroughness about New England and New York locations but also because of the weighty reputation of its author. It was also celebrated because it was a travel narrative published by an American, something relatively rare at the time.[17]

Dwight's book was seen by many champions of American culture as a critical step in the process of America's cultural separation from its former colonial master. They chafed under the fact that Britain still produced much of what elite Americans read, saw performed in their theaters, listened to in their

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[17] So many of the existing published travel accounts had been written by foreigners, mainly Britons, that a backlash had developed against them. An early example of this was an essay Irving wrote in the *Sketch Book*, "English Writers on America," a gentle criticism of their mistaken notions of Americans. The backlash heightened in eighteen-twenties: see, for example, the lengthy and scathing review of Basil Hall's *Travels in the United States and Canada* in the *North American Review* 29, no. 4 (Oct, 1829): 522-575.

concert halls, or saw in their paintings. There was a rising chorus of complaints that called for the creation of uniquely American art, literature, and drama, a movement for a redefinition of American culture.[18]

This larger movement also involved a change in the ways of thinking about the American landscape. From the first European discovery of America a great deal of emphasis had been placed on the uniqueness of its landscape. This had often been invoked to make any number of didactic, political, or emotional points, whether to emphasize its richness and potential, or its wildness and the fear that engendered, or to invoke its grandeur as a sign of its inevitable greatness.

But it is one thing to think about landscape and nature and another thing to represent it in art or literature, and Americans, as in so many other things, had been heavily influenced by European, especially British, models of thinking about nature and landscape. For tourists, their attitudes toward nature dictated what they found interesting, what they detoured to see, and where they spent their time. But there had been significant changes in Europe during the second part of the eighteenth century in regards to the way nature was viewed.

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[18] As discussed in William Gilmore's *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life*, 212 and elsewhere, who describes the United States as still being, in many ways, an intellectual province of Great Britain. See also Oswaldo Rodrigues Roque, "The Exaltation of American Landscape Painting," in *American Paradise: The World of the Hudson River School* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 21-22. A rare dissenting voice to this consensus is found in J. Meredith Neil, *Toward a National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1975), who argues that a distinct national taste had developed long before 1815. In painting, for example, the foundations for the Hudson River School had been laid in the first decades of the century by painters such as Benjamin West (pp. 106-139). But in the end he concedes that "the American school of painting, prior to the 1820s, remained a potential rather than an actual development." (p. 125)

Although Americans traditionally had been slow to accept these changes, by the early 1820s there was a perceptible shift in how they thought of nature in general and about American nature in particular. The roots of this shift had a great deal to do with how nature was depicted in art, depictions that in turn were highly influential in shaping the way people thought about nature.[19]

The changes in Britain had begun with the writings of a group of British theorists in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. They postulated that there were three basic modes of perceiving nature: as beautiful, sublime, or picturesque. Each view of nature invoked a particular set of ideals and notions and influenced the creation of a particular kind of art.

Art created under the notions of the beautiful depicted a world that was ordered, perfect, pastoral. In this it was an expression of a kind of utopian longing for an ordered landscape, a striving for perfection, something that was, of course, impossible through human agency. Its landscapes presented idyllic scenes that were peopled with idealized humans, beyond imperfection. The nature that was thus represented was of the "lion lying down with the lamb" variety, a world where God's hand had removed all evil. More often than not, the painter placed some evidence of human presence – a hut, temple, road – into

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[19] This transition is described in a number of works. Some of the most influential have been Perry Miller's *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1956) and Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967 and later editions). Others include Raymond O'Brien, *American Sublime: Landscape and Scenery of the Lower Hudson Valley* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1981); Hans Huth, *Nature and the American* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1957); Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1964); and Paul Shepard, *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1967).

his composition. Depictions of pure nature were avoided. The vast majority of American landscape art before 1825 was created under this idea.

The sublime was best defined by Edmund Burke in his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), and in its earliest form it was a way of looking at nature that began with fear but then shifted into overwhelming feelings of awe and, perhaps, despair at the power of God as expressed through his works in nature.

Burke reasoned that a viewer could reach an ecstatic state while viewing the raw power of nature through a combination of imagination, artistic taste, and judgment. This sublime state would overwhelm the watcher and create within him a fundamental and intense sense of the overwhelming power of God. In this state, the watcher's faith was made deeper and more profound. But the thrill of fear involved in this sublime state would remind him of the inevitably of the apocalypse and the judgment, but also of eventual eternal bliss. Burke felt that the sublime could be reached only while witnessing the raw power of nature in its most threatening but magnificent form: in the midst of a thunderstorm in the high mountains, for example. Burke based much of his thinking on a body of travel writing that had begun to be prevalent in Britain beginning in the early eighteenth century, particularly from writers who had ventured into the Alps.[20]

There was little or no acceptance in the United States of depictions of the sublime. Part of the reason was technical. It was relatively easy to render the

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[20] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.* (1757; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

beautiful on canvas and when the artist was successful the images were attractive and pleasant. Depicting the sublime was elusive since the artist had to convey not only the majesty and greatness of nature but also its terror. When he succeeded the resulting images tended to be dark and difficult and, perhaps most crucially for patron-poor American artists, sublime images were difficult to sell. The market, controlled and defined by the wealthy patrons who commissioned and purchased paintings, tended toward images that were much less fraught.

A middle ground had been sought and found: the picturesque. This notion sought a midpoint between sublime and beautiful in order to create images that invoked the sublime while still maintaining the forms that made the image acceptable to the viewers of the time. Its first and probably greatest proponent was another Briton, William Gilpin.

William Gilpin defined the picturesque in his first artistic publication, *An Essay on Prints; Containing Remarks on the Principles of Picturesque Beauty, the Different Kinds of Prints, and the Characters of the Most Noted Masters*, published in 1767.[21] It was widely read and appreciated in England and soon after it was published Gilpin was given charge of Cheam, a small and struggling school near London. It prospered, as did Gilpin. With this new prosperity, he was able to afford a series of summer trips around the British Islands to Kent, the River Wye, and the Scottish Highlands, for example. For each of his tours he kept copious notes and made sketches of the places he considered to be the most picturesque,

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[21] The Oxford English Dictionary notes this use of the word "picturesque" as one of the earliest in a book title. The first cited use of the word "picturesque" is in Steele's play, *The Tender Husband*, 1703.

and by the mid-1770s he had five completed manuscripts. He circulated them among his friends in the nobility, creating a constituency and giving him the backing needed to publish them. In 1782, he published the first of them; the other four followed in succeeding years. He also produced two highly influential works on the aesthetics and theory of picturesque scenery, *Remarks on Forest Scenery and other Woodland Views* (1790), and *Three Essays: on Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape: to which is added a poem, On Landscape Painting* (1792). This body of work forms what is possibly the best example of eighteenth-century writing about picturesque scenery, picturesque travel, and thinking about landscape. Gilpin's theories of the picturesque produced a generation of artists fascinated with nature and prepared to look at it with a new eye. Picturesque ideals, taught to the gentry and aristocratic youth, became mainstream in Great Britain by the turn of the nineteenth century and slowly made their way into the American gentry. Gilpin's influence was so pervasive that his work became the subject of a highly successful satirical parody, William Combe's *Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, which was published in England in 1810 and in Philadelphia in 1812. It remained in print for some time in both countries. The popularity of Combe's *Syntax* is an indication that Americans had at least been exposed to Gilpin's ideas, since the satire would not have had much impact without them.[22]

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[22] The main biographical profiles of Gilpin are Anon., "Gilpin, William," Sir Leslie Stephen and Lee, Sidney, eds. *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1886), 7:1262-64; William D. Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin (1724-1804), Master of the Picturesque and Vicar of Boldre* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1939); and Carl Paul

con't.

But Gilpin did more than just define aesthetic rules. He also defined a new type of travel, one that produced a new traveller: the "picturesque tourist." Imitating what Gilpin did in his books, travellers began journeying to picturesque sites, and once there would "take a picture" or draw a sketch. Widespread in England among the upper classes by the 1780s, this trend was also slow to come to America. American cultural parochialism was one factor, but in addition, most Americans and most Europeans did not see America as having truly picturesque scenery. For them, nature in America was too wild and it lacked the rich historical associations that gave British (and European) landscape its special cachet.[23]

This attitude began to change under the impetus of several major trends. One, as we have already seen, was the beginning of the desire to celebrate American landscape and scenery, as exemplified, for example, by the rise of travel books about America. Another was a native romantic movement as exemplified by William Cullen Bryant's poem, "Thanatopsis," (1819) which combined a romantic morbidness with a fascination with nature. Still another major influence was the work of Sir Walter Scott and his series of wildly popular romantic novels.[24]

Barbier, *William Gilpin: His Drawings, Teaching and Theory of the Picturesque* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

[23] A good brief review of this history is found in Bruce Robertson, "The Picturesque Traveler In America," from Edward Nuygren & Bruce Robertson, eds., *Views and Visions: American Landscape Before 1830* (Washington: Corcoran Gallery, 1986), 189-190.

[24] The literary roots of an American picturesque movement can also be found in the work of Charles Brockden Brown, especially in his *Edgar Huntley* (1799). But although Brown's works were modestly popular they did not achieve the remarkably wide reach of Scott's, which cut across class and were much more widely distributed. Brown's writings also came too early:

con't.

After an acclaimed career as a poet Scott turned to novels in 1813, producing tales filled with dash and daring-do. He had great success with his Waverly Series, so called after the first novel, *Waverly,* published in England in 1814 and in the United States in 1815. They sold rapidly and were distributed widely with multiple editions printed by different publishers hitting the street as rapidly as the type could be set after the texts' arrival from England.[25] Scott's influence was widespread. Washington Irving, for example, considered Scott a huge influence and was thrilled when they met in England in August of 1817, just before Irving wrote the *Sketch Book*.[26] Scott's highly romanticized and compelling depictions of the Scottish Highlands as a wild and untamed land populated with remarkable, brave characters probably did more to spread picturesque and sublime ideas in America than any other single factor. Scott's writing was often imagistic, linking characters to scenery. For example, the two romantic interests in *Waverley* were Rose, a young, beautiful, and gentle lowland

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although they had some influence among the most progressive elements of the gentry, it took another generation for their ideas to have wide credence even among the majority of the gentry. For advocacy of Brown's role, though, see Dennis Berthold, "Charles Brocken Brown, 'Edgar Huntly', and the Origins of the American Picturesque," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series 41, no. 1 (Jan, 1984): 62-84. Bryant's *A Forest Hymn* (1824) is often cited as a part of this movement, although it comes relatively late. A brief but useful discussion of the spread of romantic thought and literature and attitudes toward it in America is found in Jean Matthews, *Toward a New Society: American Thought and Culture 1800-1830*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991), 120-123.

[25] William B. Todd and Ann Bowden, *Sir Walter Scott: A Bibliographic History, 1796-1832* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1998), 554-56. See also Emily B. Todd, "Walter Scott and the Nineteenth-Century American Literary Marketplace: Antebellum Richmond Readers and the Collected Editions of the Waverley Novels," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 93, no. 4 (1999): 495-517; David Kaser, "Waverley in America," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 51 (1957): 163-67; David A. Randall, "Waverley in America," *The Colophon*, New Series 1 (Summer 1935): 39-55.

[26] Kathryn Sutherland, "Walter Scott and Washington Irving: 'Editors of the land of Utopia.'" *Journal of American Studies* 10, no. 1 (1976): 85-90.

Scots woman, dark-haired and steady, and Flora, a Highland clan leader's sister, blond, wild, and spirited. Other romantic if doomed Highland rebels were situated amid sublimely rugged terrain, while steadier lowland Scots inhabited pastoral lands reminiscent of "beautiful" paintings. Scott was a clever manipulator of the ideas of nature and art fashionable in his time, and included artistic references which were readily identifiable to his readers. For example, at one point in *Waverley* he invoked the name of one of the most popular picturesque painters in Europe, Salvator Rosa.[27] The popularity of his novels allowed the ideas of the picturesque and sublime to reach an audience that had probably not previously been exposed to them. Their wide acceptance in the United States meant that American travellers of the early 1820s often had the *Waverly* novels not far from their minds as they travelled north from New York City. And associations were easily made in the minds of travellers between the Scottish Highlands of Scott's novels and the romantically scenic Hudson Highlands.

Until the 1820s, Americans continued to emphasize European motifs, Roman ruins or British countryside scenes, for example. This came not only from a kind of snobbishness, which held that Europe contained everything that was

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[27] As Edward is about to meet the Highland chief, Flora's brother, he "prepared himself to meet a stern, gigantic, ferocious figure, such as Salvator would have chosen to be the central object of a group of banditti." Walter Scott, *Waverley* (1814, London: Oxford U. Press, 1981), Book I, Chap. XVII, p. 80. Further studies of this theme are in Eric G. Walter, *Scott's Fiction and the Picturesque* (Salzburg, Austria: Institut Für Anglistik und Amerikanistik Universität Salzburg, 1982); Barton Thurber, "Scott and the Sublime," and Alexander M. Ross, "'Waverley' and the Picturesque," both in *Scott and His Influence: The Papers of the Aberdeen Scott Conference, 1982* (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1983), 87-89, 99-108.

truly art-worthy, but also from a sense that the European landscape, heavily travelled and intimately shaped by "civilization," was in some sense safer, more controlled, than the American landscape. For American scenery to be accepted, it needed to be seen as less threatening. One of the ways that was accomplished was by making that scenery, in fact, physically safer, and, as we have seen, there was a continuing and concerted effort to remove physical hazards at sublime places through the construction of bridges, walkways, and other "improvements." There were other, more subtle ways to make scenery less threatening, to make it psychically safer. This was one side effect of James Fennimore Cooper's work, which mythologized the historical Indian presence and added the gloss of nobility to the previous image of the savage. A wider acceptance of the ideas of sublimity and romanticism helped make wildness much less of threatening, since a viewer could now interpret the fear a place inspired in this new intellectual light. Indeed, the sublime's central idea was that the viewer should allow and encourage these fears to become a part of a nearly overwhelming, but nonetheless enjoyable, process. Travellers now could absorb themselves in this fear as they faced the raw force of nature. They made it integral to the thrill of a sublime ecstasy.

Of course, the total loss of control is something that few truly enjoy. The tourist experience is always constructed to create clear boundaries within which the sensation of a loss of control could be safely experienced. This was also true of American art of the 1820s, which presented situations that carefully controlled the forces of nature, presenting wildness within the construct of a safe

experience. But a transition was needed before America could begin to accept – in other words, begin to purchase - picturesque art. Although most of the American gentry knew of the idea of the sublime, they were unwilling to hang a painting depicting it. Some art historians have argued that this reluctance to commission paintings of sublime scenes indicates that Americans did not know of the sublime prior to 1820, but there is significant evidence amid travellers' writings that these genteel travellers knew what the sublime was and when they felt it.[28] An indication of how widespread exposure to the idea of the sublime was is found in a humorous invocation of it an 1820 issue of *Salmagundi*.[29] A traveller who is taking a steamboat ride to New York's Quarantine Grounds (an anchorage near the city where ships suspected of carrying illness were kept until cleared) – the "extreme verge of the known world," as he says – contemplates the "perils of the waste and howling wilderness" faced by this "desolate traveller on his weary pilgrimage." As he is "indulging in these mixed, yet sublime emotions," he is almost robbed of his possessions – for obscure reasons, he's carrying a steamer trunk for this day trip – by "a couple of cunning rogues."[30]

Examples abound of American landscape painting before 1825 that followed the ideal of the beautiful. For example, Francis Guy of Baltimore

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[28] Uses of the word "sublime" in travel accounts before 1820 are found, for example, in: Harriet Horry diary (describing the Hudson Highlands), 22 July 1793, Pinckney-Lowndes Papers, 34-81, South Carolina Historical Society; Mary Murray diary (applied to Niagara), 8 June 1808; Drayton? Journal (applied to the Hudson Highlands), 11 July 1810; John Duncan's *Travels*, (1812) 2:12; Mrs. John Heard (applied to the Berkshires), 14 July 1815.
[29] This was a short-lived revival of the magazine Washington Irving, James K. Paulding and others had written for during the 1810s. This "second series" was solely published by Paulding.
[30] "Travellers," *Salmagundi*, Second Series 3, no. 12 (22 July 1820): 109.

specialized in it in his depictions of the stately manor homes of his patrons. In Philadelphia, Thomas Doughty came closer to painting the picturesque but his scenes still remained well-ordered renderings in carefully balanced compositions.[31]

But for an American art based on images of American nature to come into its own, the wildness of American scenery would have to be carefully modulated and key themes would have to be discovered to appeal to purchasers. It is within this context that the Hudson River School, America's first native art movement, came into being. For many patrons and purchasers, another major factor in shifting their attitude toward favoring American scenes and themes came from their tourist experiences.

By the early 1820s, many of these patrons had been conditioned through travel literature and their own experience to see the Hudson River Valley as America's most scenic area. Indeed, there was a sense among some that it was *the* American scenic region, with Niagara running a close second. The Highlands had become such an attraction that in 1821 the North River Steamboat Company began to run advertisements for day trips there. Tourists could ride the steamboats upriver to "take an opportunity of viewing the sublime and picturesque scenery" of this special region and return to the city by the evening boat.[32]

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[31] William Gerdts, in "American Landscape Painting: Critical Judgments, 1730-1845," *Art Journal* (Winter, 1985): 28-59, discusses these early painters in the context of the Hudson River School and the creation of an American landscape tradition. This was also in the context of a greater effort to create indigenous American art forms.

[32] "Steam-Boats," *New-York Evening Post*, 4 Aug 1821, p. 2, col. 1.

And so it was natural that when artists finally decided to depict American scenery they chose this area. One of the first to do so was William Guy Wall. Wall had arrived in America from Ireland in 1812 and had made a modest reputation for himself in the New York art world with his oil paintings and watercolors. He was commissioned in 1820 to paint a series of watercolors of the Hudson Valley. After a summer trip up the Hudson, Wall returned in the fall of 1820 with around twenty different views of sites on the river. By mid-1821 a prominent New York engraver, John Hill, began translating the images and in the fall he printed the first aquatints of them.[33] He and his printer, Henry Megarey, conceived of a folio of prints based on the watercolors, a high-cost and high-priced package they called the *Hudson River Port Folio*.[34] The *Port Folio* was a collective effort, a collaboration among least four persons: Wall himself; John Hill, the engraver, who in some cases modified the foregrounds and river activity; Henry J. Megarey, the bookstore owner and artistic entrepreneur who

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[33] Aquatinting is an etching process that creates prints with delicate shading and colors, "ideally suited to the reproduction of late 18th-century British watercolors." Craig Hartley, "Aquatint," Jane Turner, ed., *The [Grove] Dictionary of Art* (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1996), 2:240. James Flexner, in *The Light of Distant Skies* (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), 186, asserts that John Hill commissioned the prints, but Richard J. Koke, *A Checklist of the American Engravings of John Hill (1770-1850), Master of Aquatint* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1961), 29, notes that Hill submitted his bills to the printer, Henry Megarey.

[34] There is scant literature on Wall, who left neither papers nor other documentary information and whose death in Ireland happened at some unknown date after 1864. See Mark W. Sullivan, "Wall, William Guy," *Dictionary of American Art* (New York: MacMillan, 1996), 799; "Wall, William Guy," *Who Was Who in American Art, 1564-1975* (Madison, CT: Sounddview Press, 1999), 3448-9; Donald A. Shelley, "William Guy Wall and His Watercolors for the Historic *Hudson River Portfolio*," *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Jan, 1947): 25-45; John K. Howat, "A Picturesque Site in the Catskills: The Kaaterskill Falls as Painted by William Guy Wall," *Honolulu Academy of Art Journal* 1 (1974): 17-30. Christopher Finch, in *American Watercolors* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 41, credits Wall and the *Port Folio* for doing "much to spread interest in landscape painting...[and] gave impetus to the Hudson River School."

financed and sold the prints; and, finally, John Agg, who wrote texts introducing and describing each plate.[35] Taken as a whole, the portfolio is the first attempt to present America with an image of itself that moved away from the "beautiful" toward the picturesque.

The *Port Folio*'s twenty engravings were issued in five separate "numbers." Each "number," or set, was sold by subscription for $16 each, a substantial sum. Although there are no sales figures for the folio, it is known that after initial runs of one hundred or two hundred prints (depending on the engraving), additional runs of between fifty and sixty prints were pulled. The first set was issued in January 1822, the fifth in mid-1825. A projected sixth set of prints was never issued. This was a risky and expensive endeavor, and by mid-issue some questions had arisen as to its success. Henry Megarey had initially issued the plates in partnership with two other printers, but as an article in the *New-York Evening Post* in June 1823, noted, his partners had dropped away: "We are sorry to learn that so little public taste for the fine arts yet exists in the United States," it mourns, "that the enterprizing bookseller who has ventured to enter upon [this] expensive project…is, from present appearances, likely to be a very considerable loser by his liberality." It hoped "for the honor of our country" that Megarey would "in the end be amply remunerated." Despite these concerns,

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[35] Agg's story is unusual. A British author, he wrote a number of parodies and whimsies under pseudonyms between 1812 and 1817, including one piece purporting to have been by Lord Byron (who objected strongly to it). (See listings in the National Union Catalog.) He emigrated to New York in September, 1820 at the age of 36, and after he penned the Port Folio entries, disappeared from sight. Elizabeth P. Bentley, *Passenger Arrivals at the Port of New York, 1820-1829*. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, Co., 1999), 7.

eventually there was enough demand that the entire portfolio was reprinted in 1828. In sum, the work sold well and widely, and was ultimately one of the most successful artistic ventures of its time. As such, it represents the "arrival" of American scenery among the art-buying gentry.[36]

The portfolio depicted twenty scenes along the Hudson. Print number one was northernmost, showing the falls near the village of Luzerne; number twenty depicted the city of New York from Governor's Island. However, the choice of images produces some surprises. For example, of the folio's twenty images fully half depicted sites located on the upper Hudson on a relatively short stretch from Luzerne to Ft. Miller. This area was rarely, if ever, mentioned as being the ideal scenic area of the river in the literature of the time, and Wall's choice of it as his subject speaks more of convenience than a concerted effort to choose strategic sites for his talent. Perhaps the artist found it convenient to work there; perhaps he had family or friends nearby, allowing for a cost-free, extended stay.

The remainder of the portfolio fits better into the conventional wisdom of the time about the Hudson's scenic sites. Still, there are curious omissions. For example, one print depicts the city of Troy, but Cohoes Falls just north of the city, universally mentioned as a prominent scenic place, is not rendered. Two prints depict the city of Hudson, but the famed escarpment is depicted only far in the

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[36] *New-York Evening Post*, 9 Jun 1823, p. 2, col. 1. See Richard J. Koke, *A Checklist...John Hill*, 29-41, for a complete history of the run. A previous work by John Hill, *Picturesque Views of American Scenery*, should be mentioned. It never had the success of the *Port Folio*. A series of twenty aquatints from paintings by Joshua Shaw and printed from 1819 to 1821, only three of the four "numbers" were printed, implying poor sales. The images chosen ranged from Washington's tomb to views of Schuykill Falls in Pennsylvania to images of Norfolk, Fayetteville, or Boston. Koke, *A Checklist...John Hill*, 14-26.

background in only one view. Four prints are clustered at or just north of West Point, but the Tappan Zee and the view down toward New York – the conventional view – is not shown. The last two prints, though, are natural choices: one depicts the Palisades, the other New York itself. Wall painted several other watercolors, pictures that were not printed in the *Port Folio*. But of these, even at popular sites such as Cohoes Falls, he chose to depict not the waterfall that emptied into the Hudson, but rather the bridge.[37]

This scheme does not represent the received wisdom as to the Hudson's most scenic sites: there must be another agenda in play. The agenda that does fit is that of a tourist's journey up the Hudson. Engravings number twenty to eleven - the last ten images, read backward - are the stops or most prominent sights seen on a steamboat journey north from Manhattan, beginning from print twenty and counting backwards. The prints themselves suggest this: in three of the four prints depicting steamboats on the river, they are steaming northward, to the remainder of the portfolio, to the promise of the countryside.[38] The major steamboat stops on a summer trip are depicted: West Point, Newburgh, Hudson, Troy. This framework could explain the curious omission of a direct rendering of the hills above Catskill, since the artist was most concerned with capturing the site of the landing rather than the view from it. The remainder of the portfolio,

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[37] Richard Koke, comp., *A Catalog of the Collection, Including Historical, Narrative, and Marine Art.* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1982). A near-complete set of the engravings (1828 edition, missing one plate) is held at the Beineke Library at Yale.

[38] This can be seen in numbers 19 (Palisadoes); 13 (Hudson); and 16 (West Point). In 15 (View from Fishkill), the boat is steaming southward. (Note that there were two number 15s – the other is *Hudson*).

then, imagines a leisurely journey north from Troy along the post road from Albany to Glen's Falls. Once there, the viewer, perhaps like the artist himself, then makes visual day trips up and down the river to some of the prominent sights in the area.

As for the images themselves, looking at the prints in the *Port Folio* today, one sees images that are, in general, placid and essentially pastoral, well within the "beautiful" tradition. They have little of the sublimely tangled nature of, for example, Thomas Cole's works (which would come soon) with their dramatic rocks, twisted trees, and exaggerated precipices. Wall's watercolors present images of a Hudson prettily decorated with homes, with country roads winding near the water, and with boats peacefully sailing or steaming. He peopled each print with busy figures engaged either in fishing, travelling, or trade: colorful common folk working, presumably, for the gentry who are Wall's patrons. His skies were marked only with the occasional thunder cloud of summer, and, unless depicting a waterfall or rapids, his depiction of the river itself shows a placid and benign body. A sense of order prevails; human intervention trumps nature.

But artistic fashion in New York in the early 1820s was subtly changing. American artists, so many of them European or European-trained, had already long been aware of romanticism and the artistic picturesque, but in the absence of a demand for such scenes, artists were not rendering them. But as the 1820s progressed, the art-buying public – in other words, the portfolio's potential customers – began to display some interest in the romantic picturesque. And we

see evidence of that in the overall package that the *Port Folio* was sold in, which contained not just the etchings but also textual introductions explaining the prints. It is these introductions that reveal the effort to recast Wall's "beautiful" prints into something more, something evoking the ideals of the picturesque and maybe even a bit of the sublime.

For example, *Little Falls at Luzerne* depicts the short waterfall at that village. On the left bank of the river lies a mill; a fisherman climbs down to the river in the foreground, pole ready. And across the river, beyond a fringe of trees, is a series of smoothly rounded pasture slopes. Maybe, if we peer past that smooth patch to the smoothly forested hills at the rear, we can see a bit of the picturesque there, in those distant, forested hills. Regardless, the text wants us to believe it: "These marked and irregular summits," as it calls the rounded, sugar-loaf-form hills,

> create in their frequent intervals, a thousand romantic glens and ravines, surpassing each other in wildness, and giving to the *tout-ensemble* of the landscape, a character of darkness and dreariness, amidst which the most morbid imagination might roam and revel with unqualified delight.[39]

In a subtle way, though, John Agg realized that he was bending the message of the prints. As another of the texts explained, these introductions allowed the reader to "call up a thousand association of ideas, which clothe the artist's skill in new charms...which no richness of colours, nor ingenuity of touch, could otherwise impart."[40]

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[39] *Hudson River Port Folio,* plate I, *Little Falls at Luzerne.*
[40] *Hudson River Port Folio,* plate XXII (1822; XVIII in 1828 edition), *View Near Ft. Montgomery.*

Beyond its value as an expression of an emerging interest in the sublime and the associated increasing interest in nature for nature's sake, the *Port Folio* is, in the end, a product molded to meet the expectations and desires of the art-buying public. The world of the *Port Folio* is made for the travelling gentry. Its viewer is a member of an educated, urban class who has chosen to leave the city to find peace and to the contemplate the riches of America. He is doing this despite the ready availability of Europe as a destination. The texts assume a viewer who has been to Europe many times before, who is "accustomed to dwell on the calm and cultivated beauty of a European landscape."[41] But this traveller is weary of urban life, and these views remove those woes, as the *View Near Jessup's Landing* promises. It is

> ...well calculated to produce a powerful impression on the traveller, who, forsaking crowded cities and 'the busy hum of men' to satisfy the cravings of a romantic fancy, or to view nature in all her forms and situations, finds delight in the mountain's gorge and the mazy glen; and attaches value to the landscape in the exact proportion of its lonely grandeur and chaotic sublimity.[42]

This pilgrim will find, another text assures us, "a number of romantic situations and interesting promenades," places that are "beautiful, and well calculated to attract visiters[*sic*], whether in pursuit of health or pleasure" that are off the beaten tourist track. Finally, though, the majority of these sites are not *too* picturesque or *too* sublime: they offer a "cheerful and striking contrast to the rude and solitary grandeur of the [Hudson] Highlands."[43]

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[41] *Hudson River Port Folio*, plate VIII, *View Near Sandy Hill*.
[42] *Hudson River Port Folio*, plate III, *View Near Jessup's Landing*.
[43] *Hudson River Port Folio*, plate VII, *View Near Sandy Hill*.

Beyond these soothing messages of health and peace, social subtexts in the introductions worked to reassure the genteel traveller of his place in the world. At the *Meeting of the Hudson and Sacandaga,* the distant "scenery [has] a wild, ferocious, and solitary sublimity," (symbolized by a distant thunderstorm buffeting the rounded hills), but in the foreground, overlooking the falls, "two houses" sit: one "occupied by Judge Rockwell, near the bridge," the other "in the possession of a magistrate and lawyer." Together, they "assume a proud pre-eminence over the rest of the straggling hamlet," which is located just across the river. To the side of the estate on the right side of the falls, fields hold stacks of just-cut hay, a perfect metaphor for gentry control over the scruffy common element.[44] And in *Fort Edward,* a native American woman is depicted in the foreground, carrying a bundle. She appears to be leaving this place, where "the houses are but few in number, but there is a neat church, which is well attended." Perhaps one reason is a nearby fort, which was the site of "much brilliant service," but at which now "the dust of the merciless Indian and the ambitious European repose in awful amity together." This is a place that unequivocally belongs to the United States and has been cleansed of its native peoples.[45] In sum, the portfolio was a calculated package that presented a complete touristic experience for armchair travellers, filled with images that neither challenged nor threatened their world view.

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[44] *Hudson River Port Folio,* plate II, *Meeting of the Hudson and Sacandaga.*
[45] *Hudson River Port Folio,* plate X, *Fort Edward.*

Other artists began to use the new tourist culture to enhance their appeal to the prosperous classes. One of them was James Fenimore Cooper, the most successful writer of his day. He had achieved amazing success with his second novel, *The Spy*, 1821. Wanting to strike fast with a book that would be just as, if not more successful, he began *The Pioneers* while he was living in Scarsdale, New York. Despite his early success, though, Cooper remained financially insecure. This was largely a legacy of his recent personal history. Although he had been raised in wealth and privilege, his family's fortunes began to collapse soon after the death of his father, William Cooper, in 1809. This was followed soon after by the premature deaths of a number of siblings.[46] Probably the only factor that kept him from sliding into complete poverty was that he had married into the wealthy De Lancey family. But he had been as proudly uncomfortable at having to ask them for money as his father-in-law was in providing it. *The Spy* was the first step, and this first taste of success left him thirsty for more.

But Cooper wanted more than money from *The Pioneers*. As much as he wanted the novel to be a financial success he also wanted it to serve as a vindication for his late father. The book was a thinly fictionalized version of his father's own story, one that rewrote his history. In particular, Cooper felt that his father had been wronged in the courts and by the family's creditors, that his fortune and lands had been stolen by outsiders and opportunistic men. But Cooper's desire for success was just as powerful: he wanted to regain the gentry

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[46] Alan Taylor, in *William Cooper's Town* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1996), 363-371, neatly disposes of the traditional story of William Cooper's "murder." But even though he died of natural causes, it was a shocking death for the Cooper family.

lifestyle he had enjoyed before the collapse of his family's fortunes. There are clues that to enhance its marketability he deliberately worked in references intended to appeal to the segment of society that dictated what was fashionable – in other words, the tourist class.[47]

One of the best indications of this effort was an episode that he inserted into the story, an episode that was not, strictly speaking, necessary for the plot. In the scene, which comes about halfway through the book, Natty Bumppo, the old frontierman also known as Leather-stocking, is sitting with the old Indian, Mohegan, who had long since been displaced from his former hunting grounds. Joining them is the tourist-surrogate, Edwards, a young, educated, and possibly noble guest in the village. Leather-stocking is remembering one particularly striking place. He tells Edwards that this place was

> ...up on the Cattskills. You know the Cattskills, lad, for you must have seen them on your left, as you followed the river up from York ... Well, there's the High-peak and the Round-top, which lay back, like a father and mother among their children... But the place I mean is next to the river, where one of the ridges juts out a little from the rest, and where the rocks fall for the best part of a thousand feet.[48]

It is clear that Natty expects Edwards, as Cooper expected his readers, to have remembered this precise spot from their voyages north. Although Cooper had claimed in a letter to a friend that he hoped the book would make "American

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[47] James D. Wallace, *Early Cooper and His Audience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 130-36, argues that Cooper was strongly influenced by and "exploited" the popularity of travel literature. This is partly true, as travel literature was an expression of the tourist culture which had arisen in this time. See Taylor, *William Cooper's Town*, 406-423, for a discussion of Cooper's turn to writing; the success of *The Spy* is described on p. 409. Taylor notes that Cooper "wrote primarily for the middle and elite classes," those who could afford to buy his books, p. 419.
[48] Cooper, *Pioneers*, 292.

scenes interesting to an American reader," in fact he was pandering to the travelling class, a class already interested in such things.[49] Cooper knew this escarpment was familiar to his audience not only because of their travels but through their reading of Dwight and Irving.

Cooper writes on: Edwards, the straight man in this anecdote, now asks, "What see you when you get there?" and Natty replies, giving what is now a classic description of Hudson Valley scenery:

> "Creation!" said Natty, dropping the end of his rod into the water, and sweeping one hand around him in a circle – "all creation, lad. I was on that hill when Vaughan burnt 'Sophus,[50] in the last war, and I seen the vessels come out of the highlands ... The river was in sight for seventy miles, looking like a curled shaving, under my feet, though it was eight long miles to its banks. I saw the hills in the Hampshire grants, the high lands of the river, and all that God had done or man could do, far as eye could reachap."
>
> "It must have been worth the toil, to meet with such a glorious view!"
>
> "If being the best part of a mile in the air, and having men's farms and housen at your feet, with rivers looking like ribands, and mountains bigger than the 'Vision,' seeming to be haystacks of green grass under you, gives any satisfaction to a man, I can recommend that spot."[51]

This description resembles to some degree that found in Dwight's *Travels*, although Cooper, a good writer, has given it his own special flavor.[52]

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[49] James Cooper to Andrew Thomson Goodrich, 28 June 1820, in James F. Beard, ed., *The Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 44.

[50] He is describing the burning of the town of Kingston, then known as Esopus, by British troops in October, 1777, also described in Dwight, 3:307.

[51] Cooper, *Pioneers*, 293.

[52] Dwight, *Travels*, 4:122-24. Cooper visited Kaaterskill Falls sometime before his departure for Europe in 1828 (his 1828 journal from Switzerland compares Staubbach Falls to "the Cattskill Leap," James Fenimore Cooper [III], ed., *Correspondence of James Fenimore Cooper*, 1:275), probably during his 1823 trip upriver. See James Franklin Beard, introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans* (Albany: State University of New York, 1983), xix. But Dwight's descriptions were quite detailed and Cooper could have cribbed crucial details from him.

Leather-stocking then describes another place which figured prominently in Dwight's work, Kaaterskall Falls. It had recently become much more accessible to travellers through a road that had been cut up the nearby valley:

> "But there's a place, a short two miles back of that very hill, that in late times I relished better than the mountains; for it was kivered with the trees, and nateral."
>
> "And where was that?" inquired Edwards, whose curiosity was strongly excited by the simple description of the hunter.
>
> "Why, there's a fall in the hills, where the water of two little ponds that live near each other breaks out of their bounds, and runs over the rocks into the valley. The stream is, maybe, such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. But the hand that made that 'Leap' never made a mill! There the water comes crooking and winding among the rocks, first so slow that a trout could swim in it, and then starting and running like a creater that wanted to make a far spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides...The first pitch is right two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of driven snow, afore it touches the bottom; and there the stream gathers together again for a new start, and maybe flutters over fifty feet of flat-rock, before it falls for another hundred."
>
> "I have never heard of this spot before: it is not mentioned in the books." [says Edward.][53]

There are a number of ironies in this passage. Natty describes the area as "kivered [covered] in trees, and nateral," and that would have been the case in the time the book was set, 1793. But for Cooper and his audience the immediate area around the Clove was the site of a thriving tanning industry established in the late eighteen-teens and early eighteen-twenties. Tanning required a large amount of wood bark, particularly the kind found on the tannin-rich hemlocks which stood thick in the Clove. The process also used great quantities of water to soak the skins. Skins were soaked a year or more, a stage that threw off

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[53] Cooper, *Pioneers*, 293.

hundreds of gallons of foul water. This industrial operation had transformed the Clove by denuding large swaths of it and by fouling the watershed.[54]

Natty also notes that "The stream is, maybe, such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness." Dwight described the stream feeding the falls as a "millstream," with "a magnificent current." And, in fact, the stream a dam had been driving a mill there since sometime around 1819.[55]

Finally, when Edwards, our tourist-surrogate, comments at the end of this excerpt that he had "never heard of this spot before: it is not mentioned in the books," he refers to, of course, the very travel books that Cooper used to flesh out his descriptions. Natty's reply to him is even more telling: "I never read a book in my life...and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know any thing about the wonder of the woods!" Cooper wanted to create an air of authenticity around his account, to clothe his descriptions in a way that hid what may have been his true sources. He wanted his readers to think of *him* as authentic, as One Who Knows, in contrast to the increasing numbers of tourists flooding the Hudson for whom nature was mere decoration, one more destination to come to and go from. These mere tourists were, unlike him, reliant

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[54] Alf Evers, *The Catskills: From Wilderness to Woodstock* (New York: Doubleday, 1972), 332-340. See also Kenneth John Myers, "Selling the Sublime," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1990), 129-133. Cooper's description gives another clue that he may have relied heavily on Dwight, whose letter describing the falls, "Journey to Utica," was written in 1815, before the industrialization and logging in the valley: "the mountains on either side were steep, wild, and shaggy, covered almost everywhere with a dark forest," *Travels*, 4:122.

[55] The dam is described in Evers, *The Catskills*, 351, 362-63, 489; also Myers, "Selling the Sublime," 176n. Its retaining walls are still visible today just above the Falls.

on the medium of print to find the sublimely beautiful sites that the natives of the area –including, purportedly, Cooper – knew almost instinctively. This is one of the first appearances in America of themes that have become commonplace among travel writing: that tourists are merely sensation seekers who would not and could not possibly appreciate what they were seeing. Later in the 1820s, other authors would make these themes the basis for their books.[56]

But this was about more than just tourism. Like Irving, Cooper was a member of the class that feared and resented the disorder of the new republic. Through the eighteen-twenties and thirties his literature reflected his increasing distaste for a new trend in American politics, one that celebrated a new kind of political leader: the self-made man, the "man of the people." This trend represented a huge shift from post-Revolutionary generation of leaders and was driven by a national movement to grant universal white male suffrage. which had been almost exclusively drawn from the highest classes of society. Cooper feared this new class of politicians as being essentially base, craven, and potentially corrupt. His fear stemmed in large part from what he had witnessed with his father, who he felt had been wronged and dispossessed by such men, and he would sound this theme several times in *The Pioneers*.[57] It was also a

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[56] For discussions of the "authenticity" of tourists, see, for example (in a 20th-century context), Daniel Boorsin's "From Traveler to Tourist: The Lost Art of Travel in America," in *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1961: Vintage Books, 1987), 77-117, or Marielle Risse, "White Knee Socks Versus Photojournalist Vests: Distinguishing Between Travelers and Tourists," in *Travel Culture: Essays on What Makes Us Go* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 41-50. An early example of this is found in Theodore Dwight's *Sketches of Scenery and Manners and Manners in the United States* (1829; reprint, Delmar, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles, 1983); see chap. V.

[57] Taylor, *William Cooper's Town*, 419-423, writing against the ideas presented by Dorothy Waples (among others), *The Whig Myth of James Fenimore Cooper*. (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1968).

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prominent motif in his next book, *The Last of the Mohicans*, published 1824. In this novel, set during the French and Indian War, Cooper celebrated the honor he perceived to be inherent in the old order, choosing his heroes, in general, from the British officer corps and from certain Indians. By creating a dichotomy among the Indian characters – bad and brutal versus those who are good and honorable – he was reflecting the typical prejudices of the era about the still-existing Indians. In this schema, the good and honorable Indians had departed, or soon would depart, while the debased, bad, and brutal ones remained. These prejudices were reflected in the scores of tourist accounts of visits to the Oneida reservation in upstate New York, where tourists described their displeasure at seeing Indians still living within the borders of the United States and waxed eloquent about the fallen state of the Indians of their time. But at the same time, Cooper also reflected the era's romanticization of the Indian, a trend that ignored the pesky persistence of living Indians in favor of an idealized, sadly departed, and noble breed.[58] Cooper and other writers used these images of Indians as allegories for the Euro-American past, one that reflected a nostalgia about the pre-Revolutionary social and political order and which encoded a wish to a return to a time when the world seemed secure, settled, and orderly.[59]

Cooper's support for Andrew Jackson, the exemplar of the "self-made man," came mainly from parochial, New York, motivations. Many of his true feelings about the "era of common man" would be revealed in, for example, his *Notion of the Americans* (1828).

[58] See, for example, Robert Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 93-94 and *passim* for discussions about this trend.

[59] See Taylor, *William Cooper's Town*, 386-423. Larzer Ziff, in *Writing in the New Nation: Prose, Print and Politics in the Early Republic* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1991), also contextualizes Cooper as portraying essentially conservative themes in his literature, pp. 146-49 and 203, fn. 17.

Ultimately, though, the enormous popularity of Cooper's writings effected the very change he wished to avoid, in the very places that he had hoped would remain unchanged. In particular this happened on the very mountaintop from which the fictional Leather-stocking had peered, known as Pine Orchard. As other writers noticed the Catskill references in Irving and Dwight and Cooper, they, too, began incorporating references to the area in their works. For example, James G. Percival, a minor poet, issued his second book of poetry, *Clio* (volume I), in 1822, and in it was "A Picture, Catskill Valley," which in turgid lines described a storm-tossed night witnessed by an overheated, sensitive youth[60] This level of literary attention – Percival's superheated romanticism, Irving's whimsical tales, Cooper's dashing stories, and Dwight's stern but appraising eye – created a sudden opportunity for tourist development in the Kaaterskill Valley and up on Pine Orchard. And it is not surprising that a group of local entrepreneurs seized this moment to create a genteel tourist site there.

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[60] James G. Percival, *Poems* (New-York: Charles Wiley, 1823; originally issued as *Clio, I & II*, 1822), 248. It began:

A PICTURE.
Scene – The Valley of the Catskill River north of the Catskill Mountains.

THE glories of a clouded moonlit night-
An union of wild mountains, and dark storms
Gathering around their summits, or in forms
Majestic, moving far away in light,
Like pillared snow, or specters wreathed in flame –

Only after another fifty-four lines of this storm-tossed night do we arrive at a "lonely wanderer" who, "with soul subdued, and awed," gazes upon "the flying cohorts of the storm" with an "enchanted eye." Ultimately, he "Can only bow before them and adore."

The official announcement came in early July 1823, when the *New-York Evening Post* published over two days a long letter signed "A Lover of Nature." It described in guidebook-level detail the charms of the Catskill mountains, including details of their geology and the views available from the top of the escarpment. But, most important, it noted that a "a company of gentlemen, at Catskill" had just completed a lodging place for travellers atop the "South Eminence." Previous visitors had had to make do, camping on rough pine boards at a refreshment stand that had been operating at the summit since about 1819.[61] The lodging place the article mentioned was not much more than a large shack constructed from locally sawn hemlock boards and divided into men's and women's dormitories, a kitchen, a room rather grandly called the "ballroom," and a parlor. The bedding was loose straw for men, straw-filled ticks for women. Despite this rudeness, it was an immediate hit. But, most importantly, a more permanent structure – a genteel accommodation – was also being built. When finished, the Catskill Mountain House would be an imposing building visible for miles up and down the Hudson valley: three stories tall, sixty feet long, and twenty-four feet wide, its white-painted length facing outward like an advertisement from atop the escarpment, its front door leading out to a dramatic ledge jutting out over the steep cliff.[62] To support this, a stage line was set up to

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[61] A Lover of Nature, "Catskill Mountains," *New-York Evening Post*, 9 July 1823, p. 2, col. 2; 10 July 1823, p. 2, col. 1. Evers, *The Catskills*, 351.

[62] Roland Van Zandt, *The Catskill Mountain House* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers U. Press, 1966), 33-37. A slight modification to Van Zandt's account, implying that the permanent structure was already underway rather than to be built in the fall, is found in the letter, "Hudson, June 26th, 1823," in the *New-York Evening Post*, 9 July 1823, p. 2 col. 1: "A temporary wooden building for the accommodation of visitors, the southern wing of which is about fifty feet long, hung with

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ferry visitors "immediately after the arrival of the steam-boat" from Catskill to "the Mountain," an advertisement in New York newspapers announced several weeks after the opening.[63]

The "group of gentlemen" who created this tourist site knew their market. The temporary shack had its grand opening on July 4, the unofficial start of the tourist season, and they inserted the first article in the New York papers at the precise point in the travel season when the city would have been filled with southern tourists headed north and with New Yorkers readying their summer journeys. But more than just a hotel was envisioned: the area would become something of a theme park, and the article glowingly described the immediate environs. This included two small lakes stocked with fish just behind the nascent Mountain House. And, of course, Kaaterskill Falls awaited.

The publicity campaign was a major success, as evidenced by the response the new tourist site received. Visitors in that first summer came from the first rank of New York society, including the governor, DeWitt Clinton, and, perhaps, Aaron Burr.[64] And more than just New Yorkers were drawn to the mountaintop. One such visitor was Elias Ball, another member of that fabulously wealthy South Carolina plantation family. He had arrived in early July in New York City as a tourist. Not knowing anyone in the city, soon after his landing he went "in

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evergreens, being the ball room, has been constructed near an abrupt rocky precipice... Mr. Van Bergen, with his family, are in possession, and the accommodations are good. They company are about erecting a building sixty feet in front, with a wing of the same length running back; and the house is to be three stories." Evers, *The Catskills*, dates this to 1822, 352.

[63] "E. Beach's Stage Line," 15 July 1823, *New-York Evening Post*, p. 3, col. 5.

[64] DeWitt Clinton Diary, 23 August 1823, New-York Historical Society. An 1823 visit by Aaron Burr is suggested in Van Zandt, *Catskill Mountain House*, 34.

quest of some acquaintances," but "could find none." The city nearly overwhelmed him, as he wrote his uncle:

> As you have been in the city of New York yourself, you can readily imagine how a stranger must feel in so great a commercial town, he can't hear himself speak, for the rattling of carriages over the stones is so great, he can't turn around with out butting against some one, or cross the street without some danger of being run over, in fact there appears to be nothing but bustle and confusion during the hours of business.[65]

But the Mountain House was being advertised precisely to travellers like Ball, and just days later he was mounting the overlook above the Hudson. That speaks volumes about how effectively advertised it was. Ball stayed at the Mountain House for several days, "much pleased with the very extensive view." He then "came immediately to the Springs" where he "passed a gay week." Later, he travelled northward to Canada and then south to Boston. He returned to New York by the end of August.[66]

The Mountain House's wealthy visitors opened a lucrative new market for entrepreneurs at Catskill as early as that first season. For example, as Ball made his way on the road up to the House he encountered what was advertised as "the cave where Rip Van Winkle...had his long and comfortable nap of twenty years." Ball was charmingly uncertain about the fictional status of Van Winkle, though, adding "if ever such a person existed."[67] Another traveller somewhat more certain about that "could not help thinking of our friend and precursor Rip Van Wynkle" as he climbed the hill. He imagined that he might "expect to see

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[65] Elias Ball to Isaac Ball from Saratoga Springs, 23 July 1823, Ball Family Papers.
[66] Elias Ball to Isaac Ball from Saratoga Springs, 23 July 1823, Ball Family Papers.
[67] Elias Ball to Isaac Ball from Saratoga Springs, 23 July 1823, Ball Family Papers.

the antiquated figure of the drowsy German Royalist starting up from his long slumber to wonder at the mountain rivulet that rolled by him, and the poor modern creatures that asked the aid of horses to drag them heavily up these dreary passes."[68] Rip Van Winkle became a minor industry in and around Catskill (as it is to this day). By 1825 there was a "small cottage" staffed, one traveller reported, "by a Person called Rip Van Winkle," who, he wrote, "from W. Irvings discription *[sic]* of that oddity you would suppose he bore a striking resemblance." But his verdict for this non-event was crushing: he found it "tedious."[69] Other tourist experiences were offered on that same road such as a caged bear advertised with an "attractive inscription, accompanying an admirable likeness, hung out on the exterior of his dwelling place – '3 cents for a sight at the Bear.'"[70] These enhancements were intended to add authenticity, a heightened kind of reality, to the area, even if they depicted fictional characters. These are hallmarks of the tourist experience, what Daniel Boorstin has called "pseudo-events."[71] The finished Mountain House was inaugurated in 1824.[72]

That same year the steamboat monopoly that had been held for so long by the North River Steam Company suddenly collapsed. The company had

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[68] Charles West Thomson Diary, 2 Aug 1824, Box IV, C.W. Thompson Papers, New-York Historical Society.
[69] S. Shulling Diary, 18? July 1825, Am.1524, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. There is no record, oddly enough, of Leather-stocking impersonators on the mountain, at least in the 1820s.
[70] Charles West Thomson Diary, 2 Aug 1824, C.W. Thompson Papers.
[71] Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987; orig. pub. 1961). See especially pp. 77-117, "From Traveler to Tourist: The Lost Art of Travel."
[72] The Mountain House would be expanded over the years and would eventually become one of America's grand hotels. But it never recovered from the decline during World War II and was abandoned. It was burned in January, 1963. Van Zandt, *Catskill Mountain House,* 310-40.

conducted itself as a classic monopoly, keeping fares high while avoiding expensive technological advances. The Supreme Court ruled in *Gibbons v. Ogden* in March 1824 that the monopoly was unfair and opened the Hudson to competition. A rival line almost immediately began operating on the river, radically undercutting the North River Line. In May, North River had to cut its New York to Albany fare from seven to five dollars. By June both lines had dropped weekend fares to two dollars, weekly rates five dollars. By late July all fares were two dollars.[73] By 1830 fifty cent fares would be common on any of the five lines running from New York to Albany.[74]

One traveller who noticed the effect of all this was a young Philadelphia poet, Charles West Thompson, who was travelling that summer of 1824. He arrived in New York in late July and after spending several days there with his five other travelling companions he travelled north alone on a new steamboat, the *Chancellor Kent*. The impact of the new prices was apparent to him: "the unparalleled cheapness of travelling this season (being but 2 Dollars to Albany) has occasioned to be rather uncomfortably crowded, especially with regard to sleeping accommodations, although they are very large and well provided."[75]

Although Thompson found Saratoga Springs crowded, he was mistaken to attribute this to a three-dollar drop in steamboat fares. What he was experiencing was the effect of the resort's increasing visibility and popularity. This crowd was

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[73] *Saratoga Sentinel*, 4 May 1824, p. 2, col. 3; 29 Jun 1824, p. 3, col. 1; 27 Jul 1824, p. 3, col. 1.
[74] John Morrison, *History of American Steam Navigation*, 51.
[75] Charles West Thomson diary, 29 July 1824, C.W. Thomson Papers.

a homogenous one, composed of the gentry class and entirely comfortable to Thompson: he met several people he knew and made at least one friend.

Thompson stayed at Saratoga only three nights, like most of his fellow visitors. On his way back to New York he stopped at the village of Catskill. He took the carriage up the mountain to "the pretty white edifice," the Catskill Mountain House, which he found "over crowded." The next morning, after an early rise, he and a companion hiked several miles and gazed, stunned and amazed, at the spectacle of Kaaterskill Falls, which they contemplated from "a platform erected on one of its overhanging precipices."[76]

As Charles West Thompson was idling his way up and down the Hudson, in Philadelphia a young artist was attempting to make a career for himself. But most critics found his early efforts to be clumsy at best: he had a wobbly sense of perspective and an awkward way with the human form. Frustrated, he had spent the preceding year applying himself to the principles of painting, studying Gilpin and others. But he was still not selling his paintings. Maybe he also felt out of touch with the era's artistic changes. In April 1825, he decided that the

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[76] Charles West Thomson diary, 2 Aug., 3 Aug. 1824, C.W. Thomson Papers. Thompson would become one of the more prolific contributors to the gift books of the 1830s through 1850s and was considered one of the main poets of mid-nineteenth century America. Mention Kaaterskill Falls had first appeared in Spafford's first edition of his *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Albany: H.C. Southwick, 1813) the most highly regarded reference book for the state. It had contained a very brief notice of the falls. In the second edition (1824) he expanded the description mainly, he says, because he had heard "rhapsodies" about the falls – that they had been "so much admired of late." And he noted that "a house of entertainment" was "about to be erected at Pine Orchard," but beyond that his description was vague. Horatio Spafford, *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Albany: B.D. Packard, 1824), 245.

only way he could gain the attention of the art world would be to move to New York City.

Thomas Cole took a small garret above his father's house that one biographer called a "poorly lit closet." There he painted five small, imaginary compositions, studies partially based on the examples he found in the painting manuals of his day. He was able to persuade George Dixey, a carver and gilder, to hang them in his shop, where one day they were purchased by George Bruen, a merchant and appreciator of the arts.[77]

Bruen now played a key role in Cole's life and career. Not only had he purchased four of the five paintings for a handsome sum ($31 in all), but he suggested that the young man go and see American scenery. He probably suggested specific sites for him to visit, sites that he, as a member of this travelling class, knew intimately. He may even have proposed an itinerary. We know that he funded Cole's trip, although probably not handsomely. And at some time in late summer, but certainly no later than early September, Cole boarded the steamboat north, up the Hudson.[78]

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[77] Louis Legrand Noble, *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole* (1853; reprint, with a forward by Elliot Vesell, Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1964; paperback edition reprint, Hensonville, NY: Black Dome Press, 1997), 32-33; See also Ellwood Parry III, "Thomas Cole's Early Career: 1818-1829," in Edward Nygern with Bruce Robertson, *Views and Visions: American Landscape Before 1830* (Washington: Corcoran Gallery, 1986), 161-167. Descriptions of Cole's early influences are in Tracy Felker, "Thomas Cole's Drawings of His 1825 Trip Up the Hudson River," *American Art Journal* 24, nos. 1 & 2 (1992): 60-67.

[78] Ellwood Parry III in *The Art of Thomas Cole: Ambition and Imagination* (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1988), 24, determined the time frame for Cole's journey, based mainly on the fact that he had his first five finished paintings from this trip ready for sale by late October.

The route he followed is traceable through a sketchbook he kept on the journey. These twenty-two landscape sketches outline a route that followed the lines of the Fashionable Tour. He went up the Hudson to a point just north of Albany and from there he turned southward. He stopped at the Mountain House and took in the nearby falls. Then he returned to New York. He did not go to Saratoga: not only could he not afford it, but it was certainly not scenic. That he did not go to Lake George, universally acclaimed as scenic, probably had to do with his funding – he probably could not afford that leg. From the sketches he took, at West Point and at Cold Spring just across the river, at Troy, at Cohoes Falls near Albany, and at Catskill, it is clear that he was conveyed by steam boat: he sketched places that were at the line's standard stops. For a budget traveller, the steamboat was the most efficient way to travel. It was fast, thus cutting down on costs related to food and shelter, and it was now relatively inexpensive.

The evidence of his sketches shows that he made several of them on the boat as it chugged north through the Highlands, at morning and then in the early evening. He then probably got off at West Point to make several more sketches of the area and of the nearby ruins of Fort Putnam. He then probably took another boat up to Troy, possibly at night as there are no sketches between Putnam and Troy. At Cohoes Falls, he made four more sketches. He almost certainly had been told to go to Cohoes Falls, located on the Mohawk River just before it empties into the Hudson, since they were touted as one of the most scenic falls of the tour and had been described numerous times in print, as in, for example,

Gideon Davison's 1822 tourist guidebook.[79] After turning southward, Cole went directly to Catskill, where he made six sketches, capturing various sights in and around Pine Orchard.[80]

Cole was evidently quite taken with Kaaterskill Falls, which he studied at various angles: two sketches from below, one at a distance and another closer; another from the top; and one from within the overhang of the upper falls. These are some of the earliest images we have of the falls, and they show a well-developed tourist location. Facing the falls, to the left there was an observation platform built on iron poles above a large rock, the very platform Charles West Thomson used to peer over the falls the year before.[81] To the right of the falls the sketch depicts the guide's hut, which was set somewhat back from the edge and fronted by a short railed walkway extending to the precipice. Cole populated one of his larger sketches of the falls with several tourists lounging on the rocks at the bottom of the upper leap. Overall, Cole was awed with the site: on the obverse of his sketch number 17, he wrote that the falls had a "sublime view."[82]

Cole returned to New York and within several weeks he had created five paintings. Soon after he had painted them he hung them in the window of a

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[79] Gideon Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 30-31. Today the Hudson is dammed at Cohoes Falls; the falls are dry save for a spillway.
[80] Tracie Felker, "First Impressions," 60-76.
[81] Holes drilled into the rock for the supporting poles still exist at the top of the falls, filled with rust. One other early, but not precisely dated, image of this infrastructure survives, Thomas Hilson's *Platform and Hut Overlooking Cauterskill Falls*, pencil on paper, c. 1825-30, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
[82] Felker, "First Impressions," 76-81; see figs. 16 (Cole's sketch no. 17), 19 (Cole's no. 19, face), 20 (Cole's no. 19, verso). The immediate surroundings at the top of the falls, with mention of the "house of the guide," are described in Henry Dilworth Gilpin, *A Northern Tour: Being a Guide to Saratoga, Lake George, Niagara, Canada , Boston, &c. &c....* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1825), 40.

bookstore and picture shop owned by William Coleman. Two were views of Cold Spring and were purchased by a Mr. A. Seaton.[83] Another was a view of Fort Putnam, near Cold Spring. The other two, both views near Catskill, are the ones that made his reputation: they are considered to be the foundations of America's first art movement, the Hudson River School. One day soon after Cole had begun displaying the paintings, Col. John Trumbull, walked by the shop. Trumbull was the famous American artist whose depictions of patriotic themes and his portraits of Americans of wealth and power had made him one of America's few famous artists. He spotted *Kaaterskill Upper Falls, Catskill Mountains*[84] and immediately purchased it. He showed the painting to two other prominent artists, William Dunlap and Asher Durand. All three returned to Coleman's shop and purchased the remaining two paintings, *Lake with Dead Trees* and *View of Fort Putnam*. A short time later, Dunlap's article about Cole and his works appeared in the *New-York Evening Post*: "Another American Genius."[85]

We know from his writings that Cole was a lover of nature, a man who could value the turn of light and the play of color. And it is obvious that he was an appreciator of the picturesque. But we also know from his surviving correspondence that he was highly attuned to the desires of his patrons: he was an ambitious man who wanted to produce salable images that were admired and

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[83] These paintings are "unlocated," per Ellwood Parry, "Thomas Cole's Early Career, 1818-1829," 169.

[84] Also "unlocated" today. A copy of that painting, *View of Kaaterskill Falls* (exhibited now as *Kaaterskill Falls*), was commissioned in 1826 by Daniel Wadsworth, John Trumbull's nephew-in-law, and hangs in the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford. Myers, "Selling the Sublime," 174, fn. 11.

[85] *New-York Evening Post*, 22 Nov 1825, p. 2, col. 1.

purchased by men of influence.[86] It is in the light of these factors that we can examine why he chose to paint the paintings he did. The paintings he produced after this trip came from a mix of these motives: his artistic desires combined with what he perceived would be salable to his target audience, to merchants like Bruen and members of the artistic elite in New York. In fact, it is probable (although not provable) that Bruen himself suggested the subjects Cole eventually rendered. Even later in his career, Cole allowed and expected his patrons to have this close control over the content of his paintings.[87] At any rate, the five paintings Cole made were of places which he knew would appeal to those classes. The appeal of the two views of Cold Spring was that they depicted an area that had, fairly recently, become the site of a number of estates of wealthy New Yorkers who aspired to the status of a Livingston or Van Rensslaer. The *View of Fort Putnam*, on the Hudson in the same general area, showed a site that was prominently featured in the guidebooks of the day as the closest thing the United States had to a "mouldering ruin," in the words of Davison's guidebook: it had been built a mere fifty years before, during the American Revolution.[88] But the two Catskill scenes are out of place with the others – either

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[86] Next to Cole's aesthetics and politics, his relations with his patrons are the third most examined aspect of his life. Studies include Larry Sullivan and Mary Alice Mackay, "Another Clue to Thomas Cole," *Arts Magazine* 60, no. 5 (Jan. 1986): 68-71; Barbara Novak, "Thomas Cole and Robert Gilmor," *Art Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (Spring, 1962): 41-53; Thomas Cole, *The Correspondence of Thomas Cole and Daniel Wadsworth*. (Hartford: Connecticut Historical Society, 1983); Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole and the Aristocracy," *Arts Magazine* 56, no. 3 (Nov., 1981): 94-106; and Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole: Landscape and the Course of American Empire," in *Thomas Cole: Landscape into History* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1994), esp. section 2, "Aristocratic Patronage," 34-38.

[87] See, for example, Sullivan and Mackay, "Another Clue to Thomas Cole," 68-71.

[88] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 13.

they are offered purely as scenic wonders, which they certainly were, or, perhaps, there was something more. And why Kaaterskill Falls? He could have chosen Cohoes Falls: it certainly had gotten enough attention from his pencil, and it was rhapsodized over in the guidebooks. Naturally, we cannot completely know the roots of his decision, but the results are obvious: the two Catskill paintings sold. As an indication of just how precisely Cole had targeted his audience, William Dunlap, who had purchased *Lake with Dead Trees*, almost immediately resold it to Philip Hone, one of the wealthiest New York merchants, for twice what he had paid for it.[89]

But the composition of these paintings gives us important evidence. Cole had, as his sketchbook attests, rendered these images from life. In his sketches or in these early paintings, he did not do a great deal of artistic modification, which was allowable under Gilpin's picturesque painting scheme. But although *Lake with Dead Trees* appears to have been as close a record of what Cole saw there, the other painting from the Catskill tourist area, *Kaaterskill Upper Falls, Catskill Mountains*, has several elements of fantasy. One in particular has loaded message. Barely visible in the surviving copy, there lingers at the very edge of the second leap of the falls the figure of a Mohawk Indian. Like the Indians populating Cooper's works, this figure, far more than being just a decorative element in a picturesque composition, had powerful evocations for the viewers

[89] Parry, "Thomas Cole's Early Career," 169.

of the time: a distant past, mourned in a half-remembered golden light; the high romanticism of Sir Walter Scott's Highlands.

But what is the Indian doing there? One reason, certainly, was to add authenticity to Cole's painting, in the same way that Cooper inserted Native American characters into his novels. And Cole probably was aware of the tremendous appeal of Indian images like those that Cooper used among the art-buying public. He was careful, for example, to clearly depict the Indian in Mohawk dress, details that the public was quite aware of. An Indian at Kaaterskill evoked a pre-tourist Kaaterskill Falls, a more "authentic" time than the present.

But why put the Indian at the edge of the falls?

Cole may have been influenced by some of the stories that were reproduced in the tourist guidebooks available the year he travelled. Originally appearing in Gideon Minor Davison's 1822 guidebook, *The Fashionable Tour*, and reprinted in the 1825 edition, a "legend" is told concerning Cohoes Falls, one of the sites of Thomas Cole's 1825 trip:

> An old tradition states, that a chief of the Mohawks, attempting to cross in his canoe, embarked too near the current of the falls, to escape their descent. Fineing [sic] himself unable to resist the influence of the tide, which hurried him fast to the summit, with true Indian heroism, he turned his canoe into the stream, assumed his station at the helm, and with a paddle in one hand and his bottle in the other, was precipitated over the brink.[90]

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[90] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* [1822], 30-31.

But Davison's was not the only version of this story. A much more highly colored version appeared in another guidebook, Henry Dilworth Gilpin's *Northern Tour,* which was published in 1825:

> It is said, that when the country was inhabited by the Indians, they were in the habit of transporting the skins and articles of trade in their bark canoes down the Mohawk, and when they arrived at the falls, they carried their boats around by land. In speaking of this circumstance, old Vander Donck relates the following anecdote: -- "It chanced that an Indian, with whom I myself was well acquainted, accompanied by his wife and child, with about sixty beaver skins, was descending the river in the spring, when the stream is most rapid, intending to trade with the Netherlanders. Not being careful to come to in time, not regarding the current enough, and relying too much upon his own powers, before he was aware, he was carried down by the stream, and notwithstanding he exerted himself to the utmost when it was too late, the rapids precipitated him, with his bark canoe, his wife and child, his beaver skins and other packages which he had with him, from the top to the bottom of the falls. His wife and child were killed, most of his goods lost, and his canoe dashed to pieces; but he saved his life, and I have frequently conversed with him since, and heard him relate the story."[91]

These were stories that helped sell guide books. Cole was almost certainly motivated by a similar impulse. But Cole might have been trying to make a greater statement, discernable if both of these Catskill paintings are seen together.

The other painting, *Lake with Dead Trees,* is incongruous when compared to its four sister images. For one, it was probably as far from the "beautiful" as Cole got, as it depicts one of the two ponds that feed Kaaterskill Falls. It is a small, calm lake ringed with picturesquely gnarled trunks of trees dead perhaps a few years. Rising above it is the nearby peak of Round Top. The subtext to *Lake with Dead Trees* is only understandable within the context of the history of the

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[91] Gilpin, *Northern Tour,* 58-59.

immediate area of its subject. The lake, called Parmenter's Pond, had been expanded by the dam that had been placed just atop Kaaterskill Falls. This man-made obstruction had backed water up into the lower lake, killing the trees around it.[92] Further, because of the dam, the falls themselves did not run in the summer unless visitors paid the mill owner to release the water. Cole may have been criticizing the desolation that ensued from human intervention by offering these images as symbols of the great changes underway throughout the region. Taken together, *Lake with Dead Trees* and *Kaaterskill Upper Falls, Catskill Mountains* appear to have been deliberately created as a pair: Cole, who was always interested in the symmetry of pairs and would build his later career on series of paintings, may have seen the two paintings as part of a whole. Both depict elements of the natural landscape destroyed by the modern world: on the lake, the grand trees, and, perhaps, the lake itself; at the waterfall, the noble savage, perhaps the last of his race.[93]

During the same summer and fall that Cole had travelled, a crisis hit the career of James Fenimore Cooper. *The Pioneers* had been gratifyingly successful, as was his next book, *The Pilot*, a Revolutionary War tale published the following year, 1824. William Cullen Bryant, meeting him at a dinner at Robert Sedgwick's

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[92] Evers, *The Catskills*, 351.

[93] I am deeply indebted to Kenneth Myers' analysis of *Lake* and *Falls* in "Selling the Sublime," 172-181, which outlines the subtexts discussed in this paragraph and describes Cole's fondness for pairing his paintings to create a didactic message. William Leete Stone (d. 1844) noted the irony of the dam atop the falls, speculating that it had been "dammed up the water so as to nearly destroy the beauty of the cascade at pleasure, and when visitors come...[the owner] lets off the waters as a matter of favor...[and] duns everyone to pay for it." "Ten Days in the Country," *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, 7 Sept. 1824.

home in New York in April of that year, described him as "a little giddy" with the popularity of his works.[94] At that point, he was in the process of writing *Lionel Lincoln*, a book which would not be completed until the autumn. *Lincoln* was a Revolutionary War tale, a follow-up for *The Pilot*, which Cooper hoped would be the cornerstone of a thirteen-novel cycle in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution. But it was a commercial and critical failure, in part because of Cooper's ambiguity about the nature of the Rebel cause: the "firmest patriot of the tale," a modern critic has noted, was "an insane fanatic for whom the cause of liberty is a perverse metaphor for his private past" – he had been an inmate of a British asylum.[95]

In this relatively early stage of his career, Cooper lived with the fear that his success would prove to be fleeting, and he feared that the failure of *Lincoln* signaled an irreversible decline. Having tasted the fruits of commercial and critical success he was terrified that it would all reverse and he would one again become dependent on his in-laws. And so he returned to the formula which had proved to be successful for *The Pioneers*: the portrayal of fashionable and identifiable tourist sites in a picturesque style, combined with dramatic, romantic figures as closely similar to Walter Scott's as possible. Most importantly, the story, particularly its setting, had to have a nostalgic vision similar to that he had presented in *The Pioneers*. Its pre-Revolutionary scenery was stripped of the

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[94] William Cullen Bryant III and Thomas Voss, eds., *The Letters of William Cullen Bryant* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1975), 1:154.
[95] Wayne Franklin, *The New World of James Fenimore Cooper* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 176.

"improvements" of the present day, things Cooper found awkward and unsightly.

But, ironically, tourism proved to be pivotal in the creation of his new book, *The Last of the Mohicans*, since the moment of inspiration for it came from a tourist trip Cooper took during the summer of 1824. In July of that year he was visited by friends from Britain, a group which included the future Prime Minister and fourteenth Earl of Derby, Edward Stanley, and three others. They were determined to follow the route of the Fashionable Tour and wanted Cooper to join them. He, too, wanted that – undoubtedly the new freedom his financial success had given him had made him a bit footloose – but he had some obligations in New York. They, though, were eager to see as much of picturesque America as possible, and as it was already getting to be the height of the season they set off immediately. On the 27th of July they headed north from New York on an itinerary which included the Hudson Highlands, Pine Orchard, Kaaterskill Falls, and Saratoga Springs. Cooper had already visited these places the previous summer and he had to attend an honorary dinner; his friends went on without him.[96] Two days later, the morning after the dinner, he took the steamboat north and caught up with them somewhere along the Hudson, perhaps in Albany but most likely at Ballston Spa or Saratoga Springs.[97]

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[96] James Franklin Beard describes Cooper's 1823 steamboat journey north with the actor Charles Matthews in his introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans*, xix-xx. The dinner was with U.S. Navy friends, including Matthew Perry, *Letters and Journals*, 1:113.

[97] Cooper, *Letters and Journals*, 1:128, fn. 2. Susan Fenimore Cooper, the author's daughter, misdated this journey as 1825 in her biography of her father; see Beard, introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans*, xx.

There the party decided "upon a little excursion to Lake George," with a stop at "the Glens Falls." The falls, Number 6 of the *Hudson River Portfolio*, was another of the sites written about by Timothy Dwight, who had described them in enthusiastic detail. Cooper, well conversant with Dwight, would have been eager to see them.[98] They arrived at the falls on a day in early August. Glenn's Falls was a jumbled cascade of the Hudson River, formed by "a regular series of capacious steps…of an imposing extent, and of incomparable beauty," in the words of the *Hudson River Port Folio*.[99] The turbulence of the water and the intermittently soft nature of the limestone outcropping forming the falls had created a number of caverns beneath them. Early in the century, a substantial bridge had been thrown across the river there using a small island in the river's center as the location for a tollhouse. A staircase had been built down from the tollhouse to the river, and visitors could pay to visit the caverns.[100] Cooper and company descended into the caverns. In the journal that Stanley kept on the trip, he described Cooper as being "much struck with the scenery which he had not before seen; and exclaimed, 'I must place one of my old Indians here.'" This cavern would become the site of a crucial scene in *The Last of the Mohicans*.[101]

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[98] Dwight, *Travels*, 2:163, 3:287-9. We have already seen how Cooper used Dwight for *The Pioneers*; Wayne Franklin describes his use of Dwight for *Mohicans* in "The Wilderness of Words in *The Last of the Mohicans*," in *New Essays on The Last of the Mohicans* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 25-45, esp. 30-32.
[99] *Hudson River Port Folio*, no. VI. Today, the rocks forming Glen's Falls are visible and dry due to a dam across the Hudson just above them.
[100] *Hudson River Port Folio*, no. VI.
[101] Edward Stanley, *Journal of a Tour in America in 1824-25* (London: privately printed, 1930), 15; another, slightly enhanced version of this is told in Susan Fenimore Cooper, *Pages and Pictures* (1865: Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1980), 121; both quoted in Beard, introduction to *Last of the Mohicans*, xx. Cooper confirms this in an 1826 letter to his British publisher; Cooper, *Letters*, 1:128.

Leaving Glen's Falls, Cooper and his friends journeyed northward. They pressed on to Caldwell on the shores of Lake George. The was a popular side-trip for visitors to Saratoga Springs or Ballston Spa and as early as 1802 a tavern had been built at the northern end of the lake, at Bolton Landing. The first accommodations at what would become the village of Caldwell were built around 1818, when James Caldwell, the owner of most of the land in the area, converted his home to an inn. Dwight had praised the lake's scenery, and the area was a modestly successful attraction by the early 1820s.[102] Cooper and party made side trips to the ruins of Fort William Henry and Fort George. The Hurons had successfully besieged them while aiding the French during the French and Indian War. Cooper would work that episode, too, into *Mohicans*. The party also probably took a day trip to Fort Ticonderoga using the new steamboat that was plying the lake. Cooper returned to New York by mid-August, since he (and the city) was eagerly expecting the arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette, who was about to arrive in New York to begin a widely anticipated last tour of the United States. The idea for *Mohicans* remained dormant as Cooper completed *Lionel Lincoln*, published in February 1825.[103]

He began writing *Mohicans* sometime before *Lincoln* was published, but as the failure of that work became clear in the months after its publication he quickened his pace. He worked on it in through summer of 1825 and was proofing the manuscript in September and October, just as Cole's first paintings

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[102] Dwight, *Travels*, 3:247-52, 288-89.
[103] Beard, introduction to *Last of the Mohicans*, xxiii.

were being exhibited. Publishing was delayed as Charles Wiley, his New York publisher, began struggling under health and financial problems, and Cooper transferred printing to the Philadelphia firm of Carey and Lea. Finally, in early February 1826, *The Last of the Mohicans* appeared in the bookstores of America.[104]

Cooper was careful to make the landscape he had travelled with his friends central to the plot of *Mohicans*. Indeed, it was emphasized much more than in *The Pioneers*. Throughout, he stressed that the book's events were being conducted across tourist sites and he regularly hinted that these were places his readers knew. Ballston Spa, for example, was worked into the narrative. After a dramatic episode where the sisters and Heywood are rescued from near death at the hands of the Hurons, Hawkeye leads the shaken survivors only a short distance, down "the precipitous sides of that hill…[at] whose summit had so nearly proved the scene of their massacre," across "a babbling brook…[to] a narrow dell, under the shade of a few water elms…but a few rods" from where they had been. Cooper is describing the very route that tourists would have used to enter Ballston Spa (of course, in the 1820s this was along a road). Continuing the narrative, Hawkeye and his native friends then begin "throwing aside the dried leaves, and opening the blue clay" to uncover "a clear and sparkling spring of bright, glancing water."[105] Hawkeye tells the former captives that he knew that their capturers would head for this place – that "the Mingoes would push for this springs, for the knaves well know the vartue of its waters!" Heywood drinks

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[104] Beard, introduction to *Last of the Mohicans*, xxiv-xxvii.
[105] Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 119 (chap. XII).

from it, and experienced what many tourists must have after drinking the intensely mineralized water: he "threw it aside with grimaces of discontent." Hawkeye laughs, though, and says, "Ah! you want the flavour that one gets by habit...but I have come to my taste, and now I crave it." To make sure that his readers know that this mineral spring is truly the one they have come to experience themselves, Cooper gives them broad clues: this "solitary and silent spring," is the very one, with "its sister fountains," that "within fifty years, the wealth, beauty, and talents, of a hemisphere" would "assemble in throngs, in pursuit of health and pleasure."[106] As if that were not specific enough, in the 1831 edition he added a footnote directly identifying it as Ballston Spa, "one of the two principal watering places in America." The locations were not unnoticed by the reading public, either. One review noted that "our modern fashionables, who take their summer's tour to Lake George and the Springs of Saratoga," would, by reading *Mohicans*, "form some faint idea of the different conditions of things" in earlier times. It claimed that "our author" had "chosen...a place...admirably adapted" to his story, one "abounding with romantic scenery of the wildest and most picturesque character. "[107]

Another memorable episode is set in the caves under Glen's Falls. After an attack from the Hurons, a number of the European characters, including Cooper's Scott-esque pair of heroines, Alice and Cora Munro, take refuge in the caverns beneath Glen's Falls, along with Chingachgood and Uncas. What

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[106] Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, 123.
[107] W.H. Gardiner, "Cooper's Novels: *The Last of the Mohicans*," *North American Review* LII (New Series XXVII), (July, 1826), 156-57.

follows is passage that is so eloquent that one critic has called it an "ecstatic description," and like the Kaaterskill Falls passage in *The Pioneers*, it emerges from the mouth of Hawkeye. As they hide in the caves, Hawkeye is asked, "We are then on an island?" To which he replies

> Ay! there are the falls on two sides of us, and the river above and below. If you had daylight, it would be worth the trouble to step up on the height of this rock, and look at the perversity of the water. It falls by no rule at all; sometimes it leaps, sometimes it tumbles; there, it skips; here, it shoots; in one place 't is white as snow, and in another 't is green as grass; hereabouts, it pitches into deep hollows, that rumble and quake the 'arth; and hereaway, it ripples and singles like a brook, fashioning whirlpools and gulleys in the old stone, as if 't was no harder than trodden clay. The whole design of the river seems disconcerted. First it runs smoothly, as if meaning to go down the descent as things were ordered; then it angles about and faces the shore; nor are there places wanting where it looks backward, as if unwilling to leave the wilderness, to mingle with the salt! Ay, lady, the fine cobweb-looking cloth you wear at your throat, is coarse, and like a fish-net, to little spots I could show you, where the river fabricates all sorts of images, as if, having broke loose from order, it would try its hand at everything. And yet what does it amount to! After the water has suffered to have its will, for a time, like a headstrong man, it is gathered together by the hand that made it, and a few rods below you may see it all, flowing on steadily towards the sea, as was foreordained from the first foundation of the 'arth![108]

The similarities of this passage to the description of Kaaterskill Falls and the view from the escarpment in *The Pioneers* is striking. Both descriptions are nothing less than painterly. One contemporary reviewer, writing in the *North American Review*, called his style "highly picturesque," as Cooper "paint[ed] upon the grand scale, and with a bold outline," depicting "huge rocks, and overhanging woods, and tumbling cataracts, [and] with a great mist."[109]

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[108] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 55.

[109] Gardiner, "Cooper's Novels," 154. John McWilliams, in *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), describes this as Hawkeye's "visual responses to the framed scene…the whole paragraph makes one composite picture," 29-30.

Cooper's description of Glen's Falls is very much like Cole's depiction of Kaaterskill Falls: it created an idealized picture removed of all the modern-day tourist clutter. And as for *Mohicans*, it was an immediate success: Cooper's formula had once again worked.

Thomas Cole, too, was looking to continue his success. After the exhibition of his first series of paintings, he resumed work in the winter of 1826. George William Featherstonehaugh, a British-born gentleman farmer and merchant, invited Cole to work at a painting studio he had on his extensive estate at Duanesburg, New York, a short distance from Albany.[110] There, Cole painted for his supper, producing four views of Featherstonehaugh's estate and a couple of other minor paintings. He had also gotten a prized commission from William Gracie, another wealthy New York merchant. Gracie wanted him to render another view of the Kaaterskill Falls, and it is possible he dictated the subject and maybe even the composition. Cole then produced an uncontested masterpiece, *The Falls of Kaaterskill*. This large canvas (43" x 36") depicted both of the leaps of the falls from the front. A significant number of elements were changed, omitted, or added. For example, the view depicts the falls as if seen some fifty feet in the air, looking dead on at the falls. The curve of the rock has been flattened out, particularly on the right, and there are several imagined, picturesque rocks. Cole omitted the tourist platform, the guide's hut, and the protective railing, all

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[110] Featherstonehaugh was instrumental in creating one of America's first railroads, the Mohawk & Hudson, which would be linked to by another very early railroad, the Saratoga & Mohawk. Together, in 1831, they would create Saratoga's rail link to the world. Simon Baatz, "Featherstonehaugh, George William," in John Garraty, Mark Carnes, eds., *American National Biography* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1999), 7:783-5.

awkward artifacts of the commercialization of the falls. And the lounging tourists who populated Cole's sketches of the falls had been replaced by the figure of an Indian, standing as in *Kaaterskill Upper Falls, Catskill Mountains*, at the precipice – once again, ready, perhaps, to fling himself to his death. Cole presented the ideal tourist vision, one unencumbered by the very tourism that had brought them to the attention of his patrons and Cole to the falls.

Working in parallel, but never far from each other in distance or sensibility, both Cole and Cooper sought to render a vision for their market. For Cole, his idealized visions publicized his patrons' good taste and fashionability. These men of wealth had commissioned these images to further increase their social standing, not only as proof of their generous sponsorship of this artistic superstar, but also because the paintings they commissioned him to create depicted an area that had suddenly become the most fashionable summer destination in North America. Soon, Cole's paintings would be the center of an artistic revival in New York City, through the Academy of Fine Arts, an institution that would overthrow the old tyranny of the beautiful in favor of a new generation of artists working toward the picturesque. For Cooper, his readers could use his books to heighten their tourist experiences for those who had been there; for others, they provided the dream of these places and in effect his narratives acted as advertisements for these tourist destinations.

The widely reproduced images rendered from Cole's paintings and the broad distribution of Cooper's works would provide some of the best

advertisements for what would soon become a thriving Catskills tourist industry.[111] By the mid-1820s the ideas and ideals of tourism had already begun to ramify beyond the small set for which it had been created, and it was becoming clearer that there was going to be a cost for this heightened attention to tourism. The country's increasing prosperity combined with the rapidly decreasing cost of travel would create a larger travelling public. The increasing numbers of tourists would soon begin to create anxiety among the already established tourist class. Their comfortably constructed gentry world of tourism was about to be invaded by their lessers.

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[111] Cole's images of the falls would be reproduced in, for example, J.H. Hinton, *The History and Topography of the United States*, v. 2 (Philadelphia: Thomas Wardle, 1832); he would also inspire imitators, such as Thomas Doughty, whose engraving of *Catskill Falls* appeared in the 1827 *Atlantic Souvenir*.

CHAPTER V

GUIDEBOOKS, LITERATURE, AND THE SPREAD OF TOURISM, 1825-1827

> The European traveller beholds around him a vast field, ...on every side, the marks of ancient ignorance, useless and absurd habits and customs, and the remnants of former barbarism blended with the tyranny which is not yet extinct...
>
> Surely our own country presents a fairer and a nobler scene ...
>
> With such a country open to our investigations, and that country *our home*, there are few travellers who will not prefer it to more distant lands.
>
> Henry D. Gilpin, *The Northern Tour.*

The critical mass of cultural awareness for tourism was reached in 1825, the year that Thomas Cole was creating its artistic and James Fenimore Cooper its literary expression. That year, the Erie Canal was completed and the Mountain House entered its second year of operation. Hudson River steamboat fares continued to drop. Tourists were flooding the Hudson Valley and beyond. The increasing prominence of tourism inspired a number of ambitious writers to incorporate tourist themes into their writing, a trend that, in turn, dramatically increased the visibility of tourism and transmitted the idea of tourism to classes beyond the aristocracy. By the end of the decade tourism had become broadly established in the American mind.

There were several venues for the new class of tourism-influenced writers. Some wrote tourist themes into their fiction, either in novels or in stories printed in the newly popular and widely distributed literary annuals. Others took a more practicable approach, deciding to create texts that would guide particular classes of tourists. These new tourist books, the first to be created in North

America, interwove practical advice helpful to travellers with social and cultural information often based on the author's own experiences or attitudes.

The travelling gentry had long relied on their own networks – word of mouth, travel letters, and diaries and journals - for specific information about where to travel and what to see. Travel literature, although it did give specific information about what was striking and unusual, rarely gave enough specific information – inns to stay at, the costs of travel, or timetables – to be useful to a neophyte. America's expanding economy, though, and the new fashionability of travel was creating a large and growing group of neophyte travellers, all of whom needed clear and coherent information about tourism, what it meant, how to do it, and where to go. The appearance of American tourist guidebooks filled that need.

Tourist guidebooks stood apart from the normal run of travel writing. Something more than a gazetteer, annotated atlas, or road book, but something less than a travel account, a tourist guidebook led the reader through a specific route. Rather than being, as it were, inside the narrative (as with a travel book), the author of a tourist guidebook remained above the narrative: he was rarely, if ever, manifested as a personality in the text. But throughout the text, the authorial voice was central: it dictated place, emotion, and content, and told the reader what to think. Beyond these textual characteristics, tourist guidebooks were a symptom of a particular kind of tourism. Large numbers of this new generation of travellers did not have access to the traditional, gentry, channels of

information. They needed guides, and in response a market was created. That market, in turn, generated more tourists.

The first example of this genre was Gideon Davison's 1822 *The Fashionable Tour*, as discussed in Chapter II. Davison was fortunate in having lived at the epicenter of American tourism, and for three years his was the only tourist guidebook in America. But the number printed was limited and Davison's means of distribution was haphazard at best: Davison probably sold it only through his library at Saratoga Springs. We know, for example, that it was never advertised in New York City, the largest single publishing market in America and the most logical place to sell the book outside of Saratoga.

As obscure as it was, though, it appears to have influenced the two other guidebooks that were published in the summer of 1825. Both were written by authors who were roughly the same age as Davison, but both of these other authors came from classes far more privileged than the Saratoga printer's. Each of their texts were targeted toward the gentry. Like their authors, the texts reflected different aspects of gentry attitudes toward tourism. Both of these two young writers saw tourist-related writing as a way to further nascent literary careers, something that indicates the scope and popularity of tourism by the mid-1820s. But their writings also expressed an emerging conflict between the different classes now being thrown together through tourism.

Theodore Dwight, the first of these two authors, stood in contrast to Gideon Davison, the self-made journeyman printer. Dwight was the nephew of the late, famed travel writer Timothy Dwight, and was consequently an exemplar of a

particular kind of wealthy, conservative New England tradition.[1] Dwight was raised in Connecticut and entered Yale at the age of fourteen where he studied under his uncle, whom he revered. Like his uncle, he had initially intended to continue his studies in theology after graduation from Yale in 1814. Later accounts held that he was disabled by disease, perhaps scarlet fever, and he was unable to continue, but by September of 1815 he was teaching school in Northampton, Massachusetts.[2] He never returned to college and had a continuing struggle with his health, which at least once, in 1816, forced him to return to his parents' home in Hartford.[3] In 1818 he was an agent for John Trumbull's subscription printing of a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence, a task that led him from New York to Boston and out to the seasonal crowds at Ballston and Saratoga Springs in search of subscribers.[4] Still

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[1] Theodore Dwight (1796-1866). He signed his letters "Theodore Dwight, Junior," apparently until his father's death in 1846. Many of his papers, though, are signed and filed under Theodore Dwight, which can often cause confusion between the two. His father was secretary to the Hartford Convention (1814) and one of the "Hartford Wits." There is no biography of Dwight. but sound sketches of his life are in Timothy P. Twohill, "Dwight, Theodore," in John Garraty and Mark Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, (New York: Oxford, 1999), 7:190-1; "Dwight, Theodore," in Stanley Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, *American Authors, 1600-1900* (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1938), 238-39; Benjamin Dwight, *The History of the Descendants of John Dwight, of Dedham, Mass.* (New York: John Trow & Sons, 1874), 230-33. A good analysis of Dwight's philosophy and ideology is found in John Sears' introduction to the reprint of Dwight's *Sketches of Scenery and Manners*. I am also deeply indebted to Denis Kozlov and his unpublished paper, "'The Rational Traveller:' Theodore Dwight and the Authorship of Early American Travel Literature," (University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 1996).

[2] Theodore Dwight, Jr. (TDJ) to Mrs. Abigail Dwight (his mother), 13 Sep 1815, Folder 71, Dwight Family Papers, New York Public Library (hereafter DFP).

[3] Leavitt Thazter at Northampton to TDJ, Feb 15, 1816, lamenting his absence and illness, DFP.

[4] TDJ to John Trumbull, 24 Jun 1818, Theodore Dwight, Jr. Papers (Misc. Mss. Dwight, T., Jr.), New-York Historical Society. See also the signed receipt Dwight collected from Luther Brandish dated 7 Nov 1818 in Luther Brandish Papers (Misc. Mss. Brandish, Luther), Box 1, New-York Historical Society. All the biographies of Dwight claim that he travelled to Europe in 1818; however, there is no evidence in Dwight's surviving letters of this trip, nor is there a diary or other material related to it: that would have been character in the light of Dwight's later journeys. This evidence points to his having spent a frustrating summer and fall gathering subscriptions for

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living in Northampton, he apparently grew ill again in early 1820, and in the summer of 1820 he travelled to Europe to regain his health.[5] There, he journeyed around the continent visiting Switzerland, Italy, Germany and Holland. He was an omnivorous observer, and in Italy he developed a passion for the country that became a lifelong obsession, including, in the 1860s, material and moral support for Italian revolutionaries such as Garibaldi.[6]

Dwight returned in 1821 and moved to New York City, where he began working at the offices of his father's newspaper, the *Daily Advertiser*.[7] Once there, he began the heroic process of turning his uncle's voluminous correspondence into the four volumes of *Travels in New England*, the first volume of which was published in 1822 and the last in 1824. At the same time he was compiling his own travel notes into a manuscript. It appeared in 1824 as *A Journal of a Tour in Italy, in the Year 1821*.[8] Like almost all antebellum literature, it was published anonymously, but Dwight's friends knew. One sent him a review that was glowing to the point of being tongue-in-cheek: "The author, as is evident from almost every page, is a man of the most minute observation...he knows how to move the more serious feelings of the heart. I have spoken thus

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Trumbull, and his biographers may have confused these domestic travels with foreign ones (or, perhaps, Dwight himself made these into more romantic journeys).

[5] TDJ to Abigail Dwight, 30 & 31 Dec 1819, Folder 32, DFP; Twohill, "Dwight, Theodore," 190. All biographies of Dwight stress that illness required him to travel to Europe. However, his journal shows a man whose strength was robust enough to immediately undertake long journeys across the continent, and the tiny handwriting in his journal remained steady throughout. Perhaps Dwight was harkening to Byron's *Childe Harold's Progress* and other romantic travels which required a wan but perceptive recorder.

[6] Twohill, "Dwight, Theodore," 190; Kunitz and Haycraft, "Dwight, Theodore," 238.

[7] C. Tuthill to TDJ, 22 May 1824, DFP.

[8] Theodore Dwight, *A Journal of a Tour In Italy, in the Year 1821* (New York, Abraham Paul, 1824).

freely…because as the work is anonymous, I can in no justice be supposed to know who is the author."[9] The book was a beautiful product, profusely illustrated with Dwight's sketches and maps, and as a consequence it must have been an expensive product. It was never reprinted.[10]

The summer it was published he travelled to the Springs. Although his family had long made Ballston Spa its destination, he went instead to Saratoga Springs, where he spent a long weekend in mid-August. The spa's new popularity was evident. He counted as many as 1,500 genteel visitors, concluding, as he wrote his brother William, that "since you saw Saratoga last…I will venture to state in general terms that the number of visitors has considerably increased." He marveled at the two new grand hotels that had been built, the Pavilion and the United States Hotel, which "have been completed, to say the least." It had only been five years since he had visited there, and all of these changes had left him "a little melancholy," since in the throngs he looked "in vain for anything better than a half-way acquaintance or a homely old face or two." In all of the forced gaiety of this tourist scene, he found this group, "assemble[d] for the purpose of being gay," to be "insufferably dull."[11]

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[9] C. Tuthill to Theodore Dwight, Jr., 9 June 1824, DFP.
[10] A review of *Journal of a Tour in Italy* is in the *New-York Evening Post*, 9 Aug 1824, p. 2, col. 2. It is a favorable one, but it may have, in fact, been written by Dwight himself, as was customary in that day. The reviewer, who has "not yet had time to peruse the work," relies on "a friend in whose opinion we place confidence," a common enough device to introduce a puff-piece.
[11] Theodore Dwight, Jr. to "Dear Brother," William R. Dwight, 13 Aug 1824, Folder 32, DFP. Evidence of regular visits by the Dwight Family to Ballston can be found in Anne Royall, *The Black Book; Or, A Continuation of Travels in the United States* (Washington, DC: Printed for the Author, 1828-29), I:25-6. See Chapter V for a discussion of her interaction with the Dwights.

Nonetheless, it was probably at Saratoga that he came into contact with one thing that sparked his interest: Gideon Davison's little guidebook, *The Fashionable Tour*. From it, he got an inspiration: he would create his own guidebook, but this one informed by his own opinions and observations and those of his uncle.[12] On returning to New York, he began writing it, and it was published in the early summer of 1825.

Dwight's vision for his guide was that it would become *the* definitive work – "a complete Traveller's Guide," in the words of the preface – for genteel voyagers along the "Fashionable Tour." In his preface, he outlined the inadequacies of existing works. And although he allowed that "several valuable works" had been useful for compiling his book and might be useful for some travellers, he also denigrated them, claiming that none were fully adequate for the needs of the "vast numbers" of "strangers of wealth and taste" who were now "travelling on the northern fashionable routes." He criticized some of the works as being "too prolix for the convenience of a traveller"; others, he said, "contain much other matter, or have become antiquated by time; and others are confined to a few subjects."[13] He then proceeded to list those works, a list that included Davison's *Fashionable Tour*. This was a clear criticism of the work that was the only other existing guidebook for the fashionable tour route Dwight was

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[12] In the first edition of his guidebook, Dwight cites (among others, including Dwight's *Travels*) as a resource "for those who may wish for more details," a recommendation that disappeared in later editions. Theodore Dwight, *The Northern Traveller, Containing the Routes to Niagara, Quebeck, and the Springs…* (New York: Wilder & Campbell, 1825), 6.
[13] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), vii.

proposing to describe. Nevertheless, he admired his rival's work enough to appropriate significant chunks of it into his own.[14]

As an author Dwight assumed the role of a genteel man of wealth and taste and discrimination. This was, no doubt, not that much of a stretch, given his family's background, his education, and his life experiences. But he did not always write out of his own experiences. For example, in his guidebook he touted Ballston Springs as the ideal destination for the genteel traveller rather than new, gauche Saratoga. Ballston had a "variety of scenery in [its] neighbourhood…sufficient to attract many of those who resort to this place of health and pleasure…walking and riding will be found much more agreeable here then [sic] at Saratoga."[15] Saratoga, by comparison, was a dusty outpost: "clusters of frail board buildings… spring up among the stumps of trees lately felled in the skirts of the pine forest…show[ing] what an unnatural surplus of population the place contains during the brief period that fashion here maintains her court."[16] In this, Dwight was upholding the ideals of his uncle (who, of course, never saw the new Saratoga) along with those of old-line gentry travellers including, probably, his father. Despite this, when he came there in 1824 visit, he himself remained at Saratoga for the bulk of his visit: perhaps even Theodore Dwight found Ballston Spa too staid.[17]

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[14] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825),6. For examples of appropriations from Davison, see pp. 17-18 in Davison (1822) reproduced on pp. 12-13 in Dwight (1825); or p. 107 in Davison (1822) copied on p. 55 in Dwight (1825).
[15] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 100.
[16] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 105-106.
[17] "I understand they are filling up at Ballston, that Aldridge has not a very considerable number…" TD to William Dwight, 13 Aug 1824, DFP. He may have met his family at Ballston

con't.

Dwight's view of the institution of tourism was conflicted. On the one hand, his text would not have existed had there not been large numbers of new travellers. On the other hand, the new, cheaper, more accessible infrastructure of tourism had created a disquieting level of class mixing, pushing gentry together with non-gentry. Dwight's intended readers, these neophyte travellers, were about to be plunged for the first time from their carefully controlled homes into the chaotic new world of travel. And so his text gently steered them away from unpleasantness and constantly referred to what persons of "taste and leisure" would prefer. And he suggested ways that one could protect oneself from the undignified situations that could arise during travel. For example, a consistently chaotic situation that was regularly commented on by travellers was found at the ferry boat landing at New York City. One new traveller, a Mr. Sipple, described it in 1821: "here commenced another sea of confusion if possible more terrible than any heretofore." The Sipples, husband, wife, and daughter, had just landed in the city. They had come from their home in Milton, Delaware, and were going to Saratoga for their health, a "business of more importance than pleasure." Their trip had started badly; earlier the same day they had encountered an unwelcome fellow traveller, a sailor "with more tongue then [*sic*] wit," with whom they had been forced to share a coach: they had found him "very disagreeable," since he had been "stimulating too high." Now, at the ferry landing, there was even more unpleasantness as they were accosted by a mob of porters who had charged

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Spa as he prefaced the preceding quote with "I shall see you on Monday or Tuesday," but is unclear whether at New York or Ballston Spa.

aboard the boat the moment it landed. "They are the greatest impositioners of any I have met," wrote Mr. Sipple. Without permission, they "lay hold of your trunk and start not knowing where it is to go too [*sic*]… you must either follow them or lay hold on them to keep them back until you know where to go your self." The Sipples, pious and prim, would find much at Saratoga that challenged their mores and standards.[18]

It was precisely this audience that Dwight hoped to reach. He wrote that "a traveller is too often pressed upon by impertinent fellows, who recommend their own vessels, and urge him to take passage in them." Protection could be found, though, through the kind of brusque, aristocratic hauteur not normally necessary in small-town environments from which life they had come: "the only way to treat them," he counseled, was "without reply." Dwight knew that many would find this disorderliness unsettling and he assured them that it could or would be corrected. This breakdown of public order, he contended, was the collective fault of the collective management of the steamboat companies. "Such things ought never to be permitted by the proprietors, although they are rivals; neither ought they allow the throngs of porters, cartmen, &c., who rush in upon deck as soon as the boats arrive." His readers, he urged, should "remonstrate against so

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[18] [Caleb?] Sipple, 28 July 1821, Sipple Diary. The Sipples were from Milford, Delaware (per diary), and although there is no positive identification, this may have been Caleb Sipple (1791-1829), husband of Levenia Sipple, who owned a lot in Milford, Delaware in 1820. At Saratoga, his diary showed his disdain for the fashionable life there, finding only "the gayest sort of Pride and vanity" there (30 July 1821). Despite this, though, they remained there some time, apparently creating a zone of comfort despite all the frivolity around them. Evidence that he may have been a lawyer comes from a detailed, many-page description of the Saratoga County courthouse, (26 Aug 1821).

unreasonable a practice." Enough complaints would inevitably "convince the company of the necessity of reformation, which would benefit themselves as well as their passengers."[19]

Dwight knew that his genteel audience shared his own priorities. For him, it was the society that mattered rather than scenery, and as a consequence he lavished much more attention on it than he paid to landscape. His depiction of the new Catskill Mountain House is typical:

> The Pine Orchard is the resort of so much company during the pleasant seasons of the year, that the attractions of its scenery are redoubled by the presence of agreeable and refined society. Individuals of taste and leisure, and still more, parties of travellers, will thus often enjoy a gratification which is rarely to be found in a place naturally so wild and difficult of access.[20]

To Dwight, it was neither the wildness of the place nor its scenery that was important in journeying there. In this he parted with his uncle who often gave good scenic descriptions. Instead, he concentrated on the social contacts a traveller made, as evinced by his description of Ballston Spa: "scarcely any thing can communicate sensations of more complete desertion before the company have arrived, or after they have retired."[21]

Even the most widely acknowledged sublime site, Niagara Falls, got relatively short shrift:

> The height of the fall on this side is 174 feet perpendicular; and this height the vast sheet of foam preserves unbroken, quite round the Grand Crescent, a distance it is estimated of 700 yards... The fall on the American side is neither so high, so wide, nor so unbroken, yet, if

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[19] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 6.
[20] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 16.
[21] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 100.

> compared with any thing else but the Crescent, would be regarded with emotions of indescribable sublimity. The breadth is 900 feet, the height 160, and about two thirds the distance to the bottom the sheet is broken by projecting rocks.[22]

After allowing a few "emotions of indescribable sublimity," Dwight marched on: facts, statistics, and analysis overwhelmed any transports of emotion. Dwight's discomfort with the frivolities of travel would be expressed more explicitly in some of his later works, particularly his *Sketches of Scenery and Manners in the United States* (1827), where he railed against the "numerous travellers for pleasure" who were interested "only by their present gratification."[23]

The reception of Dwight's work was cool, if the review in the *New-York Evening Post*, which called the book "very crude," is any indication But it is hard to gauge how accurate a barometer of public response this was, since the *Post* was a rival to Dwight's father's newspaper, the *New-York Commercial Advertiser*. Perhaps a better indication was that the *Northern Traveller* was published in a second, modestly expanded edition the following year, 1826. The *Post* acidly noted that this time Dwight had taken "much care" to "exclude the errors and supply the omissions of the previous one." Unlike the first edition, this one contained several engraved maps, and this is another indication that the first edition had found its market and made its profit. The *Post* cuttingly criticized the maps: they "only serve to enhance the price without adding much to the utility" and were "useful but would be much more so if all the roads were distinctly marked upon them… in many cases [they are] not correct." Despite this carping,

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[22] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), 50.
[23] Theodore Dwight, Jr. *Sketches of Scenery and Manners*, 175. More on Dwight's critique of tourism in Chapter V.

this revised edition of Dwight's guidebook sold enough that new editions continued to emerge well into the early 1840s.[24]

Dwight's rival and inspiration, Gideon Minor Davison, also produced a book in 1825, a new edition of *The Fashionable Tour*. This new edition dropped the 1822 subtitle, "in the summer of 1821," which had implied, incorrectly, that it had been an account of a particular journey. Although no sales figures or even first-person accounts from people who purchased or used the book exist, the physical state of the surviving copies of the book gives clues to its history. Particularly, the contrast between the first, 1822 edition and the 1825 edition demonstrate the book's success. The 1825 edition was a more expensively produced product. It had better quality, straight-cut-edged paper and a nicely rendered engraving of Saratoga's newest and largest hotel, the United States, for its frontispiece. Its type was set in a looser format, on slightly larger paper. Davison, having seen the success of his first book, clearly wanted to create a franchise, one that would move steadily for year after year through regularly updated editions. The newly upscale appearance of the 1825 edition also showed that Davison wanted to increase its appeal to the fashionable patrons who frequented his bookstore and perhaps he hoped he could even distribute it to a wider audience.[25] That it did reach that audience was evidenced by newspaper advertisements purchased in

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[24] "The Northern Traveller," *New-York Evening Post* 12 June 1826, p. 2, col. 3.Dwight would also add "corrections" to the text for an 1827 edition.

[25] The first two editions (1822 and 1825) of Davison's guidebook were essentially unchanged in language and content (major changes would occur with the third edition).

early June of 1825 by a New York bookstore that carried the book, exposure that the 1822 edition had not gotten.[26]

As an author, Davison, unlike Dwight, could not trade on his social status or attach himself to any highly admired relatives. In fact, he had been daring to presume to print a book titled "The Fashionable Tour," surrounded as he was every summer by the wealthiest, most powerful, and, not coincidentally, most fashionable persons in America.

Davison wrote mainly for self-promotion. Like most of the entrepreneurs who operated on the route of the Fashionable Tour, he was looking for prosperity, of course, but also for a rise in social status. His efforts at Saratoga were intended to achieve both. He would not only make money at his various establishments, but he would put himself into contact with the most fashionable people of the United States in a forum that would allow him to present himself in the most favorable light. Davison consequently created an intellectual center for the little village. This included a book store and as extensive a library as was possible. He gave them a lengthy description in his guidebook – tellingly, the longest single description of any commercial establishment in the text:

> A Printing-Office and Book-Store have already been established, with which has been connected a Reading Room and Library, under the superintendence of the same proprietor. The reading-room and library are contained in the same building, but have their separate apartments. That appropriated for the reading-room is large and airy. It is ornamented with a variety of maps and charts, and is furnished four times a week with about 100 papers from different parts of the United States and the Canadas, besides many valuable periodical publications. An adjoining apartment contains a library of about 1500 volumes, which

[26] *New-York Evening Post*, 10 June 1825, p. 3, col. 1.

> are well selected, and receive constant additions from the most fashionable productions of the day.
>
> These rooms offer a pleasant retreat from the noise and bustle of the boarding establishments, and are much frequented by ladies and gentlemen of taste and fashion. The terms are reasonable, and are scarcely an equivalent considering the extent and usefulness of the institution.[27]

In addition to all this, a mineral room had been established due to the "liberal patronage" of "literary and scientifick gentlemen." Davison added other attractions over time. The most important of them was a logbook he kept of visitors to Saratoga, updated weekly from hotel and guest house registers. This could be used by the inquisitive to see who had been, and who was, at the Springs – an important social tool both for his patrons and for Davison himself.[28] But beyond its value as an advertisement for his business, the ultimate intent of the *Fashionable Tour* was to raise his social status by creating a genteel space at Saratoga Springs dominated by Davison, stocked with publications intended to appeal to "ladies and gentlemen of taste and fashion."

But there is another interesting subtext to the guide. Davison not only was appealing to those who already were genteel, but he also hoped to sell his book to those who aspired, like himself, to raise their status. In fact, his entire guidebook can be seen as a subtle handbook for social advancement. While it did not offer, say, etiquette tips, it told travellers who were not by some other means aware of the fashionable tour where it was and how they could access fashionable places. In that sense, it was a publication implicitly directed to the

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[27] Davison, *The Fashionable Tour* (1822), 54.

[28] The guest book is first described in Dwight, *The Northern Traveller* (1825), 10, but isn't mentioned by Davison until the 4th (1830) edition of *The Fashionable Tour*. It appears not to have survived.

non-fashionable. There are a few clues that Davison was subtly reassuring these non-genteel travellers that they could be welcome at these exclusive places. For example, Davison described Pine Orchard in the Catskills as "a place for which two years past, has attracted the attention of all classes of men." This was a striking assertion: nowhere in the contemporary accounts by genteel travellers to Pine Orchard (at least in its first years of operation) were there complaints or even comments about the presence of the lower classes. The close quarters of the early Mountain House certainly would have engendered them had members of "all classes" had been present. In fact, Pine Orchard remained distinctly genteel in its first years; it would only be much later that lower classes came there.[29]

Finally, the sensibility of Davison's guidebook was delicately tuned. Given his lack of status and credibility as a spokesman of the aesthetic, Davison himself could not make a full-throated celebration of the sublime. And in any case he himself probably was no aesthete. His mildly conservative text therefore only gingerly suggested picturesque notions. For example, he described Cohoes Falls as "an unusual scene of subliminity and grandeur" where one could be overwhelmed by the "striking contrast of the torrent, with the solitude of the scenery." But Davison suggested that this moving scene be viewed from the safety of the bridge spanning the falls, which offered "a fine view of the falls and the romatick scenery around." To help hone these emotions, he added (created?) the story (which we saw in the preceding chapter) attributed to "old tradition" of

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[29] Davison, *The Fashionable Tour* (1825), 41. See the descriptions of the Mountain House in Van Zandt, *Catskill Mountain House, passim.*

the Mohawk chief's plunge over the falls. And he reprinted eight pages of the coverage of the exhumation of the body of a British Revolutionary War major, John André, who had been executed during the hysteria surrounding the discovery of Benedict Arnold's betrayal, an execution which, in retrospect, had been seen as unjust. That story, extensively reported in American newspapers, played on an antebellum sense of pathos and of romantic loss. All of these appealed to the muted romantic sensibility of the newly genteel. He could not be an advocate for those ideals, whether by temperament or design, nor could he pretend to have the kind of artistic background or education to be able to flaunt that sensibility.[30]

However, there was another guidebook produced in 1825 intended to appeal to the seeker of the sublime, produced by a writer who could safely stand on his aesthetic credentials.

Where Theodore Dwight reflected the concerns of the "establishment" traveller and Gideon Davison those of entrepreneurs, strivers, and social climbers, Henry Dilworth Gilpin appealed to the cultural avant-garde: the aesthetic traveller. His writing was aimed at romantics, a small but increasing set of privileged, educated Americans who took their cues from the decade-old Romantic movement of Europe. Romanticism had been a hard sell in America but some practitioners had emerged, such as, for example, McDonald Clarke, the "mad poet of Manhattan." Clarke's first book, *The Elixir of Moonshine, Being a*

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[30] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1822), 30-31, 83, 13, 15-16. Mention of the Andre/Arnold story was in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, 22 Aug, 1821, p. 2, col. 1, with a follow-up on 19 Dec, 1821, p. 2, col. 1. There was also extensive coverage in New York and other newspapers.

Collection of Prose and Poetry, by the Mad Poet (1822), played off of this persona, evoking an Young Werther-esque image of the lovelorn poet, a black-dressed young man mooning in New York cafes and parks over beautiful, inaccessible women who inevitably rejected him.[31]

Gilpin came from a very privileged background. He was born in 1801 into a wealthy family of Philadelphia Quakers who had retained close family connections in England. The Gilpin family had achieved a great deal of success through a series of paper mills on the Brandywine Creek in Wilmington, Delaware, in addition to other extensive business interests. Henry Gilpin's father, Joshua, visited England in 1799, where he met Mary Dilworth, daughter of a wealthy Lancaster industrialist. In 1800 he returned to marry her, and Henry, their first child, was born there in 1801. Joshua Gilpin and his family soon returned to the United States. Henry, though, was sent to school in England, where he remained for the remainder of his youth. On his return to the United States he entered the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated in 1819. After a tenure reading law in Philadelphia, in 1822 he was admitted to the bar.[32]

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[31] McDonald Clarke, *The Elixir of Moonshine; Being a Collection of Prose and Poetry, by the Mad Poet, a Great Proportion of Which Has Never Before Been Published.* (Gotham [i.e., N.Y.]: Printed at the sentimental epicure's ordinary [i.e., David Longworth], 1822).

[32] There are no book-length biographies of Gilpin, but biographical sketches include "Gilpin, Henry Dilworth," Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931); "Gilpin, Henry Dilwood [sic]," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: J.T. White, 1898); "Manuscript Collections, Index," in Folder 1, Box 59A, Gilpin Family Papers, Historical Society of Delaware; and a profile which most of these biographical essays seem to be based on, "Political Portraits with Pen and Pencil, No. XXIII, Henry D. Gilpin," in *U.S. Magazine and Democratic Review* 8, no. 35 (Nov-Dec 1840): 512-536. There are two significant collections of Gilpin's papers. One is at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, composed of mostly post-1833 materials. Gilpin bequeathed his library and personal papers to the HSP; however, disruptions in the society's operations in the 1990s apparently either made many of these materials inaccessible as of 1999 or transferred them to

con't.

Gilpin's family was well connected to the artistic elite of England. His British relatives included the Rev. William Gilpin, the renowned author of definitive works about the picturesque, and the famed painter Benjamin West. Consequently, Henry Gilpin was well exposed to the ideas of the picturesque and the sublime, along with the romantic ideals exemplified by Lord Byron or Percy Bysshe Shelley. Gilpin read widely throughout his life and was well versed in the Greek and Latin classics; he could also read French, Spanish, and Italian. And he became an avid reader of novels, including the works of Irving and of Scott, whose books he devoured as soon as they arrived in America.[33]

In 1822, he was appointed secretary and legal counsel to the Gilpin family's business, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company. Philadelphia was still a major publishing center in the 1820s (although its status would decline as New York's grew), and through his social connections he associated with the leading members of that community, including the city's leading printer and publisher Matthew Carey. And he met other top American publishers such as George Ticknor, with whom he spent time during a trip to Boston. Gilpin was impressed that Ticknor had met Lord Byron.[34]

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other collections. Gilpin's personal papers are listed in the HSP's *Guide to the Manuscript Collections* (Philadelphia, 1949), item 238, "letters to his father, 1822-41," but are apparently no longer at HSP: they seem to have been transferred to the Gilpin Family Papers collection at the Historical Society of Delaware.

[33] Irving: Henry Dilworth Gilpin (HDG) to Sarah Gilpin (sister), 1 Aug 1825; Scott: HDG to JG, 30 July 1825, Gilpin Family Papers, Historical Society of Delaware (hereafter abbreviated GFP). Gilpin read Irving's *Sketch Book* in 1819, parts of which he found "very good," also Ivanhoe, "by the best of the novel-writers." Henry Gilpin, "Extracts from a Common-Place Book," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 45 (1921): 230, 236.

[34] HDG to Joshua Gilpin (JG), 28 Jan 1825, Box 59, Folder 6, GFP.

At some point in late 1824 or early 1825 Gilpin decided to write his first book. But rather than choosing to write a novel, he opted for a tourist guidebook of the fashionable tour. He came to this decision at roughly the same time as Theodore Dwight, demonstrating the sudden appeal and fashionability of tourism, but his letters for that crucial year are lost and consequently we cannot know precisely what motivated him to take up the pen in this genre. But it is clear from the format of the text and from several episodes in it that Gilpin not only knew of Davison's book but took the liberty of appropriating ideas and stories from it. But where Davison rarely broke from his carefully moderate and informative format, a style of writing clearly not influenced by the romantic movement, Gilpin evidently decided that he would write an aesthete's guidebook, one that would bring an artistic sensibility to his subject and direct sensitive travellers to the correct sites.

The Northern Tour: Being a Guide to Saratoga, Lake George, Niagara, Canada, Boston, &c. &c. had originally been intended to be in bookstores by June or July of 1825, but an unseasonably warm spring pushed his publisher, Matthew Carey, to move up the schedule. Writing from his home in Philadelphia in late May, Gilpin wrote his mother that they were "hurrying the printing of the book, as this hot weather fills the town with strangers." Soon after, the book was being advertised in New York bookstores.[35]

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[35] HDG to Mary Dilworth Gilpin (his mother, HDG), 25 May 1825, Folder 6, Box 59, GFP. Henry Dilworth Gilpin, *A Northern Tour: Being a Guide to Saratoga, Lake George, Niagara, Canada, Boston, &c. &c.* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1825) was advertised in the *New-York Evening Post*, 10 June 1825, p. 3, col. 1.

Gilpin's guidebook took a looser approach than Davison's, which had been much more closely based not only on the format of the gazetteer but on its dry and formal text. Gilpin generally kept to that utilitarian model in that he had capsule texts describing locations along a particular route, including useful and necessary information such as ferry schedules. But, unlike both Davison and Dwight, Gilpin allowed himself poetic flights amounting to an unabashed celebration of the American sublime, combining prosaic needs with an aesthete's eye toward the scenic wonders before him. At the Hudson Highlands, for example, Davison inserted several pages from Dr. Samuel Mitchill's widely read geology of the region. Gilpin, although acknowledging the geological theories of the site, quickly moved past them:

> Its geological formation is decidedly primitive, and is principally composed of granite and gneiss... From the circumstance of its so directly crossing the Hudson and the appearance so strikingly presented, of that river having forced a passage through it, geologists have looked upon this ridge as the great southern boundary of a vast lake.. Whether this outlet was formed by some powerful convulsion of nature, or whether by the gradual abrasion of the waters, can only be matter of conjecture among those who are skilled in geological science; and whatever charms such an investigation may present to them, the gay traveller would rather dwell on their majestic beauties, and contemplate their romantic forms and every-varying shades, than perplex himself with theories the truth of which can never be determined.[36]

Gilpin is eager to present himself as educated but quickly moves past that to a much more entertaining stance as a fashionable aesthetic, a "gay traveller" who "contemplates…romantic forms and ever-varying shades." At Cohoes Falls, Gilpin appropriated Gideon Davison's tale of the Indian-over-the-falls story.

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[36] Gilpin, *Northern Tour*, 23.

Gilpin, though, heavily embellished the story, as we saw in the preceding chapter. By adding a female victim and the shambling wreck of a male survivor, he shellacs it with a high romantic gloss. And while Davison presented his story directly, as if it were fact, Gilpin's Irving-esque introduction ("In speaking of this circumstance, old Vander Donck relates the following anecdote"), was a knowing wink to his audience's taste in literature.

Even at Niagara, a place that did not need such embellishment, Gilpin truly lost his head and was transported in romantic ecstasy as words momentarily failed him:

> To describe the scene which then bursts upon our view, would be as hopeless for the pen as it has ever proved for the pencil.

Fortunately, he picks up his fallen pen and somehow forges on:

> In vain we might bid the reader to imagine the vast body of water, whirling and fretting and foaming among the rapids above -- the deep and death-like stillness with which it approaches the precipice, then, gathering all its mighty force, the plunge which it makes into the abyss below -- the vapour clouds, rolling above in every fantastic form -- the rainbow, now glowing, now fading away, on their varying surface -- and, above all, the ceaseless roar, which diffuses through the mind a feeling of ungovernable awe.
>
> Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
> As if to sweep down all things in its track!
> Charming the eye with dread -- a matchless cataract;
> ...
>
> A scene like this is not to be described -- it is only to be felt. As it stands alone in the history of nature, with nothing to equal or resemble it, so, while we rest upon its verge, will the breast glow with sensations before unknown, and swell with emotions before unfelt. We gaze with mute wonder on the scene before us, and forget, in the contemplation of nature's mighty works, the world that is around us, and the busy

insignificance of man.[37]

With the help of a verse from Byron, Gilpin embraced the romantic and grasped the sublime. He attempted to transport his reader to dizzying heights of rapture at an American place that was, even without this new narrative, truly scenic and truly authentic.

Gilpin was not immune to showing off his erudition at the cost of coherence. At Kaaterskill Falls, for example, he inserted, in Italian, a lengthy quote from Dante's *l'Inferno*. The quote was, on some level, appropriate – it did describe a descent into a valley – but, on the other hand, it was deeply odd: the narrator in Dante's passage is outrunning a minotaur, something that rarely, if ever, happened (at least there are no surviving tourist accounts of such events). But while describing the view from atop Kaaterskill Falls, Gilpin deployed a slightly more logical quote: the paragraphs from Cooper's *The Pioneers* seen in the last chapter, beginning with Edwards asking, "What see you, when you get there?"[38]

But there is something odd in Gilpin's use of this passage. Although it does describe a view *near* Kaaterskill Falls, it is not about the view from *the top* of Kaaterskill Falls, as Gilpin has presented it. In fact, it is about the sights visible from atop the escarpment, several miles away from the falls. This is a clue leading to an interesting fact about Gilpin's writing: that although Gilpin had

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[37] Gilpin, *Northern Tour*, 147-48. The verses are from Canto 4 of Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, perhaps the quintessential romantic text.
[38] Gilpin, *Northern Tour*, 40-43. The verses quoted are lines 1-9 from Canto XII, *l'Inferno*.

travelled widely to Europe and elsewhere, he had not actually visited most of the sites he wrote about in his book when he wrote it. And he would not visit them, his correspondence reveals, until late June of 1825 – nearly two months after his guide's publication. That month, for the first time, he travelled to New York City, the Hudson River Valley, and other points north. Some sites, such as Kaaterskill Falls, he did not visit until long after the 1820s.[39] Of course, this leads to questions as to how he was able to write a guidebook about these places. Clearly, his writing was, charitably, in many places a product of inspired research. He had used a body of facts drawn from existing gazetteers, tourist accounts, and Davison's guide, sources that kept him from straying too far into the realm of fiction. Gilpin, unlike many, was usually able to disguise the most obvious borrowings, although some of his sources, such as Davison's book for the story of the Mohawk Indian at Cohoes Falls, are obvious.

Finally, Gilpin presented his book and American tourism as acts of patriotism. In his preface, he claimed that a "large portion of the citizens of the United States" had in the past wanted to "pass the summer and autumnal months in a tour through the northern section of the Union." He noted with

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[39] Evidence of this being his first trip to these places is found in a series of letters he wrote his father, 28 June, 1 July, 3 July, 5 July, 9 July, 22 July 1825, Box 59, Folder 6, GFP. See, for example, 28 June – regarding the bay of New York, "I had heard a great deal of it, but I really think it exceeded all my expectations," or 1 July: "All my expectations all that I could imagine were surpassed by the scenery [of the Hudson]." He did not visit Kaaterskill Falls on this trip nor did he travel northward again until August, 1835, when he took a trip to Saratoga (HDW to JG, 12 Aug 1835, GFP).

satisfaction that this had been at the expense of travel to Europe. This, he felt, was for the best:

> It is true, the nations of Europe present scenes and objects which are unknown to us; fancy may there indulge itself amid mouldering ruins, dignified by all that age and classic glory can impart; ...customs, which have blended the rudeness and ignorance of past ages with the splendor and refinement of modern times – of governments, in every form except that alone which we have learned to prize – of civilization, here carried to the highest point of luxury, there depressed as low as human nature can endure – of commerce, in one age enriching whole nations, which in another are little better than a barren waste – of ambition and national pride, destroying the prosperity of extended regions, from the mere desire of aggrandizement...in a word, the European traveller beholds around him a vast field, in which improvement has gradually worked its way ; but he sees, on every side, the marks of ancient ignorance, useless and absurd habits and customs, and the remnants of former barbarism blended with the tyranny which is not yet extinct.[40]

Why, Gilpin asks, visit these decadent and now backwards nations when in America one has a so much better prospect?

> Surely our own country presents a fairer and a nobler scene; one on which fancy may indulge in brighter vision, on which philosophy may reflect with more justice and delight... America offers to other nations her example, but seeks not to aggrandize herself by interfering in their views, or pursuing the delusions of a false ambition.
>
> With such a country open to our investigations, and that country our home, there are few travellers who will not prefer it to more distant lands…[41]

Gilpin's promotion of tourism as a noble act of patriotism was something that would become a constant refrain in later guidebooks and elsewhere. He was probably the first to do so, and in this he gave his audience a parochial reassurance that home-based amusements were not only just as respectable as those of Europe, but were, in fact, morally superior. He was a part of the same

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[40] Gilpin, *Northern Tour*, 1-2.
[41] Gilpin, *Northern Tour*, 2.

cultural movement that championed American paintings, promoted the books of American writers, and felt that American virtue deserved to triumph over European (particularly British) decadence.

The cachet of tourism affected many writers of the 1820s. One of the most popular, Catharine Maria Sedgwick, worked tourism-related themes into several of her earliest novels. In fact, her first book-length manuscript was an unpublished travel journal. Sedgwick was born into a prominent and staunchly Federalist family in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1789. She was related, through her mother, to both Timothy and Theodore Dwight, and she shared much of that family's sensibilities and political inclinations. She was given an elementary-school education at various schools nearby, but she found the education she'd received at home to be much more valuable. Through it, she was able to gain a fair grounding in the classics of New England religious thought. But although she'd grown up in a very conservative environment, one that frowned upon such things as the theater or fiction, she had, by early adolescence, begun reading mostly novels.[42]

Sedgwick had begun by writing a number of small sketches, and she was working on her first novel when she made a journey in 1821 with her family on

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[42] Mary Kelley, ed., *The Power of Her Sympathy: The Autobiography and Journal of Catharine Maria Sedgwick* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993), 3-22. There are few biographies of Sedgwick. The only recent book-length study is Edward Halsey Foster, *Catharine Maria Sedgwick* (New York: Twayne, 1974), which is condescending at best; somewhat better is Mary Dewey, ed., *Life and Letters of Catharine Maria Sedgwick* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1871). See also Victoria Clements, introduction to Sedgwick's *A New-England Tale* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), xi-xxviii. Sedgwick's literature has been analyzed in a number of recent dissertations (six in the year 2000 alone), and these will certainly produce a greater body of published monographs.

one variation of the "fashionable tour" route. That trip took her from her home in Stockbridge to Lebanon Springs and then on to Albany, up the Hudson River to the Falls, and from there to Montreal and Quebec. They finally returned home via Lake Champlain and the Hudson. They bypassed the Springs. The journal that resulted was a distillation of letters she wrote home. They were later recopied into a journal that was circulated among the non-travelling members of her family and her friends, as often happened with travel letters.[43]

At the time of her trip, the thirty-three-year-old Sedgwick was unpublished. But she was about to achieve celebrity. One of her sketches about Stockbridge village life had already caught the eye of her brothers, and even as she wrote her travel letters home she was expanding it, with their encouragement, into a book-length work. When published in 1822 as *A New-England Tale*,[44] it was an immediate success: it received long, appreciative reviews in the major literary magazines of the day and enjoyed healthy sales. This account of the life of one woman in a New England town, beset on the one hand by the strict orthodoxy of her Calvinist neighbors and on the other by the needs for self-preservation, well illustrated some of the conflicts Sedgwick herself felt. For example, she had chosen Unitarianism, which was considered by

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[43] Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *The Catharine Maria Sedgwick Papers, 1798-1908* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1984), microfilm. The journal is contained in Roll 7. The letters the journal was extracted from (with few omissions or additions) are found in the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Papers III (CMS III), Folders 2.15 & 16, Massachusetts Historical Society. One other letter is misdated 1819 in the collection, its content clearly places it as having been written during the 1821 journey, 5 July [1819?], Folder 1.8, CMS III.

[44] Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *A New England Tale* (New York: E. Bliss & White, 1822).

some conservatives to be a radical religious creed that approached atheism. And she never married.

Sedgwick probably incorporated some of her tourist experience into her second novel, *Redwood* (1824).[45] In it, Henry Redwood, a tourist slave owner from Virginia, is travelling in southern Vermont with his snootily remote daughter, Caroline. He is injured in a carriage accident and is invited to recuperate at the nearby home of the Lenoxes. His daughter reacts with distress, realizing that she will have to spend many weeks at this distant and, to her mind, backward country village. Sedgwick characterizes Caroline as being over-precious and nearly useless, straining the hospitality and good will of the kind-hearted Lenox family. Sedgwick was making a strong commentary not only on the virtue of hard work, something she felt was not valued among the aristocrats of slave-owning America, but also on the (as she saw it) parasitical nature of slave owners. She, like Theodore Dwight, championed the virtues of New England over *all* other regions of the country, and felt the rest of the country was populated by insufficiently virtuous and hard-working people. The counterpoint to Caroline in the Lenox household is another guest, Ellen Bruce, a young, vigorous, virtuous New England woman. While recuperating, Henry Redwood begins to reconsider slavery, Caroline marries an obviously unsuitable adventurer, and Ellen marries quite well indeed.

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[45] Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *Redwood: A Tale* (1824; New York: Garrett Press, 1969).

Sedgwick had almost certainly encountered travelling southerners during her 1821 journey. Other plot elements and characters were less directly influenced by her trip but nonetheless echoed the tourist experience of the 1820s. For example, a subplot described the Lenox family's struggle to draw one relative away from the Shaker community and that young woman's attempts to break free from her older and overbearing Shaker mentor.

The Shakers were a charismatic, celibate, and unconventional Christian group that had begun in England as an outgrowth of the Quakers in the 1770s. They eventually emigrated to America, forming communities in the Hudson Valley. Their main settlement was at Lebanon Springs, New York. By 1821, the Shaker community had become a tourist attraction, one of the main stops for the section of the Fashionable Tour between Albany and Boston. Few travellers to the area failed to mention them in their journals or letters. Both Dwight and Davison had sections on the Shakers; Dwight's ran to a page and a half. Gilpin, curiously, did not mention them at all. The Shakers, wanting to remove themselves from the world, had nonetheless become objects of fascination, and many Shakers reacted brusquely to the often insensitive and probing questions of tourists. Some travellers considered Lebanon Springs water to be superior to that of Ballston or Saratoga, and a small tourist village had grown there, but Lebanon had none of the tourist infrastructure that the other springs had. Its inn, though, was full during the season with travellers coming from or going onward to Saratoga. Some found its lack of pretentiousness a relief after Saratoga, as did

Frances Dallam of Baltimore. She found Saratoga to have "too much fashion and extravagance for me;" Lebanon, though, was in "a very butiful [sic] country & a desirable place to spend a few days, the water has no medicinal quality but is warm & the baths are very superior & the House & living very fine."[46]

Although the Shakers' draw as a tourist attraction was undeniable, Sedgwick's inclusion of the Shakers in her book was more directly influenced by her life experience: many in Western Massachusetts had been drawn into the sect, horrifying their families and friends. As for tourism itself, in *Redwood* it was nothing more than a plot device used by Sedgwick to create situations for her characters to interact in. It was not central to her story.

Sedgwick's next book, though, was almost entirely infused with the culture of tourism. This small book is her least well known. Discussion of it does not appear in any of her biographies, and it is hard to say just how many copies were printed. Probably, like many of the novels of the 1820s, one or two thousand copies were printed; it was never reprinted.[47]

Still, *The Travellers: A Tale Designed for Young People* (1825) was directly and deeply influenced by Sedgwick's experiences in the tourist culture. Two of its

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[46] Francis J. Dallam Diary, 25 July, 27 July 1827, Box 2, Ms. 1250, Dallam Papers, Maryland Historical Society. Dallam overall preferred Bedford Springs, Virginia, where she and her husband had spent several summers.

[47] Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *The Travellers. A Tale. Designed for Young People* (New York: E. Bliss and E. White, 1825). It was kindly reviewed. The *United States Literary Gazette*, 15 Jun 1825, 218, found that it had a "sweetness and beauty of style and sentiment;" the *New-York Review and Athenaeum Magazine*, June, 1825, 34, found it an "uncommonly graceful little narrative." The book was reprinted in England, a fact noted in an anonymous review of another book in the *Atlantic Review*, 49 (New Series 44) (Oct, 1825): 458, which called it "that interesting little tale" and claimed that it "met with such success, as to be satisfactory to the publisher."

major themes involved the corrupting effects of city life on the education and moral life of youth and the shallowness of tourism and tourists. In these, Sedgwick was reflecting many of the anxieties of her class. She also expressed some of the more positive effects that many thought tourism could offer, including the benefits of aesthetic education on the development of youth and the potentially improving effects of travel for a purpose. And although this book was not in and of itself influential, it neatly encapsulated anxieties created among people like Sedgwick (and, to some degree, Theodore Dwight) by the brash, new, money-oriented, and ostentatious tourist culture of the 1820s.

In *The Travellers*, Sedgwick imagines a prosperous and well-educated urban nuclear family, the Sackvilles. As book opens, Mr. Sackville has announced a decision to his children: he is going to remove his family, with his wife's permission, from the city. He has purchased a "fine estate" in a small country town. Edward, eight years old, and Julia, ten, have qualms: Edward worries that he will be bored, saddled only with lessons and with no chance for recreation. He is particularly interested in the theater. His sister, too, wonders how she will survive without her charming French dancing teacher. But their mother reassures them. Not only will they have "clever children in the neighborhood" to play with, but nature's "far more beautiful spectacles" will easily replace the theater and other city attractions.

Of course, she is proven correct: the children learn to entertain themselves. But an even better transformation has happened after their year in the country:

they are no longer little urbanites. "Return to town, now, mother!" exclaims Edward "It is impossible." Sedgwick allows them to travel from this cocoon only after another year has passed: only then are they properly inculcated with education and aesthetics and unhampered by the urbanity that had clouded their vision. They had become purified through country life. (Ironically, by 1825 Sedgwick herself had relocated from Stockbridge to New York City). Of course, their best guides are their parents, who travel with "rational expectations of pleasure." The children, though, are more typical tourists because they travel with "the anticipation of unbounded delight." This is excusable because of their youth. Sedgwick's careful modulation of language here is telling: she allows some shallowness in children, but adults must maintain a "rational" stance.[48]

Sedgwick avoided description of scenery, claiming that it was boring to young readers. "We are well aware that young people do not like to be harangued about scenery; therefore, though our travellers sailed up the Hudson, we shall resist every temptation to describe its beautiful features," she wrote. Moreover, she realized that by this time readers of all ages had already been saturated with travel description, as she described the Hudson has having "features as well known and loved as the familiar face of a friend." The number of visual images of the Hudson and Mohawk had also proliferated, and so when little Julia says that the scenery is "a perfect picture, mother, all the way," she

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[48] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 17, 21.

was speaking more than metaphorically.[49] The children are, in fact, ideal picturesque travellers who appreciate and understand aesthetic beauty. "They came to a spot which Julia insisted could not be surpassed… she begged her mother to make a sketch there," writes Sedgwick. Their mother sets up her sketch pad and is counseled by the children, in some detail, on the framing and composition of the picture.[50]

Although this is a book ostensibly intended for children, Sedgwick obviously also wanted their parents to receive edification. For example, after some small adventures, the party arrives at Niagara Falls. The Falls themselves are given a breathless description ("– the sublime falls – the various hues of the mass of waters – the snowy whiteness, and the deep bright green"), but the main point of seeing them is conveyed by Mrs. Sackville, who, after an extended spiritual moment, intones that the sight is "the spirit of God moving on the face of the waters." This site "exalts our affections above language," she declares. And then Sedgwick delivered a rapier thrust, motivated by her relatively recent embrace of Unitarianism: "this temple," she writes, "does not need a preacher."[51]

Sedgwick's treatment of Niagara reveals the heart of her diatribe against tourism, which had become in her eyes a crass, shallow and meaningless exercise, divorced from the intensely religious feeling that she thought made travelling a worthwhile activity. She makes that lesson explicit. Still standing at

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[49] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 23-4.
[50] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 28-9.
[51] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 77-80.

the edge of the falls, Edward asks his father about a group of tourists they had encountered earlier in the day, a "party of city shop-keepers" with whom they had shared lunch:

> "I heard one of the ladies say, 'I have been so disappointed in my journey.' I dropped my knife and fork and exclaimed, 'Disappointed, madam? does not the fall look as high as you expected?' 'Oh, child,' she replied, laughing, 'I was not speaking of the fall; but I find it is quite too early in the season to travel in the country. I have not seen a roast pig or a broiled chicken since I left the city.'"

His father delivers his verdict:

> "...I think, my dear, she is a vulgar woman, who travels because others do; and is naturally disappointed in not meeting with the only circumstances that could give her pleasure." [52]

Sedgwick implies that the woman's insensitivity is understandable, if not excusable. After all, these "shop keepers" could not have had access to the kind of education that has made our little travellers so sensitive. But what of the wealthy who populated the Springs and Falls? Sedgwick describes their transgressions. Edward continues, asking about a wealthy woman they had encountered:

> "There's Mrs. Hilton, papa, who, I am sure, is not vulgar – at least she is as rich as Croesus – and I heard her say to a gentleman, that if she could have remained at the Springs, and then could have gone home and said she had been to the Falls, she should have been glad; for she was sure no one came here but for the name of it."
>
> "Mrs. Hilton is of the class of the vulgar rich, among whom vulgarity is quite as obvious, and much more disgusting, than with the vulgar poor," [replied his father.][53]

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[52] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 82.
[53] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 83.

The first episode, the encounter with the shop keepers, was a reworking of an incident Sedgwick wrote of in her 1821 travel journal, where she recorded coming across "a party of Greenwich Street Shopkeepers" who were entirely disappointed in their experience because "they had not seen a broiled chicken, nor a roast-pig since they left N York!!" The figure of the crudely wealthy woman, though, apparently was entirely fiction. Nonetheless, it is revealing that she chose women to exemplify these transgressions: she felt, as many had come to believe, that it was the duty of women to educate themselves not only morally but aesthetically. Sedgwick's view that the shallow world of tourism was, in effect, a kind of sacrilege was one aspect of a small but growing criticism of the entire tourist experience.[54]

The reach of Sedgwick's critique of tourism was quite limited, given the small print run of *A Tale for Travellers*, and although her concerns were harbingers of what was to come, in 1825 she was swimming against a strong literary current. Optimistic visions of tourism covered thousands of pages, not only in travel books, but also, beginning in the mid-eighteen twenties, in other literature. An example is found in the very first literary gift book published in the United States, *The Atlantic Souvenir*. An elaborately decorated, expensively

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[54] Catharine Sedgwick Travel Journal, 3 July 1821. Catharine Maria Sedgwick Papers. Sedgwick would not again directly address tourism in her later works, although she would work in a seemingly gratuitous description of the naming of Mt. Holyoke, Massachusetts in *Hope Leslie* (1827). The mountain, which rises above Northampton and has been renamed Mt. Skinner, was then a new tourist destination; a mountain house had just been completed. *Hope Leslie; or Early Times in the Massachusetts*, Carolyn Karcher, ed. (1827; New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 103-106, Book I, Chap. VIII.

bound, and beautifully illustrated literary annual, the *Souvenir* was the first of what would become a significant force in American publishing. Within several years, gift books were the single most widely sold and distributed publications of their times. They introduced the American public to American fiction, introduced a number of new authors and published short stories from the most prominent authors of their day, including Poe, Hawthorne, Emerson, and Longfellow, to name a few. The *Atlantic Souvenir* was introduced in late 1825 but postdated to 1826 to fit into a newly created New Year's/Christmas gift-giving season. Published by Carey & Lea of Philadelphia, it was quite successful, quickly selling out its run of two thousand copies and earning its publisher a tidy profit. This success inspired a number of imitators, who quickly followed on with their own gift books.[55]

That first gift book devoted a significant number of pages to stories that had tourist motifs or that used tourism as a theme. For example, the whimsical "A Tale of Mystery; or the youth that died without a disease," which occupied fifty of the magazine's three hundred pages, was entirely set on a summer tourist trip. It opened "in the merry month of June" aboard the steamboat Chancellor Kent chugging up the Hudson, featured the adventures of a group of tourists ("gay butterflies of fashion") and closed at a hotel in Saratoga Springs. The

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[55] The seminal study of gift books, still the most valuable, is Ralph Thompson, *American Literary Annuals & Gift Books, 1825-1865* (1936; reprint, [n.p.]: Archon Books, 1967). Sales figures on 7, 50. See also Nissenbaum, *Battle for Christmas*, 140-150; David Lovejoy, "American Painting in Early Nineteenth-Century Gift Books," *American Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter, 1955): 345-361. See HDG to JG, 24 Nov 1825, GFP, for the date of publication of the *Souvenir* – "I send you a specimen of the Souvenir, which will be published next week."

tourists used travel literature – one "young squire" describes a nearby highland's "heights and distances, with book in hand," a book later identified as "friend Spafford" - Spafford's *Gazetteer*. "All who have gone on the picturesque tour," declares the writer, know one place – the Sugar Loaf – as "one of the most striking objects after passing Anthony's Nose." All those are landmarks along the Hudson.[56] Earlier in the volume, a longish poem, "The Manitto of the Cataract," offers a variation on the motif of the Indian-over-the-falls story: a "forest youth" and his young lover pursued by unstated "hunters" escape by boat only to be cast over the falls into a "cavern of night and horror." But they survive, emerging magically on Lake Ontario, where they live on a "thousand green isles" happily ever after.[57] And "Scenes on the St. Lawrence," the "Recollections of a Solitary Traveller," offered the pensive reflections of a tourist along that river. Finally, Catharine Maria Sedgwick's "The Catholic Iroquois" (one of the few stories whose author was positively identified), is set in and around Niagara Falls. Its main character was "a gentleman, on his way from Niagara to Montreal," clearly a tourist on the northern leg of the Fashionable Tour. The rest of the story was centered on the Iroquois, but Sedgwick's choice of a tourist to introduce the story

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[56] P. [James Kirke Paulding], "A Tale of Mystery; Or, The Youth That Died Without a Disease," *The Atlantic Souvenir; a Christmas and New Year's Offering: 1826* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey & I. Lea, 1825), 137, 140, 142.

[57] Anon., "The Manitto of the Cataract," *The Atlantic Souvenir; a Christmas and New Year's Offering: 1826* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey & I. Lea, 1825), 109, 110, 115, 115, 114, 122, 123. The idea of "Manitto" was a fairly widespread theme in literature of the time, appearing not only in Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* but in the Cadwallader Colden's *Memoir at the Completion of the New York Canals* (New York: W.A. Davis, 1825). There was a general interest in Indian spirituality at the time.

highlights how pervasive that stock character had become.[58] In all, 105 of the edition's 353 pages were related to tourism (counting, on somewhat tenuous grounds, Sedgwick's story; excluding hers, some seventy pages could be directly related to tourism). But beyond the cultural pervasiveness of tourism, one other reason can be found that so much of that first *Atlantic Souvenir* was related to tourism: its editor was none other than Henry Dilworth Gilpin, the author of *The Northern Traveller.* Gilpin would edit the *Souvenir* for another seven years. Later annuals would contain at least one travel-related story, including, for example, 1828's "The Vacation," by N.P. Willis, a fictionalization of his 1827 senior-year jaunt from Yale.[59]

By the mid-1820s tourism had spread beyond the Hudson Valley. The reach of the Fashionable Tour meant that well-moneyed travellers were flooding upstate and westward in numbers that could support industries that would earn their main income from their seasonal presence and operate at a lower level the remainder of the year. Tourism began shaping institutions that had been created with other purposes in mind. Foremost among them was the Erie Canal.

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[58] Catharine Maria Sedgwick, "The Catholic Iroquois. By the Author of Redwood," *The Atlantic Souvenir; a Christmas and New Year's Offering: 1826* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey & I. Lea, 1825), 72-103.

[59] Gilpin's editorship stretched across seven years of the annual; it is mentioned in his biographical sketches. However, Ralph Thompson, in *American Gift Books and Annuals*, 49, denigrates his role, noting that the publisher solicited a number of stories and all of the illustrations. However, it is possible that he played a larger role than has been suspected, given the preponderance of travel-related stories. See chap. V for a discussion of Willis and "The Vacation."

The canal, begun in 1817, was completed by 1825. It ran almost entirely along the Niagara leg of the Fashionable Tour, linking Albany with Buffalo. This route, as we have seen, had previously been long and tiresome with poor-to-terrible roads. For travellers of the time, it was an immeasurable luxury to smoothly travel on a stable platform, a canal boat. Even before the canal was completed, passenger vessels were operating along it and tourists embraced them. By 1818, Jonathan Pintard wrote that it had already become a tourist attraction, one that "seems to challenge the admiration of every visitor." And as early as 1820, boats designed to attract tourists, richly furnished and ornately decorated, were operating along the short stretches of completed canal and successfully attracting genteel travellers.[60]

By 1822 a line of seven packet boats connected Little Falls, in between Utica and Albany, to Lyons, thirty miles from Rochester. They were coordinated with post coaches from Albany to Little Falls (the connection with Lyons was more haphazard). One newspaper article noted that the cost of four cents a mile or four dollars in all, board included, was not only cheaper than the cost of a stage journey but that the trip involved "no risk of life or limb, and no fatigue or dust attending." The sole sacrifice, though, was speed: boats were not fast when compared to coaches. Early in the operation of the canal they made the stately progress of only thirty miles a day, somewhat less than two miles an hour. However, travelling with your sleeping quarters was seen as a decisive factor by

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[60] Pintard, John, *Letters*, I:144. "An elegant Canal Barge," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 3 May 1820, p. 3, col. 2.

many. By 1825, the speed had increased: travellers could expect to reach 3 ½ miles per hour.[61]

Canal boats quickly became ever more ornate. One 1823 traveller described the boat he took on one part of his journey, the *Magnet*, as "elegant." Although it was one of the smaller canal boats, it still weighed six tons. Another part of his journey was on the *Mount Holley*, a forty-ton boat drawing only eight inches of water but richly furnished with "elegant accommodations." These boats sought, and found, an upscale market. Rival packet lines began competing for business, currying favor wherever they could. The Utica and Schenectady Packet Boat Company built elegant boats named after political figures, such as the *De Witt Clinton*, (the governor of New York), launched July of 1823, and the *Stephen Van Renesselaer*, launched in 1824.[62]

What is striking about the passenger trade on the canal is not that it existed – experience from the Hudson River lines showed how ready competitors and entrepreneurs were to enter the business– but how quickly it happened. Thriving lines were operating mere months after the first canal stretches were in operation. But the presence of expensively outfitted boats suggests not only high

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[61] "Canal Packets and Post-Coaches," *New-York Evening Post*, 15 May 1822, p. 3 col. 3; "Letter to a Gentleman," *Saratoga Sentinel*, 13 July 1822, p. 3, cols. 1-3, reprinted from the *New-York Statesman* and the *New York Evening Post*, 9 July 1822, p. 2, col. 1, contained the boat speed estimate. Quotes are from "Grand Canal," *New-York Evening Post*, 20 June 1822, p. 2, col. 2. Miles per hour: Henry D. Gilpin to JG, 3 July 1825, HDG Papers.

[62] "Letter to a Gentleman," Saratoga Sentinel, 13 July 1822, p. 3, cols. 1-3. "Launch," New-York Evening Post, 19 July 1823, p. 2, col. 5.

profits but high expectations, expectations that were clearly met as evidenced by the construction of even more such boats.

Enthusiasm about canal travel ran high in certain quarters. Horatio Spafford, the writer of the New York *Gazetteer*, published a canal guidebook in 1824, "A Small Directory for the Pocket, embracing the vast extent of the lines of natural and artificial navigation in this State." It was directed "no less…[to] tourists and travellers than…men of business."[63] Travellers would find canal travel "very pleasant, cheap, and expeditious," proclaimed Spafford, finding the food "wholesome and rich." They would "find the time pleasantly employed, in conversation, and the variety of incidents, new topics, stories, and constantly varying scenery."[64]

Despite Spafford's boosterism, general opinion about canal travel was mixed. For some, the "constantly varying scenery" that Spafford described was, in fact, quite dull. Gideon Davison opined that "[o]f the sources of gratification to the tourist, during the canal passage, that of novelty is perhaps the greatest. To the man of pleasure, it will be considered, perhaps, too little diversified with incident to be repeated."[65] David Hillhouse, a wealthy Southern planter, agreed with him: he found travelling on a packet boat "quiet and monotonous" because it "affords so little opportunity of looking upon the country around." He

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[63] Horatio Gates Spafford, *A Pocket Guide for the Tourist and Traveller, Along the Line of the Canals, and the Interior Commerce of the State of New-York.* (New York: T. & J. Swords, 1824), iii-iv.
[64] Spafford, *Pocket Guide*, 117-18.
[65] Davison, *Fashionable Tour* (1825), 116.

equated it to "sitting all day in an excellent tavern hall, except that I am progressing in my journey." However, he did concede that "this **mode** of travelling accommodates the ladies very well. They can read and sew, and sleep and chew, without the apprehension of having run-away horses, or bursting boilers."[66] Theodore Dwight, though, was enthusiastic, finding in it a unique form of genteel entertainment:

> The novelty of the mode of travelling adopted on the Erie Canal, as well as the magnificence of the work itself, and the interesting objects and scenes along its course, has attracted vast numbers of travellers in that direction, a large proportion of whom, during the pleasant seasons of the year, are strangers of wealth and taste.[67]

But although the canal boats were large by the standards of the day, conditions were nonetheless very cramped. Even when all of the party were genteel, tensions arose from the closeness of company. Henry Gilpin found it distracting: "if a gentleman who is very busily engaged in discoursing on state banks & stocks & guarantees and discounts would but hold his tongue I think I could spend half an hour very pleasantly in epistolizing you," he wrote his father from the canal.[68] Small cabins contributed to the overall discomfort, exacerbated by summer heat. Elizabeth Pierce, writing from her uncle's home in Hunter, New York, wrote her father describing the scene during a river journey in late August, 1824:

> There were a great many people on board & the boat was really crowded.

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[66] David P. Hillhouse Journal, 25 Aug 1826 (p. 110), Folder 75, Alexander-Hillhouse Papers, Southern Historical Collection.
[67] Dwight, *Northern Traveller* (1825), vi.
[68] HDG to JG, 1 July 1825, HDG Papers.

> Upon retiring to rest the sleeping apartments present a ludicrous spectacle. Every cabin was filled to overflowing & in ours, ladies, servants & children were strewed about in all directions. As for the gentlemen, many of them shouldered their matresses[sic] & located themselves on deck to enjoy the luxury of a little fresh air. The pretty quakeresses deliberated a long time whether it was better to make the attempt to sleep or not, & the french lady with the servant & children were making a free use of their colloquial facilities to the no small disturbance of those who preferred sleeping to talking. It may easily be imagined that it was long before we were all tranquillized.[69]

And although the most elegant boats created a kind of segregation by charging higher fares, this was not always a guarantee of genteel behavior among people cut loose from the traditional ties of society and decorum. On some of the earlier boats, the men's cabin was separated from the women's by only a curtain, and this could lead to problems. For example, in the summer of 1824 a minor incident was widely reported in newspapers a cross New York State: a group of men began "singing obscene songs" with "gross and disgusting obscenities" clearly audible to the "party of ladies." Articles described the incident and named members of the company; rebuttals ensued; and the fracas filled several score column inches during the height of the season before blowing over. Probably one reason this incident received as much attention as it did came from the fascination of wealthy people behaving badly, but that fascination – and the naming of names – demonstrates an interesting mix of prurience and moralism. In this case, the newspapers were acting as the sort of moral checks formerly applied only at a more personal or local level. But it also indicates that

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[69] Elizabeth Pierce to Rev. John Pierce, 20 Aug 1824, Box 1, Folder 5, A-132, Poor Family Collection, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

perhaps for some there was a sense that this great machine that had been built for the pleasure of the wealthiest Americans had begun to spin out of control.[70]

With each new level of tourist infrastructure added to the system the feeling that chaos would triumph must have become more palpable. On the larger steamboats, the scene at the foot of Canal Street would have been indicative for many of the experience to come. The tourist scene had become the stage for all sorts of self-promotion, as travellers were badgered in various ways. For example, Laura Porter Hill was a young woman from Catskill, New York and in late July 1821, she and her new husband, Henry Hill set off on a honeymoon trip that would culminate at Niagara Falls. But they were determined that this would not be typical: "do not imagine," she wrote her father, "that we are employed in the pursuit of pleasure." In fact, as devout Christians – Henry was an unsettled minister, Laura an eager missionary – they saw their main duty as the proselytization of their fellow travellers. They used every tool they could. For example, at Cohoes Falls, while her husband was carving her name into a tree, she was leaving religious tracts "for a large party approaching."[71] At every stop, Saratoga Springs, Glen's Falls, and Lake George, they pressed tracts on their fellow tourists. Aboard the steamboat Phoenix on Lake Champlain:

> We distribute tracts almost every mile, which are received with avidity. Mr Hill has written for 200 more. There is no Bible on board this elegant Boat, & we shall leave one of our testaments fully believing a

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[70] The article originated in the Utica Sentinel and was reprinted in the *New-York Evening Post*, 12 Aug 1824, p. 2, col. 3.

[71] Laura Porter Hill Diary 14 Aug 1821 ("pleasure"), 1 Aug 1821 ("Cahoose [Cohoes] Falls"), Diaries H553, New York State Historical Society.

> blessing will attend it. My dear brother, the Bible is worth more than all other books ...Evening is now coming on, & I have retired to the cabin, where the ladies are chattering French, others plaing [sic] backgammon, chess, &c. When they have done, I shall open the Bible & offer my tracts.[72]

The Hills were just one form of self-promoters who used the tourist stage for their own purposes. Henry Gilpin, the guidebook author who was making his first journey up the Hudson, encountered another author on board the steamboat, a "Dr. Mack." As he wrote his father (with tongue firmly in cheek), this great poet should be a household name:

> You will be surprised at naming Dr. Mack – but I can assure you Dr. Mack wd. be much more surprised at your not knowing him – Why he is the author of the Battle of the Cats! and of many other poems which (to use his own words) have been received with unbounded applause. Mr. Armstrong [a fellow traveller] was reading a book of mine when an old gentleman came up to him and offered to exchange books, which he consented to, and lending him mine received one which on examining he found to be "The Battle of the Cats & other Poems, by Dr. Mack" – having become satiated with its beauties in a few minutes, he laid it down whereupon the Doctor came up & said to him "you do not appear to admire the book – but read it & you will find some excellent things – I am the author!"[73]

The great doctor, sadly, has been lost to history. But Gilpin was in his own way engaging in a bit of self-promotion. The "Mr. Armstrong" he mentioned was a very recent acquaintance. They had met just the day before and in conversation found that they had many mutual friends ("Middleton, Maigault, Gibbs," Gilpin tells his father, listing the names of some of South Carolina's most prominent families). If Armstrong was reading a book of Gilpin's, then Gilpin himself must have given it to him.

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[72] Laura Porter Hill Diary, 7 Aug 1821.
[73] HDG to JG, 1 July 1825, GFP.

And there was another group in contact with tourists who were much less benign than missionaries or cranks: thieves. The *Saratoga Sentinel* implied that one of the outcomes of the "Steam Boat Controversy" (the breaking of the Hudson River Line's monopoly) was an incident it reported on in 1824. "In the hurry and opposition" engendered by the debate, it wrote, "it may be well for passengers to keep a sharp eye on their baggage." It then described how a passenger from Troy lost track of his trunk on a Hudson River steamboat that contained, among other things, more than $5,000 in "notes and drafts." Several days later, he spotted a porter carrying that same trunk onto the Brooklyn ferry. Alerting the police, he regained his trunk and they arrested the thief, who had "a large amount of [stolen] property."[74]

Hudson Valley tourism had, by the late 1820s, become a phenomenon. Its increasing cultural prominence and the easy availability of tourist guidebooks had changed tourism from its first incarnation as a summer refuge for the most exclusive class of Americans and foreigners into something accessible to anyone with just enough money. This phenomenon was now entirely beyond the control of the classes that had first created it. And many of them were beginning to look at it with an entirely jaundiced eye.

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[74] *Saratoga Sentinel*, "Take Care of Your Baggage," 27 Jul 1824, p. 2, col. 5; "Steam Boat Thefts," 15 May 1827, p. 3, col. 2

CHAPTER VI

TOO SUCCESSFUL, 1825-1835

> It would be difficult at this time to write a new thing on the Hudson river…
>
> *The North American Review*, October, 1827.

Nathaniel P. Willis's "The Vacation," published in the 1828 *Atlantic Souvenir*, begins predictably enough. The narrator is a wealthy young man just freed from the bonds of study at Yale. Standing in the yard of the college, "twirling my empty purse round my forefinger," he is the image of leisure and fecklessness. Why not a diversion? Why not a trip to Saratoga and Niagara?

This young man is sophisticated and dripping with high fashion: "Every body has seen New Haven," he tells us, "and the same indefinite person knows that in the 'garniture of June,' it is like a scholar's dream of Arcadia." He is refined aesthete, as we can tell from his description of a still, moonlit Long Island Sound as seen from the deck of a steamboat chugging to New York: "Had I fallen upon a fairy revel? or is the eye unsealed, and the hidden leaf unfolded by joy?" Later, he sees the Palisades, and declares them "a feast for Werther." And he is wealthy: only after "a week or two" at Saratoga Springs, the most expensive resort in the country, do his funds begin to run low.[1]

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[1] Nathaniel Parker Willis, "The Vacation," *The Atlantic Souvenir: A Christmas and New Year's Offering*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Carey, 1827), 41, 43, 44, 40, 47.

The creator of this indolent, fashionable, aesthetic, and well-funded student traveller was Nathaniel Parker Willis. The first-born son of a large, established New England family, Willis had been given as good an education as New England could offer: Boston Latin School, Phillips Academy, and then Yale. His father was the publisher of the *Boston Recorder*, a pious newspaper, and he was a respectable member of the Boston community.

But the Willis family was large and his father earned only a modest wage: they were not, by any means, wealthy. Consequently, Nathaniel had to find his own financial way from the moment he left home. But although he was a bit down at heels, his education, charm, and social adroitness marked him as gentry. At Yale, he insinuated himself into a group of wealthy fellow students, and it was not long before he moved with the best of New Haven's society. Even before his graduation, he had published a set of well-received poems, and his social standing went up accordingly. His sparkling personality and skill at the pen gave him an entrée after graduation into an elite circle of writers and poets in New York City. He embodied the idea of high class without having a significant amount of money in his pocket.

So parts of this story of a wealthy student traveller were fantasy. But large elements of "The Vacation" were, in fact, based on fact. We know, for example, that Willis had accompanied his wealthy friends on a six-week-long tourist trip in the summer of 1827. We do not know, however, how he could have afforded it. Perhaps they loaned him the money; more likely, they simply financed him.

Willis was fun company, something that was always valuable. However he swung it, he took in all the fashionable tour sites, including Niagara Falls, the Erie Canal, and, of course, Saratoga.[2]

But because we know that Willis's fictional narrator came from the best of classes, it's astounding how Willis chose to end the story:

> Every one is at home at the Springs. People go there for amusement, and either as actors or observers they find it. There is no unnecessary etiquette, for acquaintances made there are considered par parenthése, and may be cut, or continued, elsewhere. It is a kind of limited saturnalia; and he who goes there to study human nature, finds the best contrast, and the finest grouping in the world. The "blood of the Howards," and the nouveau riche, meet at the same table. The consumptive preacher, and the roué of the first magnitude, lounge on the platform of the spring. The city belle and the dark-eyed Jewess float together in the dance. Young men fish in company on the lake, who have no recollection of it in the city. And young ladies walk arm in arm under the portico, who "could not be positive," if they met in Castle Garden.[3]

This is not typical gentry society. Here, Willis is describing a society that is loose and free-form, one that allows entrée to nearly anyone who can meet the financial challenges of life at the Springs. This is a society that is (excluding, of course, that little matter of money) surprisingly open.

Why would Willis present such a picture? We have clues, of course, from his own story: he was someone who had made a shift himself, successfully

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[2] Thomas N. Baker, *Sentiment & Celebrity: Nathaniel Parker Willis and the Trials of Literary Fame.* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1999), 19-34. Quote on 28. Baker cites the impact of this trip, particularly his stay in New York City, as being central to his development as an aesthete, that it was then that he "drifted from his evangelical moorings," (p. 28) There was a distinct shift in his writing, from pious verse to quintessential romanticism. Willis' subsequent rise in notoriety was rapid, so much so that in 1829 he was banned from his family's church for missing services and attending the theater.

[3] Willis, "The Vacation," 44-45.

crossing an invisible boundary. But what else was going on? Why would Willis make such an assertion?

By the late 1820s there were distinct signs that tourism was being sold to the middle classes. This was not a concerted campaign like a promotion for a new commercial product. Instead, its campaign-like feeling came from the aggregate efforts of dozens of opportunistic entrepreneurs, writers, and playwrights, all seeking an audience for their products and finding it among the small but emerging middle class.

For example, in 1828 the Bowery Theater commissioned a tourism-related play. It hoped to duplicate the success the nearby Park Theater had in 1827 with a spectacle that depicted a trip to Paris and London. The Bowery was becoming a middle-class theater, while the Park had always been the city's most exclusive. This fact, the separation of theaters by class, represented a big change in the New York theater world. Prior to the 1820s, all classes of society met when they went to the theater. Then, the lowest classes would sit in the gallery at the top of the theater. Just in front of the stage, and often exposed to the hurled insults of the gallery (both physical, such as fruit pits, and verbal), was the pit, filled with the middling classes. Held back from this melee and protected from the gallery by the tiers above them were the uppermost classes, safe in their boxes. This sorting was not accomplished through the explicit exclusion of a particular class; rather, ticket prices were set to segregate the different segments of society (and, of

course, boxes could be rented by the season). But by the late 1820s, in cities where more than one theater could be supported, theaters had begun to differentiate themselves. New York, with its sizable theater district, exploding population, and large numbers of enthusiastic theater-goers, began to develop these class-sorted theaters. By 1828 this difference was most pronounced in three particular theaters: at the high end was the Park Theater; for the middling classes, the Bowery, and at the lower end, the Chatham.[4]

This gives us a clear signal of the shift in emphasis in the marketing of tourism. The high-class Park had mounted a spectacle directed to the ideal of the wealthiest tourists, a voyage to Europe. Just a year later the middle-class Bowery presented a play for new middle-class aspirations, the trip to Niagara.

To write it, the Bowery's management pulled an old warhorse out of retirement: William Dunlap. Although Dunlap was a famous New York author, a drama and art critic, it had been thirty years since he had written for the stage.

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[4] David Grimsted, *Melodrama Unveiled: American Theater and Culture, 1800-1850* (1967. First Paperback Edition, Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1987), 56. Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763-1834* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1987), 252. The Park's place as the theater of the gentry emerged as early as 1822; see the watercolor by John Searle, "Interior of the Park Theatre, N.Y.C." (1822), New-York Historical Society, reproduced in Gilje, *Mobocracy*, 250, and elsewhere (see chap. II for a discussion of this illustration in regards to Sarah Ogden). There is some debate as to when the Bowery began to move to the middle scale. Grimstead is more straightforward in saying that this had happened in the late 1820s, while Bruce McConachie in *Melodramatic Formations: American Theater and Society, 1820-1870* (Iowa City: U. of Iowa Press, 1992), 22, describes the Bowery as one of the six "elite" theaters of 1827, a status which it had lost, in his reading, by 1832. On the other hand, the status of the Park Theater as, in the words of one historian, "*the* theater of New York," remains undebated, Glenn Hughes, *A History of American Theater, 1700-1950*, (New York: Samuel French, 1951), 134. One historian who would contest this time frame, placing the segregation by class much later into the 1830s, is Bruce A. McConachie, "Pacifying American Theatrical Audiences, 1820-1900" in *For Fun and Profit: The Transformation of Leisure into Consumption* (Philadelphia: Temple U. Press, 1990), 47-70; see esp. pp. 47-54. Incidentally, when the Bowery mounted *Niagara*, it had only very recently been rebuilt. It burned in May, 1828 fire, reopening in August, 1828; *Niagara* opened in November.

He was not, by any means, the hot young playwright of the moment.[5] But he would have had some name recognition. One critic applauded the Bowery's choice of an American, "a native dramaturge," rather than "servilely receiving" one of the "mawkish, and, frequently, ill-suited, effusions of London playwrights."[6] At any rate, from the evidence of the text it is obvious that Dunlap had fun writing it. For example, he was forthright in the introduction to the printed edition of the play as to its durability or significance: "The following Farce...makes no pretensions to...higher character." In reality, the play was just window dressing. The real star of the show was a large moving diorama that would be unveiled about halfway through the night's entertainment. Painted on it were images of the Fashionable Tour route from New York to the Catskills based on those from William Guy Wall's *Hudson River Port Folio*. These "admirable sketches," a critical admirer wrote in describing the diorama, "have been for a long time familiar to the lovers of the fine arts."[7] Other backdrops depicted scenes at the Catskill escarpment, Albany, along the Erie Canal, and Niagara Falls. The idea of having this diorama as the star of the night had been pioneered by the Park Theater's show of the year before, which had featured one

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[5] Biographies of Dunlap include Robert Canary, *William Dunlap*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970) and Oral S. Coad, *William Dunlap: A Study of His Life and Works* (New York: Dunlap Society, 1917). A shorter profile of Dunlap is in Grimsted, *Melodrama Unveiled*, 1-21. *Niagara* was Dunlap's last play.

[6] "A Trip to Niagara," *New-York Mirror and Ladies Literary Gazette* 6, no. 20 (22 Nov 1828): 159.

[7] "The Diorama at the Bowery Theater," *The Critic: A Weekly Review of Literature, Fine Arts and Drama* 1 (13 Dec 1828): 104.

depicting the sights of Paris and London.[8] As Dunlop put it, the play was just something to keep "the audience, or spectators, in good humour while the scenery and machinery was in preparation."[9]

It was tailored for its audience, filled with in-jokes and asides that would have been hilarious to the audiences of the day.[10] The play was presented as a spectacle typical for its time. Advertisements for it promised a number of special effects, such as lightning and fog, while the diorama was unfurled. Animated representations of riverboats plied the waters of the Hudson and "tricks, such as the motion of the steamboat's works" and "the hoisting up the sails of one of the river-craft, &c. greatly assist[ed] the illusion," one critic reported.[11] Finally, at the play's climax, at "*Niagara!* The stupendous cataract" (which was promised to be rendered "with all its terrific grandeur"), "sublime effects" were promised. All of it must have pleased the crowd immeasurably. It opened on a Friday night in late November 1828 as "A Trip to Niagara: or, Travellers in America."[12]

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[8] See Odell, *Annals*, 3:320 for a brief description of the diorama presented at the Park Theater, William T. Moncrieff, *Paris and London, or, a Trip to Both Cities: An Operatic Extravaganza in Three Acts*, (New York: E.M. Murden, 1828). James Callow gives a briefly description of *Trip to Niagara's* panoramas in *Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 148-49.

[9] William Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara; or, Travellers in America. A Farce. In Three Acts.* (New York: E.B. Clayton, 1830), [i].

[10] As an example of this – something that must have had them rolling in the aisles – one character, named John Bull, enters: "*Amelia:* Mr. Bull! You in America? *Bull.* Yes, Amelia, John Bull in America," referring to a recently published book by James K. Paulding of the same name (Dunlap, *Trip to Niagara*, 9). It was probably not a coincidence that the play *John Bull at Home and Jonathan in England* opened just a week after *A Trip to Niagara* at the Park Theater. *New-York Evening Post*, 2 Dec 1828, p. 3, col. 1.

[11] "The Diorama," *The Critic* 1 (13 Dec 1828): 104.

[12] "Bowery Theater – Friday Evening," *New-York Evening Post*, 28 November 1828, p. 2, col. 6. The play was also advertised in the *Weekly American* that night. See Grimsted, *Melodrama Unveiled*, 78-82, for a discussion of typical theater effects of the time. The play was so popular that it was

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The characters were stock figures, drunken, clueless Irishmen, upstart African Americans, a meddling but lovelorn maid, a snooty Frenchman, and a haplessly arrogant but ignorant British aristocrat. Two acts laden with mistaken identities, low farce, and some chest-beating patriotism would pass before the diorama itself would be unveiled. By the end of the second act the principal characters had been maneuvered aboard a Hudson River steamboat. Then, at last, the diorama was deployed: as they posed on board the stationary ship the scenery was cranked past, signifying their upriver journey.[13]

The diorama was stopped when the steamboat "reached" the village of Catskill. There, everyone debarked. The backdrop was changed and the new scene opened to exclamations of wonder at the stunning view from the escarpment above the village. It is there that Dunlap engineered a collision between his characters and James Fenimore Cooper's most famous invention, Leatherstocking or Natty Bumppo. That these characters were readily recognizable to the Bowery's audience signifies just how quickly and thoroughly Cooper had penetrated into the middle class's consciousness.

Leatherstocking takes only a small bit of prompting to deliver a slightly modified version of his famous soliloquy describing the vista from atop the escarpment.[14] And once he had delivered it the scene shifts. Now we're at the

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repeated the next night when the first night sold out. "Mr Dunlap's play of a Trip to Niagara," *New-York Mirror* 6, no. 24 (20 Dec 1828): 191. George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 3: 409.

[13] Dunlap, *Trip to Niagara*, 21, 26-27.

[14] Cooper, *Pioneers*, 292-93; it is reproduced in Chap. III.

Kaaterskill Falls, and the following exchange occurs between Leatherstocking, Amelia, a well-intention young British tourist, and Wentworth, her snooty brother:

> *Leather.* On that spot… I once saved a beautiful woman, like you, from the spring of a painter.
> *Ame.* A painter?
> *Went.* One of those foolish fellows, I suppose, who go about, to places like this, climbing precipices, at the risk of their necks, with port folios and three legged stools and pencils, to make sketches of what they call fine scenery. Ha! Wasn't it?
> *Leather.* Anan ? [sic]
> *Went.* What did you do with the painter?
> *Leather.* I shot him.
> *Ame.* Shot him!
> *Leather.* I never miss my aim.
> *Went.* Poor devil – but it served him right…
> *Ame.* And you shot him?
> *Leather.* Just as he was going to spring on the gal.
> *Went.* I always had a bad opinion of those vagabond sketching blades.
> *Ame.* And you saved her?
> *Leather.* She didn't see the creater, and he didn't see me – I leveld just over her shoulder and hit him between the eyes. [*Chuckling.*] He! He – He roll'd down the rock, harmless as a lamb… I wore the creater's skin ever since…
> *Went.* The painter's skin?
> *Leather.* This coat is made of it.
> *Ame.* O – a panther! Now I understand.[15]

This bit of farce, hanging as it does on the wretched word play arising from Leather-stocking's accent, nonetheless works in some sly artistic references. Not only does Dunlap allude to Thomas Cole, whose paintings by now had been widely seen and appreciated by this middling-class New York audience, but also, more obliquely, to William Guy Wall.

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[15] Dunlap, *Trip to Niagara*, 33-34.

The play ran to appreciative audiences for several weeks, which was a typical good run for the time: the New York theater audience was small, and innovation was essential to keep their attention. The diorama was resurrected twice more in the year or two following before it was, apparently, retired forever or, perhaps, sent on the road.[16]

What Dunlap's play meant to theatergoers is unknowable, although critics received it quite favorably. But beyond its entertainment value for the crowds that came to see it this may have been their first exposure a number of new ideas. They were, for example, given a primer as to how to be a tourist: the characters take a steamboat, negotiate among the rival porters at the steamboat landing, use inns, travel, meet new people. The play was also an advertisement for the specific sites the characters visited: they were never afraid to name where they'd stayed, noting the name, for example, of Forsyth's hotel at Niagara.

Beyond these advertisements for place, it was also a broadcaster of ideas. For example, it promoted ideas of the sublime: as the characters openly appreciated the scenery, they usually exclaimed over its sublime nature.[17] But Dunlap must have known that these ideas were inherently unsettling, and so he wrote his text to bridge the gap between tradition and the sublime. He wanted to create a kind of "tourist sublime," a safe intermediary between the

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[16] Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 3:407, 408, 413, 472. "Trip to Niagara," *New-York Evening Post*, 2 Dec 1828, p. 3, col. 1, also mentioned 1 Dec 1828, p. 2, col. 2. The diorama may have burned, though, when the Bowery did in April, 1829, Pintard, *Letters*, 3:71.

[17] For example, at Kaaterskill Falls Amelia declares, somewhat all inclusively, "Sublime! How bold! How picturesque!" p. 37.

uncontrollable sensations of the purely sublime and the safety of a human-ordered landscape.

For example, the traditional view tended to see beauty only where nature had been harnessed to human use. A corollary to that view held that only savages could appreciate a wild, uncut forest. The philosophy of the sublime, on the other hand, urged its adherents to look on a wild scene with wonder, terror, and excitement. No character in the play is a devotée of that pure sublime. But one character does present himself as a "savage," Leatherstocking, the white man who lives as an Indian. At his entrance, Amelia, who sees him first, is confused. "Is he an Indian?" she asks her brother. "A wild and noble figure. An Indian?" He sits on the line between "civilized" and "savage." And in his role as "savage," he is a champion of an unspoiled wilderness. Of Niagara, he declares, "What has housen [*sic*] and bridges to do among the wonders of heaven? They spoil all – they spoil all!" Dunlap could have had, say, an actual Indian character deliver these sentiments, but with Leatherstocking he was doing something else. Leatherstocking was deployed as an inherently sympathetic figure, the hero of two wildly successful books (with more to come). By allowing him to express these sentiments, Dunlap is helping to shake the idea that only savages could be pleased with wilderness: Leatherstocking is an ambassador for the sublime. However, Dunlap makes clear that although Leatherstocking is presenting an acceptable vision of nature, he is not, on the whole, a role model for his travellers. Dunlap wants them to take only a small portion of his attitudes with

them. Leatherstocking is presented as a relic of the past, a colorful figure who is, in the words of Amelia, a "strange being," fit only for the wild woods, but little more. By the end of the play Dunlap has sent him off, in Amelia's words, "away to the prairie, the woods, and the grave."[18]

Sublime images were being marketed widely elsewhere. For example, one of the most popular consumer products of the late 1820s was Staffordshire china. Before the Revolution, china and tableware from England had been available in America as luxury goods. After the war a few specialty items were specifically targeted at the American market such as statuettes of Washington and Franklin. But they were expensive luxuries due to the high tariff walls between the countries and the costs associated with the regular disruptions in trade. After the War of 1812, though, trade relations were regularized and a wide variety of newly inexpensive British-made goods, including Staffordshire china, became available in the United States.

Staffordshire potters had long been mass producing china and had become extremely efficient in finding and adapting techniques to lower costs and increase production. One of these processes, transfer-ware printing, bypassed one of the slowest and least efficient steps, the hand decoration of pottery. Transfer printing allowed for quickly manufactured, mass-produced pottery with standardized images. The images themselves were generally taken from

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[18] Dunlap, *Trip to Niagara*, 31, 39, 53.

best-selling etchings or engravings, images chosen for their popularity and as a way to differentiate the product for different market sectors.

Now that they could sell large quantities of their product in the United States, Staffordshire potters began making a wide range of items specifically for that market. They created lines of china differentiated by cost, the quality of the images, and care taken in production. They were so successful that by 1830 Staffordshire had become omnipresent in all classes of American homes.

A significant part of the marketing was based on the images that had been chosen. The main subjects for the American trade generally depicted American places or scenes, ranging from institutions such as the Hartford Home for the Deaf and Dumb to scenery such as Niagara Falls. But the majority of the non-institutional images came from places located along the Fashionable Tour.[19]

Transfer-printed ware used images from every variety of popular engraving, but the most widely reproduced images were those of William Guy Wall. His watercolors as rendered in the *Hudson River Port Folio* became standards of the Staffordshire market, with nearly every British manufacturer

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[19] Ellouise Baker Larsen, *American Historical Views on Staffordshire China (Rev. Ed.)*, (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1950), 2-3. General information about the American market for British china can be found in Marian Klamkin, *American Patriotic and Political China* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 12-54. The literature on pottery suffers, for historians, from several handicaps. For example, most of it was written for collectors, and so historical information is scattered among descriptions of the specific lines of individual manufacturers. However, the difficulty of placing particular pieces in time is enhanced by the apparent lack of hard records by their manufacturers. Likewise, it is difficult to precisely assess the quantity of production; examples of a significant number of these pieces, though, seem to have survived in collections.

distributing wares with reproductions of his prints.[20] There are several possible reasons for this. Perhaps one factor was his clarity of line, since the transfer ware process did not allow for great subtleties in style. Another was the success of the *Port Folio,* one of the earliest comprehensive folio of American views. In any case, the weakness of the copyright laws meant that these images were free to the producers. And their wide reproduction indicates their popularity among American consumers.

But the *Port Folio* was not the only source for scenes. British manufacturers rummaged through every extant engraving and image they could find to eventually depict every other major site along the Fashionable Tour. This included the most touted scenic sites of the Hudson, the Erie Canal, Niagara Falls, and parts of Canada. Even Ballston Springs, not particularly renowned for its scenic value, was depicted. By the mid-1830s, probably the single most popular Fashionable Tour site depicted was the Catskill Mountain House. Many of the pieces were from a widely reproduced 1830 engraving based on an 1828 Thomas Cole painting, *View of the Catskill Mountain House.*[21]

This emphasis on Fashionable Tour sites points to how thoroughly ingrained these images had become in the American mind as *the* American

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[20] Larsen, *American Historical Views,* lists a number of pieces based on Wall's works, especially those made by Andrew Stevenson (pp. 43-48, 50), James and Ralph Clews (pp. 58, 60-70), and Job & John Jackson (pp. 161-66). See also Jane Boicourt, "Some Staffordshire Views of the Upper Hudson," *Magazine Antiques* 60 (July 1951): 52-53 for several other Wall-illustrated pieces.
[21] Larsen, *American Historical Views,* 15, 144; also Frank Stefano, Jr., "American Hotels on Early Staffordshire," *Magazine Antiques* 112 (Aug, 1977): 276. Van Zandt, *Catskill Mountain House,* reproduces both the engraving (Fig. 2, p. 14) and two Staffordshire plates (Fig. 10, p. 59).

scenery. And their iconic status demonstrates how thoroughly established Hudson Valley tourism was as *the* American tourism.

The widespread presence of images of these formerly exclusive sites on every middle-class table must have been galling to the elites for whom the sites had originally been built. In fact, there is strong evidence that shows how shopworn Hudson Valley tourism had become among the fashionable elite by the late 1820s. In a review of a travel book in the United States' premier literary journal, the *North American Review*, an anonymous reviewer wrote, "It would be difficult at this time to write a new thing on either the Hudson river," nor on any of the other major sites of the Fashionable Tour. Nor, the reviewer went on, could anything new be written of about any

> nook and corner of the United States, within reach of stage-coaches, steamboats, or even pedestrian enterprises… We [now] have standard descriptions of all these wonders of nature and of art, under their present aspects; and until they exhibit new features, inquirers may safely be left to existing authorities for information. [22]

This commentator was correct: there was a true saturation of materials about this one section of American scenery. But on another level, what this commentator was noting was that these places had been made, by the relentless marketing of their images, almost commonplace. Their prevalence in the marketplace meant that they were no longer special, unique, or, most importantly for the tourist elite, exclusive: they had lost their cultural cachet.

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[22] *North American Review* 25 no. 57 (Oct 1827): 334, anon. review of Thomas L. M'Kenney's *Sketches of a Tour to the Lakes* (Baltimore: F. Lucas, 1827)

But there was another, even worse (by the gentry's standards) development that had happened when this route had become popular. It was now flooded with people they considered their inferiors. Many of the gentry now felt that their genial, quiet, and exclusive pursuit had become, like so much else in society, scruffy, plebian, or even dangerous. One prime example of this was the state of steamboat travel. Under the monopoly it had been a relatively quiet and controlled business, as the North River Line's standards had imposed a certain decorum. But with the entry of a number of competing companies after 1824, it had become an uncontrollably open, chaotic, untidy marketplace where transportation went to the lowest bidder. This was literally manifest at the ferry landing so complained about by Theodore Dwight in his *Northern Traveller*.

There were several efforts made in the late 1820s to recreate a gentry space. The first such attempt was made by the North River Steam Company itself. Since it had always demanded a certain decorum and had charged a premium to maintain these standards, it sought out a market niche as the gentry steamboat line. But the gentry did not flock to North River boats, and the line's efforts to maintain high standards (and high fares) failed: eventually, the company went bankrupt.

Another effort was made in 1827 by the Stevens family of Hoboken, New Jersey. Their company was very well established: John Stevens, the founder, had been one of the first American steamboat experimenters, having worked for a time on early prototypes in the 1790s with Chancellor Livingston. After Fulton's

success, Stevens appropriated a number of his advances and created a line of his own operating from New Jersey. He stayed out of the Hudson market as long as the North River line operated, but on its demise in 1826 he and his sons leapt into the gap.[23] In 1827, they entered the fight with an elegant new flagship, the *Albany*, one of the most advanced boats of its time.

The *Albany* would eventually be paired with another boat, the *New Philadelphia*, and they would work as a team, one leaving Albany at the moment the other left New York. Both were designed to be as fast and attractive as possible. They were day boats, which meant that they had to be beautiful. Night boats were utilitarian, attractive only to the traveller on a budget, as they saved the cost of a night's lodging; day boats, on the other hand, offered, in the words of an advertisement, the "gratification of viewing the beautiful and sublime scenery of the Hudson" and charged accordingly. They did not offer sleeping quarters and were better furnished and elegantly decorated.[24]

The *Albany* cost the Stevenses $65,000. Of that, the furnishings were a significant expense, nearly $10,000. But one of the most striking expenditures the Stevenses made was more than $4,000 to commission original art, a gallery of paintings, for the boat's main salon. This extravagance is even more striking given that the Stevenses had never been art collectors, with no member of the family recorded as offering any other artistic commission in this period. The

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[23] John Morison, *History of American Steam Navigation*, 15-17, 46.
[24] From Donald Ringwald, *Hudson River Day Line: the Story of a Great American Company* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1965), 4-5.

resulting gallery was of a quality and size almost unknown outside America's major cities. [25]

Twelve large paintings, each 22 by 46 inches in size, were hung in the main cabin. These represented the cream of American art: anyone familiar with the art world would have been deeply impressed with the collection. And, as in all galleries of the day, the paintings were not hung randomly. They were intended to converse with each other, providing a didactic journey with moral lessons and opportunities for discussion. But beyond their artistic significance, half of the twelve paintings were chosen specifically to please a tourist audience. [26]

The two paintings most obviously intended for this audience were by Thomas Cole. Cole was still a star only in the New York art world. His inclusion means that the Stevens were being advised by someone conversant in the new dialogue he had introduced into American painting, someone who knew of the excitement generated by Cole's works. The works themselves were significant: *Landscape View Near the Falls of the Kauterskill* was his last major view of Kaaterskill Falls, while *Scene from the Last of the Mohicans* was his first painting

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[25] This discussion of the Stevens' effort with the *Albany* is heavily dependent on Kenneth John Myers, "Art and Commerce in Jacksonian America: The Steamboat *Albany* Commission," *Art Bulletin* 82 no. 3 (Sep 2000): 503, 510-11.

[26] The twelve paintings were: Samuel F. B. Morse, *Una and the Dwarf*; John Vanderlyn, *Adriane Asleep on the Island of Naxos*; John Sully, *Mother and Child*; Thomas Cole, *Scene from the Last of the Mohicans*; Thomas Cole, *Landscape View Near the Falls of the Kauterskill*; Thomas Birch, *View of the Bay of New-York, from Castle Garden…*; Thomas Doughty, *Lake Scene at Sunrise, Composition*; Doughty, *View on the Potomac at Harper's Ferry*; Thomas Birch, *View of the Coast Near Sandy-Hook*; Charles B. Lawrence's copy of *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps*; Lawrence's copy of Sully's *Washington's Passage of the Delaware*; Lawrence, *View from Bordentown Hill on the Delaware*. Kenneth John Myers, "Art and Commerce in Jacksonian America: The Steamboat *Albany* Collection," 503-504. Myers brilliantly analyzes the artistic dialogue implicit in the works and their placement. All the paintings were painted on wooden panels.

illustrating themes from Cooper's writing.[27] Less explicitly linked but still heavily influenced by the tourist-influenced celebration of American scenery was Thomas Doughty's *Lake Scene at Sunrise, Composition*, while the connection between Robert Weir's *Landscape of Lake George* and Hudson tourism is obvious.[28]

Tourism's influence on Stevens' choice of the last two paintings is much less obvious, as both took Napoleonic themes. One was a copy of David's *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps*, while another depicted Point Breeze, the Bordentown, New Jersey, estate of Napoleon Bonaparte's exiled brother, Joseph.[29]

Joseph Bonaparte, though, was an essential figure in Hudson Valley tourism. He had fled to the United States after the Hundred Days in 1815. Calling himself the "Comte de Survilliers," after a property he had purchased adjacent to his former estate near Paris, he purchased Point Breeze and settled into a velvet exile. He was extravagantly wealthy through the significant amount of money and jewels he had managed to smuggle out of France, and he remodeled his estate into one of America's most magnificent. Hundreds of paintings graced the walls, including pieces by da Vinci, Velasquez, Rubens and Canaletto, and it was sumptuously furnished. After it burned in 1820 – most of the paintings and

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[27] In 1828 Cooper himself would commission a work from Cole. Cooper, *Collected Letters*, 1:248, fn. 9, 263.

[28] This painting, though, had not been in the original gallery. It had replaced John Vanderlyn's notorious *Adriane Asleep on the Island of Naxos*, which had been hung for only the first season. *Adriane* had been, no doubt, intended to please the mostly male viewer/passenger as it depicted a voluptuous, flagrantly naked woman. Its removal was almost certainly tied in with the scandal surround it: as one of the first non-classical nudes exhibited in America, the controversy surrounding it eventually ruined Vanderlyn's career. Myers, "Art and Commerce," 504-505. See fn. 10, 524 for discussion re: *Adriane*; Vanderlyn's *Adriane* is at the New-York Historical Society.

[29] Myers, "Art and Commerce," 518-19.

furnishings were saved by the local townspeople – he rebuilt in an even grander style. Its glories were an object of curiosity and it became a tourist site in its own right. Staffordshire plates depicting Point Breeze were sold in the United States; engravings of it appeared in magazines and journals. Joseph Bonaparte was seen as the epitome of style, taste, and fashion.[30]

Nearly every summer after his arrival in America, he travelled northward to take the waters at Saratoga. After a stay of a week or more he would then voyage onward to Niagara. Each year, his passage through New York City would be noted in the local newspapers, and his arrival would be announced in Saratoga's local newspaper. His presence at the tourist hotels or aboard steamboats was reported in travellers' diaries.[31]

Joseph Bonaparte, then, was the ideal tourist. His participation on the American tourist circuit validated it in the eyes of travelling Americans. The Napoleonic paintings aboard the *Albany* would subtly remind passengers of that

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[30] Michael Ross, *The Reluctant King: Joseph Bonaparte, King of the Two Sicilies and Spain*, (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1976), 247; Owen Connelly, *The Gentle Bonaparte: A Biography of Joseph, Napoleon's Elder Brother* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 246-48. For accounts of tourists interest in Point Breeze, see, for example, Ann Jean Baker Commonplace Book, 13 Nov 1826, Ms. 407, Box 3, Graves Family Collection, Maryland Historical Society: "Went on deck to see the villages of Bristol and Burlington and was pointed out the spire of the observatory belonging to Count Survilliers the Ex-king of Spain, which brought forcibly to my mind the changes wrought by time and the mutibility[sic] of fortune experienced by the Bonaparte family." A similar reference is in Henry Pickering Walcott Journal, 25 May 1822, Massachusetts Historical Society.

[31] Examples of tourists' mention of Joseph in their travel diaries include, from 1821: "We were last night at Sans Souci. Fashionable company there, and among others, Joseph Bonaparte, (formerly King of Spain) and his suite of about 15. Servants in livery," Laura (Porter) Hill Diary, 2 Aug 1821, New York State Historical Society; 1824: "...evening landed us at Skenectady after tea we took the Canal boat for Utica/ J Bonaparte & suite being of the Company," S. Shulling Diary, 24 June 1824, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. See reports in the *Saratoga Sentinel*, 25 Aug 1819, 25 Jul 1821, 2 Aug 1825, 18 Jul 1826, 8 Aug 1826, 17 Jul 1827, 8 Jul 1828, 5 Aug 1828, 11 Aug 1829, 20 Jul 1830.

fact, and if the Stevens were lucky enough to have Joseph himself aboard, so much the better: the paintings would have pleased him immeasurably. His presence on the boat, in addition to burnishing its reputation, would have been good for business.

Predictably, then, passage on the *Albany* was costly. A ticket on it was more than thirty percent more expensive than its competitors (four dollars to their three). The intent was to create a premium trip for discerning travellers, one that would neatly segregate gentry from non-gentry. The art gallery itself was to be the main tool to select refined, discerning, and sensitive travellers from the others. This traveller would pay more for the experience.

But that effort was a failure. After only one season the company was forced to drop its fares to two dollars to match its competitors. Meals, formerly included, now cost fifty cents each. But even these fares couldn't hold, and in 1829 it was forced to drop them once again, to a dollar. But its competitors had also cut fares: some day line journeys now were only fifty cents![32]

The drop in fares ultimately undermined the *Albany's* charter intent. With passage on it as cheap as any other steamboat, the steamboat's staterooms became crowded with "lesser" classes, social strivers, or *arrivistes*. The gentry were disgusted: they were once again surrounded, in the words of the New York

[32] The fares were as high even for day boats; the cheapest night boat competitors charged only one dollar, with occasional discounts. Myers, "Art and Commerce," 520.

editor William Leete Stone, by "the would-be ultra-genteels."[33] However, gentry would continue to ride steamboats, as there were no alternatives. For the moment, they would have to just put up with it.

Of course, many chafed at the new situation. There were several different possible responses: some were sniffy; others counseled reason and detachment; while others responded with humor and sarcasm. One of the humorous responses came from the decade's premier satirist, James Kirke Paulding.

In 1828, Paulding published a satire that was a comprehensive attack on tourism, *The New Mirror for Travellers: and a Guide to the Springs*.[34] Paulding was one of the most popular authors of the 1820s. He originally gained fame as one of the Knickerbockers, particularly through his collaboration with Washington Irving and his brother in the celebrated first *Salmagundi* series. Paulding was a conservative and he strongly opposed the rapid changes of his day: in a letter from 1827, he wrote, "I am so far a Dutchman yet, that, I hate all interlopers, and reverence Old customs."[35] He lived in Hyde Park, New York, near the Fashionable Tour route, and so would have been able to see tourism at first hand.[36]

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[33] William Leete Stone, "Ten Days in the Country," [New York] *Commercial Advertiser*, 28 Aug 1824, quoted in Myers, "Art and Commerce," 522.
[34] James Kirke Paulding, *The New Mirror For Travellers; and Guide to the Springs, by An Amateur*. (New-York: G. & C. Carvill, 1828). Page numbers for quotes following are taken from one collection of Paulding's works: *A Book of Vagaries*, William I. Paulding, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1868), which incorporates the entirety of *New Mirror* into its text.
[35] James K. Paulding to Gasherie DeWitt?, 28 Dec 1827, in Ralph Aderman, ed., *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 93.
[36] Paulding was celebrated as one of the great authors of the nineteenth century as late as 1948, earning a place alongside Hawthorne and Poe. See, for example, Alexander Cowie, *The Rise of the*

con't.

Although it actually contained enough useful information that a traveller could use it as a guidebook, in fact The *New Mirror* was a parody. It was filled with the kind of humorous tweaks that kept Paulding a popular writer throughout the 1820s. But his main targets were tourists. For example, he described a young man, an imaginary member "of a most respectable family from the south," who had followed the traditional path to gentility and travelled for years in Europe. This polishing, though, had left him with "no decided opinions on any subject whatever." The one thing his travels had given him was "a dyspepsy," which he "caught at a famous restaurateur's" in Paris, something that he characterizes as being "excessively high-bred at that time." But to his dismay, on his return to America he discovered that he was not so special: his dyspeptic disorder had now become "vulgar." He had "actually heard brokers and lottery-office-keepers complain of it." [37]

Paulding's criticism of tourism lashed unmercifully at the hypocrisy of the Springs traveller, who outwardly worshipped American scenery with a pretence

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American Novel (New York: American Book Co., 1948), which allocates fifteen pages to a profile of his literary and political writing. His literary star, however, has fallen since. For example, the *Columbia History of the American Novel*, Emory Elliott, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), has only one brief mention of him. This steep decline has come as researchers have come to understand the significance of his political work, which included apologia for slavery and various other defenses of southern extremism in the period after the 1820s. One study which argues, though, that Paulding was defending a Jeffersonian vision of Republicanism is Lorman Ratner, *James Kirke Paulding: The Last Republican* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992). Ratner contends that Paulding was much more anti-abolitionist than pro-slavery, despite the excesses of Paulding's *Slavery in the United States* (1836), which presents a bucolic view of that institution. A fine analysis of Paulding as a social commentator and travel writer is by Beth Lueck in *American Writers and the Picturesque Tour: The Search for National Identity, 1790-1860* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), esp. chap. 3, "'Banqueting on the Picturesque': James Kirke Paulding in the 1820s and '30s," 53-86.

[37] Paulding, *New Mirror*, 23-29.

of romantic fascination. What was lost, Paulding felt, was any feeling for the Hudson's real scenery:

> There is also a pleasant little ride, which we ourselves discovered, due north of Saratoga, along an excellent road, skirted on one band by rich meadows, on the other by a rugged, rocky hill, from which ever and anon, pours down a little brawling stream, that loses itself among the high green grass of the lowlands. On a fine afternoon towards sunset, when the slanting beams of the sun leave the east side of the hills enveloped in cooling shades, it is pleasant to ride along and taste the charms of nature, after revelling in those of art at the springs. But what are we talking about? we have forgot ourselves. Such matters are unworthy our book and those to whom it is addressed.
>
> Who indeed would waste his time in loitering about these ignoble scenes, unsaid and unsung by names of fashionable note, when they can walk back and forth the long piazzas at the springs.[38]

He was not opposed to the representations of scenery that had made the Hudson so popular. Regarding Kaaterskill Falls – falls that "want nothing but a little more water to be wonderfully sublime," water produced by "the proper application of half a dollar," by payment to the mill owner – he argued that "the drawing-rooms of the wealthy" should be graced by illustrations of them by Thomas Cole and William Guy Wall. But he had little praise for the new tourist infrastructure atop the escarpment. Fashionable people, he argued, climbed the mountain primarily to build an appetite: "It is amazing what a glorious propensity to eating is generated by the keen air" of mountains. "The stomach expands with the majesty and expansion of the prospect, and the worthy landlord at the Pine Orchard…has assured us that he has known a sickly young

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[38] Paulding, *New Mirror*, 289-90.

lady, who was travelling for an appetite, discussing venison for breakfast like an alderman."[39]

Finally, over many pages, Paulding dissects the manners and morals of the Springs. In chapters directed to single women, married women, single men, and married men, he offers "rules" for each group which, in aggregate, provides a vision of Springs life as facile, superficial, obsessed with appearance yet solipsistic. He ends *New Mirror* at the Springs, because, as he argues, "there is nothing beyond" it: it is the "*ultima Thule* of the fashionable world."[40]

Where Paulding sought to laugh tourists out of existence, another writer argued for a kind of educated separation from them. Theodore Dwight had marketed himself as *the* writer for the gentry through his guidebook. His main concern there had been that tourism had become a shallow exercise. He blamed this on several factors, but probably the main cause of this trend he felt was the inadequate levels of education possessed by travellers. Further, Dwight was very suspicious of Romanticism. Like many, he thought this a fad, an insincere mantle too easily worn by the callow, ignorant, or dissolute. One of the elements of his suspicion came from the sense that a romantic did not need knowledge based on discipline or instruction: the romantic's reliance on emotion would obviate any true understanding of the thing seen.[41]

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[39] Paulding, *New Mirror*, 148-49.
[40] Paulding, *New Mirror*, 282.
[41] Dwight would make education his lifelong theme, publishing many works describing the reforms he felt were essential for the future of America. See John Sears' introduction to Dwight's *Sketches of Scenery and Manners*, 3-14.

Recall that when Dwight first published his guidebook, the *Northern Traveller*, in 1825, there were two competitors on the market: Gideon Davison's *Fashionable Tour* and Henry D. Gilpin's *Northern Tour*. Davison's book was easy for Dwight to dismiss: it was published, after all, by a rough-handed printer with ink under his fingernails. But Gilpin was another matter. With his impeccable artistic education and lofty family credentials, he stood as Dwight's major rival for that crucial gentry audience. And his guidebook, loaded with emotion, poetry, and sensations of the sublime, stood in direct opposition to Dwight's ideals.

But it turned out that Gilpin, unlike Dwight, had no intentions of making a franchise of his guidebook. His restless literary intelligence had moved on to take up the editorship of the *Atlantic Souvenir*.[42] Consequently, at some point, probably in 1826, Dwight came to an understanding with Gilpin and purchased rights to the *Northern Tour*. And when Dwight published a new edition of his own guidebook in 1828, it had been renamed to reflect this: it was now *The Northern Traveller (Combined with the Northern Tour)*.

However, although Dwight had presumably spent good money for Gilpin's title, he included virtually nothing from Gilpin in the new edition of his book.

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[42] He would remain editor of the *Souvenir* only until 1830. He then temporarily left literature to concentrate on his career as a lawyer. Soon after, he was named Andrew Jackson's, attorney general, a post he held for some years, and after serving in Martin Van Buren's administration he retired from law and government to write; his works thereafter were generally nonfiction. He died in 1860: one biography (*Dictionary of American Biography*) claimed that "his body was not equal to the confining life prescribed by his literary tastes and after a tedious period of physical decline he died."

Gone was Gilpin's florid romanticism, his high-flown poetic quotes, his personality. The only content Dwight incorporated from his old rival was some information about ancillary routes: Gilpin's descriptions of the New England cities, for example, or his lengthy description of Pennsylvania's coal mines (then tourist attractions). So why did Dwight bother? With the purchase of the *Northern Tour* Dwight was able to fulfill two objectives: not only would he close out one-third of his competition in the Hudson Valley guidebook market, but he also could eliminate that detested romantic text from his tourist world.[43]

Dwight continued his campaign to reform the crass new tourism with his next book, 1829's *Sketches of Scenery and Manners in the United States.*[44] This is a curious work, as it intersperses chapters of descriptive travel literature with highly didactic essays. But this unusual format is best understood in the context of Dwight's views of the state of travel and tourism in the 1820s. And it's no surprise that the climax of the book is entitled "Travelling to Good Purpose," an idea that Dwight had been arguing for since he first committed his views to print. In this essay Dwight, though, could at last directly attack the emerging tourist culture, which he identified with frivolity and excess:

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[43] Dwight had published a second edition in 1826 that modestly expanded the original text, adding some maps and illustrations, *The Northern Traveller* (New-York: A.T. Goodrich, 1826). The third edition: *The Northern Traveller (Combined With The Northern Tour),* (New-York: G. & C. Carvill, 1828). There is no surviving correspondence between the two authors discussing this transaction. Gilpin's letters for 1826 have been lost, and there is no mention of either Dwight or the Gilpin's *Northern Tour* in his 1827 letters at the Historical Society of Delaware. There is a similar silence in the small number of surviving pre-1830 letters by Dwight held at the New York Public Library.

[44] Dwight, *Sketches*, 173, 148.

> Some individuals, among the numerous travellers for pleasure, may be found with something like a method… but the greater part appear to be influenced only by their present gratification… and not a few of them… suddenly change their course when in the neighborhood of others, surprised with discoveries which the very newspapers are weary of describing, and finally carrying home with them nothing distinct, interesting, or useful.[45]

These shallow and facile travellers, Dwight argued, were all too numerous. Their frivolity undermined the important educational impact that travelling should have had. Beyond that, he argued that this kind of travel could be, in fact, an outright danger not only to those who indulged in it but by implication to the community they returned to. When "the wild, the extravagant, and the uninstructed" travel, he insisted, they "bring home with them little more than their own ignorance and the prejudices or vices of others, and exhibit during their lives, their deficiencies and circumscribed opinions in an unfavorable relief." On the other hand, one who has travelled correctly is immediately recognizable: "He who has at any period of his life ever travelled to good purpose, is very apt to evince that fact, though unsuspectingly and without design, to the sagacious and attentive observer." A model Dwight traveller would become a good citizen and stalwart of the community.[46]

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[45] Dwight, *Sketches*, 175-76.

[46] Dwight, *Sketches*, 179, 178. The source of Dwight's discomfort with leisure could be ascribed to the lingering effects of traditional attitudes inherent in some parts of New England society, particularly that derived from Puritanism. But as Bruce Daniels shows in *Puritans at Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), discomfort toward leisure and play was not universal. He argues for a diverse New England society, with many elements, particularly toward the end of the eighteenth century, allowing for and welcoming leisure and play. On the other hand, there were clearly elements of New England society that distrusted, even despised, frivolity – see, for example, the excommunication of N.P. Willis for theater attendance, described earlier in this chapter. Dwight clearly had deep roots in this

con't.

Dwight rejected any romantic filters: "Instead of wishing to see the world through a fancied medium, the rational traveller wishes to view it as it is." In effect, he was asking his readers to become deliberate non-tourists, travellers who rejected the rosy architecture of romanticism. Dwight, too, argued for a self-contained traveller, one unbothered by others unless to notice their most positive points as a matter of celebration. This unself-conscious traveller would be free from the vanity of fashion and the need for outward display: he would be free from the emerging consumer culture of the day, a consumerism that was expressing itself not only in the items purchased and then worn or displayed but also in the experiences money could buy. [47]

The notion of the self-contained traveller, too, was a perfect one if he were forced to travel amid his lessers. Just like a rich man on today's New York subway line, the self-contained traveller brought along his own zone of separation. The commercial failure of gentry-only spaces called for exactly the kind of coping tools Dwight offered.

But although Dwight was attacking the mixing of classes, he was also attacking the affectations of his own class. Romanticism was a rich person's luxury, and Dwight wanted reform to begin at the top. His sincere, rational traveller was from the gentry, and that gentry role model would, through his

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tradition. There seems to have also been a hardening of attitudes toward recreation in the face of the expanding consumer culture of the 1820s and later combined with the tightening moral standards of the Second Great Awakening.

[47] Dwight, *Sketches*, 176.

example, influence his lessers. Dwight was not alone in his criticism: in this, he was in accord with Sedgwick, who had criticized "the vulgar rich, among whom vulgarity is quite as obvious, and much more disgusting, than with the vulgar poor." [48]

This concern with vulgarity was not limited to Dwight or Sedgwick. One other writer of the time came out stridently against vulgar show and identified the tourist sites at Saratoga and Ballston particularly with it. She was from Virginia, but her joining with this chorus is particularly ironic given her own class background. This was Anne Newport Royall, born in 1769 in poverty into a poor Virginia family. When she was teenager, she and her mother moved to Sweet Springs, Virginia. There, they served in the household of William Royall, a wealthy Virginia farmer and Revolutionary War veteran. The young Anne caught William's eye and earned a privileged position in his household. He allowed her to read from his extensive library and made her into something of a companion. Eventually, he scandalized his family by marrying her. She was twenty-seven, he was in his fifties. William Royall's nephew by marriage, James Roane, was particularly upset: his son had been promised Royall's estate during the veteran's long bachelorhood. Royall, though, had become increasingly disillusioned with Roane, who he felt was something of a parasite. His original will, properly filed, had left his estate to Roane's son. After about ten years of marriage he scribbled out a will that left the bulk of his estate to his wife, Anne.

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[48] Sedgwick, *Travellers*, 83.

But he never properly recorded it or had it witnessed: instead, he shoved it into a desk drawer and forgot about it. William Royall died in 1812, his life shortened by alcoholism.[49]

Anne claimed the estate under the revised will, but Royall's nephew immediately sued to break it and a titanic legal battle ensued. In the interim, Anne was left without any access to the estate's income and she began sliding into poverty. In 1817, the revised will was rejected by the court. She appealed, but decided in the interim to move to Alabama. While travelling there, she wrote a series of thirty-two letters to one of the lawyers who had assisted in her defense. By June of 1819 the decision was returned. It was a disaster for her: the court ruled that neither of William Royall's wills was valid. He was declared to have died *intestate* and Anne was held liable even for court costs. Other lawsuits

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[49] There are several biographies of Anne Royall. Bessie Rowland James, *Anne Royall's USA* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972) is clearly written and organized. Alice S. Maxwell and Marion B. Dunelvy, *Virago! The Story of Anne Newport Royall (1769-1854)*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1985) is awkwardly organized but vigorously told and concentrates more on Royall's trial as a "common scold" in 1829. Finally, Sarah Harvey Porter, *The Life and Times of Anne Royall*, (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press Book Shop, 1908), is earnest. There are several good sketches of her life, including "Royall, Anne Newport" in Charles Van Doren, ed., *Webster's American Biographies* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1984). Oddly, though, there is very little other secondary literature about Royall. Articles include Edith B. Gelles, "Gossip: An Eighteenth-Century Case," *Journal of Social History* 22, no. 4 (1989): 667-683; Maurine Beasley, "The Curious Career of Anne Royall," *Journalism History* 3, no. 4 (1976-77): 98-102, 136; Don Dodd and Ben Williams, "A Common Scold: Anne Royall," *American History Illustrated* 10, no. 9(1976): 32-38; Lucille Griffith, "Anne Royall in Alabama," *Alabama Review* 21, no. 1 (1968): 53-63; Virginia Foulk, "Women Authors Of West Virginia," *West Virginia History* 25, no. 3 (1964): 206-210. As for dissertations, there are also few. She is featured in two recent dissertations, Carole A. Policy's "Status, Ideology, and Identity: Class ambiguity in the humor of the Lowell 'Factory Girls,' Anne Royall, and Fanny Fern (Massachusetts)," (Ph.D. diss., Florida State U., 2000) and Erika Maria Kreger, "Plain Speaking: American Women Writers and the Periodical Sketch Form, 1820-1870," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Davis, 2000). Before that, one must look all the way back to 1930 for a Master's thesis, Kathryn Ohman, "Life and Manners in the United States, 1807-1830, As Seen by Anne Royall," (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1930).

related to the estate were filed against her. The net effect of these disasters, combined with legal fees, left her nearly destitute. Only a small widow's dower, protected from legal action, was left to support her.[50]

For the next four years, she used that dower to travel around Alabama, writing long letters to her lawyer describing what she saw, letters she would later compile for publication. There was one other possibility for a steadier income than writing, and that was the chance for a Revolutionary War veteran's pension, some of which had been paid to widows. She'd enjoyed writing and travelling, and so she decided to combine these interests into a trip to Washington, D.C.: not only would she lobby for the pension, but she would record her travels in a book. Before she left, she had settled on a title: *Sketches of History, Life and Manners in the United States.*

As she sought her widow's pension in Washington, she gathered gossip and recorded her experiences. She met with the highest officials in government, including John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State, and wrote cuttingly perceptive profiles of them. She also came up with an interesting funding mechanism: she sold pre-publication subscriptions of *Sketches*; indeed, she was even able to sell one to Adams. Her resourcefulness included gaining an interview with the Marquis de Lafayette, who was then making a triumphant tour of the country in his sunset years. By January 1825, she had earned enough

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[50] Legal ruling from James Roane and wife Elizabeth vs. Ann Royall *et als.*, File Box 235, Circuit Clerk's Office, Augusta Co. Courthouse, Staunton, Virginia, as quoted in Bessie James, *Anne Royall's USA*, 81.

from subscriptions to journey northward to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

In New York, she was able to get money from the Masons due to her husband's long membership in the organization, but otherwise the city viewed her with a generally cold eye. She met with newspaper publishers Theodore Dwight, the father of the guidebook author and editor of the *New-York Daily Advertiser*, and Charles King, but her manner and assertiveness caused both men to consider her unfeminine, a fatal flaw in their eyes. But she gained an ally in the editor of the *National Advocate*, Mordecai Noah, a flamboyant Sephardic Jew and onetime Sheriff of New York, who must have seen a kindred spirit in Royall. But for every friend she made her persona and style alienated another. Nevertheless, the friends she did make were loyal to a remarkable degree, and she was able to complete her travels through New England, recording interviews with, among others, Daniel Webster (that one did not go well), Jedediah Morse, the geographer, who received her genially, and the woman historian Hannah Adams, a distant cousin of the presidents.[51]

In May 1826, Anne Royall's first book, *Sketches of History, Life and Manners* was printed in New Haven, Connecticut. Following convention, it was credited anonymously to "A Traveller," but Anne Royall had no intention of allowing it to remain anonymous. In what may be the first book tour in American letters, she took as many as she could carry and, having arranged for her publishers to

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[51] Bessie James, *Anne Royall's USA*, chap. IV-VIII.

send her regular shipments at the cities she was to visit, embarked once again. Her first stop was the New York City office of Theodore Dwight. Her visit there was brief and not pleasant. The ensuing review of her book was, at best, tepid: "[It] contains nothing remarkable. The style is easy… It is new to us to be criticized by travellers from that point of the compass."[52] Royall did not sell many books in New York. But Boston, the next stop of her tour, gave her a much more genial reception: the entire stock she had carried there sold out, and more copies were ordered. From Boston, Royall continued to Albany, where she interviewed the governor, and then on to Saratoga and Ballston Springs. It speaks volumes of her success in Boston that she could afford to go there.

Royall never forgot a slight, and the ones she had received in New York had stung her deeply. She began writing her responses to them in a manuscript she entitled *The Black Book*, where, she promised, she would record "the black deeds of evil doers." She did not limit her observations to New York: her visit to Saratoga that summer is recorded there.

Saratoga, she wrote, was a grasping, crowded, over-hyped town which had seen more fashionable days, one that worked to extract every cent from the visitor without offering much more than name in return. As regards the food, for example:

> The cooking, particularly where I was [Reed's boarding house] was shocking; and the flies, in swarms, covered every dish for half an hour, at least, before the boarders were called to sit down. As for fly-fans, there is

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[52] "A Book of Travels," *New-York Daily Advertiser,* 20 June 1826.

not one at the springs…[53]

Or the entertainment:

> The amusements are principally riding, walking and balls; some walk fast, some walk slow, and a few ladies violate the constitution in the length of the step. There is a reading-room at the springs, but I saw few people in it.[54]

She was particularly cutting about some of the people she encountered. One was her nemesis, Theodore Dwight, vacationing with his family at Aldridge's at Ballston Spa:

> And who should I find there, but my dear friend, Mr. Dwight, the famous secretary of the Hartford Convention.* He was attended by his wife and daughter, as I was told, for he had not the politeness to introduce them; a little extraordinary, considering the common good liking that existed between us.
>
> Mr. D. is about fifty years of age; a stout heavy-made man…his forehead is high and smooth, but the venom of his eye would guillotine a whole world; it is a small redish [sic] black eye, and glistens with a nameless malignity. He is awkward, stiff, circumspect… his countenance is austere…charged with puritanical frigidness. His wife was hagard [sic] and wrinkled, and looked much the oldest; his daughter was a stout, coarse, hard featured old maid. She looked as old as her father, and not half so handsome. She conversed with a great deal of spleen… Mr. D. was very piously inclined, always said one of his long graces before we commenced eating, which [did] …very little to our meals, which grew cold… His long prayers have not been able (if report be true) to reclaim his own family, whose frailties are known to me; though I scorn to name them.[55]

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[53] Anne Royall, *The Black Book; Or, A Continuation of Travels in the United States* (Washington, DC: Printed for the Author, 1828-29), 1:21.

[54] Royall, *Black Book*, 1:21.

* Royall links Dwight to the convention as a kind of slander. The convention was called in 1814 in protest of the War of 1812, at a point when defeat seemed inevitable. As it was meeting, though, the Treaty of Paris was signed, ending the war, and the news of the victory at the Battle of New Orleans arrived. The convention was accused of fomenting treason through its call for the separation of New England from the U.S., and the ensuing furor caused the death of the predominant New England political party, the Federalists, and tainted the political careers of most of the participants.

[55] Royall, *Black Book*, 1:25-6.

Royall also gave an acidic sketch of Gideon Davison, the local newspaper printer and guidebook author. This was her sketch of him:

> [The reading room] is kept by one D. a gloomy Presbyterian; a stout man, of young appearance, young complexion and a malignant black eye; cold and forbidding in his manners. He being a bucktail, was no friend to my new work; or, indeed, to any thing else, which might be called benevolent or liberal. He is a sour grum [sic] looking man, about as well polished as a Missouri Bear.[56]

She was particularly contemptuous of the write-ups that Davison worked so hard to place in newspapers around the country. These dispatches from Saratoga had been quite effective, but Royall skewered them mercilessly:

> It is amusing to observe how the Editor of the place, puffs in the season of the springs, "One thousand visitors are now at Saratoga, and many more expected." This I saw in the papers previous to my visit, a fine harvest I thought for my travels, and away I posted to the springs, expecting to see all the world, and sell off my travels, when, lo! The thousand dwindled to about 60 or 70 of all sorts and sizes...[57]

Probably her most telling criticisms came when she discussed the character and class of the tourists at the Spa. These criticisms speak volumes of the differences between the Virginia Springs, which had remained an exclusive

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[56] Royall, *Black Book*, 1:22.

[57] Royall, *Black Book*, 1:16-17. The question of Davison's numbers is an interesting one. Davison had long published estimates of the numbers of visitors at the springs, beginning in 1819. His earliest figure was derived by counting the names of visitors in the guest books of the major hotels throughout the entire season (4,219 for 1819). In the years after, though, he estimated the number of visitors in town in any given week. These figures make comparisons difficult. The general impression that can be derived, though, is that the number of tourists at the hotels in Saratoga rose quickly in the early 1820s and plateaued for the remainder of the decade. The peak number of genteel tourists at the height of the season (the second week of August) tended to be around 1,500, as measured by Davison. Given the general propensity for tourists of all classes to stay at Saratoga for relatively short periods, a very rough estimate of the overall number of visitors per season in an average year probably was in excess of 6,000. See Appendix A. This, of course, takes Davison's numbers at face value; Royall's critique of them, though, must be held with the same skepticism. Perhaps they balance each other out.

resort limited mainly to the wealthy and powerful from across the South, and Saratoga, which had begun to be flooded with persons of all classes:

> The society at these springs, is very different… [At the Virginia Springs,] the people come in their own carriages, bring their own servants, come early and stay late, usually from six to eight weeks. They are people of the first respectability, and associate together… But at Saratoga, the different boarding houses separates the company. At the Virginia…Springs, no country people come… Here they come in shoals, and fairly eclipse the fashionables; in fact they are the fashionables in relation to numbers and dress, and though they do not add legitimately to society, they make up a part, and no small one, of the puffs in Mr. D-'s [Davison's] paper. This description of people are little advantage to the springs, as they never stay over one night, and very few of them eat a meal's victuals.[58]

Royall's criticisms of class mixing at Saratoga Springs reveals that although she was a former servant, she had as large an investment as anyone in the class system. She had fought tooth and nail for many long years not only to gain but then to defend her class standing. During her years of poverty after being dispossessed of her husband's estate, she had nothing but her fierce dignity to sustain her, and she was as deeply sensitive to slights, real or perceived, as anyone could be.

What is striking about the torrent of literary criticism of tourism that the writings of Dwight and Royall exemplify is that few tourists recorded similar views. Perhaps part of the reason was that travellers tended to write their journals and letters for those left back home or for posterity, and it would have

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[58] Royall, *Black Book*, 1:19. Royall's "country people" were probably a mix of residents of Saratoga County, many of them working class, and day trippers from Albany. Most of the latter would have been at least middle class. Saratoga Springs was much closer to population centers than Virginia Springs, and its much more developed transportation infrastructure made it much easier for "shoals" of non-wealthy to go there.

been seen as churlish to criticize such unique opportunities. As a result, surviving descriptions from the 1820s tended toward wide-eyed enthusiasm.

There are some exceptions, however. Francis Dallam, a wealthy slave owner from Maryland, visited Saratoga in 1827. He did not find the place to his liking:

> The situation of the Springs & village of Saratoga are bad, and the water I think inferior to Bedford, the company is large about 700 but not such as are agreeable to me, all strangers and many of them foreigners, too much fashion and extravagance for me, the water is highly impregnated with salt and is very disagreeable to the taste.[59]

Like Royall, this Southerner found the Springs inferior to Bedford Springs (which he had visited the preceding year), but unlike Royall his main complaints came from the number and heterogeneity of the tourists there. However, like all of the literary complainants, he found the crowd artificial, with "too much fashion and extravagance."[60]

Another Southerner, David Hillhouse, basically liked the Springs but was explicit about its shortcomings. "How," he asked rhetorically in his journal of a trip there in 1826, "are so many visitors accommodated?" The answer was "poorly." At the meals, "there is such a jostling of elbows; so great crying for help; so much over-reaching for supplies; so great dissatisfaction with what is received; such hurry and bustling by waiters and visitors, as makes eating a laborious business, rather than a pleasurable recreation." He remarks on the

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[59] Francis J. Dallam Travel Diary, 25 July 1827, Maryland Historical Society.
[60] Francis Dallam visited Bedford Springs in 1826 - see Sarah Dallam to Francis Dallam, 19 July and 31 July 1826, Dallam Papers.

smell of this jostled company: "The headed atmosphere in such a crowded walk occasions a most overwhelming exhalation of emetics, colognes, cordials, oils and ottoes [fragrant oil] with which the ladies, and the ladies' gentlemen, are most abundantly besmear'd." Hillhouse was not thrilled with his accommodations, either. In the evening he was ushered

> ...into a small room, 8 feet by 12, furnished with a window, chair, wash-stand, &c. In this there may be a creaking bedstead, and a narrow straw bed, which, though evidently not itself on skids or wheels, is constantly sliding about, to the certain discomfiture of the occupant. To aid the general comfort, these beds upon perpetual moving steads, are placed against a very thin partition, adjoining a public entry.

All of this "may, and must be borne, for fashionable," although "'Twould any of my friends learn more of this fashionable resort, 'twould be last to visit it."[61]

Although he rarely commented on his fellow passengers, Hillhouse did mention problems with the steamboats: "There were a great many passengers – of course in the number were those of almost every character," among which were "a few rogues, who under the guise of gentlemen, contrived to pilfer a portion away of hats and baggage of several gentlemen passengers." The crowded boat "render[ed] [it] uncomfortable to all but the ladies who have of course, and of right, exclusive privileges."[62]

The crowds, the crime, the sheer pressure of tourists worked to make David Hillhouse "uncomfortable." Underlying all of this were concerns about the large numbers of unknown people among the travellers. The dangers of this were

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[61] David Hillhouse 1826 Travel Journal, pp. 93-96, Southern Historical Collection.
[62] Hillhouse Travel Journal, 80.

obvious: how could a genteel traveller know which one of these fashionably dressed strangers was a bona fide member of genteel society? Which one was the dangerous stranger? Without the comfortable markers of gentility, without the traditional safeguards of a tightly knit and hard to penetrate society, a confidence man (or woman) could easily infiltrate this relatively open society. Vulnerable members could be taken advantage of.

Fears of the power of charming but unscrupulous adventurers over vulnerable young women were not new. This theme had long run through much of the popular literature of the time, including classics such as Susanna Rowson's widely republished 1794 book, *Charlotte Temple*. But these stories relied on drawing-room or other meetings. Those encounters generally required some kind of intermediary for the adventurer to gain access to society. In the early years of the Springs, when the ties between the Springs and gentry sites like New York were quite close, the danger from imposters was checked by these traditional safeguards. Tourism undermined them, and the danger (real or perceived) had increased by the 1820s. American society had grown so large and diffuse that pretenders could more readily infiltrate it.

One story nicely demonstrates the anxieties that this new, unstructured environment engendered. Published in 1826 in the *New-York Mirror*, it relied on the fact that an attractive newcomer could make a splash in a tourist

environment with just a workable façade.[63] "Fashionable Watering Places/ by a Village Beau" opened with the arrival of an attractive young woman:

> Miss Simper appeared at Saratoga in an elegant suit of sable. She was said to be in mourning for her father, an opulent broker in Baltimore, recently deceased. Grief has wasted her health, and weeping had washed away her roses… Miss Simper, of course, was an heiress, and attracted great attention…. The fair stranger…walked daily to the fountain, modestly cast down her eyes when gazed at, and seemed unconscious of all but her own horrors.[64]

With these correct, subtle, but unmistakable hints of tragedy and gentility, Miss Simper was able to place herself high in Springs society. Her demure composure overcame most concerns, although two characters expressed suspicion: "Mrs. Highflyer said she had not the air of a woman of fashion, while Capt. Halliard pronounced her a suspicious sail, and declared his belief that she was a privateer in disguise." Despite their concerns, though, she was accepted outright. Without the checks that societal connections gave – that essential network of word of mouth and gossip – travellers were dependent upon external appearances and behavior. In the hothouse atmosphere of tourist society, the faintest rumor or hint could be expanded upon to the satisfaction of all tellers.

It was almost the same day, the story continued, that another attractive stranger appeared at the springs. Major Fitzconnell made a good first impression:

> He was a tall, handsome man, of easy address, and polished manners who seemed to regard all around him with an air of very polite

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[63] "Fashionable Watering Places/ by a Village Beau." *The New-York Mirror and Ladies' Literary Gazette* (25 Feb 1826):. 244-45.
[64] "Fashionable Watering Places," 244.

> unconcern. – He was announced as an officer in his Britannic Majesty's service, and brother to Earl Somebody, in England. It was reported that he had large landed possessions in the west. He did not appear to seek society, but was too well bred to repel any civilities which were offered to him. The gentlemen were well pleased with his good sense, his knowledge of the world, and the suavity of his manners, but…he seemed to avoid the ladies.[65]

The Major, too, evinces just the right manners for acceptance to this society: education, style, and not too much interest in the women nearby. Best of all, through his British aristocratic roots he has a connection to authentic good breeding.

One day, these two characters meet at the fountain in a most genteel encounter:

> The officer, who had just finished his glass at her approach, presented it to the lady, who, in sipping the transparent element, dropped her handkerchief. The gentleman very gallantly picked up the cambric, and restored it to the owner – but the blushing damsel, abashed by the easy attentions of an elegant stranger, in her confusion lost her reticule which the soldier gracefully replaced upon her wrist, with a respectful bow.[66]

Picture-perfect. Her pretty disarray, the dropped handkerchief and handbag, his gallant and gentle ministrations: these ideal courtship devices signify great things to come.

The very next morning, again by chance, the two meet very early at the fountain. They are alone. "The attendant, who is usually posted there to fill the glasses of the invalids, had not taken his station." The Major gallantly steps in and hands her a full glass. She drinks it. (The story is careful to note that "the

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[65] "Fashionable Watering Places," 244.
[66] "Fashionable Watering Places," 244.

quantum prescribed to a delicate female varies from four to eight glasses according to the nature of her complaint.") Decorum meant that she had to drink slowly: a woman had to sip, never gulp. Once properly dosed, they could promenade together. Afterwards, she retired to her chamber but reappeared midmorning on "the farthest corner of the piazza," book in hand (another signal of her gentility). But – and is this a coincidence? - the Major discreetly appears on the porch, too. He is seeking a quiet place to "breathe forth the melancholy musings of his soul, upon his flute." What luck! the very same quiet corner is available. Another chance encounter! [67]

They spend the afternoon together, and even before dinner had come he is seen helping her "into an elegant gig." Shortly later, at a nearby village, they are "united in the holy bands of matrimony!" Such speed! Such dispatch! "This is a very ungenteel affair!" declares a scandalized Mrs. Highflyer. Ungenteel, indeed. The story now moves into its raciest element: "the new-married pair were pursuing their journey, by easy stages, towards the city of New York… our lovers…often digress[ed] from the beaten road, and as often linger[ed] at a romantic spot, or a secluded village." The pleasures of newly married life! [68]

But a dark cloud appears: they face the ticklish subject of finances. "It was a fine summer evening, as they sat by a window, at an inn, enjoying the beauties of an extensive landscape." The Major broaches the question: "Who has the

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[67] "Fashionable Watering Places," 245.
[68] "Fashionable Watering Places," 245.

management of your property, my dear?" he asks her. She replies, "You have, my darling." Confused, he answers, "I *shall* have, when I get it, [but] in whose possession" was it just then? "It is in all your own possession," she answers. Now he's truly confused. "My face is my fortune, kind sir," she explains, "I have nothing in the world but what you see." But, he says, he has "need for money immediately:" he has to pay for the room, the carriage, the meal. "Have you no real estate?.. no bank stock? .. no securities, no jewels, no money?" he sputters. "Nothing of the kind," she answers. She is, in fact, not an heiress at all, but "the daughter of a very honest blacksmith."[69]

She turns the tables on him. Why would he need cash: isn't he wealthy? No, in fact, he is "a ruined man" who does not "happen to belong to any regiment." He is landless, "the only son of a famous gambler, who left [him only] heir to his principles and profession." Chagrined, he exclaims that his skills had now failed him: they had not "prevented me from trumping the wrong trick this time!" He immediately leaves the room. Simper surreptitiously follows him.

She overhears him talking to the landlord: he has been called to business in New York, he says, and his wife will be staying at the inn to wait for him. The midnight coach would get him into town in time. He pays the landlord in advance.

That night, they sleep in separate chambers. He does, in fact, sleep, relying on the landlord's wake-up call when the coach arrives. She, however, does not

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[69] "Fashionable Watering Places," 245.

sleep. When she hears the coach arrive, she slips downstairs, packed and dressed, and tells the landlord not to disturb her husband. He had, she explains, purchased the seat for her; they had already made their goodbyes, and he should be left to sleep. And so she left the "gallant and ingenious Major to provide another conveyance, and a new wife, at his leisure."[70]

This was a society which relied on sincerity. Many of the neophyte tourists of this era were all too naïve. Some tourists would have been at least somewhat on guard: the social cues - dress, accent, bearing - of the most obviously threatening persons would have been immediately noted. But what if a criminal passed the most obvious tests? This was one purpose of a story like "Fashionable Watering Places," which was nothing less than a cautionary tale for tourists.

Tourists could be quite trusting if approached properly. For example, the experience of the Sipples, a tourist couple newly arrived from a small town in Delaware, was emblematic. When their steamboat first landed in New York on a morning in late July 1828, they suddenly encountered the chaos of huckster capitalism. At the steamboat landing at the foot of Courtland St., amidst a "sea of confusion more terrible than any heretofore," Mr. Sipple describes being accosted by a group of porters, "the greatest impositioners of any I have met." Amid this, he was approached by a kindly man, someone who had the genteel manners needed for a successful approach. "A gentleman by the name of W. J. Caldwell had placed one of his cards in my hand and solicited us to take board

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[70] "Fashionable Watering Places," 245.

with him during our stay in N York," wrote Mr. Sipple. He thanked him but explained that they were headed for Albany at the first opportunity. But could he point the way to the Hudson steamboat landing? Caldwell offered to accompany him there; on the way, coincidentally, they passed his boarding house. Sipple was impressed: "I found [it] to be one of the first rate boarding houses in the City." At the office of the steamboat line, Caldwell helped Sipple buy tickets for the afternoon boat: "He assisted me in striving to procure burths [sic]," Sipple writes, "but the greater part of them [were] taken." A crowded boat was distasteful to Sipple and he decided, therefore, to stay the weekend at Caldwell's. He and his family would take the Monday boat. But over lunch they spoke with a traveller from Philadelphia. He had tickets, he informed them, on a rival line and that boat was nearly empty. If they wanted to, they could leave today in pleasant conditions. The Sipples considered and decided: they left for Saratoga that afternoon.[71]

How much subtle manipulation had Caldwell used to persuade Sipple to lodge with him? "He assisted me," Sipple wrote, "to procure burths." How much did Caldwell "assist" Sipple? Were, in fact, "the greater part of them…taken?" We will never know because Caldwell operated under the rules of genteel conduct. He had successfully won Sipple over amid that distinctly ungenteel sea of "impositioners." In fact, Sipple would trust Caldwell enough to return to his "house" (inn) later on during his trip. And in the end, nothing happened other

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[71] Sipple Diary, 28 July 1821.

than that Caldwell got a tenant. But had Caldwell been more malicious, Sipple's ingenuousness could have had unfortunate results. As Theodore Dwight had noted in 1826, the Sipples were not the only travellers to be slapped in the face with this brutal scrum of confusion at the steamboat landing.[72]

This new pool of potential marks did begin to draw criminals. By the late 1820s, the tourist routes had become, by the standards of the time, hotbeds of crime. For example, prior to 1825, there had been remarkably little theft or other crime at Saratoga or Ballston. The newspapers had almost no report of theft or con jobs from 1804 (the first year of publishing) until 1824, save for a pocketbook that was reported as stolen in 1812. After 1824, though, a veritable crime wave began at the Springs. In 1825, for example, pickpockets were reported as operating in the community, and visitors were warned to watch their wallets. And in the years after that, several wallets or watches would disappear each season. This new wave of crime was not limited to Saratoga. Where previously the steamboats had been relatively safe modes of transportation, the lower fares and increased crowding of passengers gave new opportunities for criminals. For example, in 1827 passengers were warned to watch their belongings on the steamboat, where a gang of thieves specialized in the theft of overcoats.[73]

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[72] Dwight, *Northern Traveller*, (1825), 7.

[73] (Ballston Spa) *Independent American*, 16 Jun 1812; Examples from the 1820s include: *Saratoga Sentinel*: "Pick-Pockets," 12 Jul 1825, p. 3, col. 1 and "Pocket-Book Stolen," 12 Jul 1825, p. 3., col. 3; "Lost…Topaz Breast Pin," 19 Jul 1825, p. 3, col. 3; "STOLEN…Hunting Watch," 1 Aug 1826, p. 3, col. 2 and "LOST…French Gold Watch," 1 Aug 1826, p. 3, col.. 2; "LOST…Red Morocco Pocket Book," 5 Sep 1826 p. 3, col. 4; "Steam Boat Thefts," 15 May 1827, p. 3, col. 2; "Lost Money!" 7 Aug

con't.

For antebellum society the situations that were created in tourist venues were the leading edge of what would come to be perceived of as an epidemic of crime.[74] And although street crime was a serious concern, probably the most disturbing type of crime for antebellum society came not from the easily identified thug, but rather from the smooth and calculated confidence man.[75]

How real this threat was is unknown. Probably, like so many societal terrors, the actual threat was far less than was imagined. Few truly wealthy, well-connected persons eloped or broke the bonds of society or were swindled by confidence men or women. But societal terrors are created in response to real situations. Tales of insincere adventurers, whether male or female, helped to shape a heightened awareness of the potential risks. Lying more deeply than that fear was a sense of uncontrollable change. For those who had been travelling to the Springs for ten or twenty years, the evidence would have been before their eyes: a sea of unfamiliar faces, each one a possible threat, each one a possible bona fide member of their society. The uncertainty led many to become obsessed with a search for the truly authentic and to search for some foolproof mechanism to detect those who operated under false pretenses. These concerns are the

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1827, p. 2, col. 3; James Pratt's "breaking open a trunk" at a hotel, 22 Jul 1828, p. 3, col. 1, and his subsequent escape from jail.

[74] See Edwin Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham* (NewYork: Oxford U. Press, 1999), 699-700, for a discussion of this perception in the context of New York City. The change in New York occurred around the mid-1820s. James F. Richardson, *The New York Police: Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1970), 15-16.

[75] This was such a new phenomenon that there was not really a name for it: the term "confidence man" would not be coined until the late 1840s. (See Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, (New Haven: Yale, 1982), 6-7).

beginnings of what would become societal obsessions that would consume antebellum society in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s: the fear of the imposter, the terror of the confidence man, and the search for the authentically sincere.[76]

The commodification of Saratoga would be complete by the late 1820s. Saratoga water, once available only at the Springs, had been successfully marketed as a nationally distributed product for more than a decade.[77] Efforts to attract more tourists to the Springs and up the Hudson would continue unabated. For example, Saratoga Springs became the terminus of one of America's first railroads. In 1831, Gideon Minor Davison helped found a railroad company that connected Saratoga with the newly completed Albany-Schenectady railroad in 1833.[78] The number of visitors doubled by 1835, if the *Sentinel* can believed, from perhaps four thousand in a season to eight thousand.[79] With each new step, Saratoga's exclusivity would begin to wane; with this, the creation of a packaged Saratoga experience became more complete.

Just how far the Springs had come from their aristocratic roots can be seen from a June 1833 story printed in the *American Railroad Journal and Advocate of Internal Improvement*. "Go to Saratoga!" it begins. It then addresses itself not only

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[76] The definitive work on this topic remains Halttunen's *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, and here I have relied on her seminal interpretations as a basis for my ideas.
[77] See chap. II for a more complete description of the marketing of Saratoga Water.
[78] "John Mason Davison," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Co., 1927), 17:115. The Saratoga & Schenectady Railroad: Henry Poor, *History of the Railroads and Canals of the United States of America* (NY: John H. Schultz & Co, 1860), 308.
[79] *Saratoga Sentinel*, 21 Jul 1835.

to the leisure class, those who "have little business to attend to," but also to those have had an "an arduous and we trust a profitable, spring business." Even to the less wealthy, to those "who think they cannot afford it," the article repeats, "go to Saratoga." Technology had transformed the journey, it asserts, into something almost anyone can afford. And for those too busy for recreation, the article demolishes their concerns:

> And as for the *time*...If *time* is an object to you, adopt the following plan: Rise early each morning and be industrious through the week until Friday at 3 P.M.; then get ready for the 5 o'clock boat...which will land you in Albany next morning, in time for the *first* or half past six o'clock train of cars to Schenectady...From Schenectady to Saratoga, through Ballston, the distance is 22 miles, which is performed by horse power in two hours with great ease.

Once at the Springs, the article continued, stay at Saratoga until Monday morning. If a visitor left at noon he could be back to Albany by late afternoon and in New York Tuesday morning, ready for a work week. Each way, the trip would take seventeen hours, amazingly fast travel for the time.[80]

This article distills a decade's worth of tourist experience. Most tourists did not stay at the Springs for more than a few days; here, we see that taken to an extreme. This ultimate commodification of the Hudson tourist experience is specifically tailored to middle-class sensibilities: a bit of play, but little work lost. A weekend retreat, but a return in time for most of a week's work. Later in the article there is a suggestion that a very busy traveller could take an even more stripped-down journey. By staying just long enough at the springs to gulp "a half

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[80] "Go to Saratoga!" *American Railroad Journal and Advocate of Internal Improvements*, I (June, 1833), p. 1, col. 1.

dozen glasses of…water," he could leave on a Friday and be back by Sunday. No need, the writer assures us, for the reverent gaze: the leisurely aristocratic journey had been reduced to its most essential elements, to an easily digested commodity to be consumed as quickly as possible.

The cumulative discontent with the Hudson Valley route – its over-exposure, the rising crime, the large number of "would-be ultra-genteels" – meant that some began looking for new fields for tourism, for places that could deliver the promise of unspoiled, yet readily accessible nature.

One way to measure this development is by looking at the tourist guidebooks. Gideon Minor Davison's *Fashionable Tour*, for example, was the first description of that pioneering tourist circuit. In its original 1822 edition, it described a route from New York up to Saratoga, out to Niagara, and back via Quebec to Burlington, Vermont, and through western Massachusetts to Boston.[81]

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[81] The complete route of Davison's 1822 edition: Philadelphia, Trenton, Princeton, New-Brunswick, New-York, up the Hudson to West Point, (8½ pages, Arnold/Andre), Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, Catskill (village), Athens, city of Hudson, table: distances from New-York to Albany, Albany (2½pp), Troy, Lansingburgh, Waterford, Cohoes, Van Schaick's Island, table: distances from Albany to Ballston Spa, Ballston Spa (2pp), Low's Spring, Washington Fountain (1½pp), Ballston Boarding Houses (1½pp), Ballston Lake, Saratoga Springs (9pp), Saratoga Boarding Houses (4pp), Saratoga Lake, Schuylersville, Bemus' Heights (22pp, Battle of Saratoga), Sandy Hill, Glen's Falls, Lake George (4pp), Herkimer, Utica, Auburn, Canandaigua, Lewiston, Niagara Falls (12pp), Lake Ontario, table: distances from Niagara to Montreal, Montreal (3pp), William Henry (town), Three Rivers, table: distances from Montreal to Quebec, Quebec City (10pp), St Johns, Lake Champlain, Plattsburgh, Burlington (3pp), Whitehall, table: distances from Montreal to Albany, New Lebanon, Pittsfield, Northampton, Worcester, Boston (9pp). Cambridge, Northern routes to Boston, table: distances from Burlington to Boston. Route from Whitehall (VT) thru NH to Boston.

The 1825 edition's route was virtually identical, although among its additions was a description of Mt. Holyoke, near Northampton, Massachusetts, where a new mountain house had been built. This and other descriptions did not expand the route of the Fashionable Tour nor change its basic itinerary. But in the 1828 edition Davison substantially added to the itinerary: he devoted several pages to the White Mountains of New Hampshire, focusing particularly on the area around Franconia Notch. Theodore Dwight, too, added a White Mountain section to his 1828 guidebook, and devoted even more pages to it than Davison.

The reason the White Mountains were added to the guidebooks was a bizarre one: a family of settlers there were killed in a freak accident. Their deaths made the mountains into a tourist attraction.

The White Mountains are a spectacularly scenic mountain range in northern New Hampshire. As they are the home of Mount Washington, the highest mountain on the eastern seaboard, they were well known, at least as unusual landscape features, in early America. And although there had been some literary attention paid to them in travel literature prior to the mid-1820s, relatively little had been written about visiting them compared to the Hudson Valley. Getting to them was a problem: the roads were good enough for trade, but it was a long and difficult journey from the main routes of travel.

As the highest peak, Mount Washington had a built-in attraction. It had first been climbed by an European in the mid-seventeenth century, and a few others came there to repeat that feat over the years. Those travellers who came to

the mountain in the first years of the nineteenth century stayed at an inn built by Ethan Crawford located in the Franconia Notch, a dramatic site where the White Mountains are cleft by a narrow valley. There, sheer mountainsides rise high above the fast-running Saco River. With the light but steady traffic of climbers, Crawford hoped to increase his patronage. In the summer of 1818, he cut the first trail to the top of Mount Washington, a trail that began, naturally enough, at his inn. He then began to lead small groups of adventurers to the mountain's summit. More attention was focused on the mountains when Timothy Dwight praised them in his 1821 *Travels in New York and New England*. But their remoteness meant that they were not widely thought of as a tourist destination before 1826.[82]

The catastrophe that put the White Mountains on the tourist map happened in 1826. An intense drought that summer had dried out the lands on either side of a mountain homestead in the Franconia Notch, the home of the Willey family. Heavy midsummer rains loosened the soil high above their home, and late one night a landslide roared down the mountain. The family, hearing this and realizing their fate, fled the home but were nonetheless swept to their deaths. But this was a freak accident. Had they stayed in their home, they would have survived: the building itself was spared because it stood on an outcropping that

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[82] Purchase, *Out of Nowhere: Disaster and Tourism in the White Mountains* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1999), 25-27.

parted the flood. The landslide killed the parents, their five children, and two hired hands.[83]

The Willey disaster and the wide publicity it gained caused a relative flood of tourists to descend on the White Mountains. Thomas Cole, for example, would come in 1827 through the advice of a patron, Daniel Wadsworth. And although he would not paint the mountains for a number of years, he would write after an 1828 visit that the area was suffused with a "wild grandeur." The spectacular view was made especially poignant in his mind by the Willey family home, a "little patch of green in the gloomy desolation" that "very naturally recalled to mind the horrors of the night" when the family died. Also visiting that summer were Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Daniel Webster, and Washington Irving, among others. Although the growth in tourists was dramatic compared to earlier years, for the remainder of the 1820s the numbers going to the White Mountains remained just a fraction of those who came to the Hudson.[84]

But the White Mountains were perfectly positioned for the next wave of tourism. They were simultaneously wild and untamed (Cole wrote of an "unbroken silence reigning through the whole region") and yet accessible

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[83] Eric Purchase, *Out of Nowhere*, 8-13, gives a clear and coherent explanation of the disaster and its setting. Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), gives the best overview of the creation of tourism in the White Mountains and its link to American national tourism.
[84] Cole quoted in Louis Legrand Noble, *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole*, 66. Wadsworth's suggestion to Cole is in J. Bard McNulty, ed., *Correspondence of Thomas Cole and Daniel Wadsworth*, 12. Visitor list from Dona Brown, *Inventing New England* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1995), 45.

enough that when it came time to leave Cole had to walk only six miles to catch a coach back to Boston.[85] Accommodations within the Notch remained rude even well into the 1830s, but they were available. Crawford, for example, eventually improved his always rustic inn with a bowling alley, a dance floor, and a petting zoo.[86] Like the Hudson, the Whites would get their own cultural infrastructure: for example, Hawthorne would romanticize and immortalize the Willey story in "The Ambitious Guest" in 1835.

What we see with the White Mountains is an example of how tourism thrives on fashion. Destinations shift according to the whims of fashion, and high fashion shifted from the Hudson to the Whites. In another decade, it would turn away from the Whites back to Newport. The White Mountains were the perfect next step after the Hudson, since reaching them involved just enough additional time and expense to cut down the numbers of visitors. Once those barriers had fallen, the hot light of fashionable tourism would shine elsewhere.

This does not mean, though, that the Hudson had lost all cachet. Far from it: new methods would be invented to exclude and to make it ever more exclusive. Still, it was an ever-constant struggle to achieve that, to maintain business while making improvements. The tourist infrastructure of the Hudson would be regularly improved, and each step of that sort, though appealing to the

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[85] Noble, *Life and Works*, 67-68.
[86] Purchase, *Out of Nowhere*, 26-30.

gentry's desire for ease of travel, would have the less desirable result of making Hudson Valley resorts more accessible to crowds of non-elite visitors.

Saratoga, though, did not sink into obscurity. It found a number of ways to bring new people to the resort, and for a certain set it did not lose its cachet for quite some time. New attractions were found to maintain excitement and interest. For example, New York had long been resistant to legalized horse racing, but promoters from Saratoga eventually convinced the state legislature to allow them to open a race track there in 1847.[87] And gambling, first tried in the early 1830s, would become enshrined in permanent quarters by the end of the 1840s.[88] These steps drew a new generation of tourists to Saratoga, particularly those from the South. New hotels were built, reaching new heights of cost and exclusivity. Over the next century and a half, Saratoga's exclusive status would

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[87] Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, 80. Early racing at Saratoga was trotting or harness racing. Steven Riess, in *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 32-33, describes this sport, begun in the 1820s, as initially a sport of the New York middle and upper middle class. In the early 1850s "the nouveux riches like Cornelius Vanderbilt and Robert Bonner" took it up, making it a "respectable and prestigious amusement for the upper crust." (p. 33). Edward Hotaling, *They're Off! Horse Racing at Saratoga* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 16, 26-27. Hotaling uses a newspaper story from *New-York Mirror*, 14 Aug 1830, to claim the date of the first horse race at Saratoga, but the article describes a bet between two swells over their respective horses. Regardless, the first organized races at Saratoga would not begin until 1847.

[88] Hotaling, *They're Off!*, 27-8; George Waller, *Saratoga: Saga of an Impious Era* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 81; Hugh Bradley, *Such Was Saratoga* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1940), 110 (who describes faro tables, bowling alleys, and a roulette room across from the bowling station). Neither Corbett, *Making of American Resorts*, nor Sterngass, *First Resorts*, mention these early gaming institutions, instead noting only the casino, built 1867-71, instrumental in Saratoga's post-Civil War revival.

wax and wane, fading for a decade or two before coming back as exclusive as ever.[89]

[89] There are two fine new discussions of this process, Theodore Corbett's *Making of American Resorts*, and Jon Sterngass's *First Resorts*.

Epilogue: The Search For Exclusivity

The tensions between the classes that arose over tourism was just one part of a larger picture. The gentry's gradual loss of control over physical space at tourist sites was symptomatic of their overall loss of social and political dominance. The growth of American cities in the 1820s created an environment beyond the old gentry's capacity to control. This was most acutely seen in New York City, whose explosive expansion meant that by 1830, according to one historian, "the social controls of a stable society had broken down in many parts of the city." This chaos included, in addition to street crime, an increase of prostitution and other transgressive behavior.[90]

The gentry's responses were many. One was an attempt to create order in the streets, and that entailed a push to create a professional, London-style police force. Another was the promotion of social controls such as temperance, a new domesticity, and an emphasis on a family-centered Christmas season.[91] Other methods of social control emerged by the mid-1830s, as the gentry worked to create exclusive spaces entirely out of the reach of the grasping classes. Among these responses were the creation of wealthy enclaves within or on the edges of

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[90] Richardson, *The New York Police*, 15-16. Christine Stansell, *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 102, 110-113. Stansell notes that the increase of prostitution paralleled the rise in hotel rooms and a transient male population.

[91] See Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, for a description of that process.

the city, and the most certain solution, the establishment of vacation enclaves far removed from the city. Each fulfilled an essential role.

Within cities, the 1830s saw the creation of a number of exclusive private clubs and voluntary associations intended to ensure control by the old elites and to allow the entry of a small and carefully selected number of up-and-comers. Membership in these organizations was carefully restricted, and the wealthier the member, the more likely he was to belong to a number of them. These organizations took on a number of problems not being handled adequately by the municipal authorities, from poor relief and the assistance of orphans to the policing of houses of prostitution (publicizing, for example, the names of their patrons) and to maintaining order through near-vigilante neighborhood groups. Their role in this period, one historian has asserted, was "an especially crucial one," as the cities were seen to be suffering a "breakdown of municipal authority in the face of ...unprecedented problems."[92]

Outside the cities, the wealthiest classes began to build their own arcadias, country homes safely tucked away from the masses. Successful authors like Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper built retreats, as did wealthy merchants and men of business. By the early 1840s, these practices became encoded into a whole new movement exemplified by the house pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing. He followed these house plans with works on

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[92] Edward Pessen, *Riches, Class and Power Before the Civil War*. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Co., 1973), 252. See his Chapter 12 for an extended discussion of this trend in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

landscape gardening describing the creation of personal arcadias that encoded picturesque ideals into small spaces.[93]

Downing himself was a product of the tourist Hudson. He was born in 1815 in Newburgh, New York, a town squarely in the middle of the Fashionable Tour route, and he did early work in the area. Beginning when he was only nineteen, young Downing was hired by Robert Donaldson, a wealthy New York merchant, to redesign his Fishkill home in a Gothic style. Although these first designs were not implemented, in 1836 Donaldson used them to rebuild a cottage at Blithewood, near Hudson. These early commissions would be the basis for what Downing would come to see as his mission, nothing less than the transformation of the rural retreats of the wealthy into icons of the picturesque. His designs showed how heavily influenced by ideas of the picturesque and the sublime he had been. And increasingly through the 1840s and 1850s, Downing's house plans began turning inward, emphasizing the family and private, rather than public, display.[94]

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[93] Downing's most influential books were *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening...with a view to the Improvement of Country Residences* (Boston: C.C. Little, 1841); *Cottage Residences: or, a Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage-Villas...*(New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1842); and *The Architecture of Country Houses; including Designs for Cottages, Farm Houses, and Villas, with Remarks on Interiors, Furniture, and the Best Modes of Warming...*(New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850); *Rural Essays* (New York: George Putnam, 1853). His magazine, *The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art* was published from July, 1846 to July, 1852.

[94] Jane B. Davies, "Davis and Downing: Collaborators in the Picturesque," in *Prophet With Honor: The Career of Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852.* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 1989), 82. Despite his influence, there remains no single biography of Downing, although there are some valuable studies of aspects of Downing such as Judith K. Major's *To Live in the New World: A.J. Downing and American Landscape Gardening* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1997). Clifford E. Clark, Jr., "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History: The Romantic Revival and the Cult of Domesticity in America, 1840-1870," in Robert Blair St. George, ed., *Material Life in*

con't.

Downing's books and plans were intended for a wealthy, exclusive audience, but their presence in print and popularity meant that his ideas spread. Classes less than wealthy steadily took them up, ultimately producing an American landscape of smaller-scale arcadian retreats just removed from the urban crowds: they became the roots of the American suburb.

Tourism itself would change as well. The wealthiest classes began to create an infrastructure of private boats and personal trains conveying them to their own homes in vacation enclaves. That, for them, replaced the infrastructure they themselves had created a generation earlier, which now no longer served their purposes. This process would not be complete until the last decades of the nineteenth century, but it would reshape towns such as Newport, which turned away from public to private accommodation.[95] This process can be seen as the ultimate victory of Theodore Dwight: the new tourists were the quintessential expression of his idea of the self-contained tourist experience, separate, inviolate, protected.

America, 1600-1860 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 535-549. Some historians have interpreted this movement as part of a greater cultural movement that increasingly stressed private, rather than public, reform.

[95] See Jon Sterngass's *First Resorts* for a fine explanation of this, esp. chap. 6, "The Privatization of Newport: 'Coarseness and Vulgarity are Never Seen Here,'" 182-228.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

American tourism began with a self-conscious emulation of British spa culture. America's elites, faced with the new society of the post-Revolutionary period, sought and found an exclusive retreat, Ballston Spa, far from the rapid and eventually uncontrollable change of America's cities. The driving force for this process began with New York City, which, far more than most American cities, was undergoing a process of extreme change. The Ballston site was chosen initially for its mineral waters, but that attraction, for the majority of visitors, was secondary to the more important social draw of the place. Ballston, and the route to it, the Hudson Valley, would become the crucible for American tourism.

To facilitate their travel and increase their comfort, the elites commissioned the first elements of what would become an extensive physical infrastructure. This included substantial hotels, facilities to ease access to tourist sites, and, perhaps most importantly, an extensive travel infrastructure including steamboat and coach lines. The creation of this particular element of the physical infrastructure was rapid and was almost entirely in place by 1808. The new travel infrastructure drew many more travellers northward, including members of the gentry from across the country. Once at the Spa, they began to find a commonality that would be crucial in the formation of a national elite. A "marriage market" atmosphere contributed to this process, as alliances were

made across regions. Many members of the American gentry began to see tourism as something essential for the maintenance of their social standing.

The success of the early physical improvements inspired others to step in, and a new class of entrepreneurs began to create other facilities. This included the construction of an entirely new spa, Saratoga Springs. With its greater number of more elegantly built and outfitted hotels, it soon overtook its smaller and dowdier predecessor, and by 1820 it had become the pre-eminent tourist site in the United States. Its rapid growth would be a model for later tourist developments such as those at Niagara Falls, the White Mountains, and elsewhere.

As tourism spread among the gentry, other entrepreneurs moved in to take advantage of the possibilities for patronage. The first of their products to appear were travel books. These narratives popularized the act of travelling and gave potential tourists previews of possible entertainments. The growing number of travel books led other writers to incorporate travel themes and motifs in their work. The first writer to successfully incorporate tourist themes in his writing was Washington Irving. His most famous stories from his best-selling *Sketch Book* – "Rip Van Winkle," for example – were strongly influenced by tourism. James Fenimore Cooper, writing at nearly the same time, also found tourism to be a remarkably successful tool to stimulate sales. Their example was taken up by other, less well known authors. Together they created the beginnings of a kind of cultural infrastructure, one that paralleled the physical infrastructure of tourism.

This cultural infrastructure would prove to be even more successful in popularizing tourism for Americans. Following their literary compatriots, artists began depicting tourist sites in paintings and engravings that were widely reproduced and distributed. Thomas Cole, founder of America's first native art movement, the Hudson River School, painted for gentry tourists. His earliest commissions by a wealthy New York merchant were direct results of the fashionability of tourism among the richest classes of the nation. He would go on to make a name for himself in the New York art world by completing a number of such commissions. These paintings depicted an idealized image, one that presented tourist sites without tourists or any indication of the sites' present state. Like the authors who used tourist motifs, Cole's example would be followed by others.

Cole's paintings, and the works of those who followed him, were based on a view of nature that presented near-wild and sublime images as compelling and even beautiful. This view, long popular in Europe, had only slowly been accepted in the United States. But the prominence and popularity of Cole's paintings meant that the last hurdle had been crossed. Nature itself, preferably only slightly modified by the hand of humans, would become a central motif of the tourist experience in America.

The increasing prominence of the tourist sites in the Hudson Valley led to a flood of new tourists. Although they were, like their predecessors, people with money, these newcomers were not from the old order of high society, and as

such were seen by the traditional tourists as *arrivistes* and usurpers. They were joined, at least on the less expensive forms of public transportation, by thousands of others, the less wealthy, and the combination of these two groups led the old order to feel that their world was crumbling. The irony of this situation is that the very facilities the elite had created to make their enclaves accessible were used to shatter that exclusivity. But the elites' sense of collapse was partly an illusion. The vast majority would hold on to their money, and many would retain political power. They simply had to share, something that they were neither comfortable with nor experienced in doing.

The large numbers of new tourists led to an ever-broadening circle of products created to cater to them. These products included tourist guidebooks and maps and were created to assist the newcomers to find exclusive, fashionable, and desirable places. Popular magazines and newspapers printed stories using tourism as a backdrop or tourists as exemplars of fashionable living. And tourists appeared in plays, one of which, William Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara,* was entirely built around tourism. This secondary ripple of the tourist culture spread widely throughout America, and by the early 1830s nearly every literate American had at least been exposed to tourism.

The effect of this would shape how Americans thought of tourism. Tourist recreation would be defined for generations to come as one that involved a seeking of some kind of nature, although that search would always be conducted in a highly structured environment, one that insulated the tourist from any

contact with truly wild nature. The Hudson Valley, too, would continue to be seen as uniquely American, uniquely scenic.

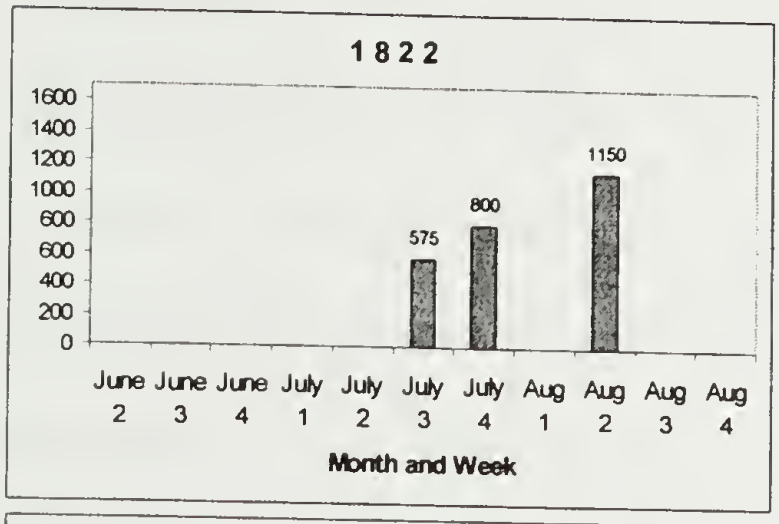
The prominence of American tourism would also prove to be central to the creation of America's sense of itself. In a country that was still in many ways in a post-colonial period, the beginnings of tourism was an important step in pulling away from its mother country. Tourism's popularity meant that American destinations and scenery could be just as authentic and compelling as those of Europe. And the stories and "legends" the cultural infrastructure created added an atmosphere of authenticity to these American destinations.

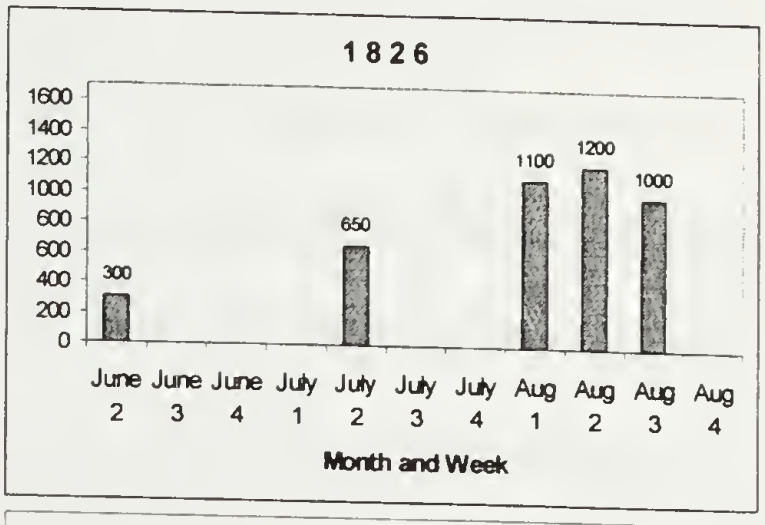
New York played a central role in this change. Its pivotal part in the creation of a consumer culture is best seen in the creation of Hudson Valley tourism. As the city began its remarkable rise to become America's commercial center, the acceptance and promotion of consumerism among wealthy New Yorkers began to be adopted by the wealthiest Americans across the country. The essence of tourism is consumerism: it creates nothing and leaves nothing in the hands of its practitioners save happy memories. And although there had been some resistance among Americans to embrace this kind of excess – they associated it with aristocrats or decadent Europeans – they acceded to it in the face of an unstoppable fashionable trend toward tourism in conjunction with the heavy influence of New York-style consumerism.

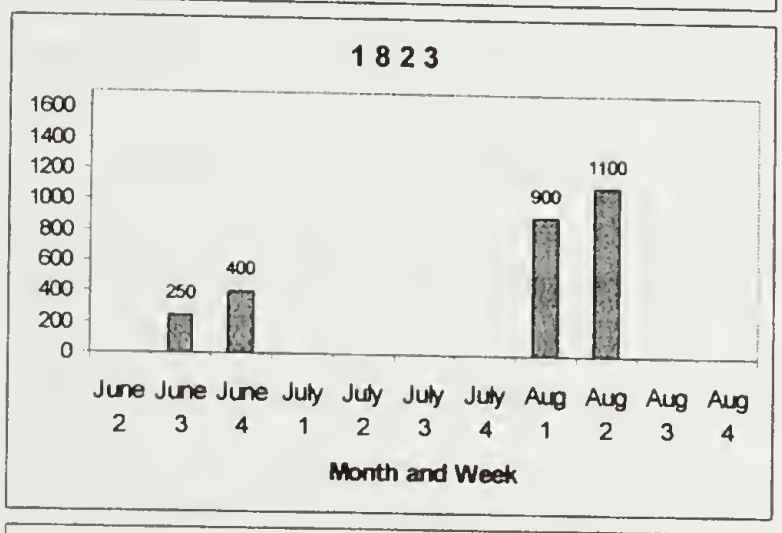
The effort to move these values down to the middle class had only just begun in the 1820s, but a small but influential number of middle-class Americans had already begun to accept them.

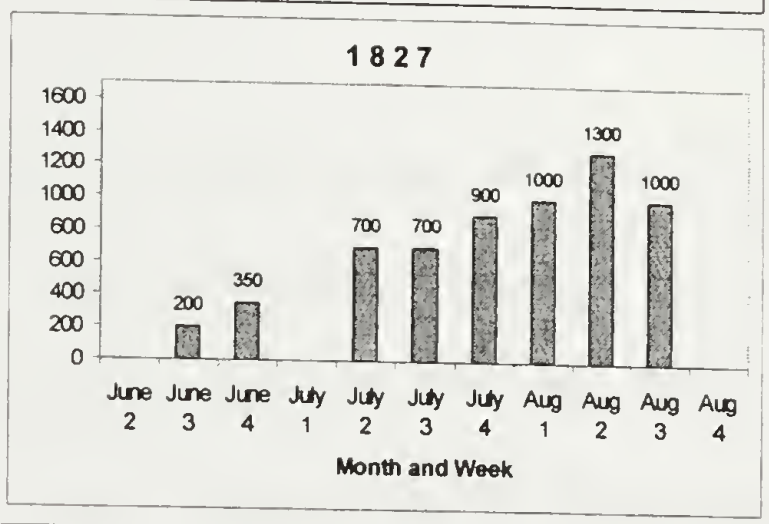
For people who could not yet afford to be tourists – it would remain very expensive until after the Civil War – the cumulative effect of the tourism of this early period was to create a lasting definition of what tourism was. When their time would come to be tourists themselves, the middle classes would begin with recreations that emulated those of this early period. In a process that would take two or three generations, they would take on many of these behaviors wholesale; others, though, would be modified by middle-class values or reservations. Tourism would be changed, but its essence would remain, as people of all classes began to emulate at least some of the behaviors of the tourists of the 1820s. What happened in the Hudson Valley in the 1820s was the beginning of a process that would change American society. Mass tourism would take the trends of this early period to a new level, reshaping American life and culture in ways that are still being felt.

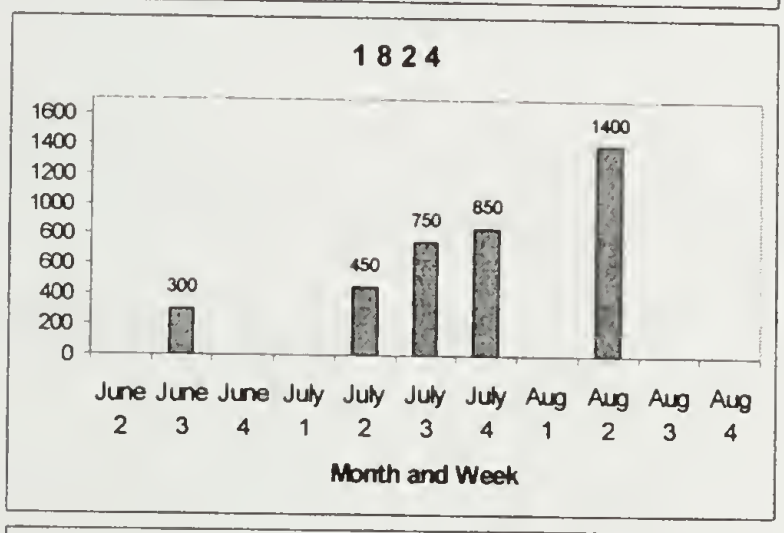
APPENDIX: ESTIMATES OF TOURISTS AT SARATOGA SPRINGS, 1822-1829

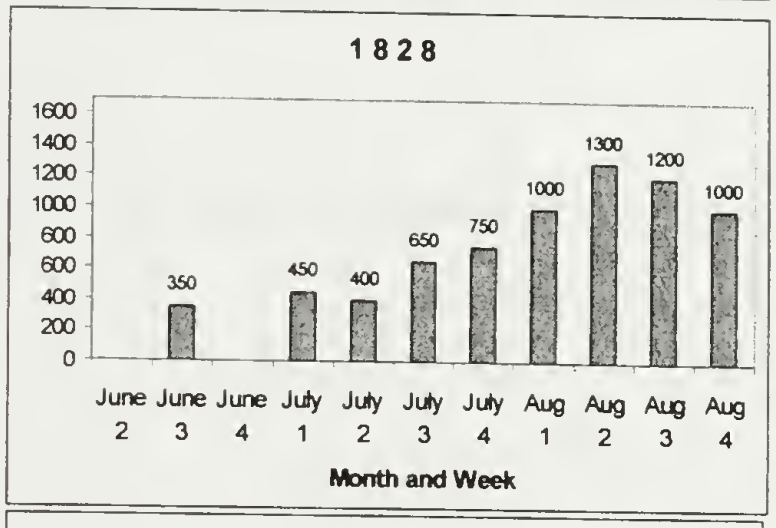


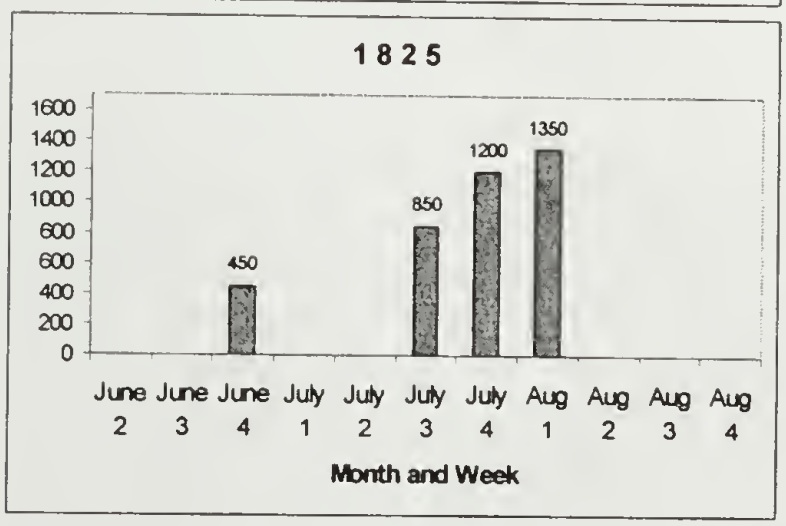


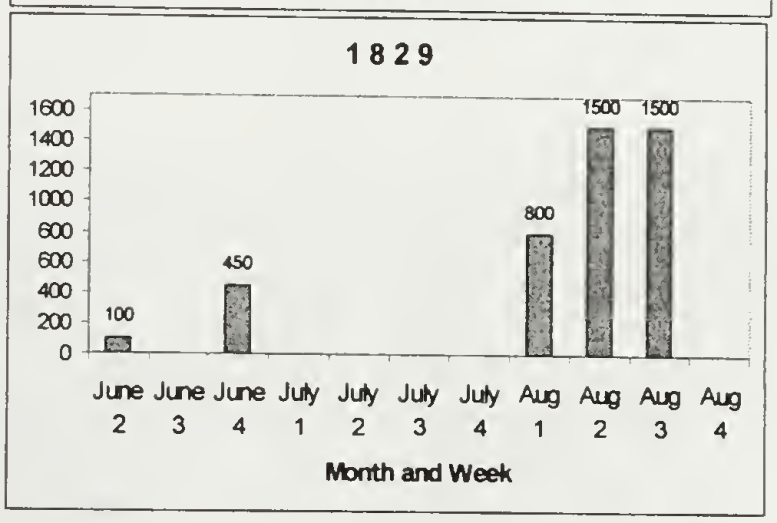












Beginning in 1819, Gideon Minor Davison compiled a set of estimates for tourists visiting Saratoga Springs. That first year, he published a complete list of visitors by hotel or inn, but in subsequent years he published estimates of the numbers of "strangers" in town at various and irregular times during the season. These estimates are the closest numbers we have for the numbers of tourists at Saratoga. However, they should also be taken with a great deal of wariness: Davison was, if nothing else, a promoter of the town.

What these estimates tell us, though, is that after an early rise in the early 1820s, the numbers of visitors essentially plateaued for the remainder of the decade. Indeed, it could be argued that there was something of a drop-off from the 1824 and 1825 seasons, a number that was not regained until the 1829 to 1830 seasons.

Finally, a technical note: the reports were issued irregularly, and so many weeks do not have data.[1]

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[1] These reports were all from the *Saratoga Sentinel:* 13 Jul 1822, p. 3, col. 1; 30 Jul 1822, p. 3, col. 1; 13 Aug 1822, p. 2, col. 4; 17 Jun 1823, p. 3, col. 1; 24 Jun 1823, p. 3, col. 1; 5 Aug 1823, p. 2, col. 4; 12 Aug 1823, p. 2, col. 2; 22 Jun 1824, p. 3, col. 1; 13 Jul 1824, p. 3, col. 1; 20 Jul 1824, p. 3, col. 1; 27 Jul 1824, p. 3, col. 1; 28 Jun 1825, p. 3, col. 1; 19 Jul 1825, p. 3, col. 1; 26 Jul 1825, p3, col. 2; 2 Aug 1825, p. 3, col. 1; 6 Jun 1826, p. 3, col. 1; 11 Jul 1826, p. 2, col. 5; 8 Aug 1826, p. 2, col. 5; 15 Aug 1826, p. 3, col. 1; 22 Aug 1826, p. 3, col. 1; 12 Jun 1827, p. 2, col. 3; 17 Jul 1827, p. 2, col. 4; 24 Jul 1827, p. 3, col. 1; 31 Jul 1827, p. 3, col. 3; 7 Aug 1827, p. 2, col. 4; 14 Aug 1827, p. 2, col. 4; 28 Aug 1827, p. 3, col. 1; 24 Jun 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 1 Jul 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 15 Jul 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 29 Jul 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 5 Aug 1828, p. 3, col. 2; 12 Aug 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 19 Aug 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 26 Aug 1828, p. 3, col. 1; 9 Jun 1829, p. 3, col. 1; 16 Jun 1829, p. 3, col. 1; 23 Jun 1829, p. 3, col. 1; 21 Jul 1829, p. 3, col. 2; 28 Jul 1829, p. 3, col. 1; 4 Aug 1829, p. 2, col. 1; 11 Aug 1829, p. 2, col. 1; 18 Aug 1829, p. 2, col. 1; 28 Aug 1829, p. 2, col. 1.

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