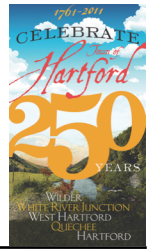




Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER



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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September-October 2021

Great Fire in Hartford

**From the Argus and Patriot
Montpelier, VT, January 30, 1889**

FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH OF PROPERTY IN ASHES

THE FAMED PEASE'S HOTEL NO MORE

LACK OF FIRE EXTINGUISHING APPARATUS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE LOSS

EIGHT HORSES PERISH

THE FIRE BELIEVED TO BE OF INCENDIARY ORIGIN

The thriving and pretty village of Hartford was last Thursday morning visited by a destructive fire that from the nature and character of the buildings destroyed was one of the most disastrous of the many conflagrations that have swept over that village in the past twenty-five years.

The fire was discovered about 4:30 a.m. by Miss Mary Hickey, one of the table girls at Pease's Hotel. She had risen early to prepare an extra breakfast for several transient guests of the house who were to go forth on the 7 a.m. train. She glanced out of the window and saw flames issuing from the southwest corner of the livery stable barn connected with the hotel, where the harness room was located. Without stopping to dress, Miss Hickey ran through the corridors of the hotel shouting, "Fire." There were 21 boarders and eleven transient guests in the house, and Miss Hickey's first thought was to arouse them, that they might escape.

Among the transients was Dr. George H. Spiller, of Bristol, NH, and he was the first person out of the house. He rushed to the barn and rescued his horse. He was quickly followed by Samuel Landers, accountant for C.W. Pease, who also ran to the barn and got his horse out, the animal following him through a sheet of flame which by that time was sweeping across the entrance to the barn. These gentlemen had been so intent on saving their horses that they did not make much alarm. Just then, M.F. Davis, a traveling man from Chicago, came out of the hotel, and shouted, "Fire" in such stentorian tones that the people in the immediate neighborhood and even those residing across the river, nearly a half mile distant, were



Luther Pease converted a ramshackle building in Hartford Village into one of Vermont's leading hostelries. The hotel, three neighboring houses, and a shop were destroyed by fire on January 24, 1889. C.W. Pease rebuilt the hotel and it remained in the family until 1908 when it was sold and renamed the White River Tavern.

aroused and quickly flocked to the scene of the conflagration, which it was apparent by that time was to be a hot one.

The hotel and furniture had for the past three years been leased to Mark S. Davis, formerly of the Summit House, Roxbury, and he was doing a flourishing business, fully sustaining the reputation, which in forty years the Pease family had won for the house. As soon as Mr. Davis and his help got out, they attempted to rescue the twelve horses remaining in the stable. Among the animals was one called "Charlie," an old fire engine horse from Boston. This intelligent beast as

Continued on page 4.

From the Editor . . .

When the Pease Hotel burned in 1889, newspapers opined that it would probably not be rebuilt. But C.W. Pease announced quickly that he planned to rebuild it better than ever. And while work was underway, guests were welcome to stay at his home. The New Pease Hotel was indeed lavish, and included a new meeting hall where dances, theatrical productions, and other events were enjoyed until 1941. The account of the fire in this issue highlights the efforts of local citizens who heard the alarm and bravely saved buildings and property.

Women did not immediately flock to the polls after winning the right to vote in 1920 but, today, women outvote men by some four percent. This issue, we look at the fifty-year struggle to secure voting rights for women after Congress gave the vote to men of all races in 1870. As states ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, Vermont could have cast the deciding vote, but for Governor Percival Clement.

You may have noticed that the old brick school building on the hill just across the Lyman Bridge in West Lebanon is now empty. It started life as the Tilden Ladies Seminary in 1855 and offered a rich curriculum prior to closing in 1890. It later served as a military academy and then public school. It was the alma mater of Hartford business leader Mae Gates.

The HHS would like to thank A.M. Peisch & Co. for their accounting help and financial support. And, once again, we ask for volunteers to take on a variety of tasks at the Garipay House. Please let Pat Stark know if you can help. Thanks!

Is your mailing address yellow? If so, we hope you will take a minute to join or renew your membership using the PayPal form on our website. We appreciate your support and welcome you to get involved with the society.

Scott Fletcher, Editor

Fire Hydrants Pass Test

The Landmark, November 26, 1897

There was a public test last Thursday afternoon of two hydrants, one in front of the Gates block on Main street, and the other on the edge of the park opposite *The Landmark* block. They were satisfactory. Through a one-inch nozzle attached to a short section of hose, the water from the first hydrant rose from 20 to 30 feet above the northern tower of the Junction House, and in a steady stream. Then two pipes were tried at the same time with water from the same hydrant, and the height and force did not seem diminished. The stream from the second hydrant rose a long way above one of the flag staffs in the park and, when directed against the staff, shook it perceptibly. The distance thrown horizontally was not measured, but must have been from 150 to 200 feet. The hydrants will be valuable in supplying water to the steamer in case of fire in the business section of the village.

The Mission Statement of the Hartford Historical Society

To acquire, identify and preserve
information and artifacts related to
Hartford's past and communicate knowledge
of local history through programs,
publications, and other interaction with the
community.



Hartford Historical Society

Post Office Box 547, Hartford, VT 05047-0547

<http://www.hartfordhistory.org>

info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com

802-296-3132

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West Lebanon's Seminary Hill School Closes

When the Seminary Hill School closed in June, another chapter ended for the former Tilden Ladies Seminary that opened on September 12, 1855 in West Lebanon. The brick building still sits on a hill looking across the Connecticut River to Hartford.

Tilden Ladies Seminary was named for benefactor William Tilden who was born in West Lebanon and made his fortune manufacturing varnish in New York City. The purpose of the seminary, as noted in the 1870 catalog was, "to provide, at a moderate expense, excellent and special advantages for the finished, practical and ornamental education of Young Ladies."

When it opened, the seminary had classrooms and accommodations for fifty boarders as well as the family of principal A.H. Weld. Day scholars were welcome for a tuition of five dollars per term.

The curriculum included arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, geography, philosophy, physiology, logic, chemistry, astronomy, rhetoric, history, evidence of Christianity, and composition. Students also received training in spelling, reading, and penmanship throughout their time at the seminary. Foreign language or painting instruction could be added for three dollars. Music lessons were an additional eight dollars in 1855.

Before the Civil War, Tilden Ladies Seminary attracted students from southern states, but the war hurt enrollment. After the war, however, the trustees hired Hiram Orcutt as principal and launched a building campaign. A gymnasium, music room, and elocution room were added, and the ladies rooms were carpeted. A new term started on April 19, 1865 with seventy students.

Hiram Orcutt was a Dartmouth graduate who had been principal of the Thetford Academy from 1842 to 1855. In 1850, he wrote an article in the Vermont Chronicle calling for a state teacher's association, which was formed in October 1850. Orcutt also wrote a number of other respected essays on education.

In March 1866, the *Vermont Journal* noted that Tilden Ladies Seminary was experiencing a religious revival. The paper reported that, "a deep religious interest seems to pervade the entire school." Under principal Orcutt, the school offered Christian and moral education, but was careful to be non-sectarian.

In June 1880, the *Vermont Journal* reported on a graduation ceremony held by the seminary during which many students gave musical performances or



The original facade of Tilden Ladies Seminary is still visible behind a basketball hoop in the gym. West Lebanon may use the historic building as a community center.

read essays. One of these graduates, Mae Gates, read an essay entitled, *American Girls*. Mae Gates went on to develop the Gates Block, including the Gates Opera House, which opened in 1891 and featured the first electric lighting in White River Junction.

During the 1880 graduation ceremony, principal Orcutt noted that women's colleges such as Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley were now considered among the best schools in the nation and opined it was no longer necessary for places like Dartmouth, Amherst, and Yale to open their doors to women.

Principal Orcutt left Tilden Ladies Seminary that same year and enrollment drifted down until the seminary closed in 1890. By that time, girls could get a strong secondary education along with boys at the new Hartford High School.

The four-story Tilden Ladies Seminary building served as a military academy from 1890 to 1915 when it became West Lebanon High School. The building has been used as an elementary school since 1961. It has been renovated over the years, but the original façade is still visible behind a basketball hoop in the gym. Students at Seminary Hill School will attend the new West Lebanon Middle School in the fall as the old building awaits its next phase.

Hartford Fire continued from page 1.

soon as the flames broke forth in the stable began to pull at the halter and neigh wildly. At last some one sprang through the flame-swept doorway and cut the halter. The old fire-horse at once dashed from the barn, actually going through a sheet of fire to reach the outer air. Then, fire and smoke swept into the stable so quickly as to prevent the rescue of any other animals. The entire contents of the barn were burned, including fifteen single harnesses, a pair of nice double harnesses, \$175 worth of sleigh robes, two nice covered carriages with whips, blankets, hay, grain, etc., for such a stable as was kept by Mr. Davis.

So intense was the heat that Dr. Watson was overcome and rolled from the roof of the main house. He struck on his stomach on a pile of snow and received no severe injury. A pail of water was accidentally thrown over his head, which revived him, and inside of three minutes he was at his post on the roof, working like a tiger.

Vermont and, in connection with the annual fourth of March balls, which have been held at the house for forty years, has become celebrated from Montreal to Boston. The hall was fitted with eight sets of theatrical scenery, and was the only place in the village where entertainments could be held. The hall was quickly licked up by the flames, which then communicated to the barn of Mrs. Harriet D. Cone.

Had there been a stream of water of even the smallest dimensions available, at this point the fire could have been checked in its westward course. But the stream was not at hand, and the fire leaped from the barn across the 12-foot space to the sheds of the residence and store building of Mrs. Cone. This was a two-story house with an ell and was heated by steam. It was the old Mark Cone stand, Mr. Cone in years past being one of the best-known general merchants in the White River Valley. This building was occupied by A.O. Worthen as a general store, he and his wife also having a room over the store, taking their meals at the hotel. The dwelling portion of the building was

occupied by Mrs. Cone and her daughter. Nearly all of the goods in the main store of Mr. Worthen were moved, but quite a quantity in the cellar and storehouse at the rear were burned.

Nearly all of the household furniture of Mrs. Cone was saved in a comparatively perfect condition, the slight amount of damage by breaking being remarkable. The buildings were valued at not less than \$4,000 and on them Mrs. Cone had an insurance of \$1,200 in the Vermont Mutual of Montpelier. She also had \$475 on her household furniture and \$75 on her piano. The piano was saved unharmed and so much of her personal property that the loss will hardly exceed \$50.

The next buildings west were the two-story house, ell, and barn of Dr. W.H. Currier, some 40 feet separating them from the burning Cone property. Alfred E. Watson, the efficient clerk of the Board of Railroad Commissioners and the local agent of the Vermont Mutual, saw that the fire must be checked at that point or there would be hardly enough of the village left to be seen, as the business blocks were packed closely beyond.

With Dr. H.L. Watson, cousin, clerk Watson went at the seemingly herculean task of saving the Currier building. Some 600 yards of new carpeting were rolled out of the store of Ernest J. Johnson and the entire exposed side and roofs of the buildings of Dr. Currier were covered with the carpeting. Water was supplied the Messrs. Watson, who were on the roof of the house, by the pail brigade and the carpet screen was kept drenched.

So intense was the heat that Dr. Watson was overcome and rolled from the roof of the main house. He struck on his stomach on a pile of snow and received no severe injury. A pail of water was accidentally thrown over his head, which revived him, and inside of three minutes he was at his post on the roof, working like a tiger. By the energetic work of these gentlemen, as well as of Dr. Currier and a few others, the desired end was attained, and the fire was held at bay until the Cone buildings were consumed, and there was no more danger.

It must not be supposed that while the destruction of the above named property was going on, the fire was in any way retarded in its progress eastward. The flames worked their way from the livery stable barn to the two-story ell part of the hotel, and quickly spread to the main part of the hotel. Only a comparatively small part of the furniture of the house was removed, and what little was saved was in such a condition as to be practically worthless. The hotel was a large one for

a small village, and was fully supplied with beds, bedding, crockery, and in fact everything that was required in the running of a first-class house, such as Mr. Davis was keeping, and such as had been kept by the Peases for forty years.

The original hotel was built some time between 1790 and 1800. It came into the hands of Luther Pease in 1849, and he at once made it the most popular hostelry in that section. After his death C.W. Pease, his son, the present owner of the property, took up the duties of landlord. from \$5,000 to \$7,500. Mr. Davis



Alfred E. Watson helped save the home of Dr. W.H. Currier by draping it with drenched carpet.

had no insurance on his property, and has lost not less than \$3,000, which is a hard blow for him. With commendable pluck, he and his estimable wife say that they are ready to begin again and try to make up what they have lost.

United Brethren Masonic Lodge and Hartford Lodge Knights of Honor had a hall in the hotel building. All the jewels, regalia and paraphernalia of the lodge were saved, and

their loss is small; that of the Knights of Honor being in fact nothing. The Masons had \$100 insurance, which fully covers their loss.

The next building east of the hotel was the handsome two story wooden dwelling of Allen L. Pease, brother of C.W., the owner of the hotel. Mr. Pease had just completed extensive repairs on his house, having refitted and refurbished it throughout, the painters only closing their work last week Monday.

The house was valued at about \$4,000, and was insured for \$2,500. On his household furniture, clothing, etc., Mr. Pease had \$1,000 each with the Union Mutual, of Montpelier, and the New England, of Rutland. The great bulk of the property in the house was saved, and Friday last H.W. Kemp, the Treasurer of the Union Mutual, settled with him for \$104, this being the sum which Mr. Pease after careful consideration thought he ought to have.

The last building on the east of the hotel to burn was the elegant residence of Mr. and Mrs. Burr. This was a fine dwelling with a furnace, finished throughout in hardwood, and fitted with every convenience that is found in a modern residence. This house might have

been saved had there been any one with as much energy as the Messrs. Watson to cover it with carpeting. There were hundreds of men standing about idle who should have taken hold and covered the house in the same manner as was that of Dr. Currier on the east. There was plenty of time for this to have been done, as the fire did not reach the house until long after the Currier house had been thoroughly protected. Mr. and Mrs. Burr were absent, and there seemed to be no one to lead in the matter. In fact when A.E. Watson left his post at the Currier house and went through the crowd urging that the Burr house be carpeted, he found that some influential (?) men had said that it would be useless to try to save the house. The dictum of these wise (?) men was taken as final, and thus one of the finest houses in Hartford was allowed to burn.

The buildings on the south side of the street had a narrow escape. To the west the first building threatened was the furniture store of Ernest J. Johnson. This was covered with carpeting, and thus kept wet, but the heat was so intense that the paint was blistered.

To the east was the building owned by Mrs. Harriet D. Cone, and occupied as a storehouse and the paint shop of C. D. Nye. The efforts of the bucket brigade saved it from any injury. Adjoining the last named building was the old storehouse of Allen L. Pease, in which the post office was formerly located. This is a two-story building, with a basement. The first floor is occupied by Warren Hughes as a harness shop and by Ernest J. Johnson as a storehouse. In the second story is the hall of the Hartford Cornet Band, while the basement is occupied by M.L. Brett as a paint shop. The building was draped with carpet and saved intact.

Mrs. Northman Livingston deserves a word of special commendation for her labors. She is not a robust woman, but she worked like a veteran fireman, carrying water, three pails at a time, from a pump to one of the threatened buildings several rods away. The people of Hartford should see that she is suitably remembered, for she is made of the same stuff as our grandmothers who underwent hardships of which the very thought would cause the powdered beauties of this generation to faint.

It is hard to account for the origin of the fire in any way except as the work of an incendiary. The harness room of the livery stable where it started contained nothing of a combustible nature, and there had been none of the employees of the hotel in the barn or harness room after 10 o'clock Wednesday evening. It is earnestly to be hoped that if the fire was the work of an incendiary, the guilty party may be brought to justice.

Women's Suffrage Comes to Vermont

By Scott Fletcher

The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave men of all "races, colors, or previous conditions of servitude" the right to vote. It was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1869 and required approval by twenty-eight (two-thirds) of the thirty-seven states to become law. On October 20, 1869, Vermont became the nineteenth state to ratify the amendment. Iowa became the twenty-eighth state on February 3, 1870 and the amendment was certified as part of the U.S. Constitution on March 30, 1870.

That same year, the Vermont Woman Suffrage Association (VWSA) was formed and a Woman Suffrage Convention was held in Montpelier. One speaker was Julia Ward Howe, well-known member of the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and composer of, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." But in June, the Vermont Legislature defeated a bill giving women the right to vote.

The focus of the VWSA turned to school and municipal elections. In 1880, Vermont allowed women to vote in school elections. They were also permitted to be school superintendants or town clerks. But in 1884, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the Vermont House of Representatives.

In 1886, Vermont's Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) endorsed suffrage but municipal suffrage was again defeated in the Vermont house. The following year, suffrage divided the WCTU and five hundred members abruptly resigned. Temperance and women's suffrage were both very progressive issues at the time, and many voters found them too radical when packaged together.

In 1890, municipal suffrage for women failed again in Vermont while Wyoming became the first state to give women the vote.

In 1900, *The Landmark* reported that the Vermont Senate had received an adverse committee report on a bill giving municipal suffrage to taxpaying women and, after much discussion, tabled the legislation.

A widely held concern among men was that women might vote in favor of prohibition and other social issues such as labor reforms, public health initiatives, and relief for the poor. While supporting women's suffrage, the WCTU also called for, "the entire prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage."

What's in a River

?

If a Vermont woman moves across the Connecticut river into New Hampshire, she loses her municipal vote.

If a New York woman moves across Poughkeepsie River or Lake Champlain into Vermont she loses her state and presidential vote. But a Vermont MAN can move to Florida and a New York MAN can move to Alabama and all his voting rights will still be protected.

Is there any real reason why there should be this discrimination between the two sides of a river and between men and women?

Is it Common Sense?

If Vermont's Legislature is called in special session, it can ratify the Federal Suffrage Amendment and thus do away with what is a ridiculous disparity in the voting rights which the different states give to women.

Everybody concedes that the Federal Suffrage Amendment will be ratified in more than 36 states eventually.

Thirty-five states have already ratified it.

Why can't Vermont be the 36th?

Authorized by the

**Vermont
Equal Suffrage
Association**

DR. MARION H. HORTON, President

THE FACTS ABOUT WOMAN SUFFRAGE

STATES THAT HAVE RATIFIED

REPUBLICAN	
California,	Nevada,
Colorado,	New Hampshire,
Illinois,	New Jersey,
Indiana,	New Mexico,
Idaho,	New York,
Iowa,	North Dakota,
Kansas,	Ohio,
Kentucky,	Pennsylvania,
Maine,	Rhode Island,
Massachusetts,	South Dakota,
Michigan,	Washington,
Minnesota,	West Virginia,
Montana,	Wisconsin,
Nebraska,	Wyoming,
TOTAL.....	20

DEMOCRATIC	
Arkansas,	Utah,
Arizona,	Oklahoma,
Missouri,	Tennessee,
Texas,	
TOTAL	3

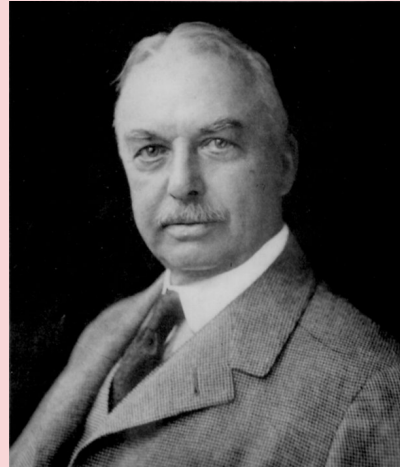
STATES THAT HAVE NOT RATIFIED

REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Connecticut,	Florida,
Vermont,	North Carolina,
TOTAL	TOTAL
3	2

STATES THAT HAVE REJECTED

REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Delaware,	Alabama,
	Mississippi,
	Georgia,
	South Carolina,
	Maryland,
	Louisiana,
TOTAL	TOTAL
1	7

ELEVEN Special Sessions of State Legislatures to ratify the Amendment were called by Democratic Governors, to SIXTEEN Special Sessions called by Republican Governors for the same purpose.



Opposite, from The Landmark, April 15, 1920. Left, from The Landmark, September 2, 1920. Vermont governor Percival Clement sold liquor at his hotels and on his railroad, and strongly opposed prohibition. He also opposed women's suffrage. In 1920, he refused to allow a special session of the legislature to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment.

This fear grew with the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1913, which established a federal income tax. This new stream of income provided funds for the U.S. Treasury apart from taxes or tariffs on alcohol and made it viable for lawmakers to contemplate the prohibition of alcoholic beverages, which were blamed for a number of social ills.

In 1918, Percival Clement was elected governor of Vermont after he campaigned on fervent opposition to prohibition. This wealthy businessman from Rutland served alcoholic beverages in his hotels and aboard his railroad. Clement called prohibition an infringement of personal rights. Accordingly, he also opposed women's suffrage.

Governor-elect Clement assumed office in January 1919 just after the Vermont legislature ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, which established Prohibition

across the United States. The legislature also passed a bill giving women the right to vote in presidential elections. Clement vetoed these bills, but it made no difference. The Eighteenth Amendment had become law and America had a year to get dry. Prohibition, sometimes referred to as the Volstead Act, would start on January 17, 1920.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote, for a second time on May 21, 1919, The U.S. Senate passed it the following month. Then, it needed ratification by thirty-six states to become law.

In Vermont, legislators were anxious to support the amendment, particularly in the summer of 1920 when just one more state was needed to meet the two-thirds requirement. On August 18, that honor went to Tennessee by a single vote.

The *Hardwick Gazette* reported that thirty-eight Vermont legislators favored the bill, eleven were opposed, and eleven were uncommitted. But Governor Clement refused to call a special session of the legislature so a vote could take place, and Vermont did not ratify the Nineteenth Amendment until its regular session on February 8, 1921. By then, women in every state had already gone to the polls and helped put Warren G. Harding in the White House. They also helped elect Percival Clement's successor, James Hartness.

Landmark Founder A.A. Earle Remembered

A.A. Earle founded Hartford's *Landmark* newspaper in 1882. He was a veteran publisher whose strong opinions and sharp sense of humor were known throughout Vermont. New issues were eagerly awaited each Saturday. Earle published the *Landmark* until 1888 when his health failed and he sold the paper to Charles Jamason. The Jamason family continued to publish the paper until 1922. The paper was then sold to Alfred T. Wright who published it until his death in 1949. In 1952, the paper was sold to the Valley Publishing Company, publishers of the *Valley News*. The following remembrance was published in the *Landmark* on March 25, 1892.

Arunah Augustus Earle was born in Hyde Park, VT. February 26, 1828, the son of Joseph Earle. He received a fair education at the district schools with one term at Newbury Seminary. While a mere lad the family moved to Chateaugay, NY. At the age of fifteen, the boy had a strong desire to become a printer and packing his personal effects in a cotton handkerchief he went on foot, with his entire fortune of twenty-five cents in his pocket to Keesville, NY, and entered the employ of Mr. Lansing as an apprentice. Here he mastered the printer's trade which practically became his life work. About the year 1850, he took a trip across the plains to California and Oregon walking most of the distance as he said, in search of change and gold. He secured the change, but did not find the gold. He was, however, a born Vermonter, and soon returned to the state to spend the remainder of his life.

In his travels he reached Irasburgh and for a time worked for Mr. Howard in the *Record* office, and in 1856 he established the *Orleans Independent Standard*. In 1864, he removed the paper to Barton and in the spring of 1866 sold out to Wm. and Josiah Grout. He then went to Bradford and established the *Bradford Opinion*, which he sold out in a few months when he returned to Barton and bought back the *Standard*. In November, 1871, he sold the *Standard* and purchased the *St. Johnsbury Times* which he sold soon after, and then started the *Citizen* at Morrisville. After a little he purchased the *News* at Hyde Park and consolidated it with the *Citizen*. In 1881 he sold the *News and Citizen* and removing to White River Junction he founded the *Landmark*. In 1887, owing to ill health he sold the *Landmark* to Charles Jamason, and it was generally supposed his work as a journalist was finished. But the old spirit remained within him

and, in 1890, he came to Newport and purchased the *Express and Standard*.

He was happy in the possession of his "first love," but the labor was too great for him, he could not accomplish what he had hoped for, his health and strength were rapidly giving way, and with great reluctance he sold the entire business in August last to Theophilus Grout.

He at once went to Massena Springs to gain some relief from rheumatism, which was troubling him severely. There he had a severe attack of heart trouble, but was able at length by the attendance of a physician to reach his home here. After six months of suffering, much of it intense, with entire breaking down of physical and mental powers the welcome end came.

His was an active life and few men were better known in the profession throughout the state. He had strong convictions and equally strong purpose to carry out those convictions. This led to marked independence in act and utterance, and often led him into trouble and litigation. Though often annoyed and beaten, his spirit was in no way broken and he came up afresh to new contests for what he believed right. Whatever the errors in judgment or action, in word uttered or printed, his motives were honest. He had the most supreme contempt for everything that was mean and dishonest; in all business transactions he was strictly honest.

As a writer he was terse, sharp, oftentimes cutting; his words were plain and his meaning seldom uncertain. He was possessed of a great fund of humor and was quick and sharp at repartee and joke. He readily seized upon any ludicrous or absurd idea or event and it mattered little whether he or someone else was the victim.



Landmark office festooned for the 1907 Vermont State Fair. It stood next to what is now Vermont Salvage.

Ozora Davis Scales Hartford's Social Ladder

Ozora Stearns Davis is known as a preacher, poet, and transformative president of Chicago Theological Seminary from 1909 to 1929. He raised funds to build the school's current campus and formed a lasting affiliation with the University of Chicago. His early years in Hartford shaped his remarkable life.

Ozora Davis' father, Alexander W. Davis, served in the Union Army from 1861 until 1865. In 1863, he became an officer in the Thirty Ninth Colored Infantry Regiment under Colonel Ozora Stearns. When Davis had a son in 1866, he named him after his esteemed colonel, Ozora Stearns.

After the war, Alexander Davis struggled as a farmer in northern Vermont but eagerly took a job with the railroad in White River Junction in 1870. Ozora Davis was just four years old when his parents brought him to this bustling town.

Alexander and Caroline had a modest income. While he worked at the depot, she made molasses candy that Ozora sold to visitors. Eventually, they built a home on what was called the second terrace above White River Junction. Ozora was a childhood friend of Rob Smith who would become the third generation proprietor of the thriving Smith & Son bakery. But his best friend was Will Tinker. Ozora later married Will's younger sister Grace.

The loving biography of Ozora Davis, written by Grace Tinker, notes that White River Junction had upper and lower social circles, which were obvious and oppressive to the Davis family. "Not every one in the village had called on Mother Davis," Grace wrote.

By the age of fifteen, Ozora was an accomplished telegraph operator. In 1882, he had a lucrative job at the telegraph station and earned more than his father. *The Landmark* commented, "Ozora Davis commences work in the telegraph office the first of July. He is a good boy and we wish him success." In 1883, Ozora's skill at the telegraph office impressed a gentleman visiting from Boston who took Alexander Davis aside and encouraged him to send his son to the St. Johnsbury Academy. Ozora's father said they did not have the means, but the gentleman persisted and scheduled an appointment for Ozora with the principal of the academy.

Alexander and Caroline Davis hoped that their son would receive at least six months of instruction in business. Instead, the principal saw promise in Ozora, provided funding, and suggested a curriculum in the classics. Ozora was enrolled and paired with a serious

young roommate who took him to church, which kindled his faith. It was life changing.

Ozora excelled in his classes and his interest turned from business to art, literature, and poetry. He joined the St. Johnsbury Congregational Church and his parents joined the Hartford Methodist church hoping to open new doors in Hartford society.

After the academy, Ozora was admitted to Dartmouth College where he roomed in old Dartmouth Hall. After graduation, he returned to White River Junction and served as principal of Hartford High School for two years. He loved teaching, especially chemistry where he fascinated students with elaborate experiments, but chose to further his studies at the seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. He completed seminary at the top of his class and earned a scholarship for two years of graduate study in Germany. He went to Leipzig, learned to speak German, and returned with a doctorate. His dissertation on pilgrim minister John Robinson became his most popular book.

Upon his return, Ozora was named pastor at the Congregational Church of Springfield, Vermont. Then, on November 17, 1896, Ozora Davis married Grace Tinkham in the Hartford Methodist Episcopal Church. Newspapers throughout the state called it the town's most important social event of the year. They noted that the church was lit by electricity and, "presents were numerous and valuable." On hand were Governor and Mrs. Samuel E. Pingree, Mr. and Mrs. Horace C. Pease, and other leading citizens from throughout New England. This convivial gathering of Hartford's social classes was a tribute to the character and hard work of Ozora Davis and his family.



Though never comfortable in the pulpit, Ozora Davis was a beloved pastor in Springfield, VT, Massachusetts, and Connecticut before becoming president of Chicago Theological Seminary.

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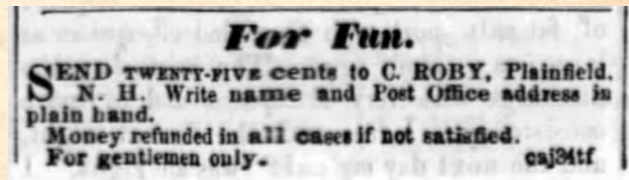
Yesterday's News

One of our esteemed townsmen was caught a few weeks ago under circumstances rather ludicrous, to use a mild term. For some reason, not explainable by himself, he lost a day, and on Sunday morning, thinking it was Saturday, he with all the energy of a thrifty farmer hitched on to his mowing machine and set his teams to hauling grain, with a purpose to accomplish a good days' work to close up the week, and prepare for a day of rest on the morrow. The click of the mowing machine grated harshly on the ears of the neighbors as it floated out on the stillness of the quiet Sabbath morning, and they wondered what hallucination had so suddenly taken possession of their heretofore Sabbath observing neighbor. Citizens passed by and shed tears, for aught we know, over the seeming depravity or madness of this estimable citizen, but said nothing. Some boys coming along asked him what he was doing, whereupon he explained to them how much he intended to accomplish that day, when they innocently asked him why he did not wait until tomorrow; he told them tomorrow was Sunday and he should go to church. When the boys told him that today was Sunday, and he upon reflection saw his mistake, that busy farm scene was suddenly brought to a close. Our friend has been wondering ever since how he lost that day. We withhold names, but consider this too good to keep. We are all liable to mistakes. *The Landmark*, August 25, 1883

The Ragan illustrated lecture upon "Paris the Magnificent," at Pease's hall, Tuesday evening, was a rare treat for those who availed themselves of the opportunity. The hall was well filled and all went away feeling that they had been well entertained as well as instructed. Mr. Ragan is a fine speaker and his illustrations were superb. We venture the assertion that nothing equal to this has ever passed this way, and those that missed this entertainment may never have another of seeing Paris. Shall we have some more of this series of lectures? *The Landmark*, January 20, 1883

W.T. Howe, our genial barber, is going to put in another chair. *The Landmark*, June 16, 1883

A young man from this place (Hartford) thinks it is a splendid ride up to Quechee, but hard walking back. *The Landmark*, June 16, 1883



Vermont Journal, *March 24, 1866.*

We learn of a young man who was so unfortunate as to have two teeth accidentally extracted by the giving away of a binding pole on a load of wood, a few days since. *The Landmark*, February 17, 1883

A little unpleasantness occurred last week on lower Main Street, in which it is said that the ardent played a conspicuous part. An arrest was made but the officer in charge forgetting that appearances are often deceitful, put too much confidence in promises and allowed his culprit too much liberty when he gayly passed over the river and was seen by him no more. The officer sadly retired from the field, exclaiming, "Alas, for the frailty of human expectations." *The Landmark*, February 17, 1883

A fish cart has begun running through the village (Quechee) on Thursday. *The Landmark*, June 16, 1883

We are soon to have telephonic communication with some adjacent towns. This is as it should be; we do not want to be behind anybody in securing the benefit of all improvements that can add pleasure or profit to our town. *The Landmark*, June 16, 1883

Roswell Bates lost a nice hog by the unrelenting hand of death last Monday. *The Landmark*, August 25, 1883

Monday Orin Taft had a two-year old bull elevated by the engine of a passenger train on the Passumpsic. It keeled him head over heels, but he got up somewhat bruised, shook his head, snorted, and went to eating grass. *The Landmark*, August 25, 1883

A traveler drove through what used to be the toll-bridge over the Connecticut the other day and looked for somebody to take his dime, but being disappointed one of the blandest smiles broke over his face and lasted him till he got nearly up to White River Village. Such is the effect of an unexpected streak of good luck. *The Landmark*, February 23, 1884

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HHS Calendar

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MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS are open to the public on the last Monday of the month at the Garipay House at 6 p.m. (Please check for exact date.)

The **Genealogy Center** on the second floor of the Hartford Library is open by appointment. Please call Carole Haehnel at 802/295-3974 or email her at: chaehnel151@comcast.net. Interested in helping residents explore their family histories? Please contact us at info@hartfordhistoricalsociety.com.

Websites

Hartford Historical Society: <http://www.hartfordhistory.org/>

Hartford History Timeline: <https://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/1456118/History-of-Hartford-Vermont/>

Very Vermont - Stories from the Green Mountains: <https://veryvermont.exposure.co/very-vermont>