



Vol. 30, No. 1, Summer 2022

GLOVER HISTORY

Providing for the Future, Remembering the Past



Hello, Summer!

Cooling off in the Barton River, Glover Village, west side of Main Street, c. 1920. From a photo album of Harriet Leonard Bickford. (GHS) Can you spot all four children? No, make that five children! Wait, make that six children! We wish we knew if the river dammed up just for swimming, or was the swimming hole actually a mill pond for some industry nearby?



Get out your swimsuits and don't forget your hats! Carrie and May Stiles cool off in Parker Pond, c. 1900. (GHS)



Glover History

A semiannual publication
of the Glover Historical Society, Inc.

President, Randy Williams
Vice-president, Darlene Young
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*Behind the scenes newsletter help: Thanks to
Jeannine Young for proofreading, to Natalie
Hormilla Gordon for layout, and to Lucy Smith for
compiling our mailing lists, keeping it up to date,
and printing our mailing labels.*

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Mission statement

The mission of the Glover Historical Society is to advance the study and understanding of the history of Glover. This purpose shall be pursued by the acquisition, preservation, interpretation, and display, in a museum setting, of items related to Glover history; by publishing a periodical newsletter; and by engaging in or sponsoring the compilation, publication, and distribution of material, printed or otherwise, pertaining to the history of Glover.

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In Memoriam

Gertrude (Lafluer) Beauregard (1942-2022)
Rene (Beal) Dunbar (1974-2022)
Edwin Elijah Alexander (1953-2022)
Dawn Marie (Thompson) Desjardins (1967-2022)
Jane (Gravel) Bachert (1941-2022)

Visit our website:
gloverhistoricalsociety.org

Glover Historical Society—Membership Form

*Please check the mailing label on this newsletter. The label indicates the expiration date of your paid membership. If your dues have not been paid, please include the appropriate amount for arrears with your renewal.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

_____ \$20 annual dues per household (calendar year, Jan-Dec)
_____ \$10 senior household option (calendar year, Jan-Dec)
_____ additional donation

If you would rather receive our newsletter in PDF format, please include your e-mail address here:

President's Message

Greetings, all. We did finally manage to have our first meeting of the year on May 2, albeit a zoom meeting. Always good to see everyone that could attend.

Betsy and I have for the last year been working to get the exterior of the West Glover Church building upgraded. The church was built in 1832 and moved to its current location in 1850. Last summer Bonnie Ingalls and her crew scraped and primed the south and east sides, which were the worst for wear. She and her crew are finishing painting those two sides this week as well as scraping and priming the west side. We have had some of the wooden soffits and window trim repaired with a little more to be done. We hired a company out of Burlington to coat the main roof with asphalt-based paint. Additionally, the steeple needs re-shingling and the broken weathervane repaired and reinstalled, and a company out of New Hampshire is giving us an estimate. They will also prime and paint the rest of the steeple. This being the oldest public building in town, we think it's important to keep it maintained. An anonymous donor will match up to \$10,000 of money raised to complete the project. Contact Betsy via email, daywilli87@gmail.com, if you would like to contribute. We have also made a request to the Preservation Trust of Vermont to get some grant assistance on the rest of the repairs. They came to visit and were very excited and offered to write a grant to help pay for the remaining repairs.

The Glover Day committee has been working for months to get our annual celebration back on track. Unfortunately, we have encountered numerous

obstacles, no t-shirt vendors, no tents to rent, and slow response from the state to get our road permit to have the Runaway Pond races. Consequently, we have decided to put the whole event off for another year. We will use the downtime to get better organized so that next year it won't be such an uphill struggle to pull off.

The Glover Trails Committee is making progress with its plan to convert much of the historic Hinman Road that runs through Glover into a maintained hiking, biking, and skiing trail. The historical society was their original nonprofit umbrella organization, but they have recently been adopted officially by the town. Peggy Day Gibson is the leader of this project and is working hard to procure grants and a labor force to upgrade some parts of the trail. They are also exploring ways to maintain other trails within Glover and to connect with trails in surrounding towns.

One last historic tidbit: As you may remember, there is confusion and a lack of documentation for the ownership of the Glover Universalist Church lot, now the town green. I am happy to report that after much research, surveys, and discussion with the surrounding land owners, the end of that road is in sight. The town's attorney is finishing up the quit claim deed process and it will be submitted to the court within the next month or so for their decision making the green an official property of the town, 112 years in the making.

Randy Williams,
President

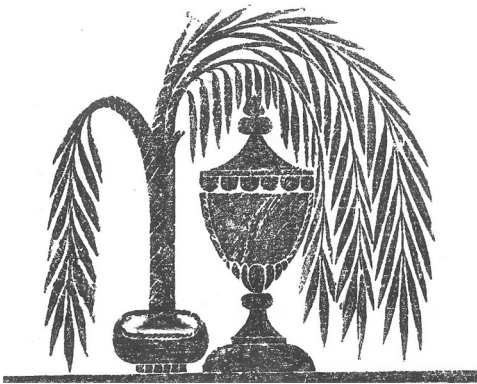
Bequests and gifts help support the Glover Historical Society

The Glover Historical Society relies on the work of volunteers and the generosity of its members and benefactors to fulfill its mission of advancing the study and understanding of the history of Glover. If you have an interest in discovering and preserving the history of Glover and wish to support the work of the Society, please consider making a gift or bequest to the Glover Historical Society. We thank you.

Bits and Pieces

Glover Cemetery Walks

This summer the Glover Cemetery Commission has been hosting cemetery walking tours in each of Glover's four cemeteries. By the time you get this newsletter, there will be one tour left: On Saturday, August 20th, at 10:30 AM, you can come explore the



history, art and stories preserved in stone at the West Glover Cemetery on Cemetery Loop in West Glover. The walking tour will last about 1.5 hours,

though you are free to leave at any time. In case of heavy rain, the tour will be canceled. There is no fee. Contact Joan at 525-6212 or joanalex_05839@yahoo.com for more info.

How's that *Silhouettes* book coming along, you ask?

More slowly than anticipated, we answer. The pleasurable work of annotating the long poem that Phebe Spalding penned in 1925, recalling her year in West Glover Village in 1872 when she was 12, will not be completed by the end of 2022 as we had hoped.



But progress is being made, and we are confident it will be finished and ready for publication in 2023, and certainly by its 100th anniversary. Stay tuned!

Lois Barrows donates her Runaway Pond quilt to the Historical Society for a raffle!

When we celebrated the Runaway Pond Bicentennial in 2010, one of the events

that weekend was a quilt show at the Town Hall. Lois Barrows, who lived in the brick house next to the town hall for decades and is a quilter extraordinaire, was inspired to design and make a quilt especially for the show. She

picked "Drunkard's Path" for her pattern, feeling the meandering trail of the pattern evoked the path of the Long Pond's escaping waters, and she chose a floral design of blue, green, and rose colors to represent the water. Lois machine pieced the quilt and Sherry Greenwood of Newport did the quilting with her longarm machine. Even the binding and backing fabric was chosen with intention, conjuring up the image and colors of the trees and sediments left in the pond basin and along the trail of the departing waters. It is a beauty!

Tickets went on sale on Town Meeting Day and are on sale Monday–Thursday at the Town Clerk's, one for \$3 or two for \$5. The king-size quilt (74" x 85") is on display at the Town Hall. The winning ticket will be drawn this December 10. We have included a page of tickets in this newsletter in case you would like to take a chance to be the lucky winner—just fill out as many tickets as you would like and mail them back to us at Glover Historical Society, 51 Bean Hill, Glover, VT 05839, with your check made out to GHS.

Lois downsized and moved to St. Johnsbury a couple of years ago. Though she keeps trying, she has not been able to resist buying beautiful fabrics and starting new quilts! Thank you, Lois, for your gift of this special quilt to support the historical society!



Runaway Pond Quilt by Lois Barrows



Dwight Dwinell and the Ceres statue on the Statehouse

There is a great little video, part of the “This Place in History” collaboration between Local 22 TV and the Vermont Historical Society, which features the three different statues of Ceres, the goddess of Agriculture, that have graced the top of the Statehouse in Montpelier since 1859. The second version of Ceres’ head was carved by 80-year-old Dwight Dwinell, born and raised in Glover, who was then the Sargent-At-Arms.

Check out the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZUXM-8yhvs>. For more info on Mr. Dwinell, see *Glover History* issues of Fall 2015 and Winter 2019.



(Courtesy Vermont Historical Society)

Vermont History Day news!

by Fiona Bock & Jezebel Capra, who will be 7th graders this fall at Glover Community School

History Day? *National* History Day? What is that? Well, to answer this question, first you have to know what *Vermont* History Day is. Vermont History Day is a statewide competition in which students research Vermont and its history, and create a presentation, report, or skit—performance related to Vermont and Vt. History Day’s annual theme. This year’s theme was “debate and diplomacy.” Other states also hold statewide versions of History Day.

For our entree, we chose the topic “The Dairy Industry of Vermont: Consequences and Outcomes.” We created a slideshow—presentation that we filmed like a lecture and made a skit capturing the controversy between large-scale factory farmers and small business farmers, hence the “debate and diplomacy” element of our project.

After we had created our presentation, we uploaded it to the Vermont History Day website. After reviewing our entree, the VT History Day judges

interviewed us to ask us about our experience with our project, what we learned, and how we thought we did.

Several days later, we received our results from the judging.

There were a few things they thought we could have done better, but for the most part, the judges said we had done quite well.

After several weeks, we got our results back: we had placed first in the performance category—and qualified for National History Day!

We worked hard to improve our project to meet the judges’ standards and get it ready for Nationals, and finally, once we were ready, we submitted our project. At the moment, we are waiting for the National History Day awards ceremony to take place, where we will learn how we did!



Fiona Bock and Jezebel Capra, History Day winners from Glover Community School.

Do you have old
Glover photos
and stories
to share?

Contact Betsy at 525-4051
or Joan at 525-6212.

Please contact us to meet
with a member.

"Alec the Great"

This spring, the family of Harriet (Urie) and Donald King, when getting their parents' home ready for sale, saved out many items they thought the historical society might like.

Harriet and Donald had to have been two of the nicest people to ever live in Glover, and, having lived here all their lives, they knew lots of Glover's history. Harriet served as a GHS board member for many years, and she was always so willing to lend a hand by answering questions or working on anything that needed doing.

One of the donated items from Harriet and Donald's home was a scrapbook Harriet had put together when she was 16, filled with "Alec the Great"—single panel comics she had clipped from the *Boston Globe* and neatly pasted in. There were pages of them, with 115 different panels in all, each featuring a sketch of a small dog, with an instructive, humorous message in verse below.

The creator was Edwina Dumm, and her drawings of Alec were based on her own dog, Sinbad. Her sketches were paired with the rhymes of her brother, Robert D. Dumm. Edwina, a stenographer in Ohio, tried her hand at cartooning after taking a cartooning correspondence course, and then became the first woman cartoonist with a daily gig. The syndicated cartoons were published in many daily papers all over the country from 1931-1969.

The cartoons were described as "wise, witty, cheerful," which seems to be a very fitting description of Harriet herself, as if she mirrored Alec's messages. Harriet's own doodles and decorative borders around her scrapbook pages show her artistic bent. She continued her artistic creativity all her life, creating notecards from flowers and leaves she pressed, arranged and embellished with her own sketching, caring for her flower gardens, and baking and cooking.

There was one of those huge family Bibles included in the gifts from the King family—and it was filled with pressed flowers and leaves.



Visit our website: gloverhistoricalsociety.org

“What is it?” puzzler winners for the 2021–2022 School Year

After two school years, 2021–2022, interrupted by the pandemic, we were able to return to regular monthly offerings of old items for the students at Glover Community School to try to identify. As usual, students’ guesses at what the mystery item in the acrylic box might be were imaginative, creative, and sometimes right on! Congratulations to all the students

with winning answers, and to all the other students whose answers were incredibly good even though they weren’t correct! Each month, a total of 20 to 40 students participated, with a randomly chosen student with the correct answer choosing a Glover Historical Society book as their prize, and other participants choosing a Glover History Card.



September 2021: Tilly Vesey, Gr. 6, apple picker



October 2021: Dominic Powers, Gr. 6, stocking knitting needles



January 2022: Howie Demaine, Gr. 4, hat pin and holder



November 2021: Dalton Powers, Gr. 2, napkin holder



December 2021: Madalyn Griffin, Gr. 4, bottle stopper



May 2022: Daniel Royer, Gr. 1, cemetery marker

More "What is it?" winners



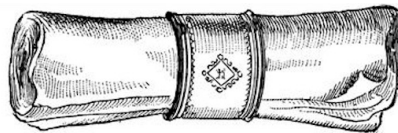
March 2022: Blaze LaCourse, Gr. 4, shaving mug and brush



February 2022: Jacqueline Boutin, Gr. 1, napkin ring



April 2022: Elias Young, Gr. 2, candle snuffer and trimmer



Eighth-graders named...

Please see page 14 to see if you know the faces named below.

Back row: Michael Urie, Phil Brown, Jeffrey Bickford, Robbie Larose, Allen Stevens, Michael Fournier, Perron.
Middle row: Elwin Annis, Pam English, Solveig Schumann, Alfreda Simino, Georgette Perron, Laurie Young, Lenwood
Left to right, seated: Kim Bacon, Tami Montminy, Rhonda Rockwell, Shari Currier, Wanda Benway, Heidi Roberts.



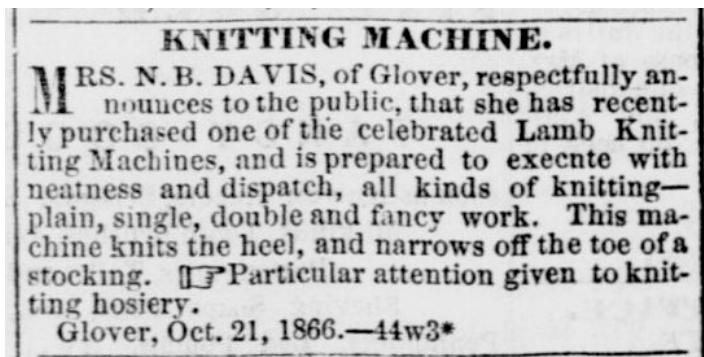
Do you have old Glover photos
and stories to share?

Contact Betsy at 525-4051
or Joan at 525-6212.

Please contact us to meet
with a member.

The Knitting Machine Comes to Glover

Just 20 years ago, home knitting machines were quite popular around Vermont, with women entrepreneurs making and selling winter hats, mittens, and scarves as a cottage industry. It was surprising to learn that the first knitting machine in Glover was delivered long before that—well over a century ago—when Mrs. N. B. Davis purchased a Lamb Knitting Machine in 1866.



Orleans Independent Standard (Irassburg, VT, October 26, 1866)

In 1864 Mary Phillips married Napoleon Bonaparte Davis in Glover when she was 22 and he 24; they had met as students at the Orleans Liberal Institute. After graduating, Napoleon helped his father on the farm and taught school in the winter months. In 1865 their first child, Hiram, was born. And the next year, 1866, Mary placed the ad announcing her business with her new knitting machine.

This was during the age of invention in America, and several Glover men were busy filing patents for mechanical inventions. It was good to realize Glover women were not shying away from mechanical pursuits. The knitting machine diagram makes the machine look like it could have taken a good

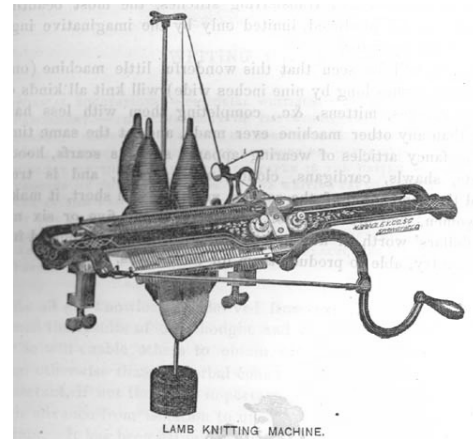


Detail from a Lamb Knitting Co., Chicopee Falls, Mass. envelope, 1860s. Though we have a photo of Mary's husband, N.B. Davis, at the museum, alas, we do not have one of Mary, so this envelope drawing of an unknown knitter will have to suffice. (Courtesy of eBay)

deal of practice to master. A young man, Isaac Lamb of Michigan, built his first knitting machine prototype in 1866, and he did not incorporate his business until 1876, so Mary must have been using an early version; the Lamb Co. is still in business today, now manufacturing commercial knitting machines.

How long did Mary keep the business going? There are no further clues. She and Hiram had two more sons, so she may have had to curtail her knitting business to care for the family and farm. An advertisement in the *Orleans County Monitor* in 1881 shows a spinning factory operating in Barton that might have made it hard for any home machine knitters to stay in business.

Whatever happened to end Mary's business, she holds the title of the first Glover woman with a home knitting machine that we know of!



The 1872 version of the machine. (Courtesy Library of Congress)



Orleans County Monitor, October 17, 1881.



The following year after buying the knitting machine, Mary and Hiram bought a home on one acre just above the West Glover Church for \$800; no doubt Mary's knitting machine earnings helped with the purchase. Shown here in a c. 1915 photo; today it is the home of Peter Letzelter-Smith.

My Charming, Crooked Uncles — Part 2

by Joan Alexander

We began this story of brothers Ira and Will Aldrich in our last issue (Winter 2021); here is the conclusion...

After high school, Will attended Harvard for at least one semester and then Colby College in Maine, where he met and married his wife, Ellen “Nell” Dolley. After

college his plan was to apprentice in the medical practice of his brother-in-law Dr. Ezra

Clark (also a Glover boy) in

Derby, who had married Will’s sister, Isadora. But somewhere along the line, Will switched from medicine to law, though it is not clear what his credentials were, if any.

By 1888, Will and Nell were living in Cherokee, Kansas. Will had established his law office, and he was becoming active in the Republican Party and their local church, as noted in the local newspapers. It was



Cartes de visite of Will and Nell, taken around the time of their marriage in 1883.

in Kansas that Will had his first run-in with the law—he was working as a bill collector for the McCormick farm machinery company and was embezzling the money he collected. When it was discovered, he skipped town but was caught and arrested in Colorado. He telegraphed Ira, who was working in New York City, asking him to bail him out of jail and raise the stolen money, which apparently had gone to cards and drink. Ira mailed all the telegrams back home to Glover, adding his own explanations on the back of each, and asking the family to provide the needed money.

Telegram #1: Will, in jail in Lamar, CO, sent a telegram in care of either “*Prof. I.R. Aldrich or Jefferson Clark, Bennett Bldg. NY Have bank wire bank here twenty-five dollars, Don’t fail.*” Jefferson Clark, a Madison Avenue lawyer, also had grown up in Glover. Jeff did not answer Will directly but instead mailed the telegram to Ira’s office in Baltimore.

Telegram #2: Three days later, Nell in Kansas telegraphed Ira in NYC: “*Will...in trouble. Can you come. Answer quick.*” Ira’s message on the back: “*Fearing #1 was not genuine, I teleg. Nell asking for Will’s address...*”

Ira’s continued: “*To be doubly sure that no one was imposing upon me & to ascertain Will was still in Lamar & in need, Mon., at same time I telg. Nell, I telg. Will: ‘Are you still in need of remittance? Telegraph some word of identifica.’*”

Telegram #3: Will sent an answer to Ira the following day: “*Yes, bad by wire to Girard Kansas to Wilbur Robinson identification April 26th. W R Aldrich*” [The April 26 was the identification Ira had asked for; Apr 26 was Ira’s birthdate.]

Telegram #4: From Nell to Ira: “*Arrested in Lamar charge embezzlement. Amount \$700.*”

Will was brought back to Kansas for trial, but two weeks later, the charges were dropped when Ira’s brother Wesley, and sisters Dora and Eunice, all back in Vermont, repaid the stolen money. The story was carried in newspapers all over Kansas, with one adding a new detail: “Gambling was believed to have caused his downfall.” Will and Nell left Kansas the following month, Will joining Ira in Baltimore, and Nell going home to her parents in Maine. She likely was considering leaving Will, but the marriage was not over yet.

Meanwhile, Ira had spent the 1880s starting speech

10TH JULY 1888

NIGHT MESSAGE. 10/1

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This is an UNREPEATED NIGHT MESSAGE, and is delivered by registered telegraphers, under the conditions named above.

THOS. T. ECKERT, General Manager.

NUMBER	SENT BY	REC'D BY	CHECK	NORVIN GREEN, President
W 1107	A SW & FM	IO PD NITE DUPLICATE	5-11	

Received at the WESTERN UNION BUILDING, 195 Broadway, N. Y. DEC 14 1888.

Dated LAMAR COL 12

To PROF I R ALDRICH OR JEFFERSON CLARK
BENNETT BLDG
N Y

HAVE BANK WIRE BANK HERE TWENTY FIVE DOLLARS DONT FAIL

WM R ALDRICH

DUPLICATE.

The first telegram. (We have kept the punctuation and abbreviations intact in our transcriptions.)

schools. As an adult, Ira (who sometimes was called Dr. Aldrich, though we have not found any evidence that he had any degree), claimed to have found a cure for stuttering. He had already established speech schools in Pennsylvania, and upstate New York (Utica and Ithaca), sometimes with Will joining him as an assistant to help with the speech school businesses. Ira never seemed to stay in one city for over a year. In all of their business ventures, the brothers always set up offices in the classiest parts of the city, furnished them in the finest fashion, and made sure there were glowing press releases. Will wrote home to his mother when they left Pennsylvania for New York, "Ira has had trouble getting paid well enough—NY pays better." But the real reason for the moves more likely was to run from creditors and escape legal troubles.

The move to New York City seemed to be the high point for Ira's speech school. After his embezzlement affair in Kansas, Will again joined Ira as an assistant. A glowing article in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 7, 1887, praised Ira and his technique. "He has made a most diligent study of the German and French methods... and for nearly a year was under the tuition and treatment of a noted Philadelphia elocutionist... only by years of labor, thought and experience he perfected his treatment for the cure of stammering which has gained him the distinction of being the greatest living specialist of this line [Oh, but if all this—or any of it—were only true!]" The article claimed Ira had used his technique to cure his own stuttering, which he had lived with since childhood, though there is no evidence that he had ever stuttered himself.

The school opened in a posh section of the city, with elegant furnishing and decoration, which Ira described in detail to his mother in a letter. Throughout their years away from Glover, both Ira and Will wrote beautiful, long letters to their mother back in Glover, always with loving sentiments for all the family. One letter Will wrote to his mother just before heading for Kansas asked her for \$1,000—a letter my father described as "11 pages of smooth talk."

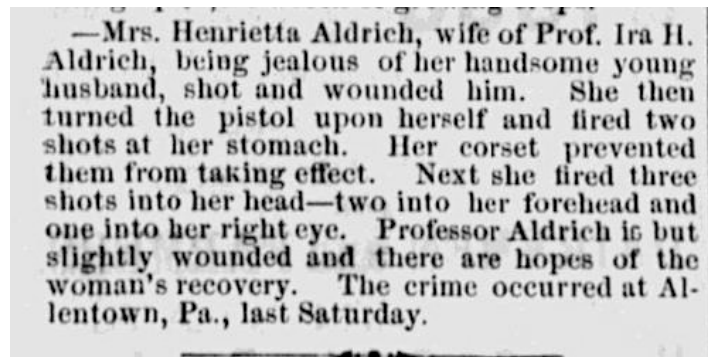


From *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* article, May 7, 1887.

In 1886, Ira, 30, married Emma Birdsall, 23, whom he met when she came to him for vocal training; her mother was quoted as saying "he laid siege to her heart." Family legend has it that she was an actress. They separated after a year when she realized he was addicted to gambling. There is another family story that Emma shot at him on the docks of the Hoboken Ferry. I did find a newspaper account about a Prof. I. Aldrich being shot by his wife, but it was from 1880, years before Ira married Emma, and the shooting took place in Allentown, Pennsylvania. It seems quite possible that Ira's marriage to Emma was his second marriage, and the family story of the shooting was from his first marriage (to a Henrietta?).



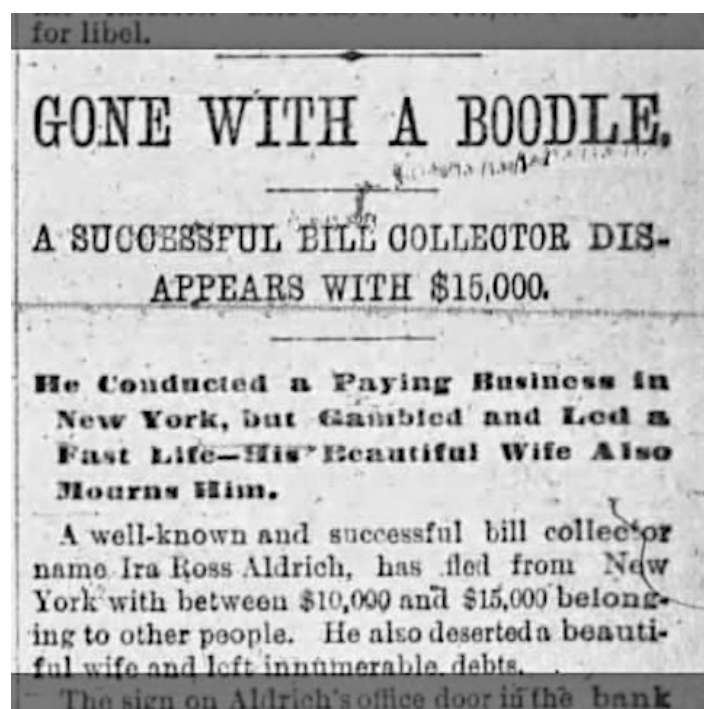
Emma Birdsall, cabinet card.



From *The Bel-Air-Aegis-And-Intelligencer*, June 18, 1880.

In 1890, it was Ira's turn to be the center of an embezzlement scheme. By this time, the speech school ventures seem to be closed for good, and Will and Ira had started a business partnership as Aldrich & Aldrich, a collection agency that specialized in securing physician's bills, employing ten collectors. They were known as one of the top collection agencies in the country according to a newspaper account. The headlines read "On the Run" and "Gone with a Boodle." Ira had taken \$15,000 and left a note on the door of his office saying he was out of town and would be returning. He was never seen again. One family story has Ira dying in the 1906 San Francisco

earthquake, another says he sailed for South America; I could find no evidence for either. He may have used other aliases, which may be why it is so hard to track him after the collection agency embezzlement. There was an Ira R. Aldrich who died in Oregon in 1918; maybe that was him. Ira's disappearance after the embezzlement was said to have broken his mother's heart; it is true she died in December of that same year. I have had no luck tracing what happened to Emma. With more research and so many old newspapers coming online all the time, I may still find the story of Ira and Emma's final fate.



From *The Brooklyn Citizen*, Mar 13, 1890. Their story is almost exactly the same as the article in *The Evening World*, a New York City paper that was published on the same day.

Unlike Ira, who disappeared after his collection agency embezzlement, Will and Nell came immediately to Vermont and stayed for about 20 years, living in Glover, Barton, and Albany. Nell worked as an accomplished seamstress and Will as a teacher in Albany and Glover, and a lawyer with offices in Barton and Orleans. They were both very involved in the community—Nell played the piano for church and was involved with many organizations; Will served as the Superintendent of Glover schools, moderator and lister in Barton, and on the boards of the local Fish & Game Club, the Village Improvement Society, Order of Odd Fellows, Epworth League, and so on. There were no new accounts of him embezzling, but his gambling troubles continued.

The complicated details of the gambling operation were like something out of *The Sting* movie.

On April 20, 1904, the *St. Johnsbury Caledonian* reported:

“Quite a sensation was started in this locality by the arrest of Lawyer W. R. Aldrich of Barton for alleged gambling. As near as the facts of the case can be learned, they are as followed: A. B. Carrick is reported to have run a ‘live easy’ in the Republican block on the Avenue, that is, he had rented a small tenement, and in one room the game of poker was played. He never played himself, but allowed certain friends to come and play, provided he secured a certain rake-off, usually 10 percent. It is said that drinking was also permitted in this place, and when anyone’s supply gave out, there was more forthcoming from other parts of the tenement. Mr. Carrick attended his rake-off himself usually, but at times had a young lad to help him, Leon Smith by name. A large number of local sports used to gather at this rendezvous and play cards and put up as much money as they pleased, and it is said that large sums of money have changed hands there in an evening. No chips were used in the game, but the money was placed out on the playing table. One way the boys knew that there was something doing was to go up the front or rear stairs of the block and if there was a small lamp sitting on the window sill at the head of the back stairs, it was the sign that they could come in if they had the proper password. Four pushes on a button, which was hidden in a nearby closet, rang a bell in the tenement, and this secured admission... The officials were directed to this place by a person who was sued by Lawyer Aldrich, and the person sued claimed that the bill was due for money that he lost playing the game. It is expected that the case will cause quite a sensation when it is heard at the June term, for quite a number of local sports are connected with it in some way and more arrests may follow. Several who have had a connection with it are reported to have left town for unknown parts.” The same day the *Caledonian* also reported in a separate article that Will had been arrested in Barton and brought to jail in St. Johnsbury, and “bail set at \$200 and furnished.” It was likely Will’s siblings that raised the bail.

Nell stayed with Will another three years, finally leaving him for good in 1907. Will sued Nell for divorce in 1911, citing desertion. Continuing her work as a seamstress, Nell lived what surely must have been a much calmer life with family in Massachusetts until she died in 1944. Will's family in Glover never blamed Nell for leaving, and always thought lovingly of her; they could not fault her for finally giving up on Will, though they all seemed to continue to enable him. Sixty years after last seeing Nell, Will's niece remembered her Aunt Nell very fondly: "She made her living by designing clothes—she never used patterns. Draped them and cut [the cloth] on them [customers] as the French designers did. She was a beautiful person, a lovely person."

In 1912, Will was charged with illegal fishing. He ended up taking both the gambling and the fishing cases to the VT Supreme Court, acted as his own lawyer, and was found guilty in both. Through all these indiscretions, his law business did not seem to suffer, even after the state took away his license for a year. In 1914, he was disbarred again for deceiving clients and then was arrested for forging checks in Island Pond. Though he never admitted any wrong, and always had complicated excuses which he shared in letters to the editor of the *Monitor*, he finally must have realized he had no credibility left and could figure no way out of his troubles, and he fled, which led to the 1915 "Wanted" poster.

For the next 17 years, the family did not know where he was. He returned unannounced in 1931 from Schenectady, NY, where he said he had been working as a railroad signalman, to attend a large Clark–King family reunion in Glover, and reconnected with Wesley's daughter's family who were now running the farm. (They first learned he was back in town when someone said they had seen him fishing at Willoughby.) In 1932, back in Schenectady, he wrote to relatives in Glover saying that he had lost his job, closing with "... can hardly hope to see anyone again..." That was the last they ever heard from him.

My father had been told that when Will died in Syracuse that the remaining family in Glover had been notified, and he asked if they wanted to pay for his body to be sent back to Glover for burial. The answer was no. Will's siblings had all died, and the Aldrich farm was now owned by his brother Wesley's grandson and his wife, Joseph and Mary Alexander. It was the Depression, the Alexanders were behind on the mortgage payments, and it would not be long before



A picture of the Aldrich family on the front steps of their Glover home farm in 1907, gathered to celebrate the oldest brother, Calvin, who is visiting from Iowa with his wife. By this time, Ira has not been heard from for almost 20 years. Will's wife, Nell, is in the photo, but by the end of 1907, she had left him for good. Wesley Noble Aldrich* (front ctr) with grandsons, Erwin Aldrich Alexander; & (moving counter clock-wise) Joseph Wesley Alexander, with their father, Edwin L. Alexander; Simeon Clark & wife Eunice Aldrich*; Edith (Lackey), wife of Wesley; Edith Francena (Aldrich), wife of Edwin, holding dau. Edith Alexander; Frank, wife of Calvin; Nell, wife of Will; Calvin Aldrich*, in chair; William Aldrich*. (* siblings). Two of the Aldrich sisters are not included in the photo: Isadora (Aldrich) Clark, and their youngest sister, Effie, who died at age 5.

they lost the farm. Coming up with the funds to bring their Great Uncle Will back home for burial seemed impossible.

I have tried to find his death record, but it has proved difficult. When he fled Vermont, he began using an alias made up of his first and middle names, Will Robinson. There are several Will Robinsons who died between 1932 and 1940 in the Syracuse area. One of them is buried in a pauper's cemetery, and I have a feeling that he is my great-great-uncle Will Aldrich, but I have not been able to prove it.

Will's "Wanted" poster and the newspaper articles about Ira's embezzlement both give long descriptions of their physical and social traits. Both were described as friendly with engaging personalities and handsome features. Their gambling habits led them to make bad choices. Perhaps the other Aldrich siblings had these same compulsive and addictive natures but used them to ends that were socially acceptable; they were all hardworking, community-minded, honest, and respectable citizens. It is puzzling to try to figure out why Ira and Will's characters were so different from their siblings. In spite of Ira and Will's shortcomings, it is clear that their mother, brothers, and sisters were

always inclined to give the wayward brothers another chance, always coming to the rescue when they were in trouble. Every Sunday their mother wore a Parisian scarf Ira had given her, long after his disappearance. Their niece Edith Aldrich, my father's aunt, 60 years after her very last time seeing Will, remembered him

with great fondness. "He was kind of a card shark, and he drank some. But he was a lot of fun... he was my favorite, always."

It seems hard to deny: they were crooked, true, but also very charming.

Can you name these eighth-graders from 1976?



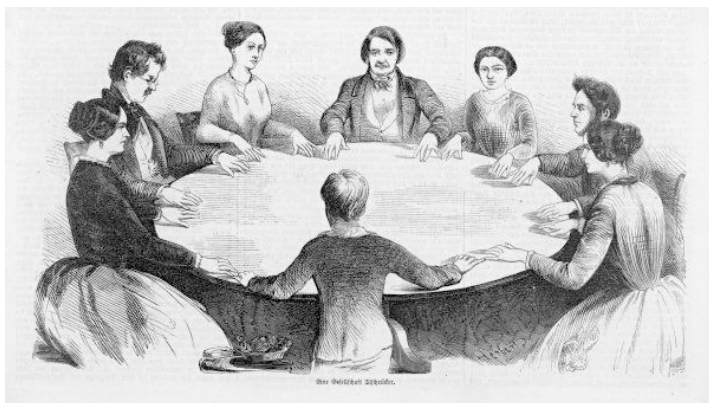
Glover Community School's 8th grade class in the nation's bicentennial year, 1976, was 19 strong, and we believe all are still living and most still living in the area, many in Glover. Can you pick out any of your friends and neighbors? Turn to page 8 for help if you need it. (Thanks to Wanda Webster for helping match names with faces!)

Visit our website: gloverhistoricalsociety.org

Necromancy in Glover

by Skip Borrell

It is midnight, October 30, 1878. A night for necromancy!



A séance, 1853. (Courtesy Mary Evans Picture Library)

Eight members of the Glover Spiritualist Society are seated at a round table in a windowless room on the second floor of Lyman Darling's home in Glover. The only light in the room is a single candle in the middle of the table. Mr. Darling begins to speak in a soft voice, "Let us all center ourselves and open our minds to the spirits all around us now." The circle of people all place their hands palm down on the table and close their eyes. After several minutes of silence Mr. Darling again speaks, "We are here tonight to communicate with Philomena Bean, the beloved child of Ardelia Bean. The innocent child was taken away to the spirit world at the tender age of 15 years." A soft whimper is heard from Ardelia, sitting across from Mr. Darling. Mr. Darling now says, "Let us begin."

In front of Mr. Darling on the table are two white dinner plates and a small steel ball the size of a marble. Mr. Darling places the steel ball in the middle of one plate and inverts the other plate on top of the first. He grasps the sides of the plates and raises them in front of him. His head goes back and he begins an incantation in strange words and sounds. Then there is silence. "We summon this night the spirit of Philomena Bean. I sense you are near. If you wish to communicate with your mother let us hear you. Use the steel ball to tap on the plates. One tap for no—two taps for yes." Again, silence. And then, two distinct taps are heard coming from between the two plates. Unable to contain herself, Ardelia says, "My baby! I have missed you so much! Please tell me you are well."



The Ladd house in Glover Village, photographed in 2012.

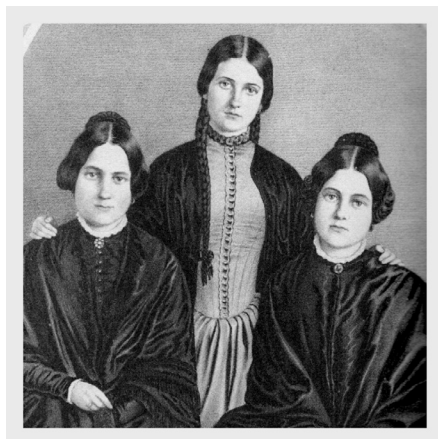
Silence. Then two taps came from between the plates. There were sighs and moans of relief around the table. The spiritual lines of communication are open! This séance continued on into the early morning hours.

This "supposed" séance could have taken place here in Glover Village. The "Spiritualist Society of Glover" was real. It had been organized by Lyman Darling on November 13, 1878, with 33 members at the time. It is said that their séances were conducted in what in recent decades was known as Bonnie and Mike Ladd's home, in a small room with no windows.¹

Necromancy, or Spiritualism, as it is also called, is the divination by alleged communication with the dead.² It was very popular from the mid-1800s up to the 1920s in the United States, England as well in other countries. For some, like the fictitious Ardelia Bean above, it was a much desired need to communicate with a beloved family member who perhaps died too young, or is sorely missed. Perhaps a casualty in the Civil War. Almost everyone, of course, believed that there was an after-life from their religious beliefs. And it is a small leap for some from religious belief to being convinced that the spirits of those who have died can, and will, attempt to make contact with their living loved ones. These people with a strong desire to once again be in touch with a loved one could be easily swayed by someone who genuinely believed in Necromancy, or more likely, had a motive to take advantage of, or deceive, others for nefarious reasons.

The genesis of Necromancy seems to have started with a family in America by the name of Fox in about 1848. It was supposedly a reaction against the

prevalent materialism of the time. It professed to make contact with the souls of the departed by means of “mediums.” There were, over the years, some scientific studies done on the so-called phenomena of extra-natural experiences. But, alas, no scientific proof positive emerged. The trend of séances grew over the years and some people saw an easy way to make a good living by it. As P.T. Barnum famously said, “There’s a sucker born every minute.” And I would add, “Someone to take advantage of them.” During this same time period there was also a popular interest in witchcraft, sorcery, conjuring and wizardry. A less-than-scrupulous person who dressed well, spoke well and had a convincing attitude could convince farmers and tradespeople as well as those with little education of almost anything including the hereafter communication. If someone set the right mood in a room and used a little slight-of-hand such as the plates and steel ball, people could be convinced of things that defy logic and reason.



The Fox sisters of Hydesville, NY. The sisters claimed to communicate with the deceased, who answered with rapping or tapping sounds. (Courtesy Google images)

But back to Glover. To show the interest in Necromancy of the time period here are some local newspaper items concerning Spiritualism. In one newspaper an article read: “All who are interested in having a reading in this place are invited to meet with Mrs. M. Abbott next wed. evening.”³ Another item

from 1869: “Spiritualism — a two-day meeting of Spiritualism will be held at the South Church in Glover village.”⁴ An article in 1869 read: “Miss Emma Morse, trance speaker will lecture in the south church, Glover village, Sunday, July 18.”⁵ In 1870 was a notice of the “Quarterly Convention of Vermont State Association of Spiritualists to be held in Glover the 10th, 11th and 12th of June next.”⁶ And, in 1875, “Mrs. Emma L. Paul will commence her labors with the society of spiritualist in Glover, the first Sunday in May.”⁷ Mrs. Paul continued to speak regularly through 1880.

It would appear that Glover had a very active group of Spiritualists at the time. But the interest was also nationwide. It even reached to the White House. In 1863 a “medium” by the name of Nettie Colburn was summoned by the President and Mrs. Lincoln to perform a séance.⁸ I agree with P.T. Barnum’s statement, but I am hesitant to put President Lincoln in the “sucker” or “gullible” category. But then, he did agree to the séance. Perhaps to satisfy his wife. We do not know.

Over the past 150 years much of necromancy and séance activity has disappeared, mostly due to more intense scientific research, and some due to “retired” necromancers who revealed the methods and tricks utilized during the incantations and summons of spirit contacts. It is said that 97% of séances have been proven to be hoaxes and frauds. But, we must ask ourselves about the remaining 3%. Is there a possibility, however slight, that communication of some sort we do not yet understand could provide contact with the spirits of the dead?

P.S. If you want to know the secret of the dinner plates and the steel ball, it will cost you \$2.00.

References:

1. *History of the town of Glover, Vermont* (Glover Bicentennial Committee, 1983)
2. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford University Press, F. L. Cross, ed., 1957)
3. *Orleans County Monitor* (November 1, 1897, Barton, VT)
4. *Orleans Independent Standard* (August 24, 1869, Irasburg, VT)
5. *Orleans Independent Standard* (July 13, 1869, Irasburg, VT)
6. *Orleans Independent Standard* (May 21, 1870, Irasburg, VT)
7. *The Vermont Farmer* (April 16, 1875, Newport, VT)
8. *Family Tree Magazine*, September 2013, “Summoning Mr. Lincoln.”

Skip Borrell, a Glover Historical Society member, retired Naval Submarine Service, and currently a lay minister in the Newport Center Methodist Church, was intrigued to learn that there had been an active Spiritualist Society in Glover. Along with researching its history, he was inspired to imagine what one of the séances might have looked like. Skip and his wife, Judy, live in West Glover Village.

More about Spiritualism in Glover...

Between 1817 and 1884, three denominations had built four churches in Glover—two Congregational, one Universalist, and one Methodist–Episcopal. A fourth denomination, the Freewill Baptists, used the existing church buildings or schoolhouses for their services. But before long there was another denomination to add to the list: the Spiritualists.

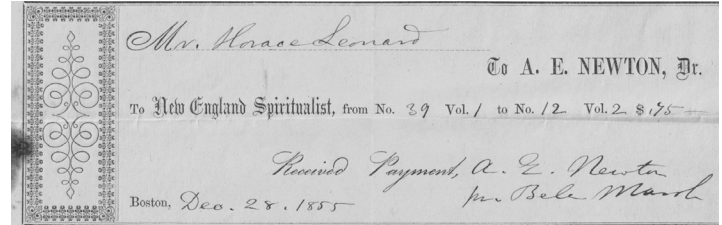
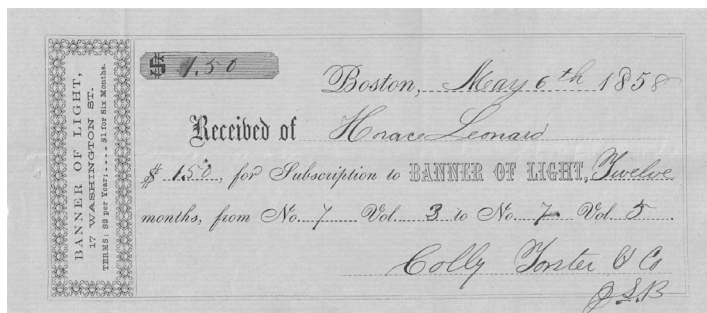
One might assume that Spiritualism was embraced by the younger generation, who were open to new, nontraditional ideas. But Glover's Spiritualists whose names are known today were middle-aged and older, citizens who were respected community leaders and business people, and from Glover's earliest settler families. Just a handful of the at least 33 names of the Glover Spiritualists are known today. At one time there was likely a record book with members' names and meeting minutes; but it has not turned up yet.



Horace Leonard

From Skip Borrell's Necromancy article, we know the Glover Spiritualists formally organized in 1878. But for almost two decades before that, interest had been brewing. **Horace Leonard** (1807–1889), a farmer who lived in what is now the Porter house on the Sheffield Heights Road, was already a subscriber to the *Banner of Light*, the major national Spiritualist paper, and also to *New England Spiritualist*.

And by 1860, **Orin French** (1806–1976), a shoemaker in Glover Village who held the reputation as the best shoemaker in Orleans County, was already a believer. What drew him to Spiritualism? He had lost his first wife soon after the birth of their only child (and that son died in 1850 at age 21), and by 1850, two of the children his second wife mothered died as two-year-olds. It



was quite commonplace for families to have so many deaths, and not all the families were attracted to Spiritualism, so one can only speculate if it was grief over these deaths that brought Orin French to Spiritualism.

In 1860, French hosted a clairvoyant healer, Mr. Welch from Massachusetts, at his home for several days. The healer, for a dollar, would diagnose

CLAIRVOYANT AND HEALING MEDIUM.

MR. AMASA S. WELSH, of Lawrence, Mass., would most respectfully inform the citizens of Glover and vicinity, that he will be at Mr. O. French's after the 19th of April inst., for the space of ten or fifteen days, for the examination of the sick. He desires that all who may visit him should refrain from stating their difficulty, agreeing to give them a description of their feelings without their imparting any information in regard to themselves to him.

Terms one dollar per visit or examination. Being personally acquainted with Mr. Welsh, I can speak high in his praise.

O. FRENCH.

Glover, April 5th, 1860—15w3

That dollar charge in today's money would be about \$34. (*Orleans Independent Standard*, Irasburgh, VT, April 13, 1860)

DR. D. L. PIKE,

ECLECTIC AND SPIRITUALISTIC PHYSICIAN, having recently removed from Bradford, Vt., to GLOVER, would respectfully inform the people of this vicinity, that he holds himself in readiness to answer all professional calls. He has had excellent success in the treatment of most chronic diseases by manipulations—especially cases of Rheumatism, Neuralgia, and Spinal Complaints.—He has had some 15 years professional experience. Mrs. Pike is also a healing and test medium. Terms reasonable.

Glover, Oct. 10, 1864—43

There is no evidence that the Pikes remained in Glover beyond 1864. (*Orleans Independent Standard*, Irasburgh, VT, Oct 14, 1864)

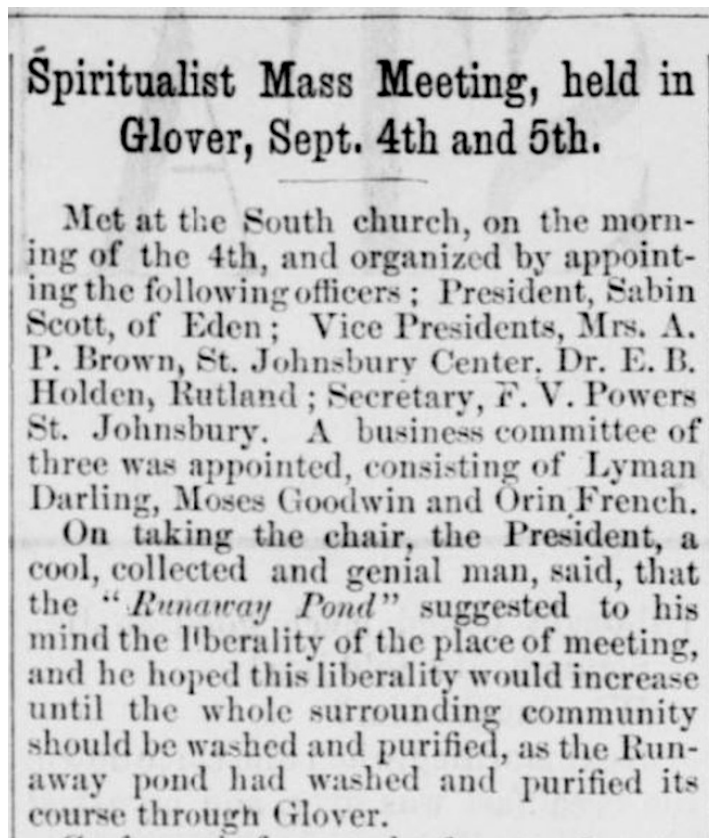
SPIRITUALISM.—The spiritualists of Glover are to hold a meeting at the South Church in Glover village, Sunday, Nov. 4. Joseph D. Stiles will address the people. The public generally are invited to attend. Seats free.

Glover began hosting Spiritualist speakers at the South Church (the Universalist Church) in 1866. (*Orleans Independent Standard*, November 2, 1866)

ailments. We don't know how many customers were attracted or how satisfied they were with Welch's healing powers. Four years later, the newspaper announced that another spiritualist doctor, Dr. Pike, whose wife was a medium, had come to Glover to set up practice. By 1866, Spiritualist speakers were coming to Glover.

It was **Lyman Darling Jr.** (1824–1881), a farmer and blacksmith, whose name was recorded as the organizer of Glover's Spiritualist Society in 1878. Like Orin French, Lyman Darling was no stranger to death. He had lost his first wife in 1848 when she was 23, then their infant daughter, and then, after his second marriage, two toddlers. In 1865, a daughter Sarah, 15, was visiting in Barton when a young man accidentally fired a loaded revolver; Sarah died the following day. And, ten years later, his ten-year-old son had died of disease.

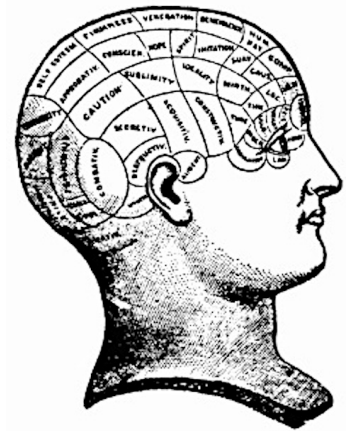
The Vermont State Association of Spiritualists, founded in 1867, held quarterly meetings around the state each year. After Glover had formally assembled a society, Glover hosted the state quarterly meetings at the Universalist Church at least three times, in 1869, 1870, and 1875. These conventions lasted for two to three days, always wrapping up



The Vermont Spiritualist Society president couldn't resist working Runaway Pond into his remarks! (*Orleans Independent Standard*, September 14, 1869)

on a Sunday. After the resident minister welcomed the crowd, speakers addressed not only Spiritualism topics, but also Christianity, temperance, and women's rights. Interspersed among the speakers were musical selections from the Universalist Church choir.

At that fall 1869 state Spiritualist quarterly meeting in Glover, the *Orleans Independent Standard* (September 14, 1869) reported that the second day's meeting opened with testimony from Orin French, "who said that some twenty years ago, he stood alone in Spiritualism, and a phrenologist was sent in to examine his head, to see if he was not 'crazy,' and now, looking around upon the large audience, he was glad to see so many 'crazy' ones present. He only wished if this were craziness, that he had been made so twenty years before he was."



Phrenology is the practice of diagnosing the character and intellectuality of a person by feeling and measuring the shape and bumps of a person's head. (Getty image)

Besides Orin French, Horace Leonard and Lyman Darling, other Spiritualist Society members' names mentioned in the newspaper items over the years: **Moses Goodwin** (1816–1882), a carpenter from Glover Village; **Hezekiah "Stillman" Bickford** (1807–1876), a farmer; and **Isaac Smith** (1809–1892), a farmer and cloth fuller, who had also served as the town representative to Montpelier and a Glover Village postmaster.

By 1883, five years after the Glover Spiritualist Society was formed, it was listed with all the other Glover churches in *Child's Gazetteer of Orleans & Lamoille County*: "The society now has about the same number of members [33], with no regular preacher, their meetings being held in the universalist church."

When he was in his 80s and living in Pennsylvania, the Rev. Benjamin Brunning, who had lived in Glover as a young man during the 1840s-1850s working as a shoemaker for Orin Leonard, wrote his memories of Glover to the *Orleans County Monitor* in a series of letters, which the newspaper published in 1907. (Bunning practiced phrenology—could he have been the examiner of Orin French?) In his letters to the *Monitor*, Brunning shared these memories of the Spiritualists:



There are six gravestones at Westlook Cemetery with inscriptions that reveal the Spiritualist beliefs of the person buried beneath. “Passed to Spirit Life” is written on the gravestones of Lyman Darling (whose stone depicts his blacksmith work), Moses Goodwin, and Charles Hardy, Glover’s town clerk for a total of 20 years (1782-1869). (Charles Hardy was on Brunning’s list of those opposed to Spiritualism so it may be that his wife or children were believers of Spiritualism and responsible for his epitaph.) “Passed to Spirit Land” was the epitaph on the gravestone of Jonah French (1787-1869), and his wife, Sally Rust French (1774-1868). The gravestone of Jefferson Kimball, a painter who died of consumption at age 25 (1839-1864), reads “Entered Spirit Life. Erected by his mother.” The fact that it was his mother, Hannah (Vance) Kimball, (the daughter of Glover’s first settler, James Vance) who had the gravestone erected is another reminder that it may be the family remaining who were Spiritualists, not necessarily the deceased. No gravestones in any of the other three cemeteries in Glover have inscriptions that indicate they were Spiritualists.

“Some years after that [the building of the Congregational Church in Glover Village in 1830] there was a movement that injured the Universalist society. That was the Spiritualist excitement of ‘table tipping’ and ‘spirit rappings,’ after the Fox girls following. If I remember correctly it started in Glover on the Sheffield road at the home of Horace Leonard, a quiet and excellent citizen. It continued to grow so that Orin French, Isaac Smith, Lyman Darling, Stillman Bickford, and some others in the Universalist church got to holding séances instead of attending church. Those in opposition were John Crane, Amos P. Bean, Joseph H. Dwinell, Amos Cook Jr., Charles Hardy, Nathan Norton, and some others. There was one good feature even about this appearance of spiritualism in Glover: the free-love element never struck Glover. The follows of the fad were good people and honest in their convictions. There were some

of the orthodox people interested in it but I have forgotten who they were.”

Brunning was proud to note that Gloverites did not embrace “freelove,” a movement that often was linked to Spiritualism. Historically, free love was the belief that neither church nor state should not be involved with regulating who you loved; it was much later that the term “free love” came to refer to the promiscuity during the sexual revolution of the 1960s. (Interestingly, “Freelove” was the first name of several Gloverites, both male and female, who were born before the Spiritualist movement began.)

Many of the opposers of Spiritualism whom Brunning remembered were related to the Spiritualist supporters. Perhaps that should not be surprising at all, as many of Glover’s early settler families intermarried, but it does make one hope that they were able to keep family relationships harmonious. Most of the

supporters whose names we know originally were members of the Universalist Church. The description of Glover in Hemenway's *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. III (1877) also mentions the schism that Spiritualism brought to the Universalist church: "diversities of views as to Spiritualism divided it."

Newspaper reports from around the state show that the Spiritualists in a couple of towns built new meeting houses, but in Glover, the South Church was used. As gleaned from newspaper items, other towns in the Northeast Kingdom were also active in the Spiritualist movement: Barton Landing, Burke, Lowell, Lyndonville, St. Johnsbury, and Troy. Reading news items about activities of Spiritualist societies around the state show these societies interacted with the community much like more traditional churches, with ice cream socials on the Fourth of July, oyster suppers, box suppers, dances and balls, and with their societies' Ladies Aid doing the planning. Newspapers advertised that Spiritualist convention-goers could get free one-way train tickets and reduced hotel costs.

By the time Glover had organized its Spiritualism Society, the *Monitor* and other local newspapers were beginning to print articles that cast doubt upon the validity of the Spiritualist movement, as mediums all over the United States who were using tricks were exposed. In 1880, a man in Lunenburg (Vermont) went missing, and a medium sensed he was well and had left the area, but then his body was found in town. Yet, the newspaper editors were not quick to ridicule the movement altogether. Commenting, "It will please some of our readers of that particular faith, and will harm no one of the opposite views," the editor of the *Standard* in Irasburg printed a long story that celebrated the wonderful communications a Spiritualist in New York City had relayed between the dead and the living. "Wonderful, if true," were the editor's closing thoughts.

The last mention of the Glover Spiritualist Society was in 1897, when "All who are interested in having a 'reading' in this place the coming winter are invited to meet with Mrs. M. Abbott, next Wed. evening." By this time, Glover's founding supporters whose names we know today had all "passed to Spirit Land" or "Spirit Life" themselves, as some of their gravestones read. World War I brought a national resurgence of Spiritualism, though no record of it in Glover. The movement faded away, though even today there are Spiritualist societies still in existence all over the world.

—Joan Alexander



WANTED

The Glover Historical Society is always looking for stories, including old diaries, journals, or letters relating to Glover during an earlier time. If you have a story to tell, please submit it to joanalex_05839@yahoo.com.

For those of you who don't use the Internet, please mail stories to:

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P.O. Box 208

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