

Insights Into Harvard Shaker History

By Michael Volmar

Abstract

Sometimes an object can provide a unique point of reference for understanding a particular period of time. Such is the case of a desk that was made by Harvard Shaker Alfred Collier for the long-standing village ministry leader Grove Blanchard in 1861. The 1820s to the 1860s were arguably the “golden age” for the Harvard Shakers. The rich documents that have survived from that period in archives around the region, including at Fruitlands, provide valuable insights into the social dynamics within the village. The Harvard and Shirley journals are particularly fruitful in illuminating the daily routines within these villages, and enable us to better understand relationships between people over time. In this article I focus on the second generation of Harvard Shakers, those born after about 1825, one of whom was Alfred Collier. For this generation we know a great deal about the circumstances of their arrival into what was at the time a growing, successful, and spiritually exciting village. In fact, this generation was particularly well positioned to play a very active role in the Era of Manifestations, a seminal period in Shaker history. A variety of evidence including objects, period photographs, and journal entries will be developed to enable us to follow this generation over time as its members mature and the village population peaks and then begins its slow decline. A comprehensive picture of the dynamics within the village emerges from this analysis, and clarifies the relationship of this bishopric with the Central Ministry, the roles played by people in the village, and the nature of their relationships—in particular both Collier and Blanchard, but also others as the village history unfolds.



Figure 1. Desk made by Alfred Collier for the use of Elder Grove Blanchard.
(Fruitlands Museum Collection)

Introduction

The first Shaker journal I ever read was written by a Harvard Shaker named Alfred Collier in 1859. As the deacon or farm manager, he was required to keep a journal of daily activities. My expectation for a dry account that enumerated mundane farm chores was quickly dispelled in the first entry when Brother Alfred began a vitriolic rant heavily prejudiced against the Irish laborers hired to work on the farm, whom he characterized as sub-human.¹ The subsequent entries included more mundane references to farm activities, painting a vivid picture of life in the village, along with numerous introspective passages that revealed a troubled soul struggling with his faith and life in the village.² Besides working on the farm, Brother Alfred also worked in the sawmill and made furniture until he left the village in 1864.

Previous research indicated that one of the few signed pieces of Shaker furniture from Harvard was attributed to him and was now in a nearby private collection.³ I visited the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald McCue in 1999 with Shaker craftsman Marty Travis to document the piece. I searched for any other signs of Alfred Collier after his time with the Shakers with little success until 2012, when several serendipitous events rekindled my interest in him. First, I received some old research files from Maggie Stier.⁴ Then, I was called by Jacqueline Grossman, a descendant of Alfred Collier living in South Carolina.⁵ Some months later, we received an unsolicited donation of books from a family descended from Arthur Collier, Alfred's brother, many with hand-written notes by various members of the family. Lastly, I got a call from Willis Henry; Gerald McCue had passed away and his collection, including the desk, would soon be auctioned.⁶ Our subsequent bid for the desk succeeded, prompting us to consider how the desk and Alfred Collier's story might be packaged to enrich interpretive materials in the Shaker Museum at Fruitlands.

Harvard Shaker Village History

The Shakers are arguably the most successful communal society that developed in nineteenth century America. Shakers lived in large celibate villages, practiced communal ownership of property and equality between the sexes. Shaker villages were large farming collectives run

March 1831.
Sat 5th Cloudy. Jonas Nutting came
here & attended our meeting.
Sat, 6th It Hailed, Rained, & Snowed.
Elder Br. here from Shirley.
Mon 7th A. M. fair P. M. Cloudy. Elder
grove went to Shirley with the Elder
Brother. A man came here yester-
day brought a boy that he wants
to leave. he went to Lexington
& staid last night & returned here
today, we conclude to take his boy,
he agrees to pay his board &c.
His name is Alfred Collier, he was 8
years of age last Jan, the 1st day.

Figure 2. Journal entry for March 1831 recording the arrival of Alfred Collier. (3-7-1831 FM 4.2)

by entrepreneurial people. Shakers developed innovative marketing techniques and products which helped transform the American economy. They also developed unique forms of worship and styles of dress. Shakers had a strong work ethic, based on obedience to a centralized authority that directed the work of the village. Being a Shaker in the first half of the nineteenth century meant being part of a dynamic thriving agricultural community. Village life required strict discipline and obedience to Shaker

doctrine, village ministry elders and the Central Ministry in Mt. Lebanon, N.Y. Included in the various roles of leadership was the responsibility to make daily entries in journals. These written records provide evidence that the Shaker experience was one of the most important social movements of nineteenth-century America.

The foundation of the Shaker movement corresponds to what is termed the Second Great Awakening, which occurred from 1790 to 1840. The U.S. constitution, with its commitment to religious freedom, probably contributed to the explosion of interest in religion in early nineteenth-century America. A plethora of new protestant denominations, including the Shakers, the Millerites, and the Transcendentalists, among others, flourished during this period.

During the First Great Awakening of the 1740s, people in New England witnessed and participated in intensified evangelical, religious activity, led by charismatic preachers such as George Whitefield who traveled the countryside and spoke in the open air, appealing to the emotions of their audiences and gaining instant conversions. Whitefield and others practiced fire-and-brimstone preaching for which the time period is known. By the late 1770s, a group generated directly by the Awakening—the New Light Baptists—had gained popularity in New England for a doctrine that prophesied the imminent rebirth of Christ. Most early Shaker villages are located in areas that were important centers for these New Lights. Harvard became a New Light enclave for central Massachusetts.

When Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers (whose official name is the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming), arrived from England and set up the first Shaker community in Niskayuna, New York, on the north side of modern-day Albany, in 1774, she and her followers found that New Lights were receptive to the ideas that she preached. As a result, the first Shakers in Harvard and Shirley were former New Light Baptists who had invited the Shaker missionaries to visit them in 1781.

The Shaker experience in Harvard and Shirley began in June 1781 when Ann Lee and a group of early Shaker leaders accepted the New Lights' invitation. They were on an extended proselytizing journey from New York. The Harvard and Shirley Shaker community consisted of groups of families and individuals who devoted their lives to God. They lived communally and developed distinctive agricultural and manufacturing practices, architecture, and forms of worship. The brethren and sisters of the village lived, worked, and worshiped together. Sisters

produced clothing and participated in weaving, gardening and preparing food, distilling, nursing, and many other tasks. They worked alongside the brethren making canned goods, herbs, mops, and sieves. Brethren worked the land producing agricultural products, timber, fruit, and many other products. First and foremost, a Shaker village was a working farm.

Shaker Timeline

1770-1784 – Formative Period – Ann Lee gathers followers.

1784-1821 – Community and Ideology Development

1791 – Gathering of the Harvard Shaker Village

1792 – Gathering of the Shirley Shaker Village

1796 – The “great apostasy” & Lucy Wright

1797 – First Covenant of the Harvard Shakers

1801 – Second Covenant of the Harvard Shakers

1814 – Third Covenant of the Harvard Shakers

1821-1852 – Classic Period: Realization of vision for Shaker communities.

1821 – First publication of the Millennial laws

1831 – Fourth Covenant of the Harvard Shakers

1834-1836 – Crisis of apostasy in Harvard and Shirley

1837-1852 – Era of Manifestations’ spiritual revitalization

1842-1843 – Harvard community builds the Holy Hill of Zion

1852 – Mt. Lebanon decrees all outdoor places of worship closed

1852-1875 – Late-Classic Period – Shaker communities begin to decline.

1855-1865 – third major period of apostasy

1875-1992 – Post-Classic Period: Waning membership prompts community consolidations and closures.

1908 – Shirley Shaker village closed

1918 – Harvard Shaker village closed

Shakers believed their mission was to alleviate sin and suffering in this world. They believed that by becoming a reflection of God's love in everything, life here could resemble heaven. Because the celibate community could only grow through conversion, Shakers welcomed everyone. To join, one made a public confession of sins and donated all possessions, including land, to the community. Particularly in the beginning, entire families joined, which aided in the development of the villages. Individual family units were dissolved; husbands, wives and children became brothers and sisters. Those who came to the villages as infants or children were given the choice, upon coming of age, of either staying with the Shakers, or rejoining the World.

Through the early nineteenth century, Shaker communities gained members and also respect, not only through the quality of the goods they produced, but through the social services they provided. In the nineteenth century, the United States had no orphanages or foster care programs. When people came to a Shaker village, those who would have benefitted from such services—widows, war veterans, orphans, unwed mothers, domestic abuse victims—each found community, wholesome meals, and valued occupations. Being a Shaker was challenging and many members opted to quit. Each one who left, did so with marketable skills. A Shaker education included math and science, a fastidious adherence to cleanliness and propriety and an unflagging work ethic. Even adults were taught how to make themselves useful to society.

Shaker villages were divided into families dictated by geography. In Harvard, as in the other villages, the core of the village was called the Church Family and was composed of the most committed Shakers. As villages grew, they formed satellite villages, typically referred to by their relative location to the Church Family, for example North, South, and East.

The formation of a Shaker village relied upon large land grants and capital donations. Typically the core lands from a village would come from specific families. In Harvard, the Babbitt, Blanchard, Willard, and Kendall families provided land and money to establish the village. The Shirley village was formed largely from the farm of Elijah Wilds. Occasionally it appears that these founding families retained leadership positions in the village. Grove Blanchard was born in 1797, entered the ministry in 1818, and became lead ministry elder in 1828. He led the ministry in Harvard and Shirley for fifty-three years, until 1871.

Labors for a Spirit of Union

The ministry in Harvard managed both the Harvard and Shirley villages. One of their central jobs—besides making sure all temporal affairs were in order—was to maintain a *spirit of union* among the Shakers. The *spirit of union* was the fundamental belief behind the idea of the Shaker tenet “Hands to work, hearts to God.” The ministry labored to manage the temporal and spiritual concerns of the village to ensure the *spirit of union* was not undermined by petty grievances, jealousy, theft, or any other issues that could hurt the villages.⁷ The village ministry reported to the Central Ministry at Mount Lebanon.

During the first several decades of the nineteenth century, the Shakers enjoyed a period of expansion, with village population growing, and the development of successful industries. Journal references indicate that Shakers who had personal experiences knowing Mother Ann Lee had a special status and were referred to as “Mothers first born children” (figure 2). With the passage of time, these early Shakers begin to pass on. In some ways the spiritual revitalization of the 1840s known as the Era of Manifestations or Mother’s Work sought to bridge the growing gap between the early Shakers and those without a personal experience with Mother Ann. Like many religious groups in America, in the 1840s the Shakers experienced a period of extreme devotion. All the Shaker villages created large outdoor worship areas where members had intense religious experiences.⁸

Like many second-generation Shakers⁹ Alfred Collier entered the Harvard Shaker village at a very interesting time. He was brought to the Shakers as a young boy (figure 1) and came out of the Boys Order in 1838, along with Elijah Myrick,¹⁰ just a few years before the Era of Manifestations. It must have been a very exciting time to be a Shaker.¹¹ Despite the intensity of religious activities, most published sources that chronicle the history of the Harvard Shakers do not provide many details about village history in the mid-nineteenth century.¹² Numerous journals do provide insights into this period including relevant details on the life of Alfred Collier.

Alfred Collier was born in 1822 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Thomas Collier and Harriet Merrick Collier. Originally from Bristol, England, Thomas emigrated to America in 181[part of date missing], followed a few years later by his wife and children. Alfred was the first child

December 1832.
Sat. 1st Snow Hail & rain. About 1/2 past
6 o'clock Salome Barret. deceased
aged 62, years & one month.
Our Beloved Mother Ann,
has taken home another of her
faithful first born children,
one that bore the burden & heat of the
day. She was a friend & well-wisher to
all. It brings a very solemn feel-
ing to have one after another drop
away of the first believers. It will
soon be said, they are all gone.

Figure 3. Journal entry for December 1831 recording the death of Salome Barret, one of Mother Ann's "faithful first born children."
(FM 4.2)

born in Massachusetts. Alfred's father brought him to the Harvard Shakers in 1831 when he was eight years old. Thomas Collier then separated from his wife and left his remaining children with her in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and moved to Virginia. In March 1838 at the age of fifteen both Alfred Collier and Elijah Myrick came out of the Boys Order and went to stay in the Second House garret. Alfred's father visited him in 1840. Alfred left the Harvard Shakers in September 1864, and ultimately married Margareta Thomas of Oil City, Pennsylvania, in 1871, with

whom he had two children, Carrie May born in 1872 and Charles Edwin born in 1874. Alfred died in 1884. Alfred's brother Arthur married former Harvard Shaker Angelina Whittier. Jacqueline Grossman is a descendant of Alfred's daughter Carrie May.

Shortly after coming of age, Alfred Collier began to receive visions. His first recorded vision was in 1841. That same year the village ministry appointed twelve chosen instruments; seven sisters and five brothers from each village were selected to receive visions for their respective villages.¹³ It is certain that Elder Grove Blanchard selected Alfred Collier, the youngest brother among the chosen instruments of Harvard.¹⁴ The appointment of instruments was encouraged by the Central Ministry and village ministry leadership in an overt attempt to control the unpredictable nature of spontaneous visions of almost any Shaker in the village.¹⁵ The spiritual responsibilities are highlighted by the written recording of one of Collier's visions in 1842.

Besides enjoying the confidence of the village ministry leaders in spiritual matters, in 1842 Brother Alfred also received the gift of increasing temporal responsibilities. He and Thomas B. Holden became the managers of the Harvard farm, relieving Augustus Grosvenor who went on to other duties. In 1847 Brother Thomas was appointed deacon. And in 1849, based on Alfred's success in the village, his family in Charlestown sent his nephew Charles Henry Collier to join Alfred in the Harvard Shaker village.

Unfortunately for Charles Henry Collier, he joined just as the Harvard village population was peaking. The florescence of spiritual activity was also waning. In 1852, the Central Ministry ordered all the Shaker villages to close their outdoor worship areas. This caused a spiritual crisis in Harvard that came to define a generation of Shakers. Without the excitement of religious ceremonies typical of the previous decade, his increased temporal responsibilities appeared to unbalance Alfred. He continued to be given more responsibility, and was appointed deacon of the farm in 1856. But numerous journal entries from that time and subsequent years reveal that Alfred was far from happy. In fact, in the Harvard village, second-generation Shakers like Alfred Collier were suffering crises of faith.

In 1858, a group of Harvard Shakers celebrated Thanksgiving dinner in a most unusual way: seven brethren and sisters sat around the same table together and shared a meal. They were all second-generation Shakers, born in the 1820s and 1830s, and rose to positions of prominence in the village

Second-Generation Harvard Shakers					
Name	Born	Joined	Apostatized	Died	Present at the 1858 Thanksgiving dinner
Alfred Collier	1823	1831	1864	1884	X
Thomas B Holden	1821	1831	1862		
Elijah Myrick	1823	1827		1890	X
Elisha Myrick	1825	1827	1859	1892	X
D. Lafayette White	1824	1829	1857		
Lyddia Grover	1826	1839		1909	X
Angelina Whittier	1830	1837	1859		X
Elizabeth Persons	1828	1847		1877	X
Caroline Meahan	1834	1834	1862		X
Warren Sparrow	1813	1834	1862		
Ida Rich	1847	1861	1864		
George B Whiting	1827	1839	1858		
Roxalana Grosvenor	1812	1820	1865		

during the Era of Manifestations. In 1852 when the Central Ministry in Mount Lebanon ordered all villages to close their outdoor worship areas, the faith of this generation of Shakers was tested. The second-generation Shakers also recognized clear signs of declining and aging populations in the villages. Because of these developments, the village suffered from a spiritual crisis that left Shakers questioning the sustainability of their lifestyle. By Thanksgiving of 1858, they were openly talking about the seemingly inevitable end of the village. On that Thanksgiving they celebrated their faith and their community, which for most was the only community they had ever known. They celebrated together in a very un-Shaker way—mixing men and women at the same table—with the people who were the closest thing to family any of them had, not knowing who would be the next to leave or how they might retain their faith.

Charles Henry Collier's departure from the Shakers in 1857 only added to Alfred's disillusionment with Shaker life. The two would continue to visit from time to time, either during one of Alfred's visits to his family in Charlestown, or when Charles came back to Harvard, and the two went on long walks together throughout the town. There is a palpable sense of loss and grief when Alfred learned that his beloved nephew had died in a yellow fever epidemic in New Orleans in 1859.¹⁶

By 1861 the spiritual crisis in Harvard had caused many young leaders to abandon their faith and leave the community. Those that remained were tortured by self doubt and lack of faith in core Shaker doctrines. Brother Alfred sought solace in his work, spending his spare time making fine furniture. In the first half of that year he made a desk for Elder Grove.¹⁷ Two Shaker sisters were important players in this crisis, Roxalana and Fidelia Grosvenor.

The Grosvenor family joined the Harvard Shakers in 1819, including both parents, Ebenezer and Mary, and four children, Augustus, Lorenzo, Roxalana and Fidelia. Both Augustus and Roxalana held important leadership positions in the village for many years. Journal references indicate that they also were generally well liked by the other Shakers in the village. Roxalana must have also enjoyed the confidence of the village ministry. She became an eldress in 1850 at the age of thirty-seven and then the junior ministry sister in 1860. Like other Shakers, she saw fewer new devoted Shakers were joining the aging community. Younger talented Shakers like Elisha Myrick were leaving.¹⁸ Many who were left foresaw that the village must eventually come to an end. Driven by the memory

of the intense spiritual experiences they all had shared just a few years before, Roxalana sought alternative interpretations in Shaker doctrines, specifically celibacy, that might enable them to avoid this fate and save their community.

Subsequent events indicate a power struggle within the village in the early 1860s. Roxalana began promoting a reinterpretation of Shaker beliefs that advocated for spiritual marriage between pure Shakers that allowed procreation. At about the same time, in May 1862, Grove Blanchard spoke to Thomas Holden about moving to the North Family to replace Augustus Grosvenor as the Office trustee. This kind of reshuffling of personnel was not uncommon,¹⁹ but Holden refused the appointment in July and left the community in October. This time the spirit of union did not flow. Elder Grove may have crossed some line with Holden by asking him to replace Augustus Grosvenor. But he did have good reasons.

During the course of that year, Blanchard had begun to suspect Grosvenor of mismanagement. And in 1863, a careful examination of records connected with the construction of the Rural Home in the North Family revealed Grosvenor had run the Society into more than \$16,000 in debt. After reviewing the circumstances with their legal council and the Central Ministry, both Augustus and Lorenzo Grosvenor were released from their leadership positions. Despite being relocated to the East Family, Augustus Grosvenor did not go quietly. By January 1864, Blanchard's day books indicate there was growing rebellion and discord in the East Family organized by the Grosvenors.²⁰

The year 1864 was a challenging one for Grove Blanchard, who labored constantly with financial problems, leadership issues connected to Augustus Grosvenor, and the growing debate surrounding spiritual unions. In March 1864, he started to investigate Alfred Collier. Apparently Roxalana Grosvenor had specific Shakers in mind when she started promoting spiritual unions between devoted Shakers, in particular Brother Alfred and a young Shaker sister from Shirley named Ida Rich. Rich had joined the Shirley village a few years before. Journal references refer to Ida as their "sweet little sister" and apparently Brother Alfred was smitten. Unfortunately, the specific details of the affair are not recorded, though the two did exchange a number of letters. Apparently the letters were discovered by Ida's father, who was quite upset by them. Alfred was thirty-seven and Ida was seventeen. By June 1864 Blanchard had read the letters and Ida, on leave with her parents in Boston, was informed that she was no

longer welcome in the Shaker community. In early September, Blanchard labored intensely to achieve a spirit of union with Roxalana and Fidelia on submission to the gospel. Then Augustus Grosvenor died suddenly. Blanchard forced Collier to show him a package of letters sent to him by Ida Rich. A few days later, Elder Grove reviewed the details of the affair with the elders in the other Harvard Shaker families. Alfred Collier left the village on the noon train.²¹ In 1865, having failed to achieve a spirit of union, the Grosvenor sisters were excommunicated from the village for heresy.²²

By the 1850s devoted and faithful Shakers in leadership positions knew that the Harvard village was not going to last, but they loved their Shaker life and did not want it to end. They struggled to find some way to make the village they all loved survive. Roxalana Grosvenor proposed a holy union of brothers and sisters to perpetuate the Shakers by reinterpreting sections of the Bible that had been interpreted for decades by the Shakers to promote a celibate Shaker life. This directly undermined the teachings of Mother Ann, the authority of the Central Ministry, and the leadership of Elder Grove Blanchard. The timing of events coincided with the revelation of the affair between Alfred Collier and Ida Rich, Roxalana's prototype for Shaker holy unions. Ultimately the Grosvenor sisters received worse treatment than Collier or Rich. They were ejected from the village with \$50, with no recourse—two single women left to struggle in destitute conditions in Boston. The sisters sued the Shakers for compensation and mistreatment.

On August 23, 1871, a delegation of Shakers from Canterbury paid a visit to the Harvard Shakers.²³ Present at that time was a photographer from Boston who took a number of pictures of the village. Part of the purpose of that visit was to remove Grove Blanchard from his leadership position in the ministry. John Whitely from Shirley received the gift to take his place. Unlike Blanchard, Whitely had less personal history with the Grosvenor sisters and the drama surrounding their other biological family members. This helped insulate the Shakers from the pending litigation.²⁴ The Grosvenor sisters lost their suit against the village in 1875.

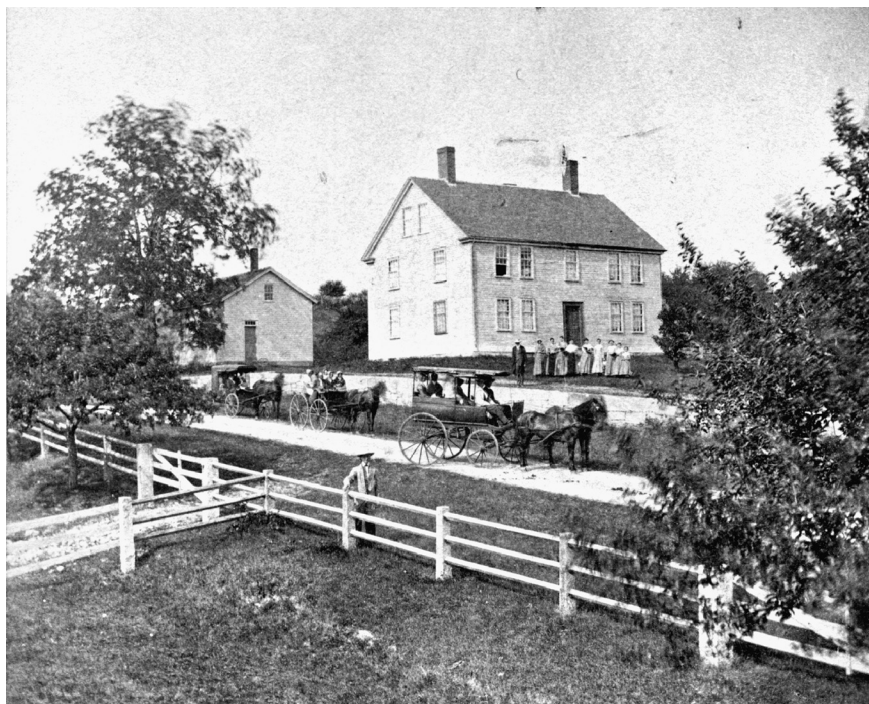


Figure 4. Square House, Harvard Shaker village, August 23, 1871. (Fruitlands Museum Collection)

Conclusion

The desk made by Alfred Collier for Elder Grove Blanchard in 1861 provides us with an entry point into a critical time in the Harvard Shaker village. The desk has design elements that reflect both Shaker and worldly values, indicative of Collier's inner turmoil, and perhaps even the factions in the village. Journal accounts reveal debates at the highest levels of leadership in the village that challenge core Shaker ideals, including celibacy—a sacrifice some were willing to make for the survival of the village. The ensuing struggle caused some members whose faith was already shaken to leave the village. Others were forced to leave. Ultimately, Shaker doctrine was left unchanged and the community eventually closed. We are left with some remarkable craftsmanship and a dramatic story from one of the most influential groups in nineteenth-century America.

Notes

1. Alfred Collier Journal 1859-1861, Fruitlands 2.2 This was not a new practice. Irish laborers had been hired for many years by the Harvard Shakers. Earlier journals occasionally mention Irish workers, some of whom were dismissed for poor efforts.
2. Further research revealed that other journals by Brother Alfred had survived. "Thus ends a day that is the Anniversary of my birth Thirty four years duly at 20 minutes to 8 o'clock AM I was ushered into this world in the common way of all living. The thought is lively with strange queries What have I brought about? What am I living for? To what am I attaining? What influence does the world have on me? Is the world any better for my living in it? Would in not have been better had I have been an infant that never saw light? these are questions that fill my mind inspi[te] of my daily vocations; the unseen answers that it is with me alone to answer these questions in the truth no human power can make me lasting misery; or lasting happiness it is with me to have a good or bad influence according to my own will I am to blame then for the influence that I have, though I did not place my self in my present situation in life I must do the best I can with it - I desire to know truth If I knew what it is I would fire[?] it out if it cost me my earthly consideration I seek for it as for the moss hidden treasure to know truth is to know God & it is the most valuable treasure that I can conceive of; these are my feelings, the result of many years travel in the foibles of youth I have sought happiness but not a lasting kind the attractions dazzled, & I followed them; but some pleasure I found but that fountain soon dried up & I pr[o]gressed to another till I saw what then was in earthly things; & I now desire to know what is right; thus my detached thoughts run on this anniversary of my birth." WRHS R39V219
3. Jerry V. Grant and Douglas R. Allen, *Shaker Furniture Makers* (Hanover: Published for Hancock Shaker Village; Pittsfield, Mass.: University Press of New England, 1989). Timothy Rieman, *The Complete Book of Shaker Furniture* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1993).
4. Stier's files included two particularly relevant research papers, one entitled "Alfred Merrick Collier," and another "Marriage for the Shakers?" concerning the Grosvenor sisters. Both are on file at Fruitlands Museum.
5. Jacqueline Grossman, personal communication with the author, 12/2011.
6. After the Harvard Shaker village closed, an antiques dealer from Shirley, Massachuseets, named Frank Lawton sold the desk with other materials to Edna Greenwood. Gerry McCue bought the desk from her estate in 1974. McCue was a major collector who amassed a very significant collection of Shaker materials and furniture. McCue's collection was auctioned by Willis Henry in July 2012.

7. An early journal reference to labors to achieve the spirit of union in 2-5-1822: "This evening whole family met in Union meeting together Ministry (except Eld. Rachel), & Elders all present when one had liberty freely to open all their grievances when - lo! we found it highly necessary to have a smart purgation from all dishonesty & disorder." FM 1.10.
8. The Central Ministry instructed all villages to construct a large outdoor worship area. The Harvard village invested an incredible amount of labor to create the Holy Hill, by excavating a nearby hilltop to create a level area large enough to accommodate several hundred people.
9. I use the term "second-generation Shaker" to refer generally to people born in the 1820s and 1830s.
10. Journal references indicate that at age fifteen Shaker children come of age, leave their respective Boys or Girls Order, and assume adult roles and responsibilities.
11. The following entry is fairly typical of the kind of experiences recorded during the Era of Manifestations. In it we get a sense of this intense, spiritually exciting time. "1843-01-19 Have a company of French Spirits here to day in addition to the Natives, & the Turks; Some of the Spirits of these different Nations, Manifest themselves among the Sisters a good part of the day. Had Meeting at the usual time. Elders read a Letter from Father James, written to day; this letter was brot & given by the French Spirits. We marched, a song, & Ann Godfrey became Inspired & Spoke for Wm Penn; He gave us his love, & told us of his thankfulness, & Simplicity which he had gained in the Gospel. Liberty was given for the Natives & other Spirits to unite with us; we labored Livly & had many gifts & operations, & presents; as heretofore; Br-Simeon of old Manifested himself, & gave his love Oc (Ins. P.P.) A number of the young talked, & acted for the Natives, the Turks & the French Spirits; some of whom were very uncultivated, & some very vain & proud; but they seemed Willing to be taught the gospel. We held Meeting a little over an hour. Some of the Ministry were present We are told by the Inspired, that our late company of Natives, have built their (wigwams) as they call them in our door yard, among the buildings. There is another Company of Natives here, who have had a longer privelege in the gospel, & are more Civilised; these have resided on the Holy Hill of Peace -their Wigwams Standing on one side of the Hill, but seeing that the above tribe have Located so near us, they have lately requested liberty to move their Wigwams, & place them around the Meeting Hourse, this has been granted, & some of them have been seen stationed near the Meeting house; (So say the Inspired.) Saturday 21 Meeting at the usual time; Brother John O & Sister Sally L attended. We sung, -kneeled, & then went in the round Dance,-faced in, & sung-Shook, & Labored lively; Ministry & Elders spoke some, then Marched, bowed, Oc, Some of the Sisters being inspired, said that our Blessed Parents, & a

company of the holy Prophets & good Spirits were present; our Parents gave their Love Holy Prophet gave their love. We then Marched promiscuously, in our own rooms, each singing their own song, or Sounding Solemn Sounds. this was a Solemn gift; & the good Spirits said they united with us in it. Father Eleyar gave each a Ball of powerful Love that were under 50 years. The Prophets, Nathan & Elijah, gave their joyful Love. Father Gave a bottle of wine, of which we partook, & then labored to be simple. Br) Asa Brocklebank gave a bottle of healing Balsom; we also had Balls of heavenly Comfort from these good Spirits -Love from Br) Simeon, & many others; we had a very good Meeting was in about 1 hour. we rolled up love, & gave to the good Spirits; also sent some to Elder Grove, & Eldress Betty, & to others who were not present. Ann Godfrey Abigail Proctor - Joseph Leaver & Lorenzo Prouly, were the most Active Instruments, in this Meeting.” FM 6.2.

12. C. E. Sears, comp., *Gleanings from Old Shaker Journals* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916.); as well as Edward Horgan’s *The Shaker Holy Land: A Community Portrait* (Harvard, Mass.: Harvard Common Press, 1982) focus primarily on the early and late periods in the Harvard village, the time when Mother Ann came to Harvard, or the final years of decline. A more recent exception that does focus on the mid-nineteenth century experience in Harvard is Suzanne R. Thurman, *O Sisters Ain’t You Happy?* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2002).
13. Information from a letter dated September 3, 1841, containing names of instruments, WRHS reel 19, f.23. Harvard instruments and their ages in 1841 when appointed: Lucy Clark, [38]; Charlotte Priest, [39]; Susan Channel, [32]; Lucy Myrick, [25]; Mary Hill, [24]; Minerva Hill, [29]; Maryann Widdifield, [26]; William Leonard, [38]; Daniel Myrick, [37]; Samuel Myrick, [21]; Thomas Holden, [20]; Alfred Collier, [18]. Shirley instruments: Joanna Randall, Martha Davis, Lucy Bodge, Ann Godfrey, Nancy Atherton, Harriot Prouty, Jane Whitney, William Wetherbee, Daniel Willard, Jonas Nutting, Bennet Bolton, John Hatch.
14. At least one written account of Alfred Collier’s visions survives in the collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society, reel 72, v. 62c.
15. See Stephen Stein, “Shaker Gifts and Shaker Orders,” *Communal Societies* 10 (1990), and Diane Sasson, “Individual Experience, Community Control and Gender: The Harvard Shaker Community During the Era of Manifestations,” *Communal Societies* 13 (1993).
16. Alfred Collier Journal 1859-1861, 6-11-1859. FM 2.2.
17. In the *Complete Book of Shaker Furniture*, Reiman notes that the desk has some characteristics that show worldly influence, perhaps a reflection of the inner struggle often referenced in Alfred Collier’s journals.
18. Elisha Myrick, William Davidson, and George B. Whiting, among others, helped run the herb business for the Harvard Shakers. This was a hugely

- profitable enterprise, involved dozens of people, and eventually led to major innovations and labor-saving machinery and techniques. Myrick began working in the herb industry at the age of ten and acquired an expertise in botany. He helped design special equipment to cut, press, and dry the vast quantity of herbs that Shakers grew and sold. His work attracted the attention of scientists from the Massachusetts Society of Pharmacy and as far afield as Kew Gardens in London. Nevertheless, like many Shakers of his generation, Elisha Myrick left the Society in 1859 at the age of thirty-three.
19. Several references from Collier's journals are illustrative of this point and that individual members did not necessarily always understand the reasons for these decisions. "10-22-1857 Thurs 22nd Fair & pleasant This morning Elder Br came [to] me before I was up & asked me to resign the charge of the Fowls as he said that there was some dissatisfaction on the part of some about the appointment and he wished to be free from any censure on his part as he appointed me to that Office he now wished to retake it it was a pleasure for me to give it up though unceremoniously and after the Short reign of 6 days. I know of no cause of the movement but I suppose the objection is among the party in power somewhere. I set 3 hands to finish threshing the Beans we got in yesterday And the Boy to pick up some small potatoes to plant PM we husk out Corn we had in the floor & put up the husks & Bean Straw I went to the Junction in the evening." WRHS R39V219. "2-5-1859 We plant potatoes on the Pear Orchard ... the moving of the officers is going on slowly. Thomas is moving today.... I am requested to give up the Charge of the new stock to Thomas Holden ... he is to move into the Family Deacons order and help take care of the Fletcher affair, there is some stir among the party in power." FM 2.2.
 20. Many references throughout Blanchard's 1862-64 journal in the Fruitlands archive, FM 31.4.
 21. FM 31.4. 9-4-1864 labors with Roxalana and Fidelia, Sept 6, 7, 8 labors with various Shakers on spiritual and temporal matters, and the Collier-Rich affair; Sept 9 Augustus Grosvenor died, Sept 10, opposition rife among the Grosvenor family, Sept 11 Augustus Grosvenor's funeral, Sept 12 Collier dismissed from the village, referred to by Blanchard as "an infamous heretic of quite and age."
 22. See Steven Paterwic, *The A to Z of Shakers* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 95.
 23. Stier's paper "Marriage for the Shakers" 1994, on file at Fruitlands, documents letters in the Canterbury archive that detail the case against Roxalana Grosvenor.
 24. In 1875, Roxalana and Fidelia Grosvenor lost their suit against the village in the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Journal accounts indicate they continued to dress like Shakers and visited the Holy Hill.