

“The Mythical Structure is Created”: Planning and Construction of the Center Family Dwelling House, Mount Lebanon, 1856-1868

By Lauren A. Stiles

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Thus is ended one scene in the drama of modern Architectural Conventionalism: an experience which, for the good of society, we hope may never be repeated. But, are we not now too fast: Are we quite sure it is ended, Nay! Verily, not until the mythical structure is created.¹

Over a period of twelve years the Mount Lebanon Center Family made and changed plans repeatedly before finally completing its new dwelling house. It was an unusually long gestation period even for Shaker building projects that relied in large part on local financing and work crews drawn from members. This project is remarkable also for the detailed coverage that has survived in official Shaker journals. The earliest stages of the planning process, the stylistic changes, and the final protracted completion are all noted. The most unusual comments on the construction, however, are found in the journals written by Giles B. Avery (1815-1890) where he candidly recorded his feelings about the complicated project. Avery, an elder in the Center Family until his appointment as second in the Ministry in 1859, participated directly in the decision making, first as a member of the Center Family and then as one of the two principal males overseeing the whole society. His written expressions of frustration with the Center Family's vacillation reveal much about how decisions were made among the Shakers. Together, these accounts form one of the most comprehensive reports of the planning process and design choices made by the Shakers in constructing a major building.

The Center Family, often referred to as the Second Order in official journals, had a direct organic relationship to the Church Family, also known as the First Order.² Both families were made up of persons who had signed the covenant making them fully professed members. Together they constituted the most dedicated group of Mount Lebanon Shakers. It

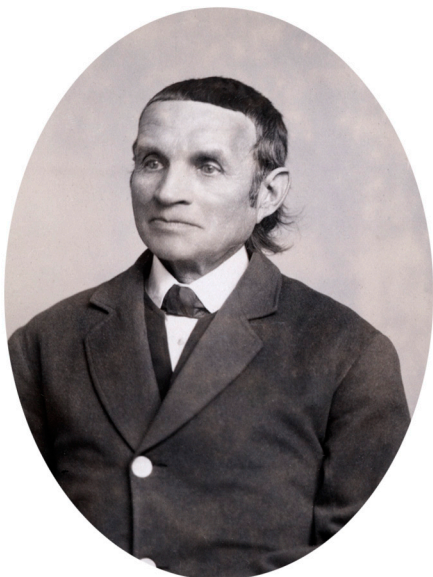
is likely, however, that their numbers were perceived as too large to exist as a single cohesive unit; therefore they were divided into two orders, each operating as a separate entity with its own elders and deacons. Finances were, likewise, the responsibility of the individual family but fell under the supervision of Church Family trustees. Members of either group could be called upon to serve in administrative positions in either the Church or Center Family as needed. Top leadership positions for the society as a whole were frequently filled from these two families. Avery's transfer from the Center Family in September 1859 to be second in the Ministry is an example. While in theory the movement between families could go both ways, the Center Family probably acted as a source of talent for the Church Family. Because of the dedication of its members and the capability of its leadership, the membership of the Center Family like that of the Church Family was relatively stable during the entire twelve-year planning and construction period. That fact, however, did not prevent problems in decision making related to the new dwelling house.

Dwelling houses were among the largest structures erected by any family. They served multiple communal purposes. Cellars or raised basements were used for kitchens, bake rooms, food pantries and general food storage, and might even house a cistern to collect roof runoff. In some dwelling houses, this floor also had dining rooms for members and visitors. Upper floors were used as meeting rooms for religious exercises and social functions and as bedrooms, and the attic for storage.³ New construction could be justified as necessary for housing members more functionally and comfortably. It was also an expression of the confidence and pride of members who made the building possible by their faith, hard work, and prosperity. Shaker leaders, despite continuing decline in rank-and-file membership, approved these and other building projects in the various communities. At the time the Center Family at Mount Lebanon launched its building campaign, at least three other major residential complexes were in various stages of planning or construction. The Poland Hill Family at New Gloucester, Maine (Sabbathday Lake) had already begun an ambitious construction project to replace its modest dwelling with a large stone structure, and the Second Family at Harvard, Massachusetts was consulting with the Mount Lebanon Ministry about their proposed new house.⁴ Groveland, within the Mount Lebanon bishopric, was also about to build at its East Family.⁵ Of all the new structures, the residence at Groveland, not surprisingly, would most closely resemble the Center Family model.

In January 1856 the Ministry, along with the elders and deacons of the two families at Mount Lebanon, met to review work projects for the coming year. At this meeting the Center Family was authorized to begin making plans for a new dwelling house. It was hoped that construction would be completed by 1860.⁶ These annual meetings of leaders were established practice and served a practical purpose.⁷ While each family was in theory administered as an independent unit, a project that required a major outlay of money and manpower impacted both families which were “in a joint interest.” Reconstruction of existing buildings or new construction required a careful coordination of resources. Scheduling the use of facilities such as lumber mills, and cooperation in forming large work crews, had important implications for both families. Building supplies, including significant amounts of lumber, had to be allotted within the community. Arrangements for purchase of additional construction materials from neighboring cities and contracts with specialized workmen had to be arranged. Loans of money for the project might also be considered.

Many Shakers who held responsible roles in the governance of the Church and Center Families as elders, trustees, and deacons also worked extensively in building maintenance and construction. Both male members of the Ministry did carpentry work as well as attended to the spiritual needs of the society. Because of the offices they held and their potential direct involvement in the actual construction of the new Center Family dwelling house, the Ministry, trustees, and the elders and deacons of both the Church and Center Families would be expected to be present at the annual meeting to review building projects. Their names in fact appear repeatedly in the official records of the society as working on roofs, shingling, and designing and framing new buildings.

While the leadership pool for this period remained fairly constant, assignments—particularly at the deaconship levels—changed frequently and dates of appointment are hard to trace with certainty. A study of the leadership for the period, however, gives some idea of the men involved and their changing responsibilities. For the purposes of this article I am particularly interested in the positions of Giles B. Avery and Calvin Reed (1821-1900). Both men remained lifelong members of the society. Avery rose to be second in the Ministry that governed the society. Reed, too, as replacement for Avery in the Center Family, held a major position and was for a long time involved in the education program for children taken in by the Shakers. Avery’s promotion, just as the new dwelling house project



Giles B. Avery

(From the Hamilton College collection)

was getting underway, may have contributed to the difficulties in completing the construction in a timely fashion. With the move, he was no longer directly responsible for the project as Center Family first elder. In effect, he lost control of the project for which he had up to this point been actively and enthusiastically preparing.⁸ Records concerning the construction of the dwelling house indicate that Shaker decision making—at least for the Church and Center Families—had a large consultative component and relied heavily on reaching a consensus of the membership. Naturally, the effectiveness of the process depended on the leadership skills of the elders. Avery's successor

Calvin Reed may not yet have had the leadership skills needed to move the project forward to a timely conclusion. The Center Family also made design choices of which Avery did not approve.

How far developed were the Center Family's plans at the time of the January 1856 meeting? As early as 1855 it was already known at Hancock that the Mount Lebanon Center Family was planning for a new dwelling house.⁹ When Hancock's Thomas Damon (1819-1880) came in mid-December of that year to talk with Avery about building techniques, the projected dwelling house was a likely topic. Interior design and arrangement of rooms in dwelling houses were, to a large extent, replicated among all the communities. This general ordering of interiors must have been satisfactory since it remained much the same in new construction even after the Center Family had built its dwelling.¹⁰ Innovations at Mount Lebanon at this time are more likely to have been in materials and construction techniques rather than in the design of interiors. The frustration expressed later in journals concerning the Center Family are focused precisely on building materials and the location of the dwelling house, not on its internal arrangement or design.

MINISTRY

| | | |
|-----|------------------|---------|
| 1st | Amos Stewart | 1852-58 |
| | Richard Bushnell | 1858-59 |
| | Daniel Boler | 1859-92 |
| 2nd | Amos Stewart | 1849-52 |
| | Daniel Boler | 1852-59 |
| | Giles B. Avery | 1859-90 |

CHURCH FAMILY OF NEW LEBANON

| First Order of the Church <i>(Commonly known as Church Family)</i> | | | Second Order of the Church <i>(Commonly known as Center Family)</i> | | |
|---|-----------------|---------|--|------------------|---------|
| 1st Elder | Daniel Crosman | 1852-85 | 1st Elder | Giles B. Avery | 1849-59 |
| | | | | Calvin Reed | 1859-71 |
| 2nd Elder | Benjamin Gates | 1852-56 | 2nd Elder | James Vail | 1859-63 |
| | Peter Long | 1856-61 | | Alonzo Hollister | 1863-66 |
| | Elisha Blakeman | 1861-67 | | Robert Valentine | 1866-71 |
| | James Calver | 1867-71 | | | |

No further action was taken until August 1858. The Ministry leaders Amos Stewart (1802-1884) and Daniel Boler (1804-1892) visited the Center Family to consult and “find out their minds” about the building.¹¹ While at this point there is no indication that the full membership, including females, was queried, later entries indicate specifically that both sexes did have input. It is extremely unusual to find entries where the opinions of both male and female rank-and-file members were solicited, thus making this project all the more remarkable. An entry for March 26, 1860 indicated that there were “frequent CAUCUS meetings”¹² concerning the dwelling house. A similar entry from a few days earlier indicated specifically that “brethren and sisters both have a meeting” about the construction and noted that the “sisters, generally say wood.”¹³ “Brethren” in Shaker documents refers to male members clearly setting them off from references to “sisters” used for female members. Because of a general separation of the sexes, the meetings should probably be understood as distinct.

Dwelling houses were a center for female activity around the clock, whereas men slept, ate, and prayed there but worked in other locations. Naturally, women would have strong opinions on their home and want to make those ideas known. It is all the more likely that they would be given that opportunity since the Center Family, like the Church Family, was made up of the most dedicated membership. A somewhat different scenario

would occur only a few years later when the Church Family dwelling house at Mount Lebanon was replaced after a disastrous fire in 1875. There was a meeting in which “all had a chance to see [the plans].”¹⁴ In contrast to the Center Family project, there was no indication of meetings to solicit suggestions for formulating the design.

The first steps towards construction were taken at the beginning of October 1858. Benjamin Gates (1817-1908) of the Church Family and Robert Valentine (1822-1910) from the Center Family went to Berrien County in Michigan for lumber.¹⁵ Several Shaker families had extensive holdings such as farms that were operated by non-Shakers or, forested land that was used as a source of much needed timber for the extensive building projects of the 1850s and 1860s. The timber cut in Michigan for the Center Family consisted of some 100,000 feet of black walnut and “yellow whitewood.”¹⁶ The Center Family dwelling timber was stockpiled until the framing was assembled three years later.

The crux of the problem around the delays in construction lay in the choice of material to cover the exterior of the house. After much discussion it had been agreed that the new structure would be faced with brick, and would be two bricks thick. The East Family, known also as the Brick Yard Family, had burned some 85,000 bricks by the end of 1859 and they had been deposited on the building site.¹⁷ In February of 1860, however, the first hints of what would become an eight-year series of design changes were recorded. The Ministry, now including Avery who had recently left leadership of the Center Family to become second in the Ministry, met with the Center Family leadership to revisit the decision to have one or two courses of brick on the exterior. Also under discussion was the choice of pressed versus common brick. The decision on the latter was left for the trustees.¹⁸ On March 7, barely a month later, Avery recorded that the Center Family no longer wanted pressed brick, which must have been the trustees’ choice. He added that “this, of course knocks overboard all our calculations about the matter.”¹⁹ Avery’s interest in pressed brick had been spurred by an article in *Scientific American*²⁰ and was probably further confirmed by a visit from an agent of a Bennington, Vermont firm that sold enameled bricks “of various colors [and] exceedingly beautiful.”²¹ Further complicating the situation were numerous meetings through the end of the month where other choices were explored. It was noted also that the sisters were strongly in favor of a clapboard exterior.²²

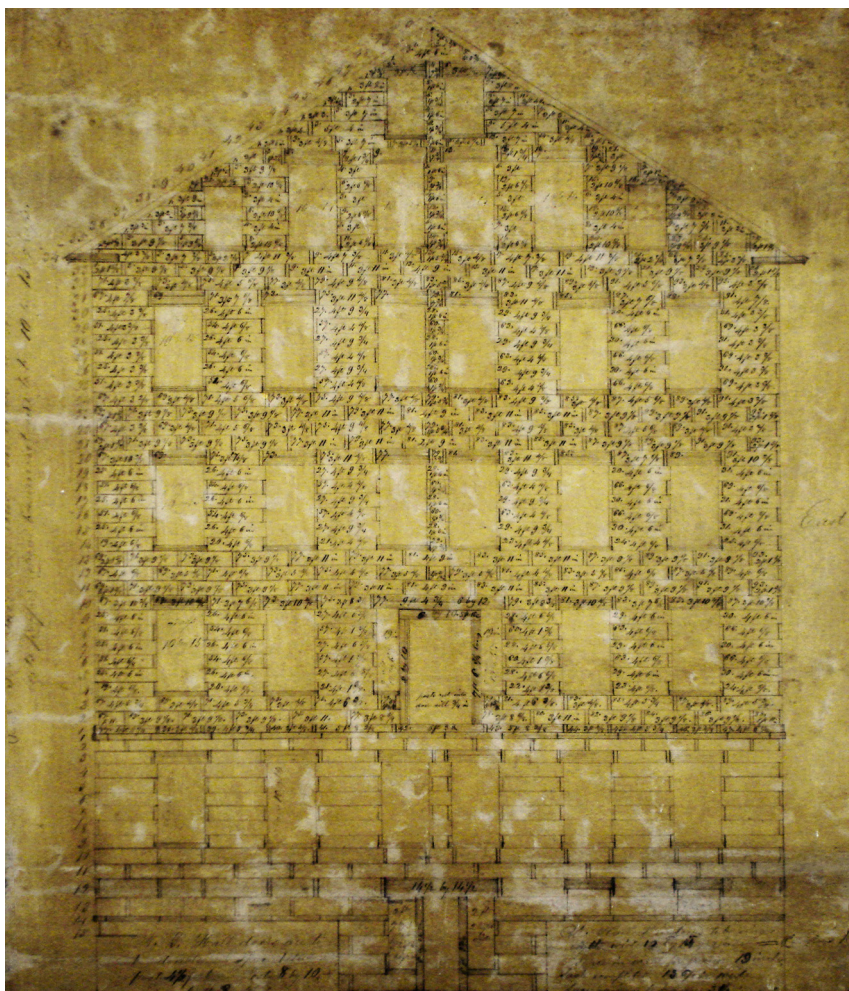
In early May there was a dramatic change in plans. On May 3, 1860 the elders of the Center Family sent a “bill” to the Ministry and trustees requesting that the exterior be covered with sawed stone. The entry stated that this change had been agreed to by the Family as a whole “with a few exceptions.”²³ The Ministry reluctantly acceded to the latest revision — not, however, without reservations. Interestingly, an entry a few days later made a reference to aesthetics as one argument against the stone. Not only would the enameled pressed brick be less expensive, less susceptible to water penetration and more durable; it was also “much more beautiful, but all do not think so.”²⁴ The entry seems to echo Avery’s preference for the brick, but did not cause the decision to be reversed. The wishes of the Center Family prevailed.

Work on stone cutting continued through the next two years, further delaying actual construction. In order to obtain the large quantity of stone required for the project, the Center Family proposed to buy a secondhand machine to cut the stone, and to set up operations on the site.

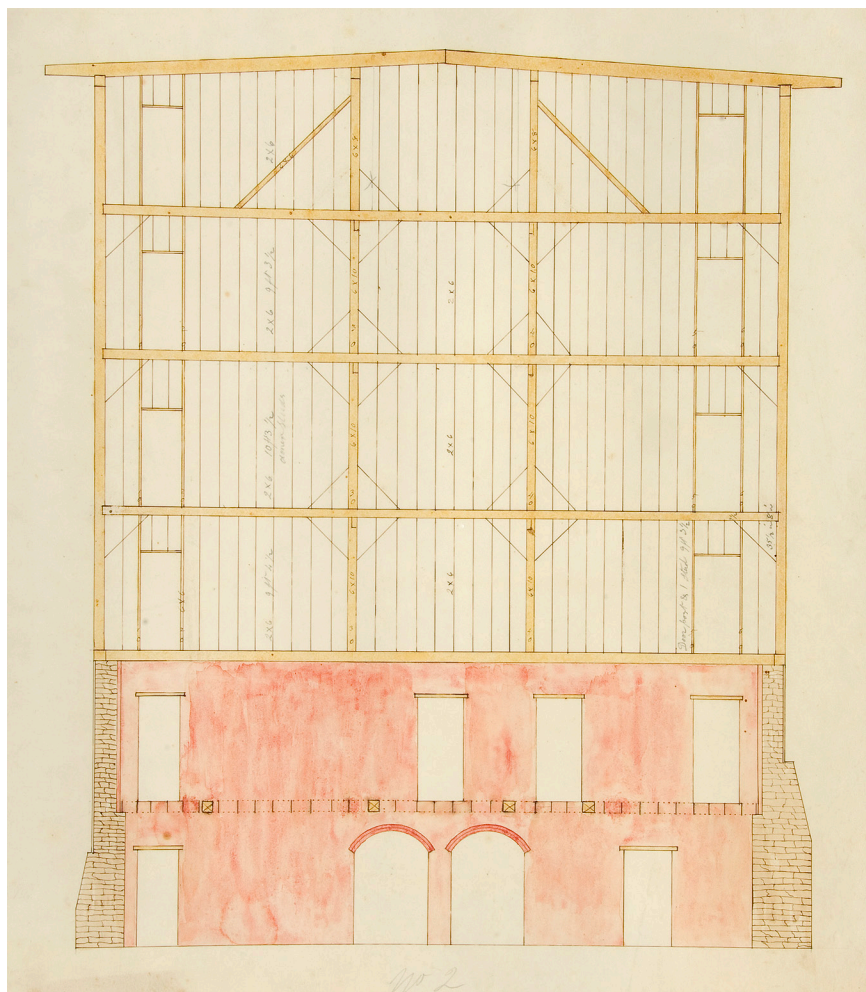
Regardless of what form the exterior covering of the house might take, there was no structural reason to keep the Center Family from assembling the elements of the frame. The term “framing” as used in Shaker journals means the assemblage of timbers into bents, which were the principal skeletal elements that make up a building. The process was distinct from raising the building, whereby the framing components were assembled.

In May 1862, while the stone was still being cut, a Shaker work crew using the lumber brought from Michigan began to lay out and fit together with sturdy wooden pins the structural elements that would eventually form the skeleton of the house. It was noted that Church Family members George Wickersham (1811-1891), who is best known for his work in drafting the plans for the North Family’s great stone barn (built 1859-1860), and James Calver (1839-1913) joined in aiding the Center Family crew in framing the new dwelling house.²⁵ Wickersham most likely took the lead in directing the work. Once the bents were assembled it was necessary to protect them from the weather by stacking them and building a large temporary shed over them. It was noted, with resignation or caustic wit, that there “they may keep, if need be, for years.”²⁶

The following year brought another dramatic change in plans. In May/June 1863 the Center Family once again deliberated the issue of the appropriate material for the exterior of the dwelling. Ironically, the upshot was to return to an option that had been rejected when the building



Revised plans for the dwelling house showing detailed measurements for the
sawn stone veneer. Drawing and calculations by George Wickersham, ca. 1860.
(Courtesy of Hancock Shaker Village, Andrews Collection, 1972.225.2)



Detail of the final design for the dwelling house showing the change from gable to flat roof. Part of a set of drawings made by George Wickersham in 1863. (Courtesy, The Winterthur Library: The Edward Deming Andrews Collection, SA1276.3)

was initially proposed. It was now decided that the dwelling would be constructed entirely of wood with a clapboard siding. At this point the Church Family journal records Avery's frustration and irritation. "If the same fickle sense prevails it never will be built. Oh for a little more stamina and backbone among leaders in society! Surely manhood is waning away!"²⁷ The outburst is remarkable both as a confirmation of the important role of communal decision making in construction projects among Shakers and also of the reluctance of the Ministry to impose a decision. It is also a tacit criticism by the Ministry of the leadership of the Center Family. Although he is not mentioned by name, it is possible that Calvin Reed, first elder of the Center Family, was being criticized for being unable to work out a stable consensus that could bring the project to a successful and timely conclusion.

But this was not the last of the construction delays. With the choice of different siding, the dimensions of the house changed, for wood siding did not take up as much space as the double run of bricks or the stone veneer. The foundation, therefore, had to be smaller. At the same time that the issue of the foundation was reviewed, the location of the dwelling was reconsidered. It was now decided to move the old dwelling house and to use its location as the new building site. In itself this was not a major hurdle, for in the nineteenth century buildings were frequently moved, although a professional from Springfield, Massachusetts was hired to do the job.²⁸ A more serious problem was the logistics of housing and feeding the Center Family during the move. That problem, however, was not faced until May of the following year.

Draft plans for the dwelling were again revised in August 1863 to deal with the proposed change from stone to wood siding.²⁹ Throughout the building process, two names recur in connection with the drafting and revision of plans. George Wickersham is cited repeatedly from the 1850s through the 1870s as "drafting" and "furnishing patterns," as well as overseeing construction of a wide variety of structures of all sorts. Again in 1863 he was called upon to further revise the plans. The second person cited is Calvin Reed, who was also actively involved in numerous construction projects. As first elder of the Center Family, he would be expected to play an active role directly related to the dwelling house project. It also should be emphasized that most of the other leaders of both the Church Family and the Center Family actively participated in carpentry work. It is likely that they, too, added their ideas as well as their labor to the community project.

The “flat” or more accurately low-slope roof of the dwelling house was first described during this period.³⁰ Flat roofs with composition or “built up” roofing were used in the Mount Lebanon bishopric for several large and conspicuous buildings. The North Family’s stone barn is probably the best-known example; however, agricultural structures were not the only buildings getting low-slope roofs. During the summer of 1863 the North Family tore off the roof of their dwelling house to add an additional floor, and finished off the building with a flat roof.³¹ Four years later the Upper Canaan Family at Mount Lebanon did the same thing.³² Already in 1859 the East Family’s new dwelling house at Groveland had been constructed with a flat roof.³³ Such roofs had much in their favor. They were relatively inexpensive, easily constructed, and maximized the use of the top floor. Several layers of heavy felt were stretched and nailed over the boards covering the roof. Hot “asphaltum”—either natural tar or coal tar produced as a by-product of the commercial manufacture of gas for lighting—was applied to the felt. While still hot the roof was covered with a thick layer of fine gravel. The scribe for the Church Family journal commented that “this is now getting to be the best kind of covering.”³⁴ This must in fact have satisfied the aesthetic sense of the Shakers and outside commentators on their community. Charles Nordhoff used a stereopticon view of the Center Family’s new dwelling house as one of the illustrations in his 1875 book on communal societies.³⁵

Construction and finishing of the dwelling house continued for over three more years, the Center Family finally occupying their new house only in January 1868. The journal entry written shortly before the move into the new dwelling stated that the occupants “are generally well satisfied with it and the world will move on as usual.”³⁶ It is an ambiguous comment, which raises the question of how the protracted and troubled project affected the Center Family. That the impact was not entirely positive is made clear by the writer who was the voice of the Ministry and elders of the Church Family. The building had been constructed at great expense both monetarily and morally. During the long period of construction numerous “hirelings” from the outside world were employed. The sisters had to feed the hired help and attend to duties related to housing them. More serious than the added work burden was the impact that these men had in their daily contact with female members. The author makes the problem quite clear, writing that it had a “deleterious effect, especially among the young & inexperienced [sisters]” who had to wait on them.³⁷

The same passage likewise points to a potentially damaging aspect of Shaker decision making related to building projects. Collective decision making coupled with inadequate direction from leaders gave rise to repeated revisions in plans. Given the prosperity of the Center Family, members had the luxury of entertaining numerous options. Much as in designing and building any family home, all members had strong opinions about issues that touched them personally. Rather than building consensus, the “caucuses” seem to have reinforced the divergence of opinions. The repeated changes led to confusion and demoralization, not only within the Center Family but in the Mount Lebanon community as a whole. The dwelling house may ultimately have become a source of pride, but it was also a visual reminder of the lack of strong leadership and the lack of cooperation among members. As the Church Family journal noted:

The burden upon the Deacon's [*sic*] has been great, to meet the expenses, &c. also upon Ministry & Elders because of various opinions expressed concerning its extravagance, &c. many comments in various ways concerning its propriety.³⁸

Avery's comments, echoed by the Church Family, were undoubtedly well taken. It is probably no coincidence that a few years later a detailed directive was distributed by the Ministry on how meetings were to be conducted. It specifically singled out discussions of building maintenance and new construction. The aim of the document was to put to an end to “the want of system in the organization of such meetings” and do away with “indefiniteness of decisions.”³⁹

Notes

Abbreviations used in notes:

HSV: Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.

NhCa: Canterbury Shaker Village, Canterbury, N.H.

NN: New York Public Library

NOC: Shaker Museum and Library, Old Chatham, N.Y.

OCIWHI: Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio

1. *Records Kept by Order of the Church*. Volume 3, 1856-1871, kept by Isaac N. Youngs and Giles B. Avery. NOC, mss. no. 10342. “Conventionalism” is probably a word made up by the writer and may come from “conventual,” referring to a convent for nuns or monks. It would be an apt description of a Shaker dwelling house.

I appreciate a conversation with Jerry Grant of the Shaker Museum and Library about the authorship of Shaker daily logs called “Journals” and “Records.” The voice of the “scribe”—the Shaker member responsible for keeping the daily log of events in a particular family—is problematic. Sometimes the writer, such as Isaac N. Youngs (for the *Records Kept by Order of the Church*), never held a major administrative position; yet the official logs listing him as scribe often have incisive or even critical comments that appear to have the sanction of superiors. Some “scribes” were elders or member of the Ministry, such as Giles B. Avery. The issue becomes more complicated where multiple writers are listed. Grant convincingly maintained that the collaboration between writers and elders, regardless of their positions, was so close that it represents a united voice and accurately reflects the opinion of the Ministry and/or elders and may even record their turns of phrase. Where the authorship of a record is not clear, I have indicated it by noting that “the journal records that,” etc. When, however, the authorship is undisputed—as in the case of the “Register” written by Avery [NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4]—the citation refers directly to the author. I use the term “journal” generally in the text without making a distinction between the “Journal” and the “Record.” For the exact source, check the footnotes.

2. Steve Paterwic provided me with the following: The Church Family at New Lebanon (Mount Lebanon after 1861) was one family divided into two branches or orders. These were named the First Order of the Church and the Second Order of the Church. They had separate dwellings, shops, and industries, but shared one set of trustees who lived at the First Order. After 1870, the Second Order came to be called the Center Family. While Center Family remained the popular title, the family was still the Second Order of the Church until its dissolution in July 1896. I am grateful to Paterwic for this explanation. There is a reference to this organizational structure in “Copy of a letter to the Ministry of Union Village....” The author notes that at Mount Lebanon there are two families “all in one interest,” and proposes it as a model for Union Village. OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: IV: B-11, Copies of letters sent by the Ministry to various communities. v. 11 (1853-1862), November 13, 1860, p. 405-10. In this article I have used the common terms “Church Family” and “Center Family” to refer to these two groups.
3. The most exhaustive and authoritative study of dwelling house construction and design is Julie Nicoletta, “Structures for Communal Life: Shaker Dwelling Houses at Mount Lebanon, New York” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1993). Nicoletta discusses the Center Family project on pages 133-38. For a typical floor plan see the HABS drawings for the Mount Lebanon North Family dwelling house as rebuilt in 1863, in William Lawrence Lassiter, *Shaker Architecture* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1966), 34-41.
4. “Br Isaiah [Wentworth] has commenced laying up the walls of his house.” Letter from Ministry Sabbathday Lake to Elder Grove [Blanchard], [Harvard] July 6, 1852. OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: IV: A-56. The structure at Poland Hill, also beset with building problems, was finally dedicated in 1879. It was abandoned in 1887 when the family was disbanded. It later burned and the remains were dynamited in 1955. See Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner, “The Poland Hill Shaker Settlement,” *Shaker Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 23-24.

Harvard’s Second (North) Family in 1850 sought permission to have a sitting room and adjacent bedroom for its elder brother in its proposed new dwelling house. OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: IV: A-40, Dec. 5, 1850.

5. The Groveland East Family constructed a new brick dwelling house between 1856 and 1859. Like Poland Hill and the Center Family at Mount Lebanon, it also faced serious construction problems. Unlike the Harvard and Poland Hill structures, however, the Groveland dwelling house had a flat roof. At Mount Lebanon both the North Family and the Canaan Family dwelling houses also had flat roofs. As a result, all of these dwelling houses within the Mount Lebanon bishopric have an Italianate look. OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: IV: B-11, Aug. 12, 1859; OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: V: B-143, June 1, 1863; NOC, acc. no. 10342, July 2, 1867.
6. OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: V:B-71, Jan. 14, 1856.
7. "A general meeting & council of the Elders and Deacons of the church is held annually at the Office (and oftener if found necessary) to consult and agree in regard to erecting new buildings." OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: IV: B-11, June 14, 1860.
8. Throughout the construction project Avery remained active in gathering building information as well as physically participating in repair and construction of various buildings. There are also several examples of his searching out specialized building information as Center Family elder prior to his appointment as second in the Ministry:

Dec. 17, 1855: "E[lder] Br [Avery] goes to Hancock to gather more information about brick & other matters connected with the new house that's going to be sometime." NOC, mss. no. 8831, p. 345.

Nov. 29, 1856: "Elder Brother [Avery] and Robert [Valentine ?] start [*sic*] morning for the East their object being to satisfy themselves with regard to the best material for building. They expect to see Harvard Worster [*sic*], Springfield and Boston." NOC, mss. no. 8831, p. 373.
9. "I [Thomas Damon, Hancock Church Family elder] walked over the mountain ... had a long talk with Elder Br. Giles [Avery], on the subject of improved methods of building ... they are ajitating [*sic*] ... putting up a new dwelling House." [Dec. 17, 1855 ... NOC, acc. no. 13,357, Dec. 17, 1855]. Nicoletta states that the earliest talk of a new dwelling house for the Center Family dates from 1844. Her reference may be to OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: V: B-107, May 9, 1844. The earliest citation to the actual building campaign discussed here, however, is to a Center Family "building committee" meeting on December 3, 1855 where it was "decided" to build a new dwelling house. NOC, mss. no. 8831, p. 344.
10. For the most complete study of the intentional ordering of Shaker interiors, see Julie Nicoletta, "The Architecture of Control: Shaker Dwelling Houses and the Reform Movement in Early-Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 3 (September 2003): 353-87.
11. NN, mss. no. 3, Aug. 10, 1858.
12. The deliberate capitalization of "caucus" may indicate that the session(s) were debated with a lively exchange of opinion.
13. A Journal of Domestic Events & Transactions ... Kept by the Deaconesses [*sic*], chh, 2nd Order, HSV, mss. no. 1086, March 20, 1860, p. 337.
- "Frequent CAUCUS meetings are being held in relation to the contemplated new house. Ah!" Farm Journal New Lebanon, N.Y., Second Order, 1858-1867, March 26, 1860. HSV 9758.N5/M928/ms.055.
14. "Elder Giles [Avery] & Geo. Wickersham work at Drafts for the anticipated dwelling House & we have all had a chance to see them." OCIWHI, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, March 7, 1875.

15. NOC, acc. no. 10342, Oct. 1, 1858. A fuller description of the Michigan “out parcels,” or land owned by Shakers outside their home sites, is found in Martha Boice, Dale Covington, and Richard Spence, *Maps of the Shaker West* (Dayton, Ohio: Knot Garden Press, 1997), 113-19.
16. NOC, acc. no. 10342, Oct. 1, 1858. The North Family also owned timberland in Michigan. NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 20, Nov. 26, 1853, p. 58.
17. OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: IV: A-42, Sept. 4, 1859.
18. “It is decided to have two courses of Bricks, and is left for the Deacons at the Office to decide whether the outside course shall be of common bricks.” NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4, Feb. 10, 1860, p. 16.
19. NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4, Mar. 7, 1860, p. 20.
20. The article was cited in a letter from Mount Lebanon to Elder Hervey Eads: “A brick machine has recently been invented in Lebanon, N.H. doubtless you have noticed the advertisement in the Scientific American.” OCIWHi: IV: A-41, Summer 1856. The article cited was probably “Machine For Making Hollow Bricks,” *Scientific American*, May 3, 1856, 265.
21. NOC, acc. no. 10342, Jan. 25, 1860. On Jan. 11, 1859, while still a member of the Center Family, Avery copied in his diary wording from an advertisement published in the Bennington *Banner*: “Enameled Brick, of any color desired, and impervious to water or air.” OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-109.
22. A Journal of Domestic Events & Transactions ... Kept by the Deaconesses [*sic*], chh, 2nd Order, HSV, mss. no. 1086, March 20, 1860, p. 337.
23. Farm Journal, New Lebanon, N.Y., Second Order, May 3, 1860. HSV 9758.N5/M928/ms. 055.
24. “Ministry have a meeting ... and once more for the fourth time to have it of sawed stone ... thus will probably be involved a cost double.” NOC, acc. no. 10342, May 6, 1860, p. 61.
25. NOC, acc. no. 10342, May 17, 1862.
26. NOC, acc. no. 10342, Oct. 27, 1862.
27. NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4, June 12, 1863, p. 153.
28. “A man & Co. from Springfield by the name of ‘Trask’ came to move the old dwelling house.” NOC, acc. no. 10342, May 10, 1864.
29. “George Wickersham has lately been for some time helping E[lder] Calvin Reed in drawing new draughts for the 2d Orders [*sic*] new house, in consequence of its being changed from a stone house to wood.” OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Supplement to August, 1863.

These drawings still exist, divided between the Edward Deming Andrews Memorial Shaker Collection at Winterthur Museum [SA1276.1-6; SA1276.7a; SA1276.8] and the Andrews Collection, Hancock Shaker Village [1972.225.2].

As built, the dwelling house was eighty feet by fifty feet. The west elevation was five stories high. Letter from Avery to William Reynolds of Union Village, OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: IV: A-43, Feb. 1, 1865, p. 10.

Another set of drawings (for what appears to be a more traditional gable-roofed dwelling house but with carefully numbered slabs of stone in a repeated pattern of large flat slabs divided by narrow vertical stone bands) is also found divided between the Winterthur and Hancock archives and probably came with the Edward Deming Andrews gifts to the two institutions. It is tempting to believe that these represent an

- earlier plan for the house. If so, they were likely also drawn by Wickersham. It is these drawings that are perhaps referred to in the following: "It was once decided 6 years ago, and drafts made out and foundation stone sawed. There have already been three different plans worked to, wonder if it ever will have two sides to it if it is built?" NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4, June 22, 1863, p. 153.
30. Two of the Winterthur drawings [SA1280.1-2] may represent an intermediate plan. Both show the same pattern of stone veneer but appear to have a flat roof. NOC, acc. no. 10342, Supplement to June 1863.
 31. NN, Shaker Collection, mss. no. 4, June 12, 1863.
 32. Canaan "taking off the roof of their dwelling house, and putting on a flat roof of pulverized slate, & Asphaltum." NOC, acc. no. 10342, July 2, 1867.
 33. OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: IV: B-11, Aug. 12, 1859.
 34. OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Oct. 17, 1864. The scribe making the comment signed himself "I.N.Y." Isaac Newton Youngs had extensive experience in roofing at Mount Lebanon.
 35. Avery commented to Elder William Reynolds of Union Village, Ohio: "The Second Order's New Dwelling House ... looks beautifully." OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Feb. 1, 1865. Stereoview in Charles Nordhoff, *Communitistic Societies of the United States* (1875; repr., New York: Dover Publications, 1966), following p. 134.
 36. "The 2nd Order's house is finished, that has been a long tedious job nearly 4 years in building, & many more previous ... and the world will move on as usual. J[ohn] M. B[rown]." OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Concluding Remarks for '67.
 37. OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Concluding Remarks for '67.
 38. OCIWHi, Shaker Collection: V: B-71, Concluding Remarks for '67.
 39. "Considerations relative to the manner in which Meetings for Transaction of Public Business have been and should be managed," Ministry, New Lebanon, April 25, 1870. NhCa, mss. no. 646, Box 9, Folder 12.