

The Shaker Meetinghouse: 230 Years of Worship, Tourism, and Preservation

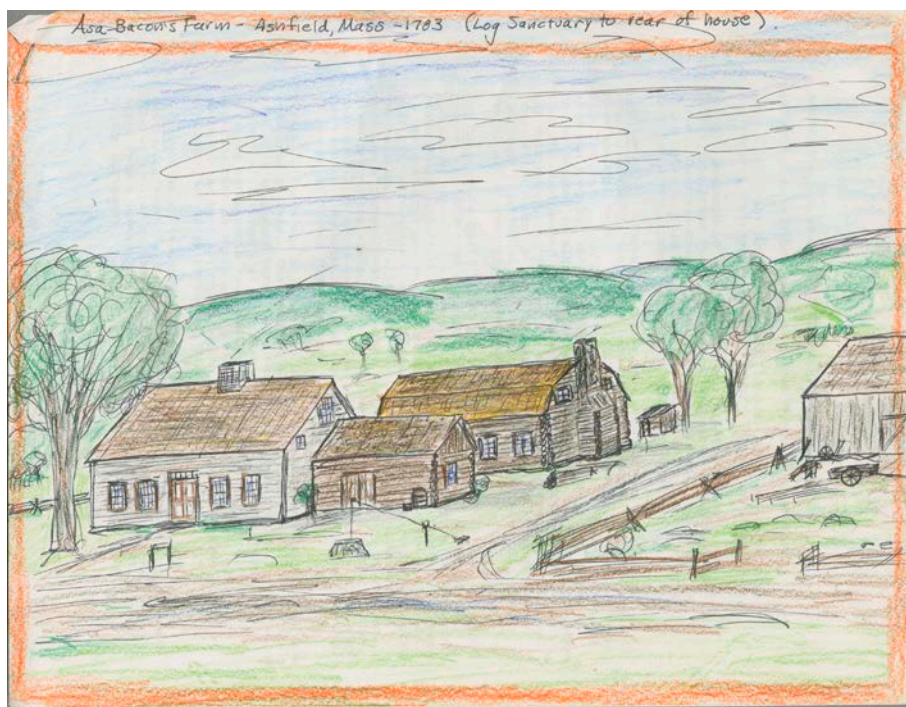
Christian Goodwillie

This article traces the construction, use, and ultimate fates, of the first generation of Shaker meetinghouses in New England and eastern New York State. Of eighteen documented structures six survive, only four in situ. Over the years, three temporarily vanished, and then reappeared—one sadly to vanish again. Most have vanished completely, but their influence and legacy loom large in New England's built heritage.

The Shakers were iconoclasts, both spiritually and architecturally. It is ironic therefore that their meetinghouses, which were deliberately designed and built to be as different as possible from those of their non-Shaker contemporaries, became icons for both non-Shakers and the Shakers themselves. The history of these buildings reveals much about the Shakers and how the sect changed over time. Additionally, the buildings serve as a nexus for examining how the Shakers were viewed by “the World,” and how “the World” came to value Shaker meetinghouses as much, or in some cases more, than the Shakers did.

Nine Shakers led by Mother Ann Lee left Manchester, England, and arrived in New York on August 6, 1774. By 1776 they had made a home just northwest of Albany, New York, at a place called Niskeyuna. In 1781 they began a four-year mission to eastern New York and New England where they revealed the news of Christ's second appearing through Mother Ann. Converts were urged to become celibate in order to regain the state of Adam and Eve before the fall. They also had to confess their sins, and eventually consecrate their assets to a communal economy, fully established only after Mother Ann's death. Shaker worship was both enthusiastic and ascetic. It was called labor, and its purpose was to mortify the flesh.

Most early Shaker worship services were conducted in private residences, but as the movement expanded, a purpose-built meetinghouse was constructed at Ashfield, Massachusetts. Ashfield was a regional center of Shaker missionary activity beginning in the spring of 1782, and particularly over the winter of 1782/1783. Angell Matthewson, an early convert who later fell away from the Shakers, left the fullest description of what he called the “sanctuary,” and the frenzy that unfolded within.¹ Constructed on the farm of convert Asa Bacon, the “sanctuary of logs ...



Shaker researcher David D. Newell's artistic conception of Asa Bacon's farm in Ashfield, Massachusetts, circa 1793. The log sanctuary is to the rear of the house. Research by Arthur McLendon indicates that the chimney mass would probably have been flush with the exterior wall, since Angell Matthewson's account mentions a Dutch-style jambless fireplace.

was about 30 by 36 feet square all in one room with a chimney at one End built dutch fashin with a back & top.”² In his dissertation on early Shaker architecture, Arthur McLendon points out that the fireplace was likely a Dutch jambless fireplace, with brick hearth, fireback, and hood framed into the ceiling to draw away the smoke.³

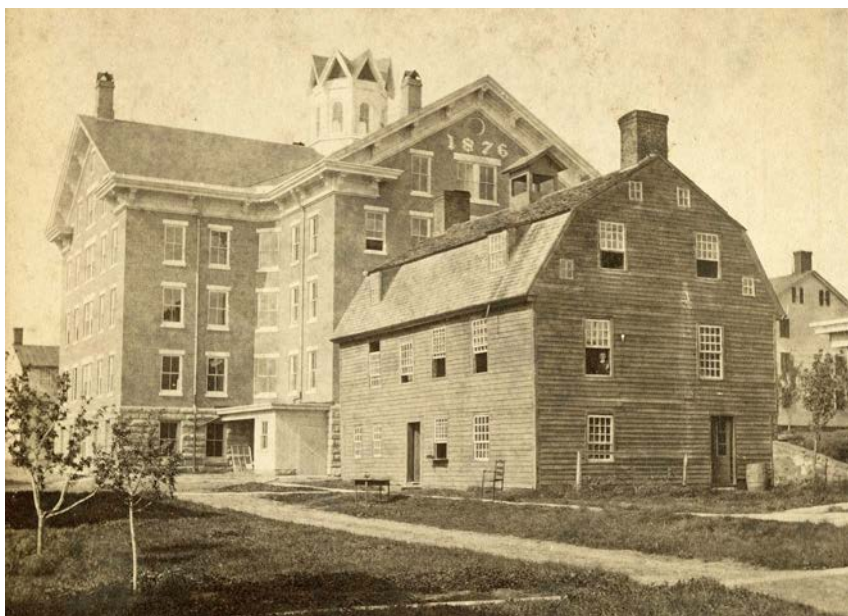
In this building hundreds of Shakers who had traveled from as far east as Worcester County, and as far west as Niskeyuna, New York, participated in a nearly continuous regimen of dancing in worship. For want of space, meals were served on a round table in the middle of the sanctuary, and consumed while preaching, singing, and dancing continued around the diners. As each diner finished, they “rose went back to the side of the house neeled & returned thanks & joined the dance another ring set round the table so in succesion till tha had all Eat then the table remoovd & the Evning worship continued till 12 or 1.”⁴

During the summer of 1784, under the direction of English Shaker John Partington, the sanctuary was “acupied for worship continualely day & night the most of the time in the dance as that was the chief object of worship.” Within the log walls Partington introduced a key tenet of Shakerism: the concept of union. Union to one’s lead is the affirmative endorsement that the work is one of God, and that the hierarchy of ministry, elders, and so on, functioned as the restored Church of Christ on earth. Partington used the Believers at Ashfield to form a physical representation of this concept. He led a man to the center of the room, then brought another behind him, laying his right hand on the left shoulder of the first man, and so on until a ring was formed. Partington then said, “You must always keep up a chain of union from the greatest down to the lest you must always be so nigh to each other in your sympathising feelings as to tuch & assist Each other in times of distress.”⁵ The “chain of union” had clear relevance to a growing communal ethic, and a conscious discouragement of individuality and self-interest.

Aaron Wood, a former follower of Harvard, Massachusetts, Perfectionist Shadrack Ireland, exhibited some of the most exuberant gifts of the spirit seen at Ashfield. When under the power of God, Wood whirled round “in swiftnis to suchey degree that his armes would be out strate & he would turn as acurate as a top about as swiftnis that of a milstone comanly turns for 3 or 4 hours at a time...& swet Equil to the hardist laboring men at moing in a hot summer day his close would be so wet with swet as not a dry spot from head to foot he would somtimes howl & crye—then laugh & bless the mother.” Matthewson also witnessed young women “turn with such great swiftnis that thare close would stand out round like a hoop—thare close below thare wast when tha ware a turning would be full of wind so as to form a shape like a tea cup bottom up—in this Exercise they would swet almost Equil to aaron—so that turning was proformed as a part of divine worship.”⁶ These classic characteristics of Shaker worship, which figured prominently in graphic depictions of the sect, were already present in 1783.

Casting out devils was also a common activity in the Ashfield sanctuary. Again, it was Aaron Wood who took center stage—literally. He began by turning in the center of the room, and gradually began to push the men nearest to him while snarling, grinning, and calling out the devil. Wood seized one Elias Sawyer by the hair and dragged him around the floor, hollering “com out devil com out devil.” He then grabbed Sawyer by

the shoulders, picking him up and whirling him around forty times, with Sawyer's legs three feet above the floor "stretched at full length." This labor of casting out Sawyer's devils took a full three hours. Matthewson also described a meeting where the sanctuary was full of a scrum of hysterical women "pushing & halling all screaming & holowing thare mouths were all open...som stamped & cried with a loud voice git out divil the seen was astonishing ... the whole body went in succesion round the room like a whirl Every one screaming stamping yowing howuing & fi[gh]ting the devils."⁷ It was scenes such as this that caused the Shakers' neighbors to perceive them as a threat to the organized churches, and to society in general.



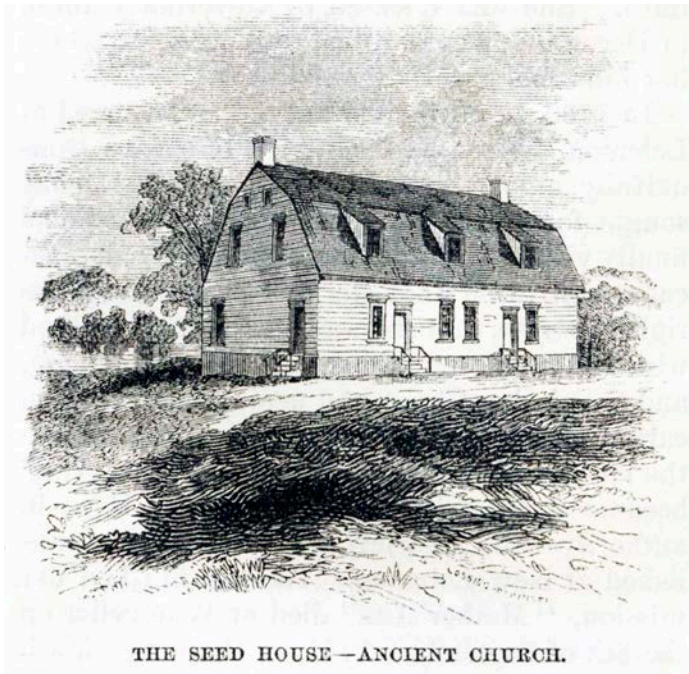
The 1786 meetinghouse at Enfield, Connecticut.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

In addition to the sanctuary at Ashfield, five other early Shaker meetinghouses were built. In nearby Shelburne Falls, Jonathan Wood (brother of Aaron, and also a follower of Shadrack Ireland), built "a large house, three stories in front and two in the rear, which became known as the Old Abbey." It served as both housing and a worship space. After Wood and his fellow converts relocated to New Lebanon the building

was sold and turned into tenements. It was demolished in 1854.⁸ At the original settlement of Niskeyuna (which was renamed Watervliet), English Shaker John Hocknell oversaw the construction of a log meetinghouse in 1784, about which nothing more is known.⁹ In 1786 the Believers at Enfield, Connecticut, erected a structure where Mother Ann's successor Father James Whittaker lived and preached. It was moved twice, once to make room for the second meetinghouse (1791), and again to make room for construction the Church Family dwelling completed in 1876. The photograph below dates from circa 1878-9, shortly before the first meetinghouse was demolished in 1880.¹⁰ The table placed in the foreground was reputedly used by Mother Ann Lee. That same year, the Alfred, Maine, Shakers built a meetinghouse "thirty-six feet long by twenty-eight feet wide." Elder Otis Sawyer recalled, "It was never wholly finished. Twelve rough beams could be seen, overhead, in the room for worship, and these were twelve inches square and hewn from the clearest of pine lumber. Two rooms had been finished in the attic for sleeping rooms, but this was not done till 1788."¹¹ It was later repurposed as a Church Family brethren's wheel shop, and later a blacksmith shop.¹² Finally, the Tyringham Shakers built an early meetinghouse that was turned into a dairy, and ultimately demolished by a later owner.¹³ None of these buildings are extant, although images of the Enfield and Alfred buildings remain.



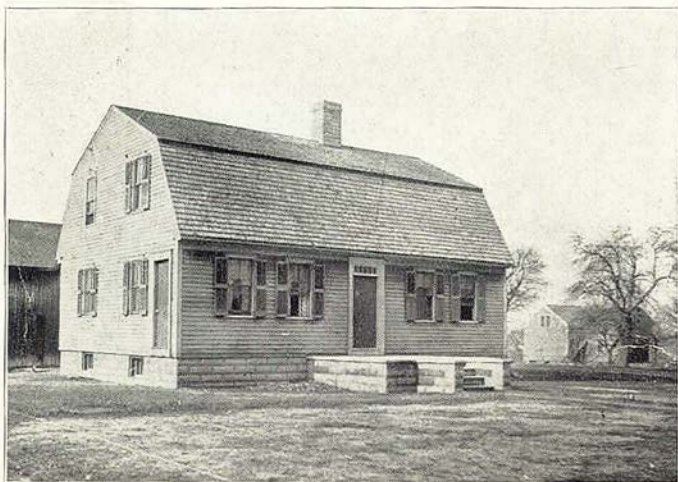
The 1788 meetinghouse at Alfred, Maine.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College



The 1785 meetinghouse at New Lebanon, New York, as depicted by Benson John Lossing in Harper's New Monthly Magazine, July 1857.

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

At New Lebanon, New York, in 1785, the Shakers constructed the first of their gambrel-roofed meetinghouses under the direction of English Shaker Father James Whittaker. The form of these buildings is remarkably similar to the Meacham house in Enfield, Connecticut, the childhood home of Father Joseph Meacham. It is certainly conceivable that Meacham, although not yet first elder in the ministry, had considerable input into the design. As Arthur McLendon states conclusively in his dissertation on early Shaker architecture, the building is “unequivocally Dutch in frame and structural conception.” The structure comprises “a series of heavy identical anchor bents, or ‘H’ bents, raised one at a time in a series. Each bent included a front and back wall-post tied together by a transverse anchor beam, or crossbeam, overhead shaped from a single log.” The posts extend several feet above the beam, and the two were connected by a mortise and tenon corbel (or knee brace) extending from the post up to the underside of the beam. This is referred to in early sources as a “Dutch brace.”¹⁴



THE
OLD
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The Meacham family home in Enfield, Connecticut (no longer extant).

As this form was instituted throughout the eastern Shaker communities, the second floors typically had a central hall with a double-pile of two rooms on each side; the third a central hall with a long room on each side. These rooms served as lodging for resident and visiting Shaker ministry. The upper floors were framed with additional, smaller anchor bents set directly on those below—two at the end walls, and two framing the staircase to third floor. This allowed for the wide-open first floor meeting space, unobstructed by posts, that the Shakers needed for dancing in worship. To bear the weight of group dancing the meeting room floors comprised two layers of overlapping boards supported by two massive sleeper beams (supported on stone foundations), running parallel to the front and back sills.¹⁵

These buildings could not have been more different from surrounding Congregational, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches. On the exterior they lacked a tower and steep-pitched gable roof, inside they had no pulpit, fixed (or boxed) pews, or gallery.¹⁶ The interior was Spartan, with whitewashed walls, woodwork painted a deep Prussian blue, and the visitor's benches painted Spanish brown. The posts, braces, and beams, were boxed, and protruded beyond the plaster into the space. The effect of this linear blue

sanctuary was completely unique, and very surprising to non-Shaker visitors.

The 1785 New Lebanon meetinghouse was the first building of the type that has since become associated with Believer Moses Johnson, originally of Enfield, New Hampshire. Canterbury, New Hampshire, Elder Henry C. Blinn, writing in the late nineteenth century, recorded this anecdote of Johnson's woodworking prowess, demonstrated while visiting New Lebanon in 1785, the construction of the meetinghouse already underway:

Moses accompanied the Brethren and they allowed him to fell the trees while other workmen were appointed to line and hew them. After working several days, Moses asked permission to finish one of the timbers. After drawing the line he began hewing by swinging the axe over his shoulder, to the great astonishment of those who were looking on. When the stick was finished it was smooth as though a Jack plane had been used with it. As soon as the timber reached the village Father Joseph Meacham made enquiries to ascertain the name of the workman. On reaching home that evening Father Joseph thanked Moses and said he need not go to the woods anymore, as his services were needed in the village. The management of the framing and raising of the Meeting House was then put into the hands of Moses to the satisfaction of all.¹⁷

In his dissertation Arthur McLendon has provided the fullest exploration yet of Johnson's role in framing the gambrel-roofed meetinghouses. Johnson certainly seems to have been a key player in the proliferation and implementation of the form in eleven Shaker communities between 1785 and 1794. Johnson was not, however, the designer of the buildings. He was a skilled framer who is documented to have erected other buildings, as well as training his sons James and Joseph, and Enfield, New Hampshire, brother James Daniels, in the art of joinery. The form of the meetinghouses was most likely established by Shaker leadership at New Lebanon, and promulgated by them to the other communities.¹⁸

The construction of the meetinghouse was part of the process of gathering the Shakers at New Lebanon into communal church order, implemented beginning in 1787.¹⁹ Father James Whittaker presided over its dedication on January 29, 1786. He instructed the assembled Believers:

Ye shall Come In & go oute of this House with Reverance & Godly fear that all men Shall Come in & go oute at the west Doors & gates & all women at the East Doors & gates that man & woman shall not intermix in this House or yard nor set together that there shall not be any whispering or talking or Laughing or unnecessary going out & in in time of Publick worship That there shall be no buying or Selling or bargaining Done in this House or yard for ye shall not make this House a Place of merchantize for it was built to worship God in & to Repent in. Furthermore ye shall do no Servile Labour in this House Except it be to wash & Clean the House and Keep it in order²⁰

Father James made the sanctified and separate nature of the meetinghouse explicit. However, from the beginning, Shaker worship was open to the public. The new meetinghouse was a tourist destination right from the start. A “Spectator” attended meeting in New Lebanon on February 22, 1787, and left a detailed account of the meetinghouse. He declared the building “really very elegant, painted white on the outside,” and noticed the separate entrances for male and female Shakers. Inside, he estimated the meeting room to be about 30'x 60', and described it as being painted “Saxon blue, and “lighted by twelve lamps of curious workmanship.”

Surprisingly, he was conducted into the private apartments of the Ministry, finding two rooms divided by a central hall on the second and third floors, and also an area for grain storage. The worship floor was “uncommonly firm, the sleepers being no more than two feet asunder, the plank are pinned down with large wooden pins.” Two chimneys at either end heated the space. Spectator (and all the other spectators) were admonished to remain silent during the service. Some, however, guffawed when dancing was commenced to the wordless singing of the recognizably non-Shaker tune “Pettycoats loose.”²¹

The Shakers' worship, though, was deadly serious. As Hancock Church Family elder, turned apostate, Reuben Rathbone wrote of those times:

I was ... taught, that I must take up my cross against all sin; but in a special manner against the lust of the flesh, which included ... all natural feelings and actions between male and female; ... to

labor for the power of God to destroy the very nature of the flesh so as to become an Eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake. This I understood to be a total destruction of the nature of generation, both as to the inclination of the spirit and the natural faculties of the body.

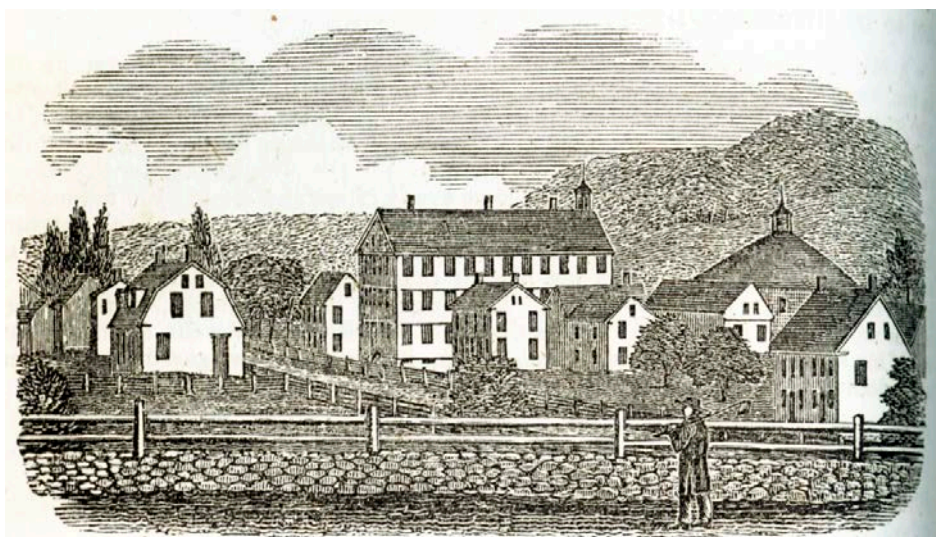
This total destruction was achieved through vigorous dancing in worship, as well as extremely slow movements accompanied by “solemn songs,” and the meager diet of a new, and overextended, communal settlement. Rathbone wrote that many of his fellow Believers achieved this goal of wasting their bodies; some even “labored out of the flesh, that is to say, the blood ceased to circulate in the veins—the lungs ceased to do their office—the soul took its departure out of the fleshly tabernacle.”²² It was the white, gambrel-roofed meetinghouses, which were the arena for these scenes of religious asceticism and ecstasy.

At Rathbone's home community of Hancock, Massachusetts, the second gambrel-roofed meetinghouse was erected in 1786. William S. Warder, a Quaker who reported on the Shakers to Welsh entrepreneur and philanthropist Robert Owen, visited the building around 1818. He wrote, “[It] is of beautiful workmanship, painted inside a glossy Prussian blue, the steps at the door are hewn out of a solid block of white marble, and from neatness of every thing one would suppose the whole house was washed between every meeting day.”²³



Detail of the 1786 meetinghouse at Hancock, Massachusetts, as illustrated by John Warner Barber in Historical Collections ... of Every Town in Massachusetts, 1839.

Communal Societies Collection,
Hamilton College



The Hancock, Massachusetts, Shaker community as illustrated by John Warner Barber in Historical Collections ... of Every Town in Massachusetts, 1839.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

In 1791 three gambrel-roofed meetinghouses were built, at Watervliet, New York, and Enfield, Connecticut (each replacing an earlier meetinghouse), as well as at Harvard, Massachusetts. The earliest journal of the Harvard community records the chronology of meetinghouse construction. They began to frame it on April 13, 1791, raised the frame on June 6, finished the building on December 10, and the Ministry moved into their apartments the same day. The first meeting was held there on January 22, 1792. The same journal records the amount and cost of materials used to paint the building in November 1793:

An account of oyl and paint to paint the Meeting House. 59½ Gall.
Linseed oyl 4 Do Turpentine 4¼ Ct. [hundredweight] White Lead
3 lb Red Do 2 1/1 lb Prusian Blew 2½ Do Vardegreen [Verdigris]
½ Ct. Spanish White ¼ Ct. Spanish Brown— the whole amounts
to— £32-7-3

the whole paid by Oliver Adams as a Gift to the Society.²⁴



The 1791 meetinghouse at Harvard, Massachusetts. It was relocated in 1854, given a gable roof, and stairwells to the second floor outside of the original footprint of the building
 Photograph by Jack E. Boucher. Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HABS MASS,14-HARV,8-2 (April 22, 1963)



Materials and expenses relating to the painting of the Harvard Shakers' meetinghouse in November 1793, as recorded in the community's manuscript "Manifest."
 Image Courtesy of The Trustees of Reservations, Archives & Research Center

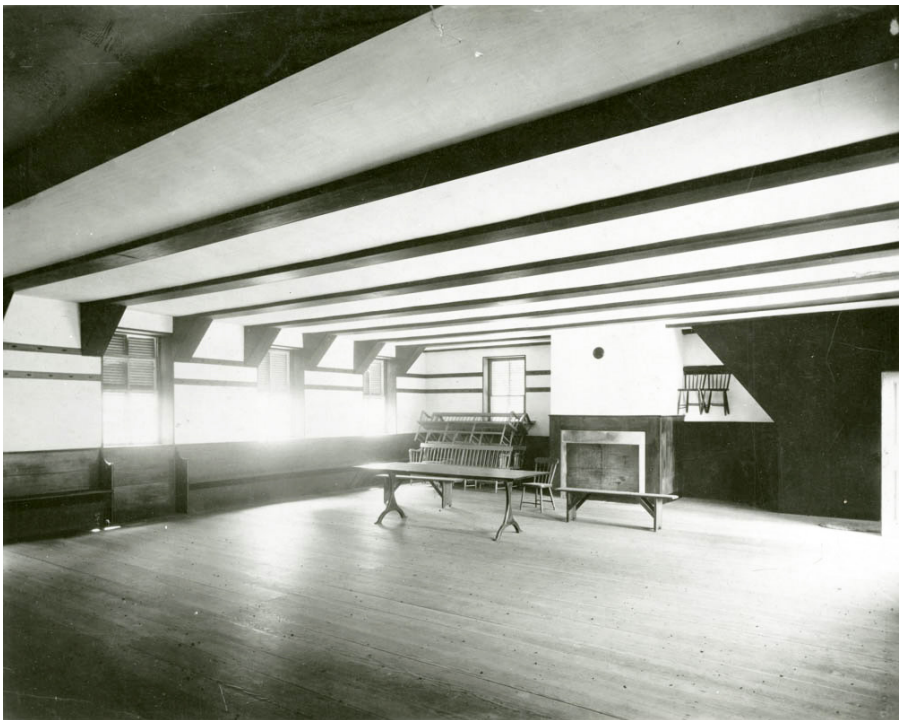
Congregational/Unitarian Minister Reverend William Bentley of Salem, Massachusetts, visited the Harvard Shakers' meetinghouse on July 20, 1795. He remarked that the Shakers "have very much timber in their frames, & even in the Meeting House, at each end of the Beams, there are, as they call them, Dutch Braces, which are sealed, & of the same proportions with the Beams."²⁵ The template established at New Lebanon had been followed faithfully at Harvard.

At nearby Shirley, Massachusetts, the frame of another gambrel-roofed meetinghouse was raised on October 31, 1792. Harvard's founding elder, Father Eleazar Rand, conducted the first meeting there on October 27, 1793.²⁶ Reverend Bentley wrote an amazingly detailed description of the building following his visit there on July 18, 1795:

We first viewed the meeting House, which drew our attention, because beautifully painted white on the sides & even over the roof. The doors were green. Within, the wood work is painted of a deep blue, & the seats are of a chocolate colour. The Seats are movable benches, placed round the room, while the area is clear like a Dancing Room. There are two Stoves inserted into the two chimnies at the end of the Building, but they are not in the middle, but so placed as to unite with the sides of the passage which lead into the chambers, with which there is a communication from the sides of the building without, near the front corners. The two doors on the north side fronting the road, open into the House, & we ascend by these steps of hewn stone placed upon a broad flat stone, & which were brought 9 miles. At each end & near the corners are doors with the same steps, which open immediately upon the Chamber Stairs, & lead to the apartment of the elders. These we were not permitted to visit. In the Meeting Room were pendant brasses to receive lights if they should be at any time necessary. These brasses were flat plates not formed like our Chandeliers but to set candle sticks upon, which are brought into the Hall. They shove up, so as easily to be put entirely out of the way. We were told that the Chambers were in five apartments & the lofts in three partitions. Above 400 lb. of white lead was used upon the outside of the Building. We could not imagine that there was so much room in the Buildings till we entered. For they have one plan of all their Houses. The eves are in the middle of the

second story as in our common garrets, & this story has its light from luthern [dormer] windows, & the third story only from the ends. Hence the upper rooms are used for vestries, store rooms, & such purposes, particularly the middle apartments, which have light only from the door. The Meeting House is in the Center of a Square, which is railed in by a handsome fence of rails, dovetailed into the Sill & the cross beam open & flat. The whole surface of the square is laid in turf, brought from an adjacent field. And that it might not be injured by rain from the building, spouts and gutters lead off the waters into a stone drain, which conveys them into the Street under the surface of the ground.²⁷

Future scholars and preservationists were extremely fortunate that Bentley left them such a rich account of this building, as we shall see.



The interior of the 1792 meetinghouse at Shirley, Massachusetts, circa 1910, prior to its relocation to Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Image Courtesy of The Trustees of Reservations, Archives & Research Center

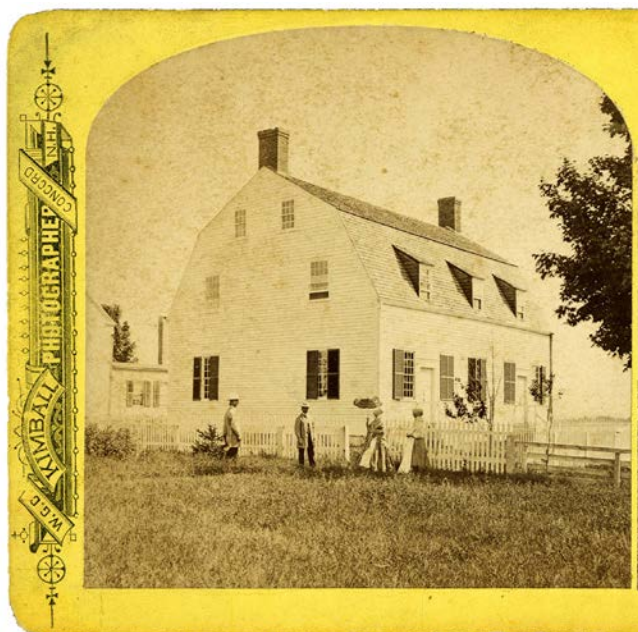


The 1792 meetinghouse at Tyringham, Massachusetts, after it was remodeled with a gable roof, detail from a stereoview of circa 1880.

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

Moses Johnson arrived on February 14, 1792 at Canterbury, New Hampshire, having been dispatched from New Lebanon to help organize the community.²⁸ The frame of their gambrel-roofed meetinghouse was raised on May 10, and finished on September 20, 1792.²⁹ That same year, in Johnson's absence, a meetinghouse was also built at Tyringham, Massachusetts, in the southern Berkshires. Although visual evidence of its original form is lacking, it is believed to have been a gambrel-roofed building in the established style.³⁰ In 1793 the community at Enfield, New Hampshire, erected their meetinghouse. The frame was raised on May 16, and the first worship service held on the third of November.³¹

The last two gambrel-roofed meetinghouses were constructed in the Maine communities. Remarkably, the Alfred, Maine, Shakers preserved a letter sent to their founding elder Father John Barnes from New Lebanon in 1791. It contained Father James Whittaker's commentary on building a meetinghouse, as well as sanction to do so from Father Joseph Meacham, first elder in the Ministry:



*The 1792 meetinghouse at Canterbury, New Hampshire,
as shown in stereoviews from circa 1877-1878.*
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

“When the gift and order of God, to build the house to meet in for the public worship of God, in this place was publicly made known to us, the conditions were as follows;

1st. That it should be built by free contributions. None were desired to give anything towards the building, but such as could do it freely, as a matter of their own faith, and never after bring any one into debt or blame on account of what they had done. They need make no excuses of being in debt or in poverty, as God required no more of them than what they were able to do, according to justice.

2nd. That it should be done by a joint union and agreement with each other.

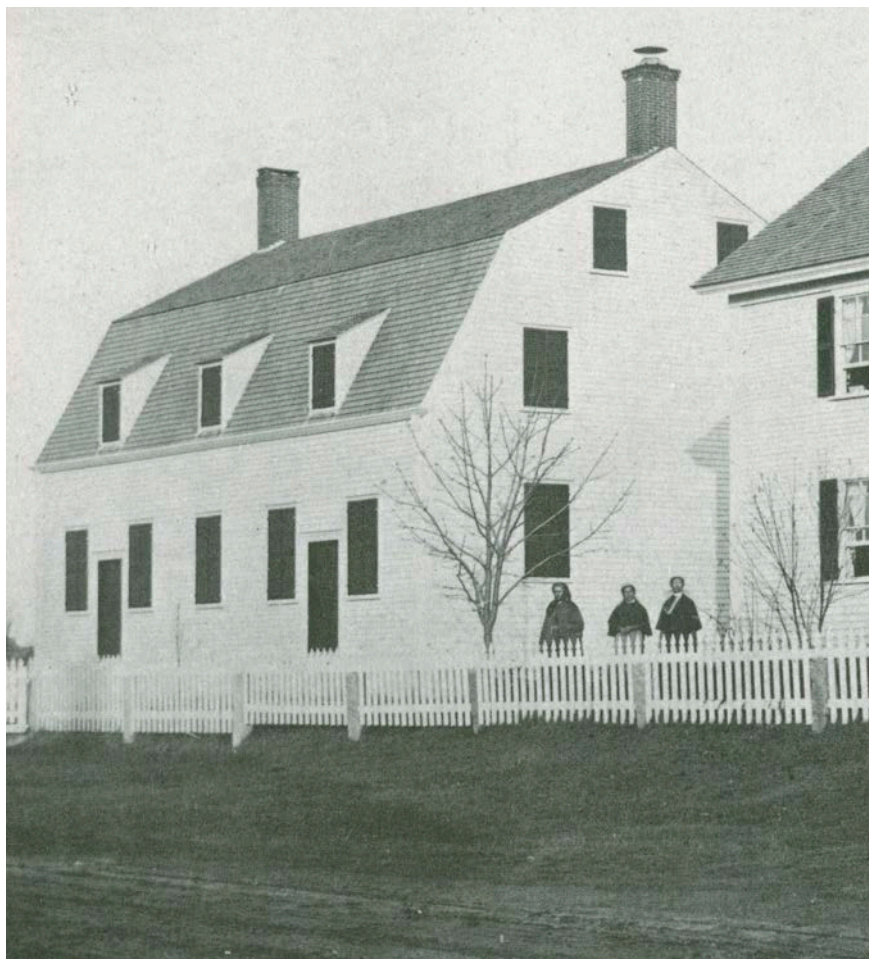
3rd. As the house is for religious and not for common use, none might hold a right of government in the house, by virtue of what they had done, but by Church order the property being changed from a private to a public use, is consecrated to the Lord. It is the privilege of all that believe and are holden in union, according to their opportunity, to assemble in, one day in seven, for the public worship of God. Any further privilege to the use of the house must be by order, as the good of the Church and Society may require.”

The above was received from Father James Whittaker, and was the Covenant by which the house of worship was built in New Lebanon.

Father Joseph Meacham then writes, “If you as a people believe it to be your duty to build a house to meet in as you have signified, you have liberty, according to the same order and covenant.”³²

The Alfred Believers raised their meetinghouse in 1793, and held the first worship services there in 1794.³³

It is fitting that the last gambrel-roofed meetinghouse built by the Shakers is the only one still in use by the sect today. The frame was raised at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, on June 14, 1794, and first used in worship on Christmas Day of that year. A visitor to the community in 1822 noted that “the beams on the walls are about a yard apart, painted black, and varnished, so that you might see your face in them.”³⁴ The Prussian Blue paint must have darkened considerably. In her history of the Sabbathday Lake Shakers, Sister R. Mildred Barker remarked that the “meeting room, simple and unpretentious, is unadorned except for the beautiful blue paint



The 1793 meetinghouse at Alfred, Maine.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

which is seemingly impossible to duplicate.”³⁵ The year 1794 marked the close of an architectural era for the Shakers, who constructed a number of later meetinghouses—some architectural marvels—but no more in the gambrel-roofed style. The journeys, however, of these remarkable buildings, were just beginning.

A brief look at the use of, and improvements made to, the Canterbury meetinghouse, from the 1790s to the late nineteenth century illustrates the way in which Shaker communities changed as they opened themselves to outside influences, and accommodated an aging membership. The building was painted for the first time in April 1794. It was painted on the outside a second time in May 1800. Due to lack of ventilation, the sills had rotted and they were replaced in May 1803, only eleven years after the building’s construction. On April 13, 1815, the original interior stairways to the ministry’s apartments were removed so as to provide additional space for worship. In their stead, a single staircase was added in a new ell on the back of the structure. Exterior stair ells were eventually added to nearly all the gambrel-roofed meetinghouses. The exterior and interior of the building was also repainted in 1815, the latter a deep blue color that still survives on the second and third floors.

No additional major changes were made until August 18, 1872, when Elder Blinn recorded that “Settees, take the place of benches ‘sans’ backs in Meeting House, Wall seats retained.” Whether this was for the comfort of the members, or an embrace of worldly style, we cannot know. From March to May 1878 non-Shaker painter Kneeland Codman repainted the interior of what was now call the “Ancient Church.”

The wood-work of Ancient Church (Meeting House) re-painted a lighter shade of blue than the original, or first coat....The wall seats have been removed walls lime-washed & wood-work painted a much paler shade of blue than formerly, window sashes re-painted settees revarnished The Porch on East side shared the same renovation. This was the first time the interior had been renewed since the house was builded A period of 86 yrs!

The scribe had obviously forgotten about the repainting of 1815. The meetinghouse now also became a venue for non-Shakers to lecture the Shakers, and their friends, on temperance, spiritualism, and world religions, among other topics. An exhibition of stereopticon photography was held



The meeting room of the 1792 meetinghouse at Canterbury, New Hampshire, as it currently looks following repainting “a paler shade of blue” by Kneeland Codman in 1878.

Photograph by Malerie Yolen-Cohen for GetawayMavens.com



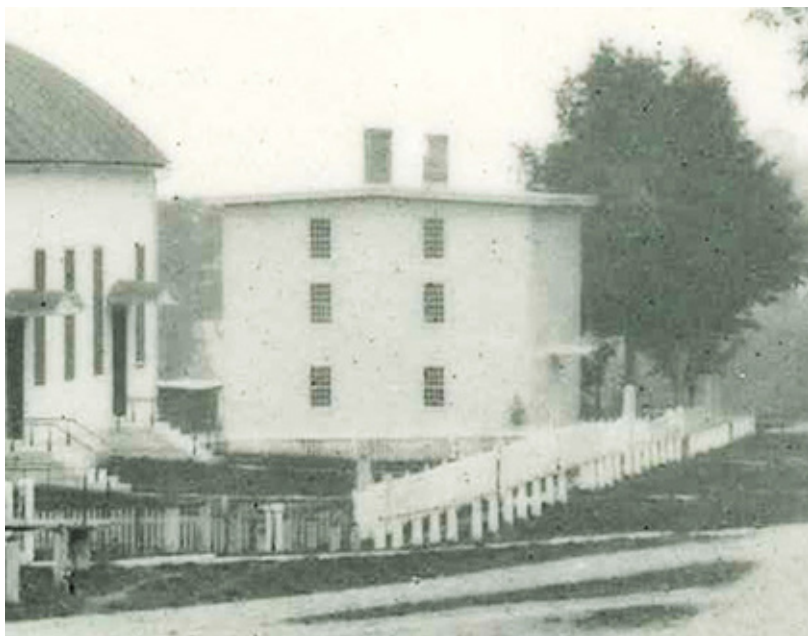
Above: Newell posts from the third floor of the Canterbury meetinghouse. The deep blue applied in 1815 is present at left. The right newell post is white, as is the woodwork on the second floor.

Right: The rear stair ell of the Canterbury meetinghouse. The railings, spindles, and newell posts are the same pale blue as the meeting room. The stairs are painted a yellowish-orange ochre, a color commonly used on Shaker floors.

Photographs by Paul Lange



there, and even a dramatic pageant about Mother Ann's arrival in America on August 6, 1774. By May 1, 1881, Elder Blinn wryly observed that at Sunday meetings the "form of worship somewhat changed externally Exercise of mind rather than physical demonstration as formerly."³⁶ At Canterbury, and many other Shaker societies, the gift of dancing from which the sect received their sobriquet, had subsided into gentler, inward spiritual reflection. This, combined with the presence of meeting rooms in many of the Shaker dwelling houses, made the eighteenth century meetinghouses somewhat obsolete.

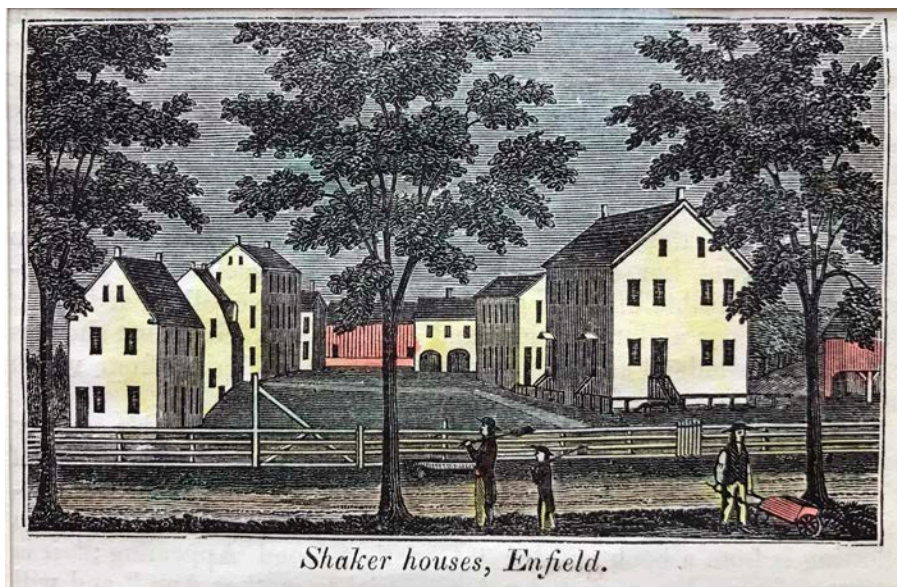


The 1785 New Lebanon, New York, meetinghouse following its relocation and renovation which added a story and a new flat roof, in a detail from a James Irving photograph of 1871.

Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon

By the end of the nineteenth century many Shaker communities had no clear use for their eighteenth-century meetinghouses. In some cases, as at New Lebanon and Watervliet, New York, and Enfield, Connecticut, this was due to the later construction of a more spacious structure. The second meetinghouse at New Lebanon (1824) and the 1848 meetinghouse at Watervliet have been written about exhaustively, and are well-known for

their architectural and aesthetic merits.³⁷ In 1822, the 1785 New Lebanon meetinghouse—the archetype for them all—was moved to make way for its successor. Eventually a full third story was added with a flat roof, it was repurposed as a school house, and later a seed house.³⁸ Today it has a gable roof and is a private residence. When the Watervliet Shakers built their impressive 1848 meetinghouse they left the 1791 structure in situ.



The Church Family of the Enfield, Connecticut, Shaker community, as depicted by John Warner Barber in 1836. All three Enfield meetinghouses are visible in the woodcut.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

At Enfield, Connecticut, in 1827 the Shakers constructed a third meetinghouse. Itinerant artist and historian John Warner Barber sketched Enfield for his Connecticut Historical Collections in 1836. Remarkably, all three Enfield meetinghouses are visible in the resultant woodcut. Stephen J. Paterwic, scholar of Shakerism, and the expert on the Enfield community, has identified the second building on the left as the 1791 meetinghouse, still with its gambrel roof. The next building is the 1786 meetinghouse, however much altered. Paterwic concludes, “The third structure on the left is the first meeting house, but Barber did not depict it well at all. It always had a gambrel roof and dormer windows. What he shows is a narrow building with a pitched roof and no dormers.” The large building at right is the 1827 meetinghouse.³⁹



Church Family Shakers, Enfield, Conn.

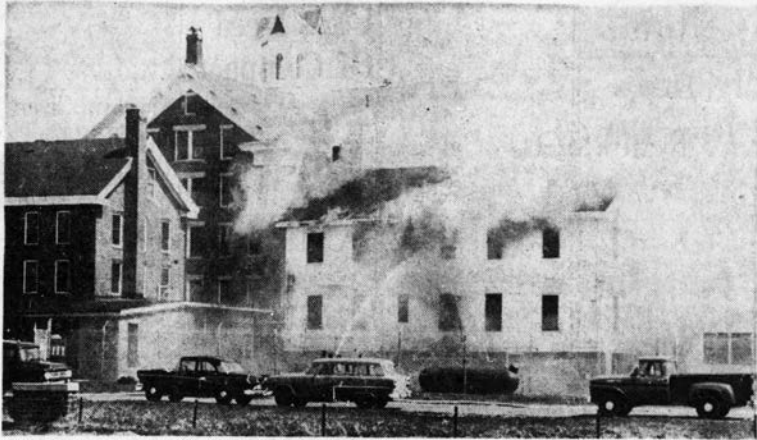
*The 1791 meetinghouse at Enfield, Connecticut, in its final location,
in front of the 1876 dwelling, to the right.*

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College



The 1791 meetinghouse at Enfield, Connecticut.

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College



PRISON FIRE: Twenty inmates from the prison fire detail joined firemen from three departments in battling this blaze at the Osborn Prison Farm, Enfield, for three hours Wednesday. The men are shown directing the hose stream at the two-story frame structure as smoke billows heavily from windows. The building, used as the prison laundry and farm office,

was a total loss, though there was no immediate estimate of damage. The farm records were salvaged. Nearly a century ago, the building was one of those in the old Enfield Shaker Colony. Firemen from Hazardville, Shaker Pines Lake and Longmeadow, Mass., helped fight the spectacular blaze, visible for many miles (Alfred B. Heald Photo).

Space Age 'Columbus' Is Son of Carpenter

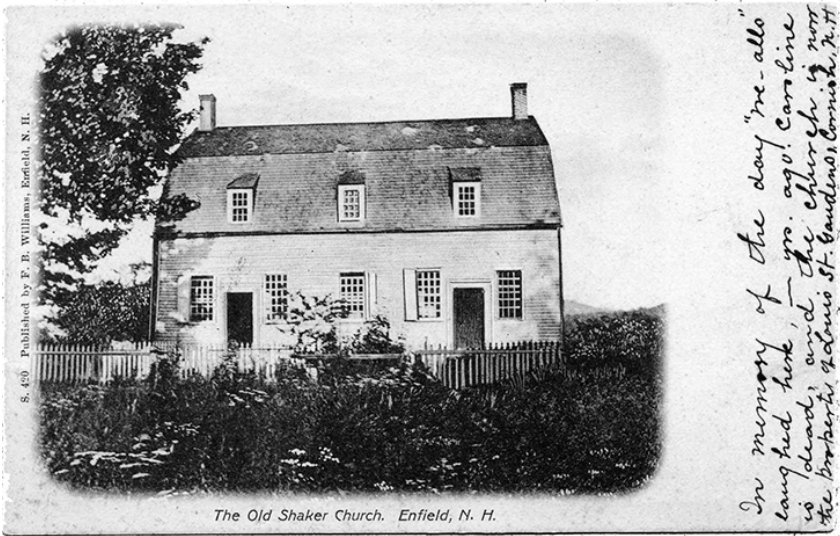
Prison Farm Building Destroyed by Flames

The 1791 meetinghouse at Enfield, Connecticut, burned down on April 12, 1961, (Hartford Courant, April 13, 1961).

When the Enfield Shakers' enlarged their Trustees' Office in 1841 its footprint extended into that of the 1791 meetinghouse. Accordingly, it was moved and "lengthened, made upright, and occupied as a shop for dairy purposes."⁴⁰ Later it was repurposed as an infirmary. In 1879, when the Enfield Church Family built a new brick dwelling, the 1786 meetinghouse was moved and used to house the workers (see photograph on page six). Like many New Englanders, the Shakers were not averse to moving wood frame structures. Also, they were not sentimental about their buildings, even their meetinghouses. The fact that Father James Whittaker, or any of the Shaker founders may have preached or lodged in a building was of no major significance. If the building had no useful purpose, and was a fire hazard, or tax liability, the Shakers would take it down. As stated above, the 1786 meetinghouse was demolished in 1880. After the community closed in 1914, it eventually became the site of a prison. The prison used the 1791 meetinghouse as a laundry and farm office. Sadly, it was destroyed in a four-alarm fire on April 12, 1961. The 1827 meetinghouse still stands.⁴¹

At least five of the meetinghouses were remodeled with gable roofs between 1854 and circa 1880. These were: Harvard (1854, when it was relocated to its present foundation, see photograph on page thirteen), Hancock (1871, see photograph on page thirty-three), Tyringham (date unknown, see photograph on page seventeen), Enfield, Connecticut (date unknown), and New Lebanon (by 1871, see photograph on page twenty-two).⁴² While visiting Hancock in 1873 Elder Blinn noted that the old “curb roof,” his term for gambrel, had been made into a gable roof.⁴³ Exactly why these modifications were made is not stated in any Shaker record, but extending the plane of the front facade to the cornice of a new gable roof would have provided a fuller second floor, and a larger third floor under the roof than the slightly cramped second and third floors of the gambrel-roof structures. Additionally, full window sash replaced dormer windows on the second floor, allowing for more light to enter the buildings. As numbers at Shaker communities diminished, worship was held less frequently at the meetinghouses, and more often in the comfortable meeting rooms of the family dwellings. This was especially true in inclement or cold weather. The Sabbathday Lake, Maine, Shakers closed their public meetings in 1887.⁴⁴ Additionally, new amenities, such as an organ installed in 1883 in a sunken floor the Canterbury Shakers’ “chapel,” (the meeting room in the Church Family dwelling) reflected the transition away from dancing in worship, to more mainstream practices of singing hymns in harmony to musical accompaniment.⁴⁵ A result of these changes was that the necessity of maintaining the old meetinghouses was called into question.

The first half of the twentieth century was a perilous time for the earliest Shaker meetinghouses. The 1793 structure at Alfred, Maine, was burned in a horrendous 1901 fire that also destroyed the Church Family’s dwelling and Ministry’s shop.⁴⁶ The Enfield, New Hampshire, meetinghouse, also built in 1793, had fallen into disuse. It was sold for \$150 in the autumn of 1902 and relocated. As scholar Robert P. Emlen recounted in his article “Raised, Razed, and Raised Again,” it had a remarkable second life as a home for sculptor Louis Saint-Gaudens and his new bride Anetta. On a trip to Mascoma Lake she saw the building and decided to acquire it and modify it for a residence as Aspet, the Cornish, New Hampshire, summer home of her brother-in-law Augustus Saint-Gaudens.⁴⁷ Mrs. Saint-Gaudens modified the building, introducing “a recessed porch in one end and a kitchen ell at the other, and a 1902 colonial revival fireplace at the center.” Thus, the open space and symmetry of the Shaker building



The 1793 meetinghouse at Enfield, New Hampshire.
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

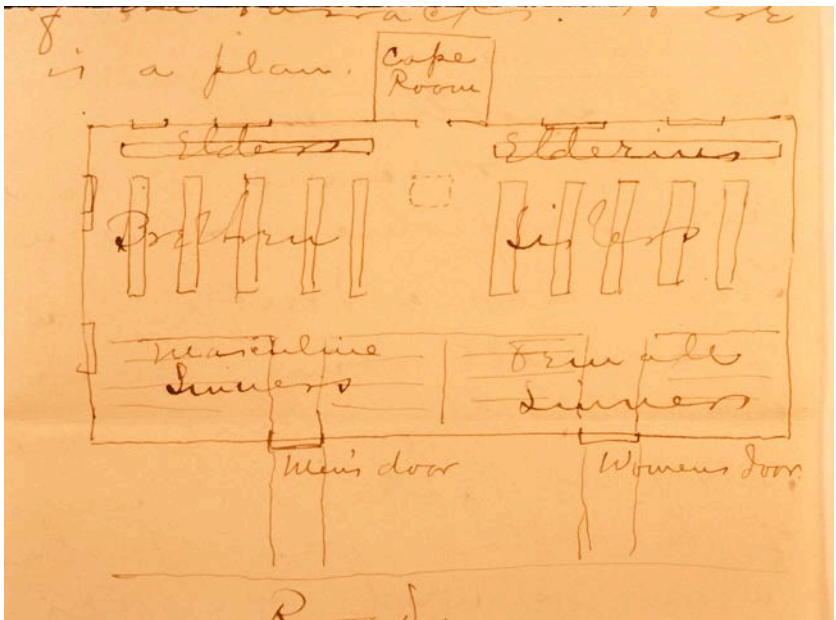


Diagram of the first floor of the Enfield, New Hampshire, Shaker meetinghouse made by Ashton Willard, 1878.
Willard Family papers, Vermont Historical Society, Barre, Vt.



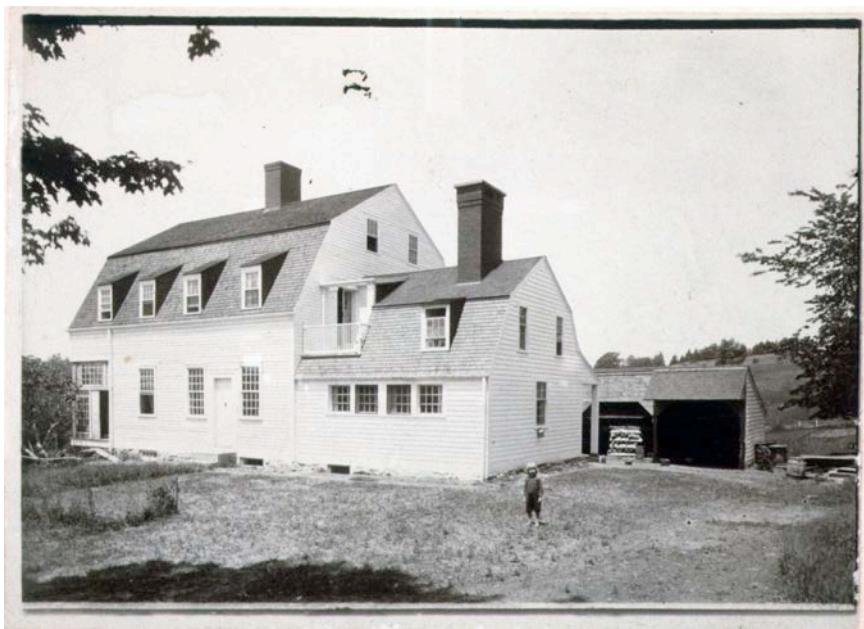
Brother Hiram Baker and his bicycle in the meeting room of the 1793 meetinghouse at Enfield, New Hampshire. Salt print by Lewis Johnson, August 1902.

Courtesy of Robert P. Emlen



The dismantling of the 1793 meetinghouse at Enfield, New Hampshire. Note the built-in case and drawer laying on the grass. Salt print by Lewis Johnson, August 1902.

Courtesy of Robert P. Emlen



The relocated Enfield, New Hampshire, meetinghouse, showing reconfigurations of doors and chimney, as well as an addition.

Courtesy of Robert P. Emlen

was sacrificed for its new role as a home and studio. Sadly, the building was lost to a suspicious fire on May 30, 1980. John Dryfhout, the director of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, then occupied it. He tragically lost all of his possessions in the blaze, including Shaker artifacts and original photographs of the building.⁴⁸ These images now survive only as copy slides made by Emlen in 1974.

The property and buildings of the Church Family of the Watervliet, New York, Shaker community (Mother Ann's original home in America) were sold in 1924. Acquired by Albany County in 1926, the site was designated as the Ann Lee Home for tuberculosis patients.⁴⁹ The 1791 meetinghouse served no purpose for the new campus and was torn down by the county in 1929.⁵⁰ Fortunately, a more sympathetic owner acquired the meetinghouse at Tyringham, Massachusetts. In 1875, Tyringham was the first eastern Shaker community to close. The community's buildings went through a couple of different owners, until the meetinghouse was acquired by Ellis W. Leavenworth, who moved it a mile from its original location in July 1925. There, it was modified further by the introduction of a colonial-style center chimney.⁵¹



The 1791 meetinghouse at Watervliet, New York, prior to its demolition in 1929.

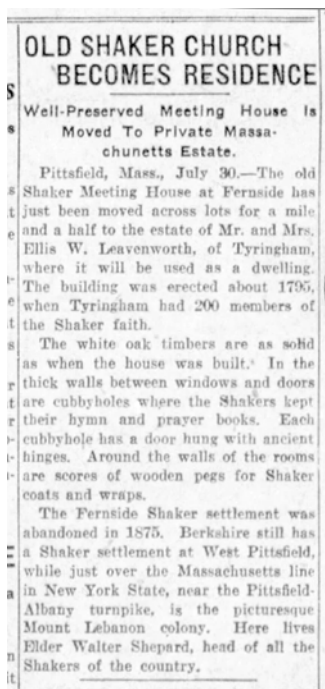
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

In 1935 successful playwright and screenwriter Sidney Howard acquired the Tyringham meetinghouse. In an article for the *New York Times*, his granddaughter Rachel Urquhart wrote a moving account of Howard's motives for buying the building, now situated on hundreds of acres of fields and woodlands. Howard's career in Manhattan and Hollywood was demanding. He had written twenty-seven Broadway plays and thirteen screenplays, and received a Pulitzer Prize in 1925. Amidst this excitement, however, he missed his family. As Urquhart wrote, "Early in 1936, while in Hollywood, he wrote in his diary: 'Terribly depressed about money. God help us if we (or I) go on living in this idiot's way of giving up life for places to live in. I dream of the farm but.—'" The center of the farm was the Shaker meetinghouse.

In a letter to his wife Howard rhapsodized about life with her and their children on the farm, and the experiences and values it would instill. He wrote, "I dream of [the farm] giving them cultural things deeper and more valuable than they can find elsewhere in the fetid life we all lead.—How would you like to call our farm 'American Dream'?" Although Urquhart questions whether this suggestion was slightly tongue-in-cheek, it is



Sidney Howard on the cover of the June 7, 1937, issue of Time magazine.

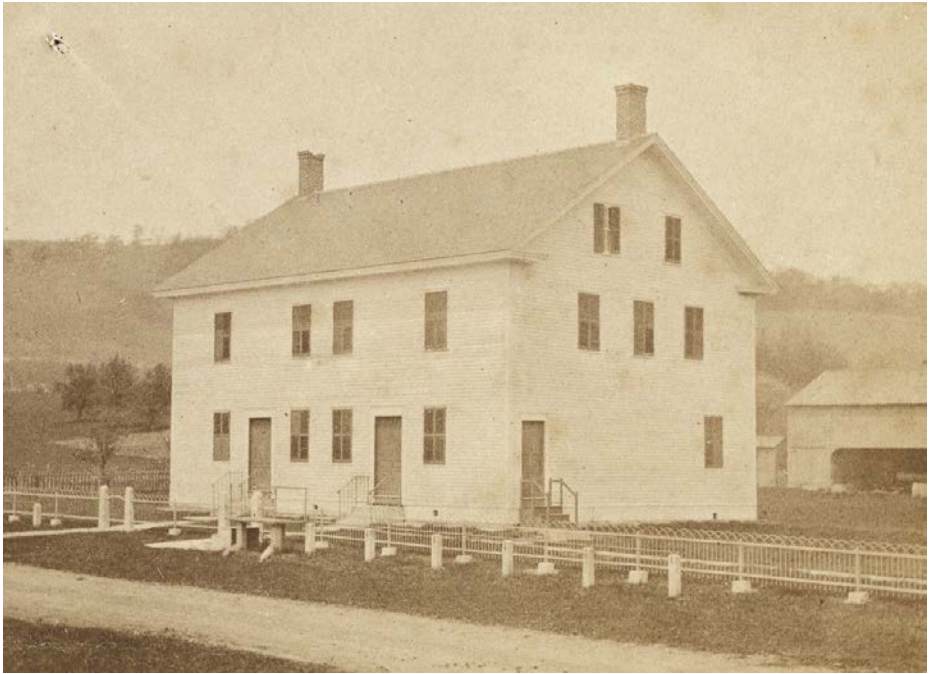


The move of the Tyringham Shaker meetinghouse is reported in the Evening Sun (Baltimore), July 30, 1927.

nonetheless poignant that a married man, with a nuclear family, would make the former church of a radical celibate sect the linchpin of his patriotic fantasy of rural American life. The Shakers' iconoclastic architecture had been transformed into a reassuring icon.

Tragically, in the summer of 1939, Howard was in a barn on the property, and his tractor lurched forward, crushing him against the wall and killing him. The next year Howard was posthumously awarded an Oscar for his screenplay of "Gone With the Wind." His granddaughter has perpetuated the family's literary legacy with her acclaimed novel about a female Shaker medium, entitled *The Visionist*. The house remains in private hands to this day.⁵²

The year before Howard's death in 1938, the Hancock Shakers decided to demolish their 1786 meetinghouse. As it was no longer used for worship, it had become a fire hazard and tax liability. Shaker collectors and scholars Edward Deming Andrews and Faith Andrews were



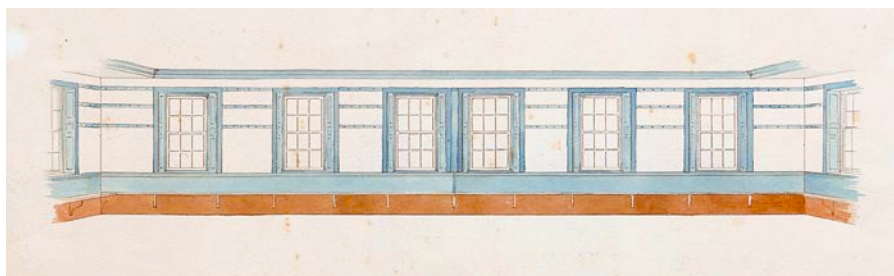
The 1786 meetinghouse at Hancock, Massachusetts, circa 1875.

Collection of Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.

determined to save as much of the building as possible. However, social tensions between Hancock's trustee Frances Hall and the sisters living in the Church Family's brick dwelling meant that this would be no easy task. Faith Andrews recalled that Frances Hall "had notified the people in the red brick dwelling that in order to save money, or repair, she was going to take down the meetinghouse ... one of the most beautiful buildings. And she started to get the workmen lined up and we felt very very badly about that ... so in our rush and eagerness to do something, we went over to [New Lebanon Shaker Sister] Sadie Neale and told her what was going on and we said we would be satisfied just to get the meeting room if we couldn't get the whole building. We couldn't afford to get the building and move it."⁵³

Relying on their deep friendship with Sadie Neale, the Andrewses approached her with the news from Hancock. Neale inquired, "Do you know what it would cost you to get the meeting room?" The Andrewses approached Hall and the workmen and got a price for saving the meeting

room, eight or ten more windows, “all in perfect condition and painted that pale heavenly blue, two stoves to heat that room, just a magnificent place, and built-in pieces.” They went back the same afternoon and told Neale. She said, “‘Yea, you wait a few minutes.’ And she went into her bedroom...took the covers off her bed and reached under the mattress and pulled out a little satchel and sat on the bed and counted out the money and gave it to us. And that was the most amazing thing. She said ‘Yea, if you want it, it’s yours.’”⁵⁴ It is ironic that a Shaker sister would have to lend money to outsiders in order to save the interior of a Shaker meetinghouse situated four miles from her home. However, Shaker families had a tradition of economic independence, and, as has been shown, Shakers were not terribly sentimental about their buildings, an attitude that extended even to the meetinghouse. By lending the Andrewses money to save the interior of the Hancock Meetinghouse Sadie Neale was quietly demonstrating her personal regard for the Shaker past, as well as her respect for the intentions of the Andrewses in saving it.



*The Meeting Room: 1786.
Hancock Shakers.
Measured and drawn by H. Seaver.*

Architect Henry Seaver's elevation drawing of the meeting room of the 1786 Hancock, Massachusetts, meetinghouse, 1938, immediately prior to its demolition.

SA-1702-3, Andrews Shaker Collection, Winterthur Library

Before the 1786 meetinghouse was dismantled in November 1938, architect Henry Seaver documented the interior. Elevation drawings of the one of the pairs of south doors, nine pages of written notes, and a striking watercolor of the meeting room survive in the Andrews Collection at Winterthur. The woodwork was taken to the Andrewses' barn at their Richmond farmhouse. A portion of it was sold to the American Museum in Britain, where it is still installed in the Shaker Room. A substantial amount of the remaining interior is catalogued and stored at Hancock, although some was repurposed, as we shall see.

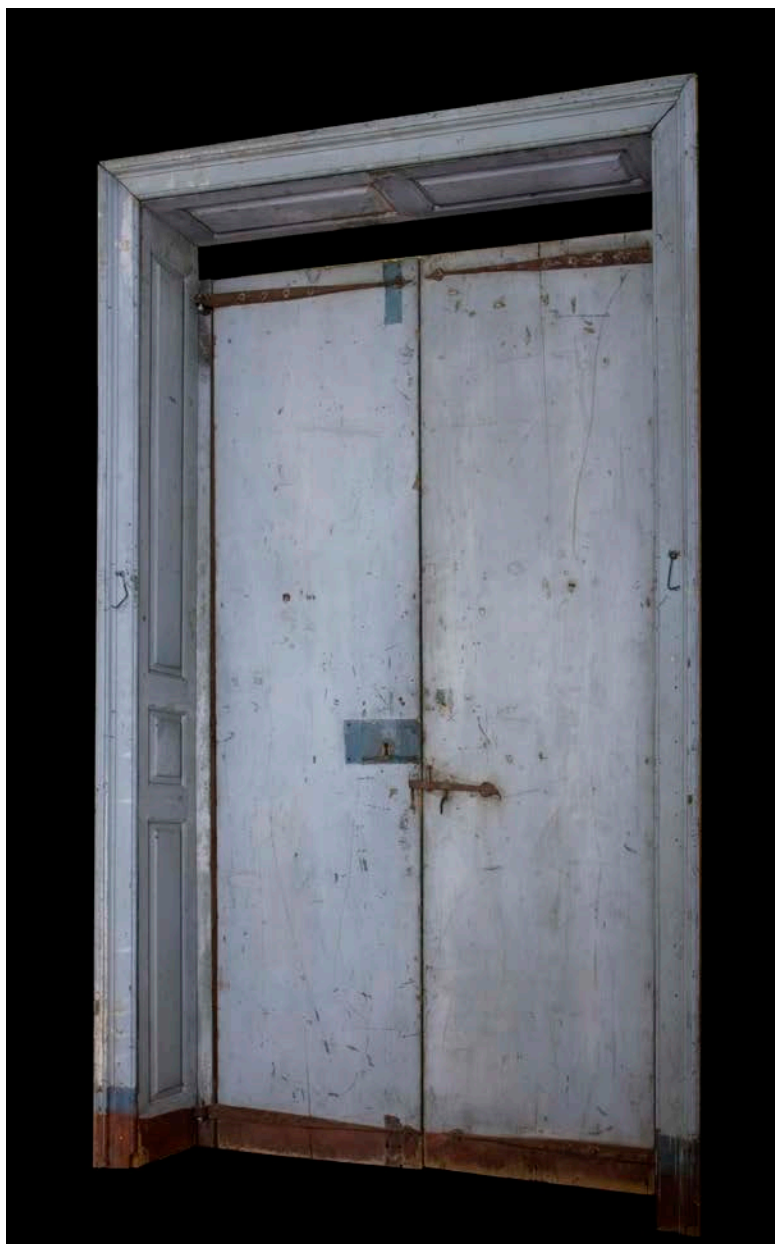


The meeting room of the 1786 meetinghouse at Hancock, Massachusetts, 1931.
 Photograph by William F. Winter. Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress,
 Prints and Photographs Division, HABS MASS,2-HANC,15--2



*Interior door surround, exterior door latch,
 and doors, from the 1786 meetinghouse
 of Hancock, Massachusetts. Salvaged
 by Edward Deming Andrews and Faith
 Andrews with the help of Shaker Sister
 Sadie Neale in 1938.*

Photographs by Michael Fredericks.
 Collection of Hancock Shaker Village,
 Pittsfield, Mass.



Pair of doors and interior paneled jambs and surround from the 1786 meetinghouse of Hancock, Massachusetts. Salvaged by Edward Deming Andrews and Faith Andrews with the help of Shaker Sister Sadie Neale in 1938.

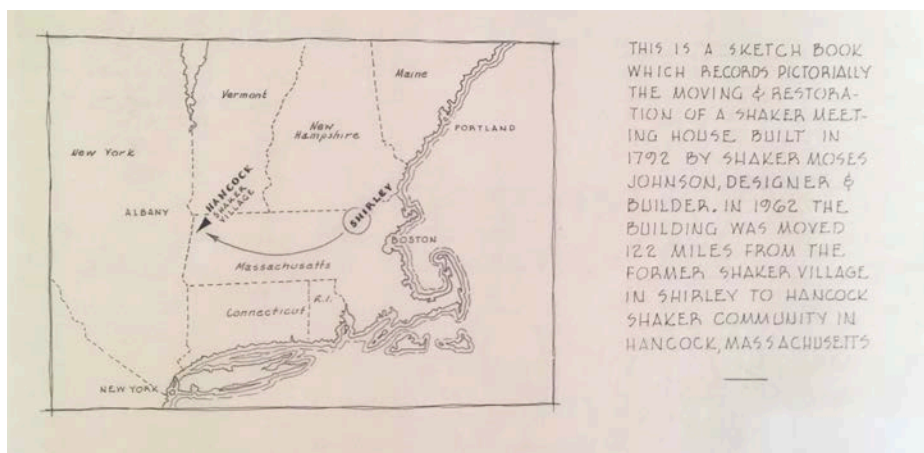
Photograph by Michael Fredericks. Collection of Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.



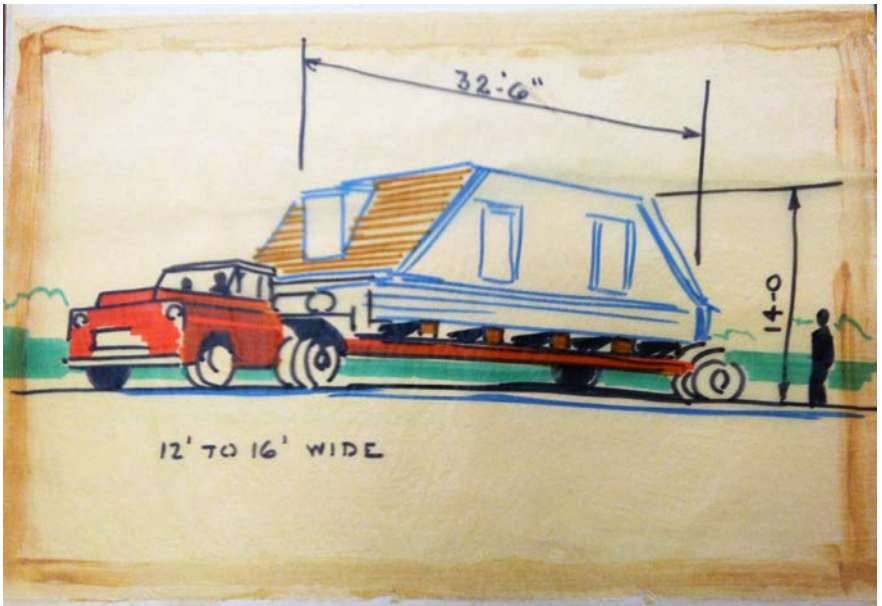
The 1792 meetinghouse at Shirley, Massachusetts, circa 1920, prior to its relocation to Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Image Courtesy of The Trustees of Reservations, Archives & Research Center

Shortly after the loss of the 1791 Enfield, Connecticut, meetinghouse by fire in 1961, Amy Bess Miller, the founder of Hancock Shaker Village, Inc., was alerted by Shaker eldresses Gertrude Soule and R. Mildred Barker about the existence of the 1792 meetinghouse at Shirley. Miller, who had just founded a museum on the site of the Hancock Shakers' community, was lacking a meetinghouse due to the 1938 demolition of Hancock's original structure. She approached the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, owners of the Shirley village since it closed in 1908, and purchased it from them for \$1.00. In 1962 it was cut into nine sections and trucked to the former site of the Hancock Shakers' meetinghouse, where it was re-erected. The fourth section, however, had a perilous journey. The truck carrying it rounded the infamous Hairpin Turn on Route 2 in Clarksburg, Massachusetts, in freezing rain, and the windshield wipers caught fire! According to Miller, "The driver could see only by sticking his head out of the window, and then he was almost blinded by the driving sleet and fumes from the engine. His companion asked, 'George, is it time to jump?'" Fortunately, this section, and those remaining all arrived safely. Reverend William Bentley's detailed 1795 description of the building was relied on heavily for the restoration. It was dedicated on May 30, 1963, to the tune of "Simple Gifts," which Aaron Copeland had popularized in his "Appalachian Spring."⁵⁵



Architect Terry Hallock's plan for the move and restoration of the 1792 Shirley, Massachusetts, meetinghouse, which was carried out in 1962.
Collection of Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.



The 1792 Shirley, Massachusetts, meetinghouse, was cut into nine sections and trucked to Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1962.
Collection of Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.



Above: The 1792 Shirley meetinghouse during its reconstruction in 1962.

Photograph by Jack E. Boucher. Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HABS MASS,2-HANC,16--4



Left: The 1792 Shirley meetinghouse during its reconstruction in 1962.

A framing detail of the north wall, showing the dutch braces connecting post and beam.

Photograph by Jack E. Boucher. Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HABS MASS,2-HANC,16--20

Right: The 1792 Shirley meetinghouse, and meeting room, following replication of the original Prussian blue paint.

Photographs by Michael Fredericks. Collection of Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass.

The building has seen further restoration.⁵⁶ During the summer of 2005 the first-floor interior woodwork was repainted with hand-ground Prussian Blue, titanium white (instead of lead white), chalk, and linseed oil, restoring it to its original appearance. Despite having been cut up and moved, the Shirley meetinghouse is the only extant eighteenth-century Shaker meetinghouse to retain its original footprint, complete with interior stairways, and no additional ells.⁵⁷

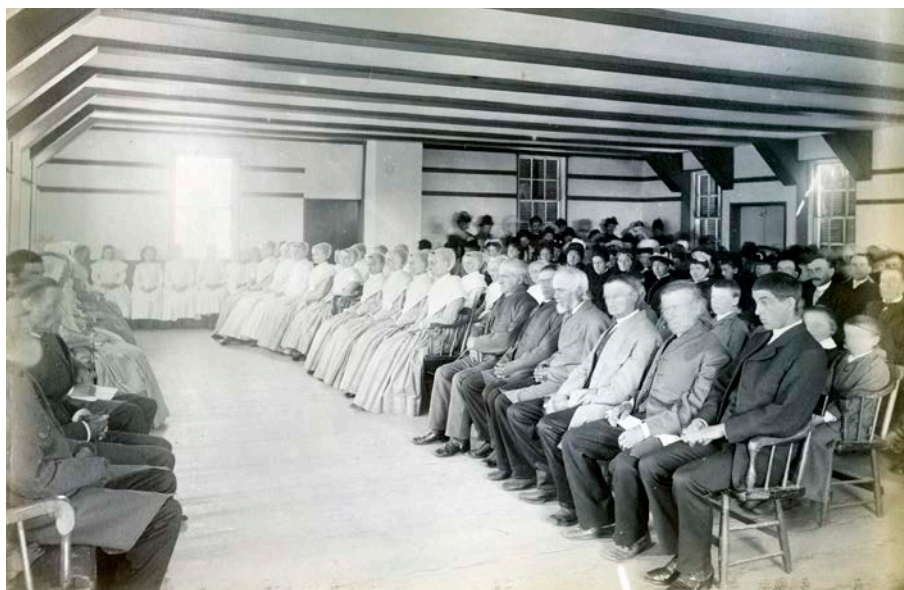


In 2020, the only remaining Shaker community lives at Sabbathday Lake, Maine. After closing meeting to the public in 1887, the Shakers reopened their 1794 meetinghouse as an antique store called the “Shaker Bazaar.”⁵⁸ This was necessitated by the closure of the Alfred community in 1931, which resulted in a glut of excess furniture and other items that needed to be disposed of. The store was managed by Eldress Prudence Stickney, who even printed business cards for the enterprise. Although this contravened Father James Whittaker’s 1786 admonition against making the meetinghouse “a Place of merchantize,” it was at least a responsible way of liquidating possessions, many of which found loving homes with antique collectors. The second story of the meetinghouse was turned into a museum showcasing Shaker material culture. Catalogs for the fancy goods made at Sabbathday Lake featured a picture of the meetinghouse on the cover, again indicative of its transformation into an instantly identifiable Shaker icon. The building’s date of construction, 1794, is proudly painted on the north end, and also figures prominently in the illustration of it on the catalog. The Shakers’ rich religious and cultural heritage was beginning to be recognized by the broader public, and the Sabbathday Lake Shakers were not shy about embracing the public’s respectful admiration.

The meetinghouse was reopened for public worship in 1963, and the museum remains open to this day.⁵⁹ A reporter for the New York Times visited the community in 1974 and described the scene:

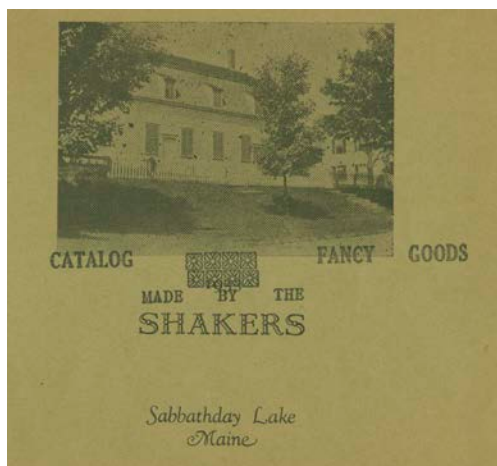
Although the Maine Shakers no longer dance on the broad unvarnished floor boards, their Meeting House remains the center of weekly worship to which outsiders are regularly invited. The interior retains its original white paint, scrubbed to Christian perfection, set off by blue woodwork and the characteristic pegboards on which Shaker cloaks, bonnets and chairs were hung. The second and third floors offer all manner of antiques from Shaker Victorian beds and chests to miniature baskets of sweetgrass and horsehair.⁶⁰

The Sabbathday Lake Shaker community still invites visitors to attend worship during the “warm weather” months every Sunday at 10:00 AM. On their website they describe the meeting, which opens with a reading of a Psalm, then a hymn, three Bible readings, and then another hymn. As with



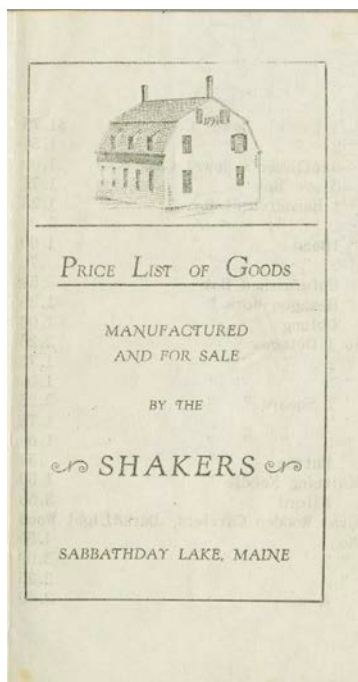
Shaker meeting at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, 1885. This is the earliest known photograph of Shaker worship. It was taken by a staff photographer from the Poland Spring Hotel.

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College



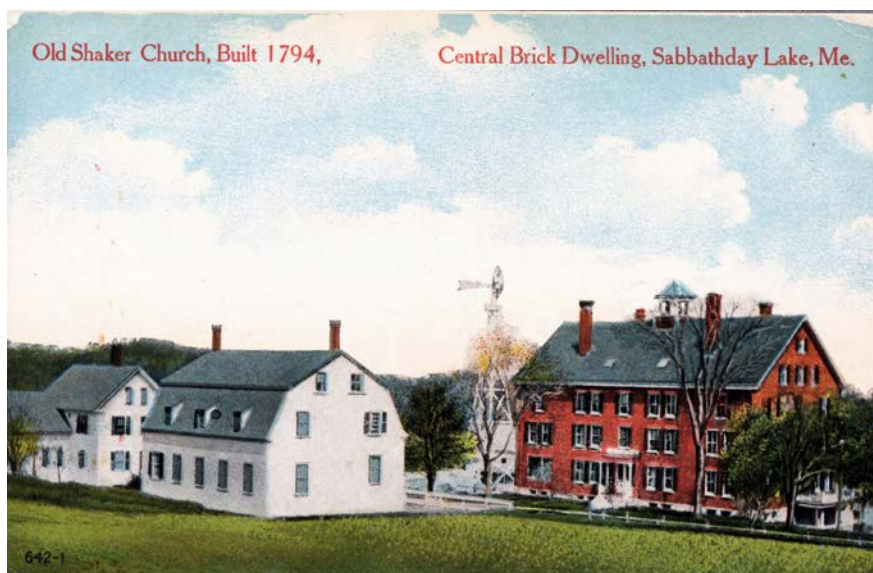
Catalogs issued by the Sabbathday Lake, Maine, Shakers in the 1930s prominently featured their meetinghouse.

Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College





The museum on the second floor of the 1794 meetinghouse at Sabbathday Lake, Maine.
 Photograph by Gerda Peterich. Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress,
 Prints and Photographs Division, HABS ME,3-SAB,1-6 (June 1962)



The 1794 meetinghouse at Sabbathday Lake, Maine.
 Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College

the Shakers at Ashfield in 1783, the meeting is then “open to the moving of the Spirit.” Shaker and visitors alike are welcomed to “participate in song and testimony as the Spirit may lead you. As our founder Mother Ann said, ‘A strange gift never came from God.’ So please do not feel strange or a stranger.”⁶¹ In 2020, the Shakers and the non-Shaker world, separated by antipathy and mistrust in the 1780s, are now reconciled in the sacred space of the Shaker meetinghouse.

Notes

1. Angell Matthewson, “Reminiscences in the form of 39 letters to his brother Jeffrey” (1775-98), letters III and IV, Shaker Manuscript Collection, #119, New York Public Library.
2. Ibid., 15-16.
3. Arthur E. McLendon, “‘Ye Living Building:’ Spirit, Space, and Ritual Encounter in Shaker Architecture,” Thesis (Ph. D.), University of Virginia, 2010, 111-30, 278-86.
4. Matthewson, “Reminiscences,” 29-30.
5. Ibid., 58-59.
6. Ibid., 38-40.
7. Ibid., 41-42, 46.
8. Walter E. Burnham, et. al., comp., *History and Tradition of Shelburne, Massachusetts* (Shelburne, Mass.: Town of Shelburne, Massachusetts, 1958), 66, 180.
9. “Buildings at Watervliet,” [ca. 1825], Watervliet, N.Y. OCIWHI I:A-20.
10. Lucy S. Bowers, “Record of buildings; 1785-1913, Shaker Farm, Enfield, Conn.,” Shaker Manuscript Collection, Hamilton College. I wish to thank Stephen J. Paterwic for information regarding the 1786 meetinghouse.
11. Otis Sawyer, “Alfred, Me., No. 4,” *Manifesto* 15, no. 4 (April 1885), 80-1.
12. Ibid.; Harland H. Eastman, *Alfred, Maine: The Shakers and the Village* (Sanford, Maine: Wilson’s Printers, 1992), 36.
13. Stephen J. Paterwic, *Tyringham Shakers* (Clinton, N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2013), 142.
14. McLendon, “Ye Living Building,” 79, 83-84.
15. Scott T. Swank, *Shaker Life, Art, and Architecture: Hands to Work, Hearts to God* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), 24; McLendon, “Ye Living Building,” 92.
16. McLendon, “Ye Living Building,” 80-81.

17. Henry Blinn, "History of Enfield," Canterbury Shaker Village archives, Cantebrury, N.H., vol. 1, 301.
18. McLendon, "Ye Living Building," 161; Henry C. Blinn, "James Daniels," *Manifesto* 13, no. 5 (May 1883): 106. In his article, "Shaker Meetinghouses of Moses Johnson" *Antiques* 98 (October 1970), Marius B. Péladeau asserts that Johnson was actively involved in the construction of ten Shaker meetinghouses. However, he provides no documentation for these statements.
19. Isaac Newton Youngs, "A Concise View Of the Church of God and of Christ, On Earth," as published in Glendyne R. Wergland and Christian Goodwillie, eds., *History of the Shakers at New Lebanon, New York, 1780-1861* (Clinton, N.Y.: Richard W. Couper Press, 2017), 41.
20. Father James Whittaker, in Father Joseph Meacham, Writings, OCIWHI VII:A-12.
21. [A Spectator], "From the Hudson Weekly Gazette," *Connecticut Journal* (New Haven, Conn.), March 28, 1787.
22. Reuben Rathbone, *Reasons Offered for Leaving the Shakers* (Pittsfield, Mass.: Printed by Chester Smith, 1800), 5-6, 15.
23. William S. Warder, *A Brief Sketch of the Religious Society of People Called Shakers* (London, 1818), 9-10.
24. Harvard, Massachusetts, "Manifest, 1791-1806," [27], [58]-[61], Item #1.7, Fruitlands Collection, Archives and Research Center, Trustees of Reservations, Sharon, Mass.
25. William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D. D.* (Salem, Mass.: The Essex Institute, 1907), 2:153.
26. Edward R. Horgan, *The Shaker Holy Land: A Community Portrait* (Harvard, Mass.: Harvard Common Press, 1982), 54.
27. Bentley, *Diary of William Bentley*, 2:150.
28. Canterbury, New Hampshire, "Current Record of Events, 1792-1885," Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College.
29. Ibid. Visits from stereographic photographers Howard Kimball (September 10, 1877) and Willis Kimball (March 20, 1878) are recorded in this manuscript.
30. Paterwic, *Tyringham Shakers*, 141-42.
31. Robert P. Emlen, "Raised, Razed, and Raised Again: the Shaker meetinghouse at Enfield, New Hampshire, 1793-1902," *Historical New Hampshire* 30, no. 3 (Fall 1975): 132-46.
32. Otis Sawyer, "Alfred, ME., No. 5," *Manifesto* 15, no. 5 (May 1885): 106.

33. R. Mildred Barker, *Holy Land: A History of the Alfred Shakers* (Sabbathday Lake, Maine: The Shaker Press, 1986), [18].
34. "The Shakers," *Newport Mercury* (Newport, Rhode Island), August 24, 1822.
35. R. Mildred Barker, *The Sabbathday Lake Shakers: An Introduction to the Shaker Heritage* (Sabbathday Lake, Maine: The Shaker Press, 1985), [6]-[7].
36. Harvard, Massachusetts, "Manifest," [62]; Canterbury, New Hampshire, "Current Record of Events, 1792-1885."
37. See: Jerry V. Grant, *Noble but Plain: The Shaker Meetinghouse at Mount Lebanon* (Old Chatham, N.Y.: Shaker Museum and Library, 1994); and James Daly Tobin, and Lili R. Ott, *The 1848 Watervliet Shaker Meeting House: An Historic Structure Report* (n.p., 1981).
38. Grant, *Noble but Plain*, 8. I thank Jerry V. Grant for information on the changes to the 1785 meetinghouse.
39. John Warner Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections* (New Haven: Durrie and Peck and J. W. Barber, 1836), 84-87 (e-mail Stephen J. Paterwic to the author, November 2, 2018).
40. Russel Haskell, "Some Sketches of the Rise and Progress of the United Society of Christians or Christian Believers (commonly called Shakers) in the town of Enfield, CT, by Russel Haskell, July 10, 1868." Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon, item 16561.
41. "Prison Farm Building Destroyed by Flames," *Hartford Courant* April 13, 1961, 27. I thank Stephen J. Paterwic for information on the Enfield, Connecticut, meetinghouses.
42. I thank Jerry V. Grant for the information that the first meetinghouse roof was flat by 1871. His information is based on a dated photograph by James Irving.
43. Christian Goodwillie and John Harlow Ott, *Hancock Shaker Village: A Guidebook and History* (Pittsfield, Mass.: Hancock Shaker Village, Inc., 2011), 144.
44. Stephen J. Paterwic, *Historical Dictionary of the Shakers*, 2nd ed. (Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 2017), 203.
45. Canterbury, New Hampshire, "Current Record of Events, 1792-1885."
46. Paterwic, *Historical Dictionary of the Shakers*, 2nd ed., 21.
47. Emlen, "Raised, Razed, and Raised Again," 132-46.
48. [Robert P. Emlen], "Meetinghouse Lost in Fire," *Shaker Messenger* 3, no. 1 (Fall 1980), 3.
49. Paterwic, *Historical Dictionary of the Shakers*, 2nd ed., 316.
50. http://virtual.shakerheritage.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54&Itemid=68#.WwbcEdXwbjA

51. "Old Shaker Church Becomes Residence," *Evening Sun* (Baltimore, Maryland), July 30, 1927, 3.
52. Rachel Urquhart, "A Simple Gift: Domestic Lives," *New York Times*, January 1, 2015, D1.
53. Mario S. De Pillis and Christian Goodwillie, *Gather Up the Fragments: The Andrews Shaker Collection* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008), 85-86.
54. Ibid.
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56. The Andrewses, who were both working at the museum in the early 1960s, Edward as curator, were appalled that much of the original peg rail from the 1786 Hancock meetinghouse was cut up to fit the 1793 Shirley meetinghouse. In an angry letter to Amy Bess Miller he complained, "this original material was painted over with the false color and cut to fit space!" "Report on the Color in the Meeting House at Hancock Shaker Village," by Edward Deming Andrews, Curator, Shaker Community, Inc., April 29, 1963, Andrews Archives, uncataloged document, Winterthur Library, Winterthur, De.
57. Goodwillie and Ott, *Hancock Shaker Village*, 143-45.
58. Michael S. Graham, "Nothing Too Small to Be Remembered: the Maine Shakers' Evolving Use of Their History," in *The Shakers: From Mount Lebanon to the World* (New York: Skira Rizzoli Publications, Inc., 2014), 159.
59. Paterwic, *Historical Dictionary of the Shakers*, 2nd ed., 203.
60. Gloria Hutchinson, "Shakers—A Mere Handful—Are Alive and well in Maine," *New York Times*, August 25, 1974.
61. <http://maineshakers.com/sunday-meeting/>