From the Editor
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I am delighted to announce that the first monograph published by the Richard W. Couper Press is now available. Edited by Glendyne R. Wergland, *Visiting the Shakers: Watervliet, Hancock, Tyringham, New Lebanon, 1778-1849* is a 385-page compilation of visitor accounts to four Shaker villages. Wergland gathers these accounts, many of which have never before been reprinted, from a wide range of sources and brings them together into a coherent whole. For information on ordering a copy, see page 192.

This issue of the *Quarterly* inaugurates a new relationship between Hamilton College and the Shaker Seminar. As Christian Goodwillie notes in his article, Hamilton College has joined Hancock Shaker Village as a co-sponsor of the Seminar. As part of the agreement, selected offerings from the Seminar will be published each year in the October issue of the *Quarterly*. In addition to Goodwillie’s summary, we present two thought-provoking papers from the 2007 Seminar.

Paul M. Pearson writes on Thomas Merton and the Shakers. Pearson is director and archivist at the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky. He is resident secretary of the International Thomas Merton Society, served as president for the 10th administration (2005-2007), and is currently the program chair for the 11th ITMS conference to be held in Rochester in 2009. Pearson is a founding member and first secretary of the Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland. His most recent book, *Seeking Paradise: Thomas Merton and the Shakers*, was published by Orbis in the fall of 2003; a companion volume, *A Meeting of Angels: The Correspondence of Thomas Merton with Edward Deming and Faith Andrews*, will be published by Broadstone Books in early 2008.

Diane Sasson writes on Laura Langford and her long relationship with the Shakers of New Lebanon, especially Anna White. Sasson is a lecturer at the Divinity School of Vanderbilt University. From 1987-1999 she directed the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies and Master of Arts in Teaching Programs at Duke University. She is former president of the National Association of Graduate Liberal Studies. She is the author of *The Shaker Spiritual Narrative* (University of Tennessee Press, 1983) and articles on nineteenth-century communal societies, and editor of a four-volume work titled *Church, State and the First Amendment* (1985). Her research interests include autobiography, narrative, and gender studies.