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From the Editor

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From the Editor –

This issue includes three articles about the Shakers. Brian L. Bixby and Jill Mudgett examine “The Shaker Lovers,” a story by Daniel Pierce Thompson. Mudgett writes about cultural and environmental history from her home in northern Vermont. She is interested in Daniel Pierce Thompson’s role in the creation and promotion of a New England regional identity during the nineteenth century. Bixby met Mudgett while both were earning their doctorates in history at the University of Massachusetts. Bixby’s dissertation was on visitors to Shaker communities, and he has presented at the Shaker Seminar and Enfield’s Shaker Forum.

Jane Crosthwaite returns to our pages with an article on the Shakers’ understanding of their founding in relation to that of the United States of America. Using spirit messages and drawings received by the Shakers, Crosthwaite focuses particularly on George Washington and Christopher Columbus. Crosthwaite is professor of religion at Mount Holyoke College. She and Christian Goodwillie co-edited *Millennial Praises: A Shaker Hymnal* (UMass Press, 2009).

Christian Goodwillie provides an extensive gallery of images of Shaker ephemera found at Western Reserve Historical Society. He and I visited Western Reserve in April as part of a project to develop a new bibliography of literature by and about the Shakers. While we have always known that Western Reserve held a wealth of Shaker material (confirmed by our previous four visits), we were able to see materials that few others have had the privilege to view. What was especially exciting was that many of the items were not included in Mary Richmond’s *Shaker Literature: A Bibliography*. These images are presented without commentary.

Finally, I am enclosing a flyer announcing two new publications of the Richard W. Couper Press. One is the collected writings of Henry Cumings, an elder at the Enfield, New Hampshire, Shaker community. The other is a publication featuring 206 photographs taken by Noel Vicentini in 1936 as part of the WPA’s Index of American Design project. The pictures are of the Mount Lebanon, Hancock, and Watervliet Shaker villages. I hope you will find these of interest and send in your orders.