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# George Darrow, an Early Shaker who “Turned Away”

**Marilyn Cassidy**

The Shakers *and* the Mormons touched the lives of George Darrow and some of his descendants. Darrow, a child of Calvinists and New Light Baptists, became associated with the Shakers, shortly after their arrival in New York in the summer of 1774. He was soon connected to leading members of the Shaker Church by blood, marriage, and association. Darrow’s life’s story is interesting and important because it helps explain his association with the Believers and how they affected his life. But, Darrow turned away despite family connections and having been a participant in Shaker events.<sup>1</sup> He turned away in response to evolving church doctrine, stricter laws of obedience, and the creation of new policies and practices. Because of this, many of his descendants turned to other religions and eventually some of them joined a new sect—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Thus, though Shakers were supposed to be celibate, there are many who can claim both Shakers and Mormons as ancestors.

Christian Goodwillie’s scholarly publications about anti-Shaker sentiment and apostasy have clearly shown common themes in accounts of apostate Shakers.<sup>2</sup> Among the charges found in those writings are the sensational claims of drunkenness and sexual immorality. Despite these issues, many were attracted to the religion by Shaker claims that Christ had returned to earth and other doctrine.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, basic Shaker tenets of celibacy, confession of sins, communal living, and separating themselves from “the world” were probably difficult for many early converts to practice.

Darrow accepted at least some Shaker tenets. His choices were almost certainly influenced by the propensities of family and community members. His ultimate choices, however, show that Darrow was his own man and decided for himself what course he would take. Glendyne Wergland, a scholar of Shakerism, made an astute statement that applies to Darrow’s situation: “There is no such thing as a generic Shaker. Shakers were individuals with their own personalities and quirks; some adapted more easily to Shaker society, others struggled or left.”<sup>4</sup>

In order to understand Darrow’s choices, it is essential to understand



his family background and his involvement in the Shaker Church. It is also important to know what his relationship was to Shaker leaders and how they influenced family members and his community. His story shows how changing doctrine and policy, as well as his personal character traits, influenced his decision to leave the society.

### **Establishing a Family—Establishing a Church**

Darrow and his wife, Eunice (Meacham), were not aware of Mother Ann Lee and other Shakers' arrival in New York Harbor on August 6, 1774.<sup>5</sup> At the time, the Darrows had settled into life together on the frontier in Canaan, Columbia County, New York.<sup>6</sup> They had one child, Celia, and were expecting another.<sup>7</sup>

George was “a prosperous farmer.”<sup>8</sup> He called himself a yeoman.<sup>9</sup> The Darrows lived on the western slope of the Taconic Mountain Range where they could view eastern New York and the beauty of the valley stretching towards the Hudson River. One visitor from the east, Captain Frank Ellis, described the sight of the valley as he crossed the mountain range as being “charming . . . [looking] westward the country is alternated by hill and dale, field, forest, and stream, teeming with busy-life, until a hazy horizon obscures the view.”<sup>10</sup>

Beautiful as it was, this area of New York was frontier country. The population, though growing, was sparse and life there could be lonely. Historian, David J. Goodall notes that the “Yankees” who settled there regarded the land primarily as an economic investment and [only] secondarily as a way of life.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Goodall claims “The essential Yankee character exhibited itself through extreme religious feeling.”<sup>12</sup> Most of the settlers had a Puritan background, believed in God, and had belonged to the Congregational Church. But many had embraced the doctrine of the New Light Baptist Church whose members proclaimed their convictions aloud in religious revivals, and believed in personal salvation.<sup>13</sup> The solitude and lack of organized religion these settlers faced on the frontier intensified the thoughts they had about religion and, when they gathered to worship, their emotions and evangelical fervor were dramatically displayed.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Shakers displayed religious fervor as they worshipped.<sup>15</sup>

But the newly-arrived Shakers had a more pressing matter—survival—on their minds. Three of the immigrants, William Lee (Ann Lee's brother),

James Whittaker, and John Hocknell, procured land on the Hudson River in a district called Niskeyuna.<sup>16</sup> Here the Shakers purposely dropped out of society for a brief period to remain inconspicuous until they were able to establish themselves.<sup>17</sup> Little can be documented about this time because their leader, Lee, opposed written creeds, written statements of belief, and written testimonies.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, Lee was illiterate. But she was determined that her view of Christianity was the way to salvation, needed to be spread, and that the time was approaching for doing so.<sup>19</sup> At the time, few people knew what Shakers believed.

Meanwhile, Darrow and his wife’s expected child, a son they named Joseph, arrived on March 27, 1775.<sup>20</sup> About two and a half years later, while the Revolutionary War still raged, the Darrows produced yet another son. George Darrow, Jr. was born on October 9, 1778.<sup>21</sup> Darrow would have been pleased and proud of these children. Sons brought prosperity to families because families with healthy sons could become creditors thus increasing their wealth and community standing.<sup>22</sup> Darrow, however, was about to learn that there was a starkly contrasting view to the age-old concept that sons were an asset. It would not be long until he was introduced to the Shakers.

While the War of Independence occupied America generally, a more regional event caused excitement among Protestants in the “Yankee” zone. This event, known as the New Light Stir, was a small religious revival that occurred in June 1779, in the Berkshire hills along the border of New York and Massachusetts.<sup>23</sup> Specifically, one revival broke out in New Lebanon, New York, where Joseph Meacham, Darrow’s brother-in-law, preached at meetings held that summer in Darrow’s barn.<sup>24</sup> Meacham was considered “a verry able preacher in that line; for though naturally of quite a bashful turn, such was his eloquence & understanding manner of speech, that it was thot few if any exceeded him,”<sup>25</sup>

This revival was characterized by “wild, exalted preaching; of visions, signs, operations, and prophetic utterances; of shouting, screaming, and the falling of men and women ‘as if wounded in battle.’”<sup>26</sup> The passion subsided late that fall, however, and the people involved were disappointed and disillusioned that they had not yet witnessed Christ’s return to earth. As winter approached, the people could only encourage each other to have patience and pray.<sup>27</sup> Richard Francis assessed the situation:<sup>28</sup>

What we have, in the early months of 1780, are two

communities forty miles or so apart, the tiny group of Shakers at Niskeyuna waiting for converts, and the much larger group centered on New Lebanon waiting for the return of belief. It is rather like putting positive and negative polarities in proximity to each other, and watching for the spark to jump between them.<sup>29</sup>

And the spark did jump.

The conversion of the New Light Baptists is well known among students of Shaker lore: In their travels, Reuben Wight and Talmadge Bishop were impressed by what they learned of Shaker beliefs and the testimony that the Christ, whom they had been expecting, had already appeared through a woman, namely Ann Lee. Consequently, Wight and Bishop hastily returned to New Lebanon to tell Meacham, their preacher, about their amazing discovery.<sup>30</sup> Soon Meacham, his brother-in-law, Aaron Kibbee, and Amos Hammond, another Baptist elder, visited Niskeyuna and became convinced of the truthfulness of Shaker doctrine.<sup>31</sup> Meacham and his companions returned to New Lebanon, reported their findings to the disillusioned New Lights, and urged them to visit the society in Niskeyuna in order to judge Shaker teachings and testimonies for themselves. Within weeks, on May 19, 1780, the famous “dark day” occurred in New England, adding evidence in the minds of many that miracles were truly happening. The “dark day,” a bewildering day of darkness that covered most of New England, convinced many Christians that the Judgement Day foretold in the Bible was at hand.<sup>32</sup>

Consequently, before long, Mother Ann’s prophecy that people would come ‘in droves’ to the new church in Niskeyuna proved true. Many people traveled the road between New Lebanon and Niskeyuna to learn what all the commotion was about. David Darrow, George Darrow’s younger brother, and two companions were among those who made the trek. On the first of July 1780, Darrow and his friends attempted to deliver nine fat sheep to help feed the masses of people who were gathered to learn about Shaker beliefs.<sup>33</sup> Unsympathetic patriots who questioned their political motives stopped them, but their attempt proves that great numbers of people who needed to be fed had gathered in Niskeyuna.

Many of the inhabitants of New Lebanon, including the Darrows, were related to Joseph Meacham and it seems reasonable that Meacham’s family members traveled to Niskeyuna and believed what they heard.<sup>34</sup>

However, no records explicitly state when or if George Darrow was converted. Nevertheless early Shaker manuscripts and more recently published histories give context to his life and indicate his involvement. Darrow is listed in the “Early Believers at New Lebanon 1780-1782,” a Shaker manuscript of records kept by mandate of the church.<sup>35</sup>

## **The Darrow-Meacham Connection**

One particularly interesting Shaker manuscript, found in the records of the Western Reserve Historical Society, is a memoir by Benjamin Lyon, an early Shaker, who dictated his memories to Daniel J. Hawkins. From Lyon’s account we learn how closely situated Meacham, Darrow, and some of their other relatives were. Lyon states, “David Darrow [George Darrow’s brother] lived on the North side of the road—opposite Samuel’s & where the North Family’s company house now is.” “George Darrow [husband of Meacham’s sister, Eunice] owned the place where the Meeting house stands. His house stood where the horse shed is.” “David Darrow Sen. or ‘Father David’ . . . lived near where the meeting house stands.” “Father Joseph Meacham lived on the Same road a few rods to the South of Geo. Dar.” “Aaron Kiebbe [husband of Meacham’s sister, Sarah] . . . lived on the road that branches from said Pittsfield Road, to the left hand, between the Spring & Turner’s place that goes right by the Springs—On the top of the Hill.”<sup>36</sup> Research shows that Gideon King [husband of Meacham’s sister, Ruth] also lived in Lebanon Springs, within about two miles of George Darrow and Joseph Meacham’s homes.<sup>37</sup> Because of their close proximity to each other, these family members were undoubtedly aware of events in each other’s lives.

They all knew about Sarah Kibbee’s birth defect, a “withered” leg and foot. So they must have been aware of her experience with Elder Lee. “The day after she [Kibbee] had confessed her sins, Elder William Lee came into the room, took hold of her foot and stroking it with his hands, said: ‘According to thy faith, so be it unto thee.’” Then Mother Ann Lee admonished Kibbee to put away her crutches and “lean upon Christ.” Kibbee’s leg and foot miraculously “grew sound” and she was able to perform acts that had been very difficult or impossible before.<sup>38</sup> Probably, in part, because of miracles such as this, the Darrow and Meacham families, already the backbone of the New Light Baptists in the area, heeded the call to Shakerism. But, unlike his brother-in-law, Joseph

Meacham, or his brother, David Darrow, both of whom became leaders in the Shaker Church, George Darrow often seemed to struggle with the concepts and teachings of Shakerism.

### **Mission to the East**

Darrow, some of his neighbors, and others from the area traveled to Ashfield, Massachusetts, a town about 45 miles east of New Lebanon, to listen and learn from the preaching of Shaker leaders. Ashfield served as home to the Shaker missionaries for the entire winter of 1782, when they were on their extended missionary tour.<sup>39</sup> Darrow's acquaintance and an early member of the society, Daniel Rathbun, also attended meetings in Ashfield.<sup>40</sup> Later Rathbun recounted one meeting in 1785. He had apostatized from the Believers when he wrote a scathing letter to Whittaker, a leader in the church, stating his reasons for opposing Shakerism.

I have also seen such a lead given to excessive drinking, that I could not go with it without sacrificing or violating my conscience; and therefore it was that I complained to you so much about it. I think it is very evident that your people in general are become great drinkers—and that from your examples; for if you did not do it yourselves, they would not dare to do it. I have certainly seen and heard complaints from others, of your often-being beside yourselves; especially when you rode abroad. One time you and elder William, and George Darrow, came in to John Spires, I being there, and George smelt and acted as if he was full of rum up to his gullet, and the rest of you not much behind him. I remember this same George was chastised sharply at Ashfield for covetousness by the church when they were there; but afterwards becoming very liberal and free with liquor to your mother and the elders, and partaking of it with you himself, he soon became a great favorite of the church, while I sunk into contempt for an uneasiness and complaints against such practices.<sup>41</sup>

This letter provides a definite link between Darrow and Shaker leaders.

Although, if Rathbun’s’ claims were true, the chastisement Darrow received may have been the beginning of Darrow’s disenchantment with his new religion. It is not as if Darrow was the only person to be publicly reprimanded however.

Wergland points out that Lee “proselytized by publicly denouncing men and women whose sins caught her attention.”<sup>42</sup> Samuel Ellis, another early Shaker, later recalled that in the autumn of 1782, Lee addressed a room full of followers at Ashfield and “chided them for loving their lust, ease, and sloth instead of ‘the gospel.’ ‘You are lazy idle people; you have set out in the way of God,’ she said, ‘and think you have travelled far enough.’”<sup>43</sup>

At first, Darrow’s public denouncement did not seem to have affected his attitude towards Lee or tempered his enthusiasm for her church. Given the attitude of men towards women at the time, Darrow might easily have been embarrassed and annoyed by being openly called to account by a woman.<sup>44</sup> Wergland notes that there were some Shaker brethren who were upset by female power and “who could not tolerate ‘female rule.’”<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, Darrow remained involved in Shaker affairs for some time after the Ashfield incident.

Wergland states that “Celibacy was the key to Shaker equality,” and “eliminated the source of men’s traditional authority over women.”<sup>46</sup> Though Darrow may not have struggled with equality, he almost certainly struggled with celibacy and though the two may have been connected in the minds of some, celibacy may have been a different matter for him.

The subject of lust was discussed and condemned in the earliest meetings between Shaker authorities and potential converts, but at first marriage and its physical intimacy was not utterly prohibited.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless as Shaker doctrine became more defined, more emphasis was placed on the law of celibacy. Darrow certainly knew the dogma, but he and his wife became parents to a third son, David Meacham Darrow, on March 13, 1782. More significantly, the Darrows had another baby boy two years later, and the birth of this son, James, was followed by the birth of two additional daughters.<sup>48</sup>

## **More Accusations**

While apostates and anti-Shakers claimed that celibacy destroyed natural affection between family members, sexual abstinence was only one

aspect of Shakerism that came under attack.<sup>49</sup> The claim of excessive drinking, was made early and often against Lee and other leaders. When Rathbun made his accusation, he charged Darrow and Shaker leaders with drunkenness.<sup>50</sup> Charges like this were usually dismissed by devoted members of the sect. Yet the charge of drunkenness was almost certainly based on fact. Goodwillie supports this by sharing a newspaper debate that was published in 1796-97 between two anonymous men, “Calvin,” and “A Lover of Truth.” Calvin publicly criticized Shakers, and A Lover of Truth, defended them. In one 1796 article, the unidentified Calvin accused Mother Ann of drunkenness and lasciviousness. What is intriguing is Lover of Truth’s response: “For the sake of argument, let it be admitted that all this is true, and that these excesses took place about 12 or 15 years ago; the question then is, are the Shakers *now* in the habit of practicing such enormities? No.”<sup>51</sup> Goodwillie’s assessment is telling, “This is quite a loaded instance of playing devil’s advocate. Why would Lover [of Truth] so casually accede to Calvin’s accusations, which were among the most sensational and commonly repeated charges against the Shakers throughout the eighteenth century?”<sup>52</sup>

Excessive drinking was a problem in Colonial America that had not yet been widely addressed. Historian, Paul E. Johnson provides insight, “liquor was an absolutely normal accompaniment to whatever men did in groups. . . such community gatherings as election days, militia musters, and Fourth of July celebrations invariably witnessed heavy drinking by men at all levels of society.”<sup>53</sup> Alcohol was part of everyday life and was used by men, women and children alike. Because drinking was equated with hospitality, it is easy to understand why excessive drinking may have occurred in at least some Shaker gatherings.

## **Darrow’s Legacy**

Darrow was certainly no stranger to liquor. It played a large role in the lives of his ancestors and his descendants. Darrow’s great-uncle, Christopher Darrow, for example, was involved in the rum distilleries of New England and even invested in a ship to go to Barbados to purchase molasses for his business.<sup>54</sup> Four generations later, Darrow’s son, George, Jr., and his partner, Heman Oviatt, were involved in building and operating extensive distilleries in Ohio, both before and after the War of 1812.<sup>55</sup>

While drinking was normal, records and testimonies about the mission

to the east show that Shakers were persecuted and harassed because of claims of excessive drinking.<sup>56</sup> After much persecution, Lee and her companions decided it was time to return to Niskeyuna early in July 1783. They were tired. They had been confronted by mobs almost continuously for the whole of their mission trip—and mobs continued to follow them as they returned west. They finally arrived in New Lebanon, on Saturday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August, after being gone for nearly twenty-six months.

## **The Arrest**

Lyon, in his memoir, recalled, “Mother [Ann] went from John Bishop’s to Hezekiah Hammond’s. & from there to George Darrow’s which was only across the road. There she staid overnight.”<sup>57</sup> Witnesses gave testimony that corroborates Lyon’s statement and described the events that followed.<sup>58</sup> The neighbors had become increasingly annoyed at the nightly commotion of Shaker worship and obtained a warrant on trumped-up charges against “two leaders,” Darrow and David Meacham. The warrant accused Darrow and Meacham of abusing Love Meacham, David Meacham’s thirteen-year-old daughter. Shortly after Lee and her companions arrived at the Darrow home, two angry groups led by former militia captains approached the house from different directions and placed Darrow and Meacham under arrest. Before the men were taken to the courthouse, Darrow asked his brother, David Darrow, and a friend, John Spiers, to protect his home and his guests.<sup>59</sup>

With Darrow and Meacham out of the way, the encircling mob gained enough courage to attack. David Darrow, Spiers, and others tried, but were not able to hold the angry men at bay. The three doorways of the house were guarded, but the attackers were determined to enter. In their fury, mob members threw Spiers from an elevated back door three times. Other Shakers were dragged from the house by their hair, limbs, and clothing and deposited in a nearby mud-puddle. Inside, Lee was in a partitioned-off back bedroom.<sup>60</sup>

Despite efforts of the brethren who guarded the door to Mother Ann’s room, members of the mob were able to tear through the ceiling and, seizing Ann by the feet, dragged her through the parlor and kitchen and pitched her head-first out the door into a waiting carriage.<sup>61</sup> Her ride to the courthouse was fraught with danger and roughness as members of the mob tried to overturn the carriage and pull accompanying Shaker



brethren from their horses.<sup>62</sup> At the courthouse, Lee was treated “so roughly that she lost her cap and apron.”<sup>63</sup> These events had such an effect on the community that the account was recorded and repeated for years. A memorial was carved in a rock commemorating the day.<sup>64</sup> Even Lyon, though he was probably very young when it happened, mentioned Lee’s visit to New Lebanon in his memoir.<sup>65</sup>

When the trial of Darrow and Meacham dwindled for lack of evidence, Lee was brought before Eleazer Grant, local justice of the peace and magistrate.<sup>66</sup> It took several days, but Lee was finally released on the bond of David and George Darrow.<sup>67</sup> This may have been Darrow’s last personal interaction with Lee, and he deserves credit for his generosity towards her. After their release, Lee and her companions made their way back to their home in Niskeyuna despite continued harassment and persecution. They arrived there on September 4, 1783, the day after the Treaty of Paris was signed. One year later, on September 8, 1784, Ann Lee died.<sup>68</sup>

Although Darrow was not a leader or a missionary, he participated in the Shakers’ missionary tour. He hosted the missionaries at New Lebanon, even though his good intentions were thwarted by mob action. And, finally, he and his brother posted bond for Lee and her companions securing their release from jail. For the time being he remained one of the faithful.

### **Changing Shaker Leadership—Changes in the Church**

Upon Lee’s death, James Whittaker accepted leadership of the church.<sup>69</sup> This meant change was in the air because, unlike Lee, Whittaker could read and write. He began reading aloud from the Bible during his dynamic sermons, and he communicated with scattered Shaker converts through correspondence and by written orders.<sup>70</sup> Further, Whittaker encouraged dispersed Shaker families to share what they owned and “have all things in common.”<sup>71</sup> Specifically, he “continued the effort to consolidate the families of [scattered] Shakers” by calling for some to “sell their homes and farms and live with others.”<sup>72</sup> Whittaker became known for solemnly preaching the doctrine of self-denial and “demanding complete withdrawal from the world.”<sup>73</sup>

One communal family gathered under Whittaker’s leadership in New Lebanon where the first and largest group of Shaker converts resided.<sup>74</sup> A meeting-house that Whittaker ordered to be built was raised on October 15, 1785, on land possessed by George Darrow.<sup>75</sup> It was dedicated on

January 29, 1786.<sup>76</sup> After it was constructed, Whittaker and other church leaders discontinued proselytizing and concentrated on building up the church and indoctrinating those who had accepted their dogma.<sup>77</sup> Whittaker preached at the newly erected building for another year, and worked among the converted at various locations around New England and New York until his death on July 20, 1787.<sup>78</sup>

## **George Darrow’s Land**

Because Darrow was considered prosperous, it would be easy to assume, as some have, that he donated land for the first meetinghouse in New Lebanon. He was a yeoman—both a farmer and an artisan/tradesman.<sup>79</sup> It seems reasonable, given his family’s proclivity to manufacture rum and Rathbun’s claim that Darrow was “very liberal and free with liquor to your mother and the elders,” that he was a distiller.<sup>80</sup> Manufacturing rum was the largest and most lucrative industry in early America, so if Darrow did own a distillery his wealth may have been partially due to his trade.<sup>81</sup> But Darrow was no fool when it came to land transactions either. In this he was like his father, Nathanael Darrow, who was an early settler of New Lebanon.<sup>82</sup>

The settlement of the area that became New Lebanon began in the late 1760s and was brought about mainly through two land transactions.<sup>83</sup> The first contract took place around 1750, between a group of Connecticut investors (squatters) and the Mohican Indians.<sup>84</sup> Darrow’s father, Nathanael, possibly acquired land from one of the original investors as his name is found among those who had lots surveyed and assigned to them between 1757 and 1760.<sup>85</sup>

Lyon’s memoir provides details about the New Lebanon settlement a couple of decades later. Because Lyon’s narrative mentions Lee’s visit to New Lebanon, it seems reasonable that the time Lyon was remembering was around 1783. Lyon’s record informs us about the changing nature of the New Lebanon community:

George Darrow owned the place where the Meeting house stands. This house stood where the horse shed is. Believers early bought him out & he moved to the place now known as the Darrow place, in the South West corner of the lot, upon the spot where the N. Family have recently built a

tenant house. Daniel thinks, tho he is not quite certain, that Father Joseph and George Darrow changed places when George was bought out.<sup>86</sup>

In other words, George Darrow owned the property and lived in the locality that became the center of the New Lebanon community.



Survey of George Darrow's land, February, 1779.  
Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College.



Know all men by these Presents, that We, George Darrow & David Darrow, both of New-Lebanon in Kings-District County of Albany & State of New-York, do hereby give, sell and in Consideration of the Sum of Eight Pounds New-York Currency to give hand paid by Elder James Whittaker, and the rest of the Elders and Church of Christ, and People of God that stand in Union that are commonly known in the World by the Name of Shakers that meet at the new Meeting-House, which the P<sup>o</sup> People of God built the Year past to Worship God in, in New-Lebanon aforesaid: the receipt whereof we do hereby acknowledge and ourselves therewith fully satisfied and payed, we have therefore and do by these presents for ourselves our Heirs and Assigns, Bargain, sell and Acquit unto the P<sup>o</sup> Elder James Whittaker and the rest of the Elders & Church of Christ and people of God that stand in Union all our Claims, Right, Title, Possession and Property that we have to a certain piece of Land, Situate Lying & being in New-Lebanon aforesaid (viz) Beginning at a great Stone Northward of the Meeting House aforesaid: thence running South q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> West on the Road which Leads from the Post to Richmond & Pittsfield Swanton Roads to another Stone: Thence West q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> North on our Land ten feds to another Stone: Thence North q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> East on our P<sup>o</sup> Land twelve feds to another Stone: Thence East q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> South on the Same, three feds to another Stone: Thence South q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> East on the Same to another Stone near the House occupied by George Darrow above mentioned five feds: Thence East on a Lane Leading to P<sup>o</sup> House, q<sup>o</sup> Deg<sup>o</sup> South to the first mentioned Bounds: Containing One Acre Wanting Six feds to the same more or less to be to all Intents and purposes at the Disposal of Elder James Whittaker and the rest of the ruling Elders of the Church of Christ and People of God that stand in Union, and to the succeeding Elders and their Assigns for ever for the benefit of the meeting House that stands upon it and any other Use that they in their Wisdom shall order it for. To have and to Hold the Same with all the Privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging; or in any wise appertaining to him the P<sup>o</sup> Elder James Whittaker and the rest of the Elders and Church of Christ, & people of God that stand in Union to them their Successors and Assigns for ever for the purposes above mentioned and we the P<sup>o</sup> George and David Darrow do for ourselves our Heirs and Assigns promise to secure and defend the Same against the Claims or Demands of any Person or Persons, for, by, or Under us in Witness whereof we have hereunto set our Hands and Seals this Third Day of May Anno Domini one thousand seven Hundred Eighty Six

Sign'd Seals and P<sup>o</sup> in presence of us  
 Jonathan Walker  
 Hershiah Rowland

George Darrow  
 David Darrow

Deed, George and David Darrow to James Whittaker, May 3, 1786.  
 Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College.

The date the meetinghouse was constructed is important. The meetinghouse was built (started) on October 15, 1785, and probably dedicated January 29, 1786.<sup>87</sup> Yet, three months later, on April 26, 1786, Darrow's father, Nathanael Darrow, deeded to his sons, George and David, approximately 193 and ½ acres of land for £600 "Lawfull money."<sup>88</sup> He signed the deed with the notation that he had interlined (inserted) the following exception: "Except one Acre Lacking Six Rods which I Gave a Deed of this Day to Elder James Whittaker for the meeting House &c."<sup>89</sup>

This deed indicates that the land George Darrow and David Darrow lived on was actually owned by their father until after the meetinghouse was dedicated. Then the land was sold to both brothers with the notation that a little less than an acre of the deeded land had been given to Whittaker for the meetinghouse. One week later, on the third of May, the Darrow brothers sold the land that had previously been given by their father to "Elder James Whittaker," to Whittaker for £8 New York currency. Perhaps the later deed was merely establishing a clear chain of title or correcting unforeseen legal issues, but it may have been an indication of Darrow's attitude towards giving his land away.

The following April in 1786, about six months before his death, Nathanael Darrow signed separate deeds to a large tract of land in the same vicinity.<sup>90</sup> George Darrow purchased 75 acres, 2 rods, and 30 perches for £300 lawful money. David Darrow purchased 85 acres, 2 rods, and 30 perches also for £300. A year later, George Darrow sold his tract to the Shakers for £500 lawful money. Then, ten days later, on April 21, 1788, David Darrow sold his tract to the Shakers for £400.<sup>91</sup> No deeds after that time have been found for George Darrow. David Darrow ended up donating some of his land to the Shakers for five dollars "to be Improved according to the understanding and Direction of the Said Deacons and their Services as they Shall Direct and appoint," whereas George Darrow seems only to have made a substantial profit by selling to them.<sup>92</sup>

Whatever reasons Darrow had for handling land transactions the way he did, he undoubtedly understood the need for his brother-in-law to live near the meetinghouse and the ecclesiastical center of the community. After Whittaker's death, Joseph Meacham became head of the United Believers, and New Lebanon became the center of the Shaker Church. Because Darrow's land was in the center of New Lebanon it makes sense that he changed places with Meacham and moved away from the geographical center where he had probably resided for years.<sup>93</sup> As he

physically moved from the center, Darrow also moved emotionally from Shaker leaders and their doctrine. As First Elder, Meacham increased the emphasis on adhering to dogma, especially the law of celibacy. He also initiated new policies and created “orders” or “families,” based upon the Old Testament temple with three courts which he symbolically correlated with three “orders” or divisions within the structure of the church. The third order was for older members who were considered less pure than the young because they had “lived longer after the flesh.”<sup>94</sup> Darrow fell into this category.

### **Darrow’s Drift from Shakerism**

Much happened that may have tempered Darrow’s enthusiasm towards Shakerism; then several more events also affected him directly. The first occurred on January 11, 1792, when his old house “took Fire and Burned up.”<sup>95</sup> Perhaps this burning was symbolic of Darrow’s feelings and future relationship with the Shaker Church.

Darrow showed ambivalence towards the Shakers before the middle of 1792 when he demanded compensation from the church for “Dammages Done by Horses In grain and Lots at Sundretimes judged to be To the vallue of twenty Shillings & 6 pence £1:0:6.”<sup>96</sup> The document containing this information was signed by Darrow as a receipt for payment received by the hand of Noah Wheaton, for damages and tanning services in the amount of 6 shillings, six pence, and the payment to Ephraim Hunt, a Shaker, for 14 shillings that Darrow apparently owed him. But the tone of the document is matter-of-fact and business like. Nothing suggests hostility towards the Shakers on Darrow’s part.

Another document (undated) is also interesting. This is a claim for compensation for property held in trust and food provided for the people who went to be taught at Niskeyuna in order “That the poor might have an Equil previledg of the gospel with the Rich.”<sup>97</sup> It is a rather lengthy document that asserts the Shakers’ position that those they urged to donate had done so freely and had not been compelled. It also claims that those they had urged to work had done so freely as a matter of faith. It was the Shaker position, therefore, that the church could not and would not acknowledge that it was ever in debt to anyone. Nevertheless, in order to keep peace, they agreed to a settlement, which they insisted was a gift, not a payment. Eight men pled they had done more than their equal

share and also claimed necessity.<sup>98</sup> The men were from New Lebanon and Darrow was on the list. They each received £7.<sup>99</sup> Although not dated, this document provides a second witness to Darrow's lack of total commitment to the church.

In focusing on the reasons for Darrow's apostasy, it is easy to assume that the critics of Shakerism were faultless and to think the worst about the sect. These documents show, however, that the Shakers tried to keep peace with all their neighbors including those who had turned from them. The documents create a sense that Darrow was not going to be taken advantage of but that he held no ill will towards the Believers. Lyon supported this when he recalled, "Reuben Wight—George Darrow & Seth Thurber turned away—." Then, as an afterthought, "They always remained Friendly."<sup>100</sup>

Although Darrow demonstrated some misgivings towards Shaker practices and doctrine, he remained involved in Shaker affairs at least as a friendly associate until January 1793. An entry in the *New Lebanon Journal of 1788-1794*, dated October 16, 1792, states, "George Darrow Returned from Hudson in Pursuit of our Stollen Horses."<sup>101</sup> Entries in January show his determination and success: "January 25, 1793. . . Cold—George Darrow Went after our Stolen Mares," and "January 31, 1793. . . George Darrow Brought home the 2 Mares that we had stole Last Fall."<sup>102</sup> Whether Darrow was paid for this service is unknown. By now he was 45 years old, still associated with the Shaker church, and still uncommitted to the practice of celibacy. His youngest child, Rosannah, was born April 1, 1795.<sup>103</sup>

## **Other Apostates**

Darrow's ambivalence may have increased as he saw some of his relatives drift from the church. Celia Darrow, Darrow's eldest daughter, turned away December 22, 1795.<sup>104</sup> Gideon King, brother-in-law to both Meacham and Darrow, was embittered by Shakerism, deserted his wife, Ruth, took some of their children, and turned away.<sup>105</sup> At one point, Ruth herself left and got as far as Richmond, Massachusetts, before she discovered her husband had remarried. She returned to New Lebanon only to be relegated to the Second Order.<sup>106</sup> Later, shortly after Meacham's death, two of Ruth's sons, who had remained with her, left the church at the end of what was considered "a serious falling away" mostly among the young.<sup>107</sup> Meacham

was aware of the numerous apostasies around 1794 or 1795, and blamed his declining health on the grief he felt for the number of youth leaving the faith.<sup>108</sup>

Meacham died on August 16, 1796, severing the last strong cord between Darrow and the Shaker Church.<sup>109</sup> Darrow and his family remained in the area for a while and were enumerated on the 1800 U.S. census for Canaan, Columbia, New York.<sup>110</sup> Darrow appears on the tax lists of Canaan, for the years 1800-1802, where his real estate was valued at \$1500 and the value of his personal estate dwindled from \$97 to \$76.<sup>111</sup>

### **George Darrow Moves On**

Meanwhile, on April 24, 1799, Darrow’s eldest son, Joseph, was hired as a surveyor for fifty cents a day by David Hudson, a land speculator who was leading an expedition into the newly-opened Connecticut Western Reserve in what would become Ohio.<sup>112</sup> Joseph was gone about six months on the preliminary excursion. Then, with his younger brother, George Jr., he returned to Ohio with Hudson the following year to help create the permanent settlement that would become known as Hudson, in the newly formed Trumbull County.<sup>113</sup>

On October 17, 1801, George Darrow, Jr. married Olive Gaylord, a Presbyterian, in the first marriage to take place in Hudson Township.<sup>114</sup> Together George Darrow, Jr. and his wife produced twelve children, at least nine of whom lived to adulthood.<sup>115</sup> Although this couple came from religious backgrounds, early records give no indication that they belonged to or raised their children in any particular church.

On April 15, 1803, Joseph Darrow married Sally Prior in the first recorded marriage of Northampton, Trumbull County, Ohio.<sup>116</sup> Together this couple produced thirteen children, eight of whom survived to adulthood.<sup>117</sup> Like his brother, George, Joseph Darrow’s name is absent from local church rolls.

In 1806, George and Eunice Darrow migrated to Ohio to live near their sons.<sup>118</sup> Darrow no longer had close family ties to anyone living in New Lebanon, making it easier to leave the place filled with memories of his association with the Shaker Church. His turning from the church was now complete. Nevertheless, Darrow had played an important role in the establishment of Shakerism in America and his name would be mentioned in history books generations later. He died November 19, 1811, in Stow,



Portage County, Ohio.<sup>119</sup>

Eight years after he died, Darrow's wife, Eunice, and his son, James, were admitted into the Shaker Church at Union Village, Warren County, Ohio.<sup>120</sup> Eunice died there on June 17, 1822.<sup>121</sup> Seven years after Eunice died her daughter, Celia, the same "Seely" or "Selia" who had turned from the church in 1795, became a member at Union Village.<sup>122</sup> She died there on July 27, 1860.<sup>123</sup>

## **Going West**

Shaker missionaries went west from New Lebanon to Kentucky and Ohio on January 1, 1805, four or five years after Joseph and George Darrow had settled in Trumbull County and one year before the elder Darrow and his wife migrated there.<sup>124</sup> Joseph and George Darrow were among the first settlers in the sparsely settled Western Reserve, but soon, as a result of governmental changes and the Harrison Land Act, there was an influx of pioneers.<sup>125</sup> Concurrently missionaries from different denominations sought converts to their various religions in the rapidly developing areas of the west.<sup>126</sup>

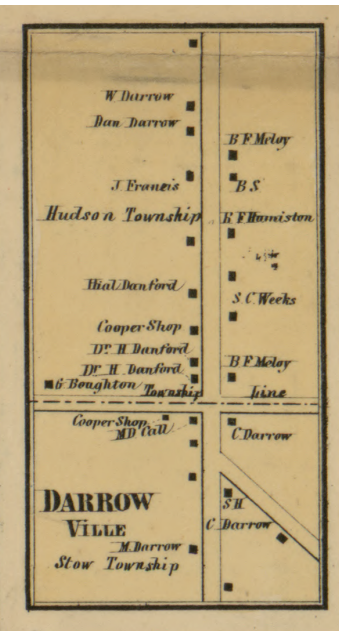
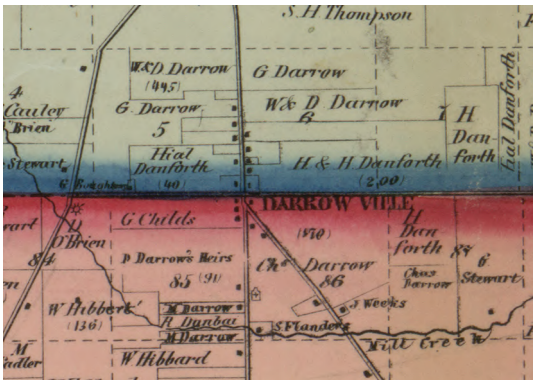
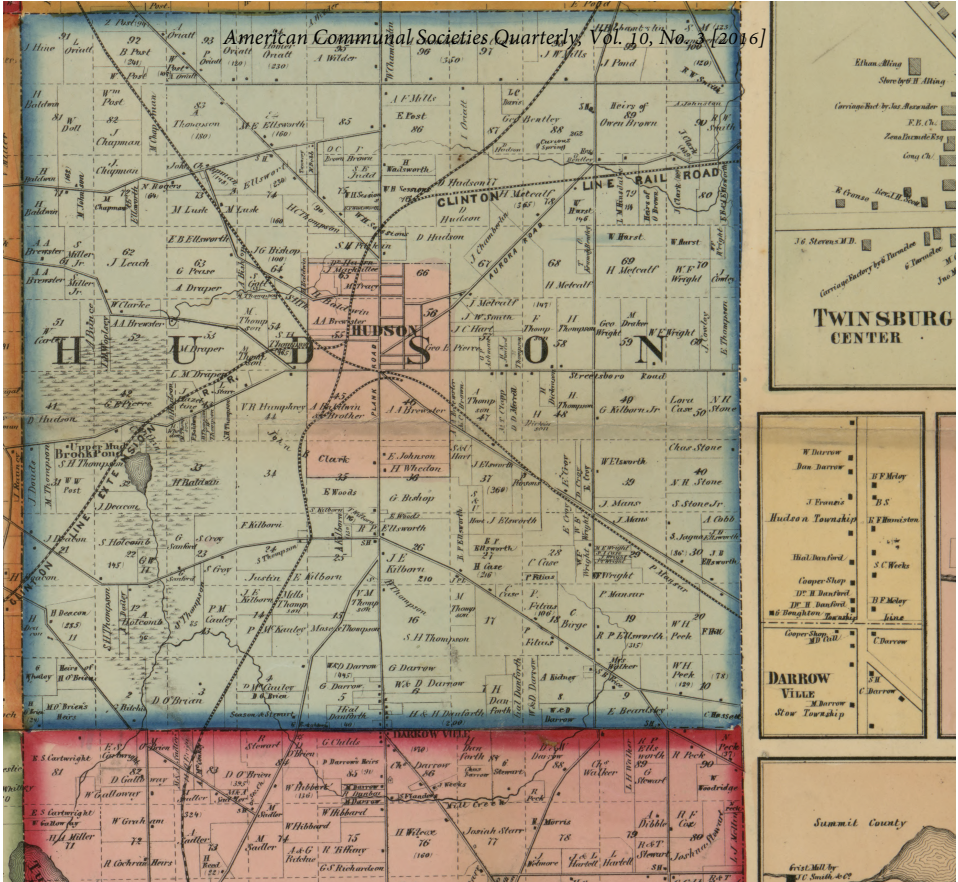
In 1806, the Darrow brothers built log cabins two miles south of the village of Hudson, in Stowe Township.<sup>127</sup> The road passing their homes eventually became known as Darrow Street. In 1818, Joseph Darrow surveyed Norton Township which led to the development of seven small villages. Ambrose Palmer, a War of 1812 veteran, laid out the village of New Portage within Norton Township.<sup>128</sup> Some of the children of the Darrow brothers settled in New Portage. Others, including a number of men by the names of Bates and Bishop—names familiar among the Shakers—also settled there.<sup>129</sup>

When Sidney Rigdon, a newly converted Latter-day Saint, preached in New Portage in 1831, he and his companion, Luke Johnson, baptized between fifty and sixty people.<sup>130</sup> That year Eliza Darrow, the eldest daughter of George Darrow, Jr., was living in New Portage with three children by her first marriage to Seth Fifield and with her second husband, Dennis Bates.<sup>131</sup> No early LDS membership records have been located for Bates, but documentation shows a definite link between Bates's first wife Isabel Bronson's birth family and the LDS church.<sup>132</sup>

Regrettably, Bates died in 1832, as a result of a fall from the roof of a mill he was helping to construct.<sup>133</sup> It is interesting that the administrator

of his estate was Palmer, the proprietor who had laid out the village of New Portage and who was to become the future leader of the local LDS church.<sup>134</sup> About sixteen months after Bates died, his wife, Eliza, married Orren McNeill, an event which seems to have severed Eliza’s ties to the Mormons. Around 1846, however, the McNeills moved to Lee County, Iowa, with their family.<sup>135</sup> Mormons made up a large portion of the population in Lee County.<sup>136</sup>

Several parallels can be drawn between the lives and experiences of George Darrow and his granddaughter, Eliza McNeill. Darrow was an early settler on the frontier of New York and became associated with the leaders of a newly-established church, the Shakers, who practiced communal living. McNeill grew up on the frontier of Ohio and became associated with the leaders of a more recently established church, the Mormons, who taught and practiced the “Law of Consecration and Stewardship,” making them a communal society.<sup>137</sup> (Both of these churches are more readily recognized by their nicknames than by their official names.) Darrow was actively involved in early Shaker affairs, yet increasingly lacked commitment to the doctrine and practices of the church. McNeill was probably active in early Mormon affairs, but the death of her second husband and her marriage to Orrin McNeill tempered her enthusiasm.<sup>138</sup> Darrow, unlike other apostates of Shakerism, remained friendly towards those of that faith. McNeill, though it cannot be said she apostatized from the Mormon faith (because no records have been found to prove she was ever a member), withdrew from her close association with the Mormons but remained friendly and stayed within the vicinity of the main body of Saints. At least two of Darrow’s children remained with or rejoined the Shakers. At least two of McNeill’s children became Mormons.<sup>139</sup> Consequently, many Darrow descendants can claim both Shaker and Mormon ancestry—an implausible result of George Darrow’s strengths, weaknesses, attitude, and choices.



Hudson and Stow Townships, and details showing the Darrow Family's lands, and "Darrowville," from Hosea Paul's *Map of Summit Co., Ohio*. Philadelphia: Matthews & Taintor, 1856. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

## Notes

1. I used the following three scholarly texts as the basis for my discussion of the Shaker religion in this paper: Edward Deming Andrews, *People Called Shakers: A Search for the Perfect Society*, (New York: Dover Publications Inc. 1953); Stephen J. Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America: A History of the United Society of Believers*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Richard Francis, *Ann the Word: The Story of Ann Lee, Female Messiah, Mother of the Shakers, The Woman Clothed With the Sun*, (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2000).
2. Christian Goodwillie, *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850*, 1-3 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013); Christian Goodwillie, “The Shakers in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers,” Part One: “From a Spirit of Detraction and Slander,” *American Communal Societies Quarterly*, 4, no. 3 (Jul 2010), 161-82; Christian Goodwillie, “The Shakers in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers,” Part Three: “Calvin” versus “A Lover of Truth,” Abusing Caleb Rathbun, the Death of Joseph Meacham and the Tale of His Sister, *American Communal Societies Quarterly*, 6, no. 1 (Jan 2012), 39-63; Christian Goodwillie, “A Postscript to Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850: New Light on Benjamin West, William Scales, Benjamin Green, and Zebulon Huntington;” *American Communal Societies Quarterly*, 8, no. 1 (Jan 2014): 46-63; Elizabeth De Wolfe, *Shaking the Faith: Women, Family, and Mary Marshall Dyer’s Anti-Shaker Campaign, 1815-1867*, (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Ilyon Woo, *The Great Divorce: A Nineteenth-Century Mother’s Extraordinary Fight against Her Husband, the Shakers, and Her Times*, (NY: Grove Press, 2011); Stephen J. Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America: A History of the United Society of Believers*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 15-18, 55, 57, 67, 85, 128, 217-19, 226, 383, 463.
3. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 19-20.
4. Glendyne Wergland, *One Shaker Life: Isaac Newton Youngs, 1793-1865*, (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015), 17.
5. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 14; Stein says the date of their arrival is uncertain.
6. Official government records, including later census records, listed the place they lived as Canaan until 1818 when the township of New Lebanon was officially formed. U.S. Bureau of the Census 1790; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1800; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1810. Most histories, however, refer to the community as New Lebanon from the beginning of the settlement. For that reason, I will also refer to it as New Lebanon from here on out.
7. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18; Bill Huelson, “Darrows in America,” 3 (Union County, IL: Darrow Association, 1974), 134-140; Celia was born on either 12 or 24 March 1774, depending on which records are consulted. Ellen F. Van Houten and Florence Cole, *Warren County, Ohio, Shakers, Union*



- Village, 1805-1920: Part 1, A-K*, (Lebanon, OH: Warren County Genealogical Society, 2003), 76; Warren County Historical Society, *Union Village Warren Co. Ohio Register of Deaths April 11, 1807 - May 19, 1920* (Warren County, OH: 1989), 3.
8. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18.
  9. Shaker Manuscripts, Special Collections, Hamilton College, George Darrow to Calvin Harlow, Crete 91; Fred Anderson, explains, “the young men of Massachusetts waited to assume the prerogatives and responsibilities of adulthood, they pursued occupations that varied according to choices their fathers had made for them while they were still children. . . Colonial farmers often practiced trades in addition to farming; artisans might inherit or purchase enough land to make most of their living from it and begin to style themselves ‘yeomen’. Fred Anderson, *A People’s Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years’ War*, (Williamsburg, VA: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 36.
  10. Capt. Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County, New York: with illus. and biographical sketches of some of its prominent men and pioneers* (1878; reprint, Old Chatham, NY: Sachem Press 1974), 304-5; In the Springs neighborhood, Gideon King had a large tract of land at an early day, sometime about 1790; digital images, Genealogical Society of Utah, *ExLibrisRosetta* ([https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE7772665](https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE7772665): accessed May 9, 2016.
  11. David J. Goodall, *New Light on the Border: New England Squatter Settlements in New York During the American Revolution*, Albany, NY: Department of History, State University of New York, 1984, 2.
  12. Goodall, *New Light on the Border*, 9.
  13. Charles J. Hoadley, *Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut: From May 1762 to October 1767 Inclusive*, (Hartford, CT: Press of the Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1881), 271.
  14. Goodall, *New Light on the Border*, 309-10; Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18.
  15. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 25.
  16. *Ibid.*, 99. Niskeyuna was an Indian word meaning “extended corn flats.” It was later called Watervliet.
  17. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 7.
  18. *Ibid.*, 9.
  19. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 359.
  20. Frederick A. Virkus, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy: The Standard Encyclopedia of Genealogy of the First Families of America III*, (Chicago: The Baltimore Publishing Company, 1968), 517, (reprint); George and Eunice were married in June 1769, five years before the Shakers arrived in New York. It is interesting to note that records show their first child was born in 1774, nearly five years after their marriage. Considering the naming

pattern prevalent among New Englanders at the time, their first son should have been named after his paternal grandfather, Nathaniel. Thus, it seems reasonable that they may have lost a child or two who we have found no record of.

21. Janis H. Miller, “Sgt. George Darrow of New London and his descendants,” typescript, LDS Church, *FamilySearch.org* (<https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/129892?availability=FamilyHistoryLibrary> : accessed 31 January 2015), 3.
22. Anderson, *A People’s Army*, 29.
23. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 109-110; Revivalist outbreaks had occurred periodically in New England from the time of the First Great Awakening in 1734. This particular one was referred to as “The New Light Stir.”
24. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18.
25. Goodall, *New Light on the Border*, 277, quoting Calvin Green, “Biographical Account of Father Joseph Meacham,” 23.
26. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18.
27. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 113.
28. Richard Francis is a Shaker scholar, broadcaster, and writer. He wrote *Transcendental Utopias*, a study of utopian communities in America and now teaches at Bath Spa University College in the United Kingdom.
29. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 113.
30. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18-19.
31. *Ibid.*, 19.
32. Wergland, *One Shaker Life*, 2.
33. Francis, *Ann the Word*, 143.
34. It appears that Joseph Meacham’s parents and siblings all embraced Shakerism. Some research still needs to be done on some of them, but Joseph Sr., his wife, Sarah, and their children, Sarah, David, Moses, Ruth, and Eunice can all be found among Shaker records.
35. Darrow, George, in Index of New Lebanon Shakers. Glendyne R. Wergland, “Darrow and Meacham Excel Spreadsheet” 30 Jan. 2015.
36. Benjamin Lyon. “Memoir.” Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, III:A-8, leaves 6, 9, 10, 30, 34.
37. Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 304-305.
38. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 26.
39. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 23. One neighbor, John Farrington, was mentioned by Ashfield historians. Lyon mentions him as a neighbor in his “Memoir,” leaf 16.
40. Daniel Rathbun was not included in Benjamin Lyon’s memoir, but Shakers testified that while in New Lebanon, Mother Ann chastised old Daniel Rathbun’s daughter at Nathan Farrington’s house, “Because though Ann had been all round her father’s house, she had never been invited inside.”

- Rufus Bishop and Seth Youngs Wells, *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations, and Doctrines of Mother Ann Lee: and The Elders with Her*, Second Edition (1888; reprint, Sabbathday Lake, ME: The United Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, 2015) 140); Mary Jane Rathbun, *The Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn Family Historian*, 3, no. 3 (July 1983), digital image, (<http://www.mcihaelrathbun.org/03-1983-003.pdf>; accessed May 20, 2016).
41. Daniel Rathbun, "A Letter to James Whittacor," in Goodwillie, ed., *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850*, vol. 1, 63.
  42. Wergland, *Sisters in the Faith*, 13.
  43. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 28. Stein was quoting from Rufus Bishop and Seth Youngs Wells, *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of Our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with Her*, (Hancock, Mass.: J. Talcott & J. Deming, 1816, (hereafter *1816 Testimonies*).
  44. Goodwillie, *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850*, 1, xxix; other men who were publicly shamed stayed with the Shakers awhile before finally leaving and publishing anti-Shaker critiques. For example, John Whitbey left the Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, community after having been humiliated by one of the theological elders there. John McBride also left Pleasant Hill after being publicly chastised.
  45. Wergland, *Sisters in the Faith*, 6.
  46. *Ibid.*, 10.
  47. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 21, 23.
  48. James Darrow was born March 18, 1784; Sallie Darrow was born June 19, 1787, and Rosannah Darrow was born April 1, 1795. See genealogical records of Bill Huelson and Janice Miller.
  49. Goodwillie, "A Postscript to *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850*," 46.
  50. D. Rathbun, "A Letter to James Whittacor," in Goodwillie, ed., *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782-1850*, vol. 1, 63.
  51. Goodwillie, "The Shakers in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers, Part Three," 41.
  52. *Ibid.*, 41.
  53. Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 56.
  54. *Diary of Joshua Hempstead of New London, Connecticut covering a period of forty-seven years from September, 1711, to November 1758. New London, CT: The New London County Historical Society, 1901, 14.*
  55. Samuel Alanson Lane, *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County*, (Akron, OH: Beacon Job Department, 1802), 837.
  56. Henry S. Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard Massachusetts, 1732-1893*, (Harvard: Printed for Warren Hapgood, 1894), 259.
  57. Lyon, "Memoir," leaf 21.

58. *1816 Testimonies*, 184; Bishop and Wells, *Testimonies* (1888), 144.
59. *Ibid.*, 185-86.
60. *Ibid.*, 186.
61. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 48.
62. Francis *Ann the Word*, 297.
63. *1816 Testimonies*, 148.
64. Ernest Dale Smith, “The Sacred ‘J.W.’ Rock, *Valley Tales, Volume One: Historical Stories of the Lebanon and Taconic Valleys*, (Canaan, NY: Echo Publishing Company, 1979), 96. The Reverend Ernest D. Smith lived in Stephentown, New York, and served as pastor of the New Lebanon Congregational Church for about 20 years. In 1974, he began historical research about the area which produced more than 150 stories for the local paper, *The ECHO*, which printed them weekly. The publisher claims “the historical facts are all true,” but no source citations are given. Hence this work may only be considered oral tradition.
65. Lyon, “Memoir,” leaf 21.
66. *1816 Testimonies*, 149.
67. *Ibid.*, 192.
68. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 32.
69. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 50.
70. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 33.
71. *Ibid.*, 34.
72. *Ibid.*, 34.
73. *Ibid.*, 35.
74. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 52.
75. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 34.
76. Andrews *People Called Shakers*, 52. I’m assuming that the meetinghouse was dedicated at the first regular meeting held there on January 29, 1786.
77. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 52.
78. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 36.
79. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 18.
80. D. Rathbun, “A Letter to James Whittacor,” in Goodwillie, ed., *Writings of Shaker Apostates and Anti-Shakers, 1782–1850*, 1, 76.
81. Christopher Darrow was a distiller in early Connecticut. The great-uncle of George, he is mentioned in *The Diary of Joshua Hempstead* as a partner in buying a ship that went to Barbados to purchase molasses that was used to manufacture rum.
82. Although many records use the spelling, “Nathaniel,” when he signed documents, he spelled his name “Nathanael.” He had a son who used the spelling Nathaniel.
83. Kevin Fuerst, “New Lebanon History,” *Town of New Lebanon*, 1, no. 1, (Jan. 2012).



84. Anna Mary Dutton, *Reflections: Canaan, New York Bicentennial*, 1976, Canaan, NY: Canaan Historical Society, 1976, 2; this is also documented very well in the book Anderson's *A People's Army*.
85. Ellis, *History of Columbia County*, 397; The deed between the Indians and the Connecticut investors is transcribed in its entirety in *Reflections, Canaan, New York Bicentennial*, 1976. Nathanael's mother was Millicent Bebee and three Bebees signed the original deed. Because Nathanael's father died when Nathanael was only eight years old, it is reasonable that a male relative adopted him or was appointed as his guardian. How much land Nathanael owned is unclear. Each of the original proprietors was entitled to one hundred acres in each of two divisions. The divisions were then surveyed into lots. After all received their two hundred acres, the remaining land was divided up equally. Another possibility exists. Perhaps George and his brothers, Nathaniel and Isaac, bought land they had traveled to as soldiers under the command of Captain Johannes Hogeboom who led a company of militia from Claverack, Albany County, in 1767. Young men like George and his brothers often enlisted in military service to get enough capital to start their own lives; soldiers had steady work and pay and received their compensation as a lump sum at the end of their military service.
86. Lyon, "Memoir," leaves 10-11.
87. Andrews *People Called Shakers*, 52.
88. Deed of Nathaniel Darrow to George and David Darrow, April 26, 1786. Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College. Nathanael used the legal term "interlined," for writing between the lines.
89. *Ibid.*
90. Nathanael Darrow died September 20, 1787. The deeds were created on April 4, 1787.
91. Deed of George Darrow to Calvin Harlow, April 11, 1788. Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College.
92. Deed of David Darrow to David Meacham, et al, July 9, 1801. Communal Societies Collection, Hamilton College.
93. Lyon, "Memoir," leaf 30.
94. Andrews *People Called Shakers*, 57.
95. "Records of the United Society of Believers, for the years 1788 to 1804 inclusive." Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, V:B-64; David Darrow's house was deliberately burned on March 22, 1792, probably in preparation for new buildings that were being erected in the burgeoning Shaker commune. Settlers often burned houses that were no longer going to be used, in order to save the nails which they considered valuable.
96. [Receipted Demand] July 23, 1792. Edward Deming Andrews Memorial Shaker Collection, Winterthur Library, #925.2.

97. “Claim for Compensation,” in Series I Covenants, laws, and legal and land records, Watervliet, N.Y. 1777-1880, *The Shaker Collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society, 1773-1995*, A-20, items 5-6, FHL microfilm 1550374.
98. [Claim for Compensation], Watervliet, N.Y. Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, I:A-20, items 5-6
99. The men were Daniel Goodrich, Joseph Markham, Eleazer Grant Esq., Daniel Goodrich Jr., George Darrow, Samuel Chapman, Timothy Hubbard, and Rafael Goodrich.
100. Lyon, “Memoir,” leaf 17.
101. “Records of the United Society of Believers, for the years 1788 to 1804 inclusive.” Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, V:B-64.
102. Ibid.
103. Miller and Huelson records.
104. Isaac Newton Youngs, “A Memmoranandum Wrote by Isaac Youngs.” Shaker Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, V:A-3. Celia was spelled Selia in this account; the Winterthur Library holds a manuscript of the list of clothing delivered to George Darrow for his daughter, Seely on December 24, 1795—the equivalent of what she had brought into the community. A notation that she had been paid £40: 14: 9 for the work she had done after she turned eighteen is included on the list.
105. Goodwillie, “The Shakers in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers, Part Three,” 39-63. In this newspaper account, an anonymous detractor of Shakerism gives details of the fate of Ruth Meacham, who lost her husband and some of her children because she followed her brothers, Joseph, David, and Moses Meacham, into Shakerism.
106. Goodwillie, “The Shakers in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers, Part Three,” 58-59.
107. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 64.
108. Ibid., 64.
109. Stein, *Shaker Experience in America*, 48.
110. 1800 U.S. Census, Columbia County, New York, population schedule, Goshen, 1232, George Darrow; digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com>; accessed September 7, 2012); FHL Film 193710.
111. New York (State) Comptroller’s Office, “New York, Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799-1804,” digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com>; accessed December 31, 2014), entry for George Darrow; Microfilm Series B0950 (26 reels), Albany, New York: New York State Archives.
112. Grace Goulder Izant, *Hudson’s Heritage: A Chronicle of the Founding and the Flowering of the Village of Hudson, Ohio*, Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1984, 43.
113. Izant, *Hudson’s Heritage*, 43.

114. Huelson, "Darrows in America," 134-140.
115. Miller to Cassidy, letter and family records.
116. Dorothy Parks Keller, comp., *Darrow: Notes Regarding Darrow Family in N.Y., Ohio, & Missouri* (Fort Wayne, IN: Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center, 2010), 1.
117. Keller, *Darrow: Notes Regarding Darrow Family in N.Y., Ohio, & Missouri*.
118. Ibid.
119. Ibid.
120. George died November 19, 1811, in Stow, Portage County, Ohio; Van Houten, *Warren County, Ohio, Shakers*, 76.
121. Warren County Historical Society, *Union Village Warren Co. Ohio Register of Deaths April 11, 1807 - May 19, 1920* (Warren County, OH), 336.
122. Eunice died June 7, 1822; Van Houten, *Warren County, Ohio, Shakers*, 76-77.
123. Warren County Historical Society, *Union Village Warren Co. Ohio Register of Deaths April 11, 1807 - May 19, 1920*.
124. Andrews, *People Called Shakers*, 72.
125. Ray Allen Billington, *Western Expansion: a History of the American Frontier* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 257.
126. Congregationalist missionaries from Connecticut were the first to preach in the Western Reserve, but Methodists were the first to organize a church in Norton Township. Then Baptists began making inroads into the area. By 1827, the Disciples (Church of Christ) found many converts in the area. See A.S. Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio*.
127. Miller to Cassidy, letter and family records, 28 February 1993.
128. Edward Brown, *Wadsworth Memorial: An account of the proceedings of the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the first settlement of the township of Wadsworth, Ohio* (Wadsworth, OH: Steam Printing House, 1875), 148.
129. M.L. Shook, "Norton Township," in *History of Summit County [Ohio]*, ed. William Henry Perrin (Evansville, IN: Unigraphic, 1972), 587.
130. Luke S. Johnson, "Autobiography," *Deseret News*, May 16, 1858.
131. 1830 U.S. Census, Medina County, Ohio, population schedule, Norton Twp., 188 (penned), Dennis Bates; digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com>: accessed 26 September 2012); NARA M19, Roll 135.
132. Elder R. Etzenhouser, *From Palmyra, New York, 1830, to Independence, Missouri, 1894* (Independence, MO: Ensign Publishing House, 1894), 388.
133. Brown, *Wadsworth Memorial*, 166-67.
134. *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*. Kirtland, OH. Oct. 1834–Sept. 1837.
135. Ted and Carole Miller, scanners, proofers, *Past & Present of Platte County, Nebraska - Volume II: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement* (1915; reprint, Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1997), 326-27, Martha L. McNeill; digital images, NEGenWeb Project, *Online Library* (<http://www.usgenet.net>).

org/usa/ne/topic/resources/OLLibrary/PlatHist/Vol\_II/ppp2p326.html#p326a ; 1850 U.S. Census, Lee County, Iowa, population schedule, Division 28, p. 317 A (stamped), dwelling 515, family 515, Eliza McNeil; digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com>: accessed 27 September 2012); NARA film M432, Roll 186.

136. Alexander L. Baugh, “Remembering the Mormons in Lee County, Iowa: Marking the Past in Montrose and Keokuk,” *Mormon Historical Studies*, 4 (Fall 2003), E-journal ([http://mormonhistoricsites.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/MHS\\_Fall2003\\_Markers.pdf](http://mormonhistoricsites.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/MHS_Fall2003_Markers.pdf) : accessed 6 February 2016), p. 178.
137. “Mormonism and Communal Studies,” *Times and Seasons*: February 17, 2009, weblog (<http://www.timesandseasons.org/harchive/2009/02/mormonism-and-communal-studies/>: accessed 26 June 2016; Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt: One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Embracing His Life, Ministry and Travels, With Extracts, In Prose and Verse, From His Miscellaneous Writings* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1973), 106-7. Pratt began construction of a house in New Portage in 1834, which was burned to the ground. The local citizens came together to provide him with what he needed to serve a mission and took care of his family while he served.
138. It is interesting that Eliza and her second husband, Dennis Bates, named their first child Emma Bates. Emma was born on September 6, 1831, nine months after the prophet, Joseph Smith, and his beloved wife, Emma, moved to Kirtland, Ohio, 40 miles north of New Portage. The name “Emma” has not been found in the naming patterns of either the Bates or Darrow families.
139. Mark Gaylord Fifield, Eliza McNeill’s second son, was baptized into the LDS Church September 3, 1881. Louisa Charlotte McNeill married Wilder Brock whose parents names are found in early LDS records. This family did not go west to Utah but probably became members of the Reorganized Church in the Midwest. Some of Joseph Darrow’s relatives also became Mormons.