Migration: Vermont and New York, by Kyle Hurst

Considering their shared history, little wonder that Vermont and New York influenced each other when it came to migrating populations. Understanding patterns of settlement, expansion, and migration within each can help us track and identify origins for families on the move in the Northeast.

This session will explore when and how New Englanders and New Yorkers populated the territory that became Vermont and when, why, and how Vermonters then migrated into and across New York. The study of population movements within the English colonies turned American states will focus on the century spanning from the 1750s through the 1850s.

Having gained an understanding of the general migration patterns, how do we research the New England origins of ancestors who migrated to New York? Learn techniques and record sets that can uncover this migration story.

Kyle Hurst, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press, holds degrees in History and Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin in Madison and a Master’s certificate in Museum Studies from Tufts University. For the culmination of this program, she completed a semester-long internship at the National Archives in Waltham, MA. A skilled writer, she has been credited for her contributions to the *Vita Brevis* blog and *American Ancestors* magazine and has authored four books to date. Her book *Ancestors and Descendants of Charles Le Caron and Victoire Sprague* won the 2020 National Genealogical Society Award for Excellence in the Genealogy and Family History category. Her areas of expertise include genealogical research in the mid-Atlantic, Midwest, New England, and various European countries.

Kyle will be presenting to us live from the Boston area, via Zoom.

A Documentary History of Early French-Canadian Migrations to Vermont and New York, by Patrick Lacroix

In the spring of 1831, Joseph and Dorothee Royer returned to Lower Canada. At Saint-Denis, on the Richelieu River, Father Jean-Baptiste Bédard baptized their children Joseph Simon and Zoé, to whom Dorothee had given birth in the United States. For two years, at least, Joseph had worked as a day laborer south of the border. Although history has not recorded where, exactly, the family lived in that time, the parish register confirms that French-Canadian migrations were not merely a thing of the late nineteenth century.
Other records, including newspaper reports and government documents, also attest to sustained cross-border movement prior to the 1860s. Though familiar to genealogists, these sources are still little explored by historians, least of all by scholars who begin the Franco-American story in the aftermath of the Civil War. Yet they point to significant continuity in French-Canadian migrations going as far back as the 1780s. They also suggest that the southern region of Lower Canada was by no means a closed society and that parts of northern Vermont and New York may even be described as a borderland. In fact, research in this field promises to restore French Canadians’ place as central figures in the making of the Lake Champlain basin and its periphery.

Five of Zoé Royer’s fourteen children would eventually settle in the United States. One went to Massachusetts, another worked in Connecticut for several years. But all spent time in Vermont. Their journeys gave proof that settlement in the Lake Champlain region enabled French Canadians to broaden their horizons even farther—and, in time, establish the more iconic Little Canadas in large industrial settings.

Patrick Lacroix is a native of Cowansville, Quebec. He earned a Ph.D. in history at the University of New Hampshire in 2017 and has since taught at Phillips Exeter Academy and at liberal arts colleges in Canada. He managed the PearsonVUE centers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, before accepting his current role as director of the Acadian Archives in Fort Kent, Maine, in 2021. Dr. Lacroix has authored two books, *John F. Kennedy and the Politics of Faith* and *Tout nous serait possible: Une histoire politique de Franco-Américains, 1874-1945*. A scholar of Franco-American history, he has contributed articles to such journals as the Catholic Historical Review, the American Review of Canadian Studies, Quebec Studies, and Vermont History.

**Vermont, 1800 and Froze to Death: The Cold Year of 1816, by Howard Coffin**

1816 has long been known as the year without summer. Vermonter still call it “1800 and Froze to Death,” a year of frosts every month, dark skies, and mysterious lights that caused a widespread belief that a higher power was displeased. In reality, Vermont was far from alone in feeling the effects of these drastic weather changes.

In this talk, historian Howard Coffin will go over the global effects of this phenomenon, and the cause, which was only determined well into the 20th century. The effects on Vermont included failed crops, scarce food, thousands leaving the state, and a religious revival that included the construction of many churches in the state.

Howard will be bringing copies of his books to sell at the conference.

*Howard Coffin* is a seventh generation Vermonter and author of nine books. He is best known for his books on the Civil War: *Nine Months to Gettysburg*, *Full Duty*, *The Battered Stars*, *Guns Over the Champlain Valley*, and *Something Abides*. Howard is a former reporter for the *Rutland Herald* and *Christian Science Monitor*. He has served as News Director for the University of Vermont and Dartmouth College, and as Press Secretary to Senator Jim Jeffords. Howard has long been involved in historic preservation as a member of the National Civil War Sites Advisory Commission.

**Misc. Information**

Our schedule will include a short business meeting for members. We will also have displays and books, including those by Howard Coffin, for sale. The option of a sandwich lunch may be ordered ahead.

Information on times and cost will be posted soon.