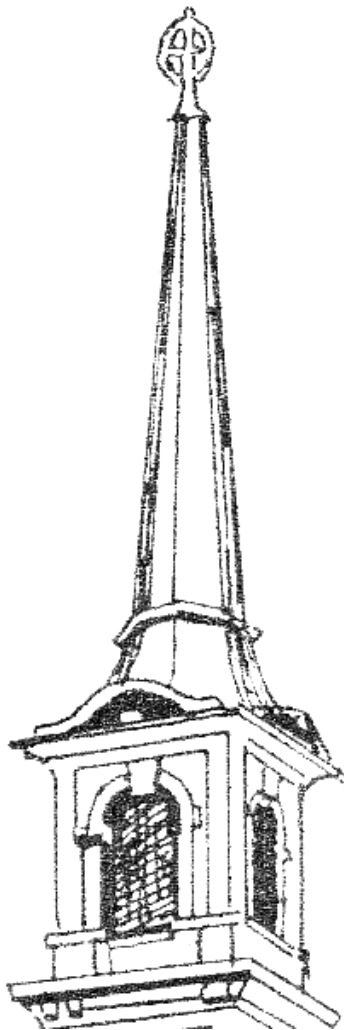


*“To Obtain Religious Instruction
More Congenial to Their Sentiments & Feelings”:*

The Formation of
The Orthodox Congregational Church
in Mansfield, Massachusetts



Heather Owen
Senior Comprehensives in History
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Introduction

On a Wednesday afternoon in early May 1838 a group of Congregationalists in Mansfield, Massachusetts, met in the comfortable home of Major Elkanah Bates to discuss possible secession from their church. Founded when the town was incorporated in the 1770s, First Parish was the center of Mansfield, geographically, politically, and religiously. Though its influence had dwindled with the establishment of local Methodist and Baptist churches and the statewide disestablishment of Congregationalism in 1833, First Parish, housed at the Center Meetinghouse, remained strong in the town. However, the secession of over half its members on this May day would strike a blow from which the church would never recover.

The seceders represented an interesting cross-section of a New England town on the cusp of massive industrialization. Elkanah Bates was a well-to-do entrepreneur, the owner of Mulberry Tavern and a major stockholder in local

cotton mills. Others were members of the emerging middle class – farmers, basket makers, and carpenters. Some would go on to work for the railroad while others found prosperity in the booming straw bonnet industry. They were married to respectable women who bore them seven or eight children, and made their modest homes throughout the small town of Mansfield, often living next door to brothers or cousins. They joined moral reform associations, attended lyceums on temperance, and hotly debated the issue of abolition. The issue this day, though, was couched in theological terms.

According to their official records, these men met to “consider the state of affairs in the Society to which they belong[ed], & to devise measures by which to obtain religious instruction more congenial to their sentiments & feelings than they have recently enjoyed.”¹ The recent doctrine preached from the pulpit in the Center Meetinghouse had taken a liberal, Unitarian turn, which de-emphasized the divinity of Christ and denied the existence of a tripartite God. The Trinity, liberals argued, was not a biblically justified doctrine. The men at Bates’ house, though, were by their own definition orthodox, meaning that they believed in the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They believed in Christ as the Son of God and in his dualistic human and divine natures. By the end of the day they had pledged themselves to the formation of the Orthodox Congregational Society (OCS) by signing a short compact in which they agreed to form “a Society or association for the purpose of providing and supporting orthodox preaching.”² This particular schism, however, was about more than a simple disagreement over Christological doctrine.

Both local historians and scholars who study such splits between the liberal and orthodox Congregationalists in Massachusetts point to theology as the chief cause. Separating the schism from the social, economic, and political realities of the town, though, does not yield a complete picture of motivations and causes. Indeed, theology *was* a factor in precipitating the eventual 1838 schism, but it was not the only one. It fueled the conflicts and compromises made regarding preachers, caused chaos at the parish meetings in the critical months before the schism, and was reflected in the wording of the founding documents for the new church. Inconsistencies within this argument for theological causation, however, beg for explanation and suggest a need for a more nuanced understanding of the society that produced such a schism.

Family allegiances, economic concerns, and moral and religious reform movements underscored the schism and made separation a plausible course of action for the orthodox. Patterns of surnames and maiden names reveal that a few, large families dominated the newly formed orthodox society, and continued to supply members as children came of age. This testifies to the strength of these relationships in defining an individual’s allegiances to certain creeds. Furthermore, the economic prosperity of a few leading orthodox and the promising future of Mansfield’s new railroad and coal mining industries made gathering a new church financially possible. In *Baker v. Fales* (1820) the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that any seceding part of a town parish forfeited its access to Parish Funds or ministerial lands in the establishment of

a new church. Thus, the inhabitants of Mansfield had to shoulder the financial burden of establishing a new church on their own. Lastly, the reform societies and new denominations that spread through Mansfield in the 1830s set a precedent of proactive reformation for common churchgoers and made separation a plausible course of action. Mansfield's strong reform atmosphere led the orthodox to view their doctrinal conflicts with their liberal brethren as a moral mission rather than a passing difference of opinion and made compromise increasingly difficult.

While these underlying issues lay a foundation for the establishment of a new church, local agitation over abolition polarized the town and brought the theological issues to a head. In October 1836 a small riot erupted in the First Parish meetinghouse in response to an abolitionist lecture by the Anti-Slavery Society representative C.C. Burleigh. The immediate effects of the riot included the departure of many Congregationalists from the parish, the resignation of the minister, and the polarization of the town into pro and anti slavery factions. The division made itself manifest in the bickering and unsuccessful balloting at the town meetings the following year. Thus, all these factors – family relations, economic concerns, attitudes of moral and religious reform, and the divisive abolition issue – combined with the theological conflicts experienced by Congregationalists to drive the orthodox to secede from their original parish and found a new one.

Background

Until 1833, Congregational Protestantism received public support as the official religion of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Each town had to have a Congregational meetinghouse as a prerequisite for official incorporation, with local taxes supporting a full time minister. Public Christian teaching, it was argued, benefited the entire community by inculcating piety and morality among citizens. Thus, every taxpayer had a responsibility to support the church. However, a citizen could claim exemption from these taxes by showing that he financially supported another Christian denomination.³

Despite the official state support, Congregationalism was profoundly decentralized as a denomination. Each church had full autonomy and complete control over the decisions that affected it, including the hiring of ministers. Since Congregationalism was the established religion with direct public support, every male taxpaying citizen had a stake, and a vote, in the affairs of the parish. Not every parishioner, however, attended the Congregational church. This led to an official distinction between the parish as the decision making body of the institution, which included all male citizens, and the church, which included the male and female congregants who professed Christianity.⁴

First Parish, Mansfield, followed this parish-church system. Thus, though all of the thirty-one men who signed the compact and formed the OCS were

parishioners of First Parish by their rights as citizens of Mansfield, they were not necessarily professing Christians and seceding members of the Congregational church. Only thirteen of the signers were seceding members of the First Parish church and admitted as original members of the Orthodox Congregational Church (OCC), and none of the twenty-four original female members of the church were admitted to the OCS.⁵ (For a list of compact signers and their relationship to the OCC, refer to Appendix B.)

As a result of this dualistic structure, both congregants and non-congregants often made important decisions regarding the church. For example, when choosing a minister the church would make a recommendation to the parish, but the parish ultimately hired him. Should the views or interests of the church body not coincide with those of the parish, serious conflicts could emerge between the church members and non-covenanted members of the parish.⁶ As a result, pulpit exchanges emerged as a common means to relieve tensions that could develop between the church and parish over the doctrinal persuasion of the minister. Clergyman generally had long careers at their churches, and thus a congregant could attend meetings for years and hear the same doctrine from the pulpit. Occasional Sunday exchanges allowed congregants to hear different interpretations, and pacified those who disagreed with their minister's views. Exchanges, therefore, not only benefited the ministers, but also the congregants by giving them both variety and an escape hatch.⁷ The practice could also alleviate tensions between the church and parish should their opinions regarding the minister differ.

This safety valve, however, did not prevent conflict and schism at First Parish, Mansfield. The seceding orthodox church was also Congregational, but differed in doctrine, as per the wording of the compact and subsequent confessions of faith.⁸ As a result, this type of schism fits within a pattern of church schisms throughout Massachusetts that historians commonly refer to as the Unitarian Controversy. In the three counties of Norfolk, Bristol, and Plymouth twenty-four Congregational churches, including First Parish in Mansfield, split into two, with one adopting Unitarian and the other Trinitarian beliefs.⁹ It is the scholars of Unitarian history who predominantly address the Controversy.

Historiography

In the introduction to a collection of papers on Unitarianism given in 1987, Conrad Edick Wright pronounced that Unitarian historiography had entered a new phase where it would no longer be limited to theological discussions. Besides looking at old issues with new lenses, fresh topics of study had begun to emerge which were not related to the previously dominant theological narrative.¹⁰ The same can be said of the historiography of the Unitarian Controversy. Before World War II, Wright asserts, little scholarship addressed Unitarianism or the Controversy of the first decades of the nineteenth century. From the 1950s through the 70s, the main studies were strictly theological narratives that focused on the doctrinal conflict between Trinitarian and

Unitarian ministers.¹¹ This changed with the refinement of social historical analysis during the 1980s and 90s, while the research published in the late 1980s and 1990s began to look at the broad cultural and economic patterns revealed in the Unitarian Controversy.¹² The most current scholarship focuses on locating the ministers and other elites within the broad social issues of religious disestablishment, political action, and republicanism versus liberalism.¹³ Precious few studies, however, look at local town schisms, and none locate their causality outside of religious issues.¹⁴ This study, then, seeks to build upon the social histories of the 1990s in an effort to understand how the Unitarian Controversy manifested itself in the lives of common people worshipping in their local church. It moves beyond the previous scholarship chronologically by examining a schism that occurred after the 1833 disestablishment of religion in Massachusetts, geographically by focusing outside Boston, ideologically by looking at secular factors in the schism, and culturally by studying parishioners rather than the ministerial elite.

Theologically centered scholarship of the Unitarian Controversy presents a concise narrative regarding the nature of the schism. According to this reading, the Unitarian influence was geographically limited to eastern Massachusetts with Boston as the center. More specifically, the Controversy centered on the appointment of liberal Henry Ware over the orthodox Jedidiah Morse as the Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard College in 1805.¹⁵ Since the chair was the center of Congregational intellectualism, this move indicated the continuing emergence of liberalism as a significant doctrinal threat to the orthodox.¹⁶ In reaction to the decision, orthodox members of the Standing Order established Amherst Theological Seminary in 1808 as a doctrinally conservative reaction to liberal Harvard. The ministers that each college produced held to the doctrines of their alma mater and spread their beliefs as they took positions throughout Massachusetts. Tensions mounted between intellectual leaders of the two movements in the halls of Harvard and Amherst, in intellectual debate, and in the allegiances of influential Boston parishes.¹⁷

Historians also agree that liberal Unitarians represented the elite of society.¹⁸ Peter Field argues that this connection can be traced to the cultural power of Harvard College, the completion of the West Boston Bridge in 1793, and the development of an alliance between liberal members of the Standing Order with cosmopolitan Boston merchants.¹⁹ Jane and William Pease use statistical data to demonstrate the economic and political power of Unitarian and Episcopal laymen in Boston churches.²⁰ Mary Kupiec Cayton supports this conclusion as well through her own statistical and anecdotal evidence relating to the economic and cultural identities of Bostonian liberals and evangelicals.²¹

Current scholarship examines the role of the ministers and other elites within the context of major social trends in the history of young America. Jonathan Sassi, looking at emerging Christian social ideology in the new nation, corrects past misinterpretations of the Congregational ministers social importance. Historians, he argues, portrayed the ministers as either hugely political and influential or confined them “to the dustbins of social irrelevance.” Sassi, on

the other hand, argues for a more balanced approach in determining the cultural influence of the ministers that does not overemphasize either of these two “caricatures.”²² Mark Noll, who also focuses on the intellectual elite of the early nineteenth century, presents a “contextual history of Christian theology” that explores the creation of a distinctly American theology in contrast to the older European model.²³ He places his work within the historical debate concerning the influence of republicanism versus liberalism in the churches of the young republic.²⁴

Significantly less scholarship identifies the causes and effects of the Unitarian Controversy on local parishes beyond the theological center of Boston. The research that is available takes a theological approach, locating the source of rural parish schisms in the doctrinal persuasion of the ministers and congregation’s reactions to them. Controversy schisms followed two general trends. In one scenario, an orthodox minister refused to exchange pulpits with local liberals. As a result, the liberal minded congregants and parishioners tried to fire the minister, as was the case in Mansfield’s neighbor Easton, Massachusetts. However, the courts ruled that refusal to make exchanges was not grounds enough to dismiss a pastor.²⁵ Thus, liberals in this situation often left to form their own church. Conrad Wright gives a detailed account of such a split that occurred in 1813 in Dorchester, Massachusetts, over the refusal of Reverend John Codman to exchange pulpits with his liberal peers.²⁶ A reverse situation often occurred when the current pastor of a church vacated his role and a new call had to be made. Many parishes had members from both sides of the doctrinal fence, and these differences often led to conflict over who would be called to the pulpit. Quite often the parish favored a liberal minister while the church wanted an orthodox one.²⁷ Though a majority of the church, the orthodox usually represented a minority in the parish, and were outvoted. In these types of situations many orthodox decided to withdraw and form their own church. This was the situation in Mansfield.

Theology

The third minister of First Parish, Mansfield, was a well-loved man named Richard Briggs. Reverend Briggs graduated from Brown University in 1805 and was ordained at Mansfield in 1809. According to local historian William Davis, Briggs was “inclined to the Unitarian doctrine,” though during his tenure, there did not appear to be any conflict between the pastor and his people over theological issues.²⁸ In fact, such future orthodox seceders as Otis and Susanna Allen and Elkanah Bates joined the church during his pastorate.²⁹ Unfortunately for Briggs, his mental health deteriorated and by 1833, he was unable to preach on a regular basis making it necessary to find substitutes.³⁰

The task of finding substitute preachers brought out the developing conflict over the issue of doctrine. Though the historical record is difficult to reconstruct, it appears that a majority of the church tended to orthodoxy while the majority of the parish favored a liberal preacher.³¹ On March 31, 1834, the

parish reached a compromise by voting “to have Mr. Holman, [orthodox,] and Dr. Saunders, [liberal,] preach in this Parish the ensuing year, one three months then the other.”³² This arrangement did not work out so neatly in practice, though. According to an anonymous sheet of sermon notes for 1833 and 1834, both Saunders and Holman had previously preached at First Parish when the parish decided to alternate between them. Holman had just completed a stint of about four months at the pulpit. Dr. Saunders took over preaching on April 6, 1834, but did not relinquish the pulpit until December 7, 1834, other than for a few pulpit exchanges with other liberal ministers. By the end of 1834, Saunders had preached eight months to Holman’s four. Furthermore, the anonymous note-taker mentioned that on July 22, 1834, while Saunders preached from Job and Acts, Holman was present in the congregation - for what reason is unknown.³³ Thus, even though the parishioners reached a legalistic compromise between liberal and conservative doctrines, the actual record of Sunday preaching at First Parish shows that this arrangement did achieve the desired results.

Perhaps precipitated by the failure of the compromise to provide both view points in church the parish voted on November 3, 1834, to create a Committee to Supply the Pulpit until a minister could be called. Committee members Jacob Dean, Simeon Green, and Elijah Hodges were all church members, but Hodges was the only one who seceded with the Trinitarians in 1838, showing that the committee was two-thirds liberal.³⁴ The character of the group notwithstanding, it was shortly after the formation of this committee that Reverend Holman returned to the pulpit. At the town meeting the following March the committee was altered. Simeon Green and Elijah Hodges, two church members on opposite sides of the doctrinal conflict, were excused from the Committee to Supply the Pulpit and Hosea Grover and Otis Allen added in their stead. Both orthodox, these men would later become instrumental in organizing the seceding church. Thus the balance shifted from two liberals and an orthodox to two orthodox and a liberal on the committee. At the same meeting the parish “voted to employ Mr. Sayward 4 Sabbaths longer.”³⁵ Reverend James H. Sayward was “a distinctly Unitarian minister”.³⁶ At the end of his four weeks preaching, on April 27, he was invited to become the permanent minister of First Parish.

The calling of Reverend Sayward to the pastorate at First Parish reflects interesting contradictions in the hereto-straightforward liberal-orthodox conflict in Mansfield. The choice of a liberal minister undoubtedly caused a great deal of contention, as evidenced by the inability of two parish meetings to settle any business. At a meeting on April 13, for example, the only decision reached was to adjourn until April 27.³⁷ Curiously, though, the parish (including male church members) voted unanimously to give Sayward a call at this April 27 meeting. The Committee to Call on Mr. Sayward, which was two-thirds orthodox, offered him the job and the young minister immediately accepted. The ordination, scheduled for June 17, was attended by the now famous liberal

Henry Ware from Harvard College as well as Unitarian ministers from Dedham, Hollis St. Church, and six other nearby towns.³⁸

Sayward had a short and highly contentious career at First Parish. He was well loved at first and brought a lot of young energy to the pastorate. In his first year he established a Female Benevolent Society and later a Moral and Religious Improvement Society. He also married Mary Pratt, the daughter of wealthy entrepreneur and influential parishioner Solomon Pratt. However, things soon went sour when an altercation developed between him and the family with whom he boarded. Rumors spread throughout town; the content of which has not survived in historical record. Sayward's fate was sealed, though, by the anti-abolition riot at his meetinghouse in 1836. After coming under criticism for his conspicuous absence, his public accusatory responses, and the failure of his moral reform agenda, the young pastor resigned from First Parish and moved with his Mansfield bride to New Hampshire. There he died at a rather young age.³⁹

A year of turbulence followed Sayward's resignation. Upon his dismissal, the current Parish Committee, with a two thirds orthodox majority, received the charge to supply the pulpit "and hire such Preachers as they think shall suit the Parish best."⁴⁰ What followed, for a time, was a series of compromises that were monitored much more closely than the failed arrangement of 1835. Besides voting to alternate Sabbaths between orthodox ministers Holman and Emmons and liberal clergymen Briggs and Barrett, the parish met promptly when each new compromise expired, almost certainly to avoid the same failure of the 1835 arrangement. These agreements must have proven somewhat successful, for even though they met with continued regularity, the sole business conducted was to continue to have the Parish Committee supply the pulpit.⁴¹ In December of 1837, however, things began to unravel with the employment of Reverend John B. Kendell, a liberal, for three Sundays, and then till April 1, 1838. The Parish met again in March of 1838, before Kendell's contract was to expire, perhaps to make arrangements for the next doctrinal shift. However, they were unable to conduct any business beyond dissolving the meeting, an indication of extreme conflict and inability to compromise.⁴²

The April meeting after Kendell's departure saw a vote to hire an "authodox" (orthodox) pastor. Dr. Roland Green, a well-to-do, liberal member of First Parish, described the scene in his 1840 sketch of the Parish. Even though a majority of church members favored orthodoxy, Green observed that "the majority in the Parish was considered at that time Unitarian." The doctor explained that "few attended" the April 16 parish meeting where they voted to hire an orthodox minister. At the April 30 adjournment of the meeting, presumably with more Unitarians in attendance, "the Moderator, [Elkanah Bates,] opened the meeting with a speech which gave reflection to his personal feelings," probably attacking Unitarianism. Green recorded that, "This was replied to in a spirited manner, and no doubt his feelings were much excited. The former Vote to hire an Orthodox Minister was reconsidered."⁴³ Only ten days later, the orthodox left First Parish and formed their own church.

Retracing the aforementioned events reveals certain inconsistencies and peculiarities that cast doubt on the theory that theology was the only divisive factor at play. First, the Committee that nominated liberal Sayward to be called by the Parish was three fifths orthodox. Among the members were Elkanah Bates and Otis Allen, who later became deacons in the OCC. There is no doubt, either, that at the time of the nomination the Committee knew of Sayward's liberal theology, for he had been preaching at First Parish at least one month. The Parish's unanimous vote to call him also reinforces these conclusions.⁴⁴ Secondly, the causes for Sayward's resignation were not theological in nature. Though the few pages that include Sayward's resignation request are missing from the surviving First Parish Records, in 1906 local historian William Davis cited them as specifying "the depressing influence of the Riot and the dissension thus created among the People" as the cause of the minister's departure.⁴⁵ The conflict between him and his boarding family as well as the failure of his moral reform crusades certainly added to the young minister's causes for resigning.

Thirdly, though his account is fairly biased against Elkanah Bates and the orthodox, Dr. Roland Green provided some telling analysis of the causes of the 1838 schism. After the reconsideration of the "authodocks" vote, according to Green, Bates, "was frustrated in his plans and being an artful man, stiff and unbending in his opinions and having influence over a certain class in Society," gathered a group of people to withdraw from the Parish. This off-hand comment about class, related to the fact that Bates was an elite of Mansfield and a member of the rising managerial class, points to an economic dimension of the secession. It also suggests that the dominance of Bates' personality was key in the formation of the OCC. Surprisingly, Green stated that, "in his party were some Unitarians, one of which was led to believe that the course proposed to be taken would tend to Union, and harmony in the Parish. Another joined his party to keep peace in his Family, others joined being prejudiced in favor of the Calvinistic doctrines, some joined being restless anywhere, but fond of a new thing."⁴⁶ This, again, implies that theology was not the only factor uniting the seceders.⁴⁷

The last piece of evidence pointing to a weakness in the theology theory comes from examination of financial record books for the year after the schism. In 1839 Elkanah Bates served as a deacon and the treasurer of the new OCC. He had opened his home and his store for worship services before the church building was completed and donated a handsome \$150 to the new society.⁴⁸ However, the financial records for First Parish, which survive from 1839 on, reveal that Bates donated a surprising \$1051.81 to his old church that year.⁴⁹ While many reasons might explain this immense generosity to First Parish,⁵⁰ the size of his contributions refutes the idea that Bates found the liberal parish's doctrine spiritually reprehensible. He never would have made so great a total donation to the Parish if he believed it was truly heterodox. Thus, while some people may have left for strictly theological reasons, Bates, for one, did not.

Therefore, though theological conflicts between liberal and orthodox doctrines clearly played a role in the split of First Parish, ample evidence suggests that it was not so divisive and decisive as to warrant the split that emerged. In fact, other factors influenced the division by amplifying the theological conflict and making secession both a plausible and preferred course of action for the orthodox. Kinship ties, the moral and religious reform movements in the town, and the economic power of certain key orthodox helped make secession a viable option and dampened their ability and desire to forge theological compromises. The 1836 anti-abolition riot in the meetinghouse polarized the town and sent local churches crashing towards division.

Family

The 1830s were a time of upheaval and redefinition for middle class families. With the rise of industry came the demise of the family economy as workers began to turn to wage jobs outside the home. Public and private spheres slowly separated and became the accepted responsibility of men and women, respectively.⁵¹ Home and family, with a loving and virtuous woman at the center, were exalted as a refuge from the increasingly impersonal, immoral, and cruel world. As Stephen Mintz and Susan Kellogg summarize, “The family was changing its emphasis from an institution in which all members were expected to contribute to an integral family economy to a unit in which individuals lived together for the sake of each other’s emotional well being and development.”⁵² Marriages became increasingly companionate in nature and childhood started to be interpreted as an important stage of life. Mothers became the moral compass for the family and took on more responsibility for raising their children with a strong character and sense of morality, ruling by love rather than the rod. Children stayed within the family longer, allowing time for more intimate bonds to develop between parents and children.⁵³ At the same time, however, geographic mobility became increasingly accessible and children found new opportunities in areas away from home.

This development of the middle class family coincided with the expansion of evangelical Protestantism. Taken together, it becomes apparent that family relationships often played a large role in determining the religious allegiances of New England Christians. Mary Ryan comes to this conclusion, arguing that women often led their family members into religious life. The new source of morality, piety, and virtue within the family, wives and mothers converted to evangelical Christianity in part to set an example for their family to follow. The effect of these women leading their families to church was that the majority of new converts, in Ryan’s words, “Confessed their faith in the presence of those with common surnames.”⁵⁴ Similar patterns existed in Mansfield, where a majority of church members were related to each other through ties of blood or marriage.

Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, in-laws – a wide variety of relationships connected the people who comprised the

congregation of the OCC by 1850. Starting with the signers of the founding compact, the venture was largely a familial one. Of the all signers, the twelve had been covenanted church members of First Parish became the first members of the church, eight converted later, and nine never became professing Christians and church members. (Refer to Appendix B.) Only three men of the twenty-nine – Elisha Hodges, John Rogers, and Homer Skinner – were not related to other people affiliated with the OCC, and none of them ever became professing members. Thus, all the men who signed the compact and joined the church were related either by blood or marriage to someone else in the OCC. For example, signer James Corey, who joined the church in 1840, was the son of Leonard and Adah corey, who were both original members of the OCC. Amasa Copeland, a signer who did not join, was the son of seceder Hannah (Stone) and the father of Eliza (Copeland) Day, who was also an original member.⁵⁵

The men and women who comprised the first congregation in 1838 also reflect overwhelming kinship connections. Of the thirteen men every one was related to at least one other seceding member (only two, Elkanah Bates and William A. Paine, were related indirectly.) Similarly, of the twenty-four seceding women only six were not related to other members. Those six women, however, all shared some of the common surnames that appeared among the members indicating that they were not completely unconnected to their fellow orthodox. Common surnames abound, especially when women’s maiden names are taken into consideration. The Skinner and Williams families were especially strong in the new society, with ten and eleven representatives respectfully. Among female members belonging to the Skinner family particularly, maiden names are important in revealing the connection of many women to others in the church. Six of the of the women named Skinner had it as a maiden name, revealing that many women remained connected to their own families after marriage and held to their religious loyalties.⁵⁶ The following chart further clarifies the religious relationship of seceding members to their spouses.

Original Members of the OCC⁵⁷

	Men	Women
Spouse Also Seceded	7	7
Widowed	1	5
Spouse Joined Later	2	1
Spouse Attended Another Church	0	1
Spouse Did Not Attend Any Church	3	6
Never Married	0	4

The Williams family presents a fine example of the type of kinship connections that existed between founding members of OCC. Married in 1792, Daniel Williams and Nancy Grover were both original members of the new church. Daniel signed the founding compact, along with his three sons Daniel Jr., David, and Nahum. David was the only one of the three who did not join immediately. Daniel Sr.'s daughter Nancy was also an original member, along with daughter-in-law Lavina (Clark). Sisters Azubah and Eunice brought the total number of Daniel's relations involved in the founding of the church to eight.⁵⁸

As would be expected, the people who joined the church in subsequent years, either by letter of transfer from another church or by profession of Christianity, were largely related to either established members of the OCC or each other. Examination of conversions to the year 1850 reveals that over twenty were the children of members, professing Christianity for the first time. For example, Fanny, Martha, and Joseph Skinner, the children of Isaac Skinner, Jr. and his wife Fanny (Clark), joined in 1840 and 1847.⁵⁹ A particularly good example of this pattern is the Corey family. Leonard and Adah (Skinner) Corey joined the church when it was founded in 1838. They had a total of ten children, but only five of them lived into adulthood. Of the survivors, four, James, Charles, John, and Hannah, joined the OCC when they came of age. Their conversions were recorded in the years 1840, 1845, and 1847 respectively. In 1848, a year after Hannah became a member, Charles married fellow congregant Julia Ann Skinner, the daughter of OCC members Elias and Susanna (Bates) Skinner. Other new members were married couples, like Hermon and Fanny (Copeland) Hall, Amasa and Sally (Woods) Pratt, and Jacob and Sally (Skinner) Bailey. Contrary to the arguments that pious wives led their families to church, these couples joined the church together – the Halls in 1839, the Pratts in 1840, and the Baileys in 1847.⁶⁰ These kinship patterns among the signers, original members, and later converts demonstrate the importance of family ties in the founding and subsequent success of the OCC.

One of the first factors to take into consideration when examining the staying power of a church is the strength of its membership. The tendency of families to join the church together, as well as the ability to convince non-professing family members to support the OCC made it clear to the founders that they had enough people behind them to be able to sustain a new church. The interest of spouses, siblings, and children in the venture, as well as the growth of these families in subsequent years shows how kinship ties insured a strong congregation of believers and the survival of the OCC. Were they merely a group of unrelated people coming together to create a religious society, they might not have survived with such strong numbers. The fractured First Parish, which was not tightly bound by kinship as was the OCC, certainly did not survive.

The remaining congregation at First Parish did not display the same level of family participation as the OCC did, possibly contributing to the church's eventual demise in 1888.⁶¹ Judging by the financial records from the years

following the schism, the church certainly had enough wealth and prestige to continue its ministry as well as the support of non-churchgoing parishioners for its liberal doctrine. But it did not have members. Thirty-seven people, a little over half of the congregation, withdrew in 1838, leaving only twenty-eight behind. These remaining members were not overwhelmingly connected by immediate family ties, as was the case in the OCC, nor did they share common surnames. For example, among the twenty-two women of First Parish, six did not share either a maiden or married name with any other member. This presents a stark juxtaposition to the twenty-four women of the OCC, who all shared either their married or maiden name with someone else in their church. Furthermore, only one married couple attended First Parish after the schism while seven worshipped at the OCC.⁶²

Hurting for members, First Parish issued a circular to the town around 1840, encouraging people to join their ranks. Not enough did and the church remained painfully small until its eventual dissolution.⁶³ However, in 1838 the OCC had roughly the same number of members as First Parish, yet its population thrived. This was due primarily to the family ties that existed among the orthodox but not at First Parish. Family members could convince their relations to attend church with much greater persuasion than friends or strangers. Additionally, as the secondary research shows, the rapid privatization of religious matters made them family issues rather than public ones.⁶⁴ Thus, it is fair to say that kinship connections played a large role in the early life of the OCC by providing enough interested people to found the society and feeding its growth in the following years. These family patterns, then, reveal a social foundation for a nominally theologically driven split.

Economics

Certain families were not only connected by kinship, but also by economics. For example, brothers-in-law Elkanah Bates and Solomon Pratt went into the cotton business together and their children married. Economics also informed attitudes regarding reform and social activism as the main investors in local cotton factories shied away from abolitionism and local employers spread temperance among their Irish employees. Yet financial concerns played their biggest role in the funding and founding of the new church. The cost of building the OCC was substantial and required a strong commitment among its first members. Refused access to the property or funds of First Parish by judicial precedent, this commitment would have been a major deterrent to secession. However, in the 1830s Mansfield anticipated a bright financial future due to the introduction of new and prosperous industries to the town. This promising forecast made the daunting cost of establishing a church more manageable and thereby helped encourage secession.

A similar Congregational schism occurred in the nearby town of Dedham in 1818 when the orthodox left First Church after a liberal parish voted, hired, and ordained a Unitarian minister. The seceders included Samuel Fales who,

being trusted with the property of First Church by his position as a deacon, took the “records, communion service, trust deeds, and securities” with him.⁶⁵ The parish, by way of Deacon Eliphalet Baker, sued Fales for the return of the property. After the orthodox were granted a mistrial, the case went to the state Supreme Court and Chief Justice Isaac Parker. In April of 1821, Parker handed down a controversial ruling in favor of the Unitarians. Historian Conrad Wright succinctly summarizes the main question that the ruling addressed: “Which of the two bodies both claiming to be the First Church of Dedham was entitled to the claim? Hence, which of two groups of men both claiming to be the deacons of the First Church was the rightful custodian of the property of the church?”⁶⁶ Parker ruled that a church, being an unincorporated body, was legally without power to contract a minister. Thus, the minister hired by the *parish* and his constituted the real First Church of Dedham. The Unitarian deacons received custody of the church property as representatives of the true First Church, and the orthodox were thus left without church status and forced to either rejoin or found their own society.⁶⁷ One of the effects of this ruling was to increase the financial burden of secession from a similar “first church.” As Wright argues, the ruling did not give control of church property to the parish. Rather it negated the claim that any seceders lay to it.⁶⁸ Therefore, even though a majority of the church in Mansfield seceded, they were forced to found their own church on their own funding.

The cost of gathering a new church was considerable. The seceders had to purchase land, raise and furnish a meetinghouse, and hire a salaried minister. They made arrangement at a meeting on July 1, 1838, to purchase a plot of land kitty-corner to the common and First Parish at the center of town. Otis Allen, a yeoman and one of the first deacons of the new church, purchased the land from Ebenezer Williams in August and sold it to the OCS shortly afterwards for \$171.34.⁶⁹ The cost of the original building can be best estimated using early OCS financial records to have been between \$3000 and \$3500. Until the end of 1839, the church spent \$552.30 on ministers, and they hired Reverend Mortimer Blake to a \$500 a year contract in December of 1839. After various other expenses, the orthodox spent \$3371.06 by the end of 1839 to establish their church. They also had an outstanding debt as well, which was paid off in 1845.⁷⁰

This amount would have been a much more daunting sum had the orthodox not had certain financial advantages on their side. First, they had the support of Elkanah Bates and John Rogers, two of the wealthiest local entrepreneurs. More importantly, though, the majority of Mansfieldians looked forward to a prosperous future due to a number of local rising industries. Mansfield’s cotton industry got its start in 1810 with the founding of Mansfield Cotton Manufacturing Company. The industry continued to grow, spinning cotton thread and weaving cloth until 1841 when Solomon Pratt and Elkanah Bates built the last of seven mills.⁷¹ The straw bonnet business, following a boom-bust cycle, was on the rise in Mansfield by 1820. Solomon Pratt brought the trade to Mansfield, but it was John Rogers, prompted by his shrewd wife

Eliza Rogers, who became the king of the industry. Rogers began his business in 1836 and by 1840 had built a formal factory.⁷²

The railroad and coalmines brought not only economic promise to town, but also a laboring class of Irish Catholic immigrants. The charter for the Providence Line, a direct route from the Rhode Island capital to Boston that passed through Mansfield, was granted in 1831. Construction finished in 1835. Completion of the Taunton Branch in 1836 brought further importance to Mansfield by making it a transportation hub for southeastern Massachusetts. While the Irish immigrants built the tracks, the Paine family achieved local significance as the railroad family. Nelson Paine, the first baggage master, made the railroad his life’s work until he died of a heart attack on the job. It also brought increased commerce and overall economic importance and promise to Mansfield.⁷³ Three months after the opening of the Providence Line, farmer Alfred Hardon discovered coal while digging a well on his West Mansfield land. The discovery set everyone digging, but by 1838 the townspeople had lost interest and the industry’s only advocates were non-local men. Mining continued on and off into the twentieth century.⁷⁴ In the end, then, besides bringing new workers and a new Christian denomination to Mansfield, the railroad and coal industries brought increased economic importance and promise to the town on the eve of the Congregational schism.

This bullish forecast made money easier to both borrow and solicit. To fund their \$3600 adventure, the orthodox were able to raise an impressive \$1366 in the OCC’s first year of existence. By the end of 1839, when the meetinghouse was complete and the books first balanced, they had raised \$2166.15 through donations, pew rentals, “subscriptions,”⁷⁵ and various other gifts. They were not without debt, though, for they had to borrow \$1342 from Messers Smith, Sumner, and Sweet before the end of 1839. The following chart outlines the sources of funding for the OCC.

Sources of Income for the OCC through the year 1839⁷⁶

	Member Donations	Subscriptions & Pew Rentals	Borrowed	Other
1838	\$1366	—	\$342	\$1
1839	\$194.38	\$390.67	\$1000	\$214.10
Total	\$1560.38	\$390.67	\$1342	\$215.10

Closer examination of the members who contributed to the new church reveals the financial profile of the congregation and further explains the economic confidence with which they founded their own society. The male inhabitants of Mansfield can be loosely grouped into four social classes: an upper employer class of entrepreneurs and business owners, a rising middle

class of yeoman farmers, a less affluent yet still middle class of small producers and craftsmen, and a laboring underclass of Irish workmen. Women shared status with their husband's or father's family, though many did have a small income working in the straw bonnet or cotton industries.⁷⁷ The male contributors to the OCC belonged to the top three of these social classes, and were accompanied in their giving by a large number of female donors.

Three contributors to the OCC were wealthy entrepreneurs: Elkanah Bates, his son William B. Bates, and John Rogers. The elder Bates was the owner of Mulberry Tavern and the co-owner of the Upper Cotton Factory on the Rumford River.⁷⁸ His son undoubtedly participated in the family business, though brother Benjamin took over after their father's death.⁷⁹ Rogers was incredibly successful in the straw bonnet industry and, while he never officially joined the OCC as a professing member, he was a generous donor to the church. Besides his cash contributions, he also gave the church an organ and a bell for the belfry. However, having purchased the \$360, one-thousand pound bell Rogers found its ring too weak and he had it recast to 2,013 pounds for almost \$700. Years later, after his daughter Ellen married the second pastor of the church, Jacob Ide, Jr., Rogers purchased the parsonage and gave it to them as a present.⁸⁰ The prospect of having men of this wealth involved in the founding of the church certainly created a sense of financial security for the seceders and helped make secession a viable option despite the economic burden of establishing a church.

The yeoman middle class also contributed a significant amount of money to the young church. These men usually held various side jobs at other times, though their main occupation was always farming. Many also invested small amounts in the developing cotton and coal industries, but more powerful entrepreneurs bought them out when the companies fell on lean times.⁸¹ As a group they gave liberally to the OCC, even though they did not have the economic power of the upper employer class. For example, while non-member Rogers could purchase a weighty bell, Deacon Otis Allen presented the church with a much humbler, albeit no less important, communion table.⁸²

A strong plurality of the male contributors belonged to a lower middle class of small producers and craftsmen who may have farmed a little on the side but who concentrated on various other professions instead. Occupations ranged from house carpenters like Hosea Grover to basket maker like Isaac Skinner, Sr., Jacob Bailey, and James Corey.⁸³ Their small income limited their ability to contribute financially to the church. Jennie Copeland described basket making in particular as not hugely profitable, but still a business that required little capital and furnished a decent livelihood.⁸⁴ Their smaller incomes, though, did not mean that these men were any less important to church life. For example, basket maker Daniel Williams, Sr. served as the first deacon of the church while Isaac Skinner, Jr., also a basket maker, was made the first secretary.⁸⁵

The largest group of donors to the OCC were women. While many gave much less to the church than their husbands, it is significant to note that they donated what they could in their own names. Women like Susanna Allen, Adah Corey, and Mary Robinson all gave \$1, even though their husbands had already made a donation.⁸⁶ Unfortunately, any jobs that these women may have held braiding straw or sewing bonnets have not been recorded. As a result, it is not certain where they got the money for their donations. The smallness and odd denominations of their gifts, though, implies that their income was preciously earned and, thus, represents a large commitment to the OCC on their part. The following chart summarizes the contributions of these four groups to the OCC.

Contributions to the OCC by Social Group⁸⁷

	Upper Employer	Yeoman Middle	Craftsman Middle	Woman	Unknown Occupation
Number of Donors	3	5	7	16	4
Total Contributed	\$450	\$625	\$203	\$217.38	\$66
Average Donation	\$150	\$125	\$29	\$13.59	\$16.50

Therefore, the economic condition of both the town and the orthodox was critical in determining the seceders' ability to found a church of their own. Due to the precedents set by the Dedham case, they were not entitled to claim status as the First Parish church and thus, could not receive any support from the parish funds. As a result, they had to shoulder the entire cost of founding a new church themselves. The prosperous future that Mansfield anticipated along with the wealth of particular subscribers, made this a less daunting responsibility, and thereby encouraged schism.

Moral and Religious Reform

A crusading attitude of moral and religious reform stood at the intersection of religion, family, and economics in New England. Spurred by Protestant theology, the Cult of Domesticity, and emerging middle class morality, many women and men formed voluntary improvement societies determined to better themselves and their communities. Scholars have heavily debated the motivating factors behind these societies. Four authors, writing from the late 1970s to the mid 1990s, display the range of approaches taken in locating the source of moral and religious reform energies in the 1830s.

Paul Johnson takes a revisionist, slightly Marxist approach to the subject arguing that, as the Industrial Revolution began to formalize the relationship between employers and their employees, employers converted to evangelical Christianity and promoted moral reform as a means of spreading a middle class

work ethic among their employees (albeit subconsciously). The managerial class was apprehensive of the evolving autonomy of the working class and their culture. Promoting moral reform, therefore, was a means of continuing to exert control over them and their behavior.⁸⁸

Mary Ryan brings a different perspective as she locates the cause of reform movements in the changing role of the family in an increasingly industrial economy. Much of this activity, according to Ryan's findings, came from women whose role was becoming increasingly domestic as the corporate family economy gave way to the industrial public one. Concerned about the evil influences of the industrializing world on their families, women increasingly joined Protestant churches and reform societies in order to fulfill their maternal duty by setting a pious and moral example for their households.⁸⁹

Writing in the 1990s, Robert Abzug locates the cause of reform in the theological developments of the day. He argues that the constant change in Protestant America's view of the cosmic order, caused by the various factors that unsettled New England Calvinism and guided by the ministers, led people to join evangelical churches and reform societies.⁹⁰ Steven Mintz complexifies the discussion by explicitly critiquing previous class control and religious benevolence arguments as too simplistic in their unidirectional approach. Mintz argues for a dualistic understanding of evangelicals and reformers that balances the social control and religious charity theories. Taking a multicausal approach, he identifies three types of associations in the 1830s: "missionary, humanitarian, and liberationist." These groups all emerged from different types of social concerns and addressed different social needs. Thus, Mintz nuances our understanding of 1830s popular reform by opening the topic up to a number of different interpretations.⁹¹

This pervasive reformist attitude abounded in 1830s New England, and was no less forceful in Mansfield. As Mintz argues, the attitudes towards reform in Mansfield derived from mixed motivations. For example, the Moral and Religious Improvement Society that Reverend James Sayward founded upon his arrival at First Parish appears to be the result of young idealism and religious convictions. On the other hand, some prosperous local entrepreneurs, such as Elkanah Bates, were ardent proponents of the temperance cause, but not of abolition or antimasonry. This specific reform points, perhaps, to a desire to promote temperance among their own employees, especially among the recently immigrated Irish working class who were known to locals as being particularly fond of drinking "ardent spirits."⁹² Furthermore, about half of the Mansfieldians that joined one reform society were likely to join another, demonstrating an overall desire to promote social betterment and general reform.⁹³ This general reformist attitude that helped promote the 1838 schism at First Parish.

A variety of outlets for reform energies existed in Mansfield. One such organization was the Mansfield Female Benevolent Society, created under the influence of James Sayward. The young minister spearheaded an effort by 107

women to “voluntarily and cheerfully form [them]selves into a society” that would enable them to “promote human happiness” through the distribution of clothing to the sick and funding of a free library for members of the Society.⁹⁴ The women sponsored these activities through both their own and solicited donations. Like the creation of the OCC, the Skinner and Williams families supplied the most members.⁹⁵ The Moral and Religious Improvement Society, another creation of Sayward’s, had a much shorter existence. Local historian William Davis stated that on March 11, 1836, Sayward and eight male members of his flock (seven orthodox, one liberal) “voted to form an association of Gentlemen and Ladies for Moral and Religious purposes ... to distribute tracts to promote Temperance and the free discussion of the Slavery question.”⁹⁶ The majority of the seventy-three members attended the congregation at First Parish while a few individuals attended Reverend Morton’s First Christian Church or Reverend Dane’s Methodist society.⁹⁷ This association was short-lived. It crumbled in late 1836 shortly after the anti-abolition riot at the Center Meetinghouse. The Mansfield Anti-Slavery Association was formed at that same disturbance, boasting three hundred members at its inception.⁹⁸ Designed to promote the cause of abolition throughout the town, historian Richard Newman cites it as one of the largest local anti-slavery societies at its time.⁹⁹

The men and women who eventually seceded from First Parish were overwhelmingly active in these reform groups. There were fifty-four founders of the OCC, defined here as the male signers of the compact (including those who did not later join) and the men and women who seceded to form the original core of members. Of this total, 74% (forty people) were active in either the Moral and Religious Improvement or Anti-Slavery Society. Those founders who did not join were mostly elderly. This number appears even more significant when compared to the mere 14% of remaining First Parish members who were active in either society in 1836. This demonstrates an overriding reformist attitude among the founders of the OCC.

Reform Society Membership by Church¹⁰⁰

	Moral & Religious Improvement	Both Societies	Anti-Slavery Society
Future OCC Members (to 1850)	9	23	27
Were to Remain First Parish	10	2	4
Methodist	0	1	16
First Christian	0	1	27
Future Baptist	0	0	28
No Church	29		171

This reform energy and attitude was a key foundational element in the 1838 schism. Their membership in these societies points to a committed reformist attitude and a deep conviction for moral and religious reform, and implies that the orthodox would not be inclined to accept what they viewed as heterodox or compromise on important theological issues. Rather they would crusade against it and strike out to reform rather than accommodate.

Significantly, however, they did not reform First Parish's Unitarianism from the inside, but rather chose to remove themselves from the church. To do so required precedent, especially considering that First Parish was not only the center of town politics but also until recently the established local church. As the 1833 disestablishment of the Congregational Church in Massachusetts itself demonstrates, Protestant alternatives became increasingly abundant as various Christian sects multiplied throughout the country.¹⁰¹ Again, Mansfield was not wanting for examples of this trend. The Methodist Church, formed in 1792, was the oldest local alternative to First Parish for the citizens of Mansfield. The Society of Friends completed their meetinghouse in 1810, and the First Christian Church organized in West Mansfield in 1831. A reaction against growing Christian sectarianism, the members formed their church "receiving and acknowledging no other name than that of Christian."¹⁰² Lastly, the Baptists started a congregation in Mansfield in January of 1838, only four months before the founding of the OCC. For years Mansfield Baptists had been worshipping at the church in neighboring Foxboro, but as their numbers increased they amiably separated themselves from their neighbors to create a church in their own town.¹⁰³ Thus, the orthodox had strong precedent for forming their own church on slightly modified Protestant doctrine.

Again, the 1838 schism reflects the complexities of Mansfield society. The wave of reform sentiment throughout the town encouraged the orthodox to view their doctrinal differences with other members of the parish as less of a difference in opinion and more as a crusade against heterodoxy. This way of viewing the conflict made compromise impossible for the orthodox, and the pattern of Protestant sect building offered them a model for seceding from the church.

Abolition

In the years before the Civil War, conflict over the abolition of slavery led to the division of both the Methodist and Baptist denominations along sectional lines. A few years before these national schisms, however, abolition polarized Mansfield and raised the fear of church schism among many of the ministers. A series of abolitionist lectures and the strong opposition towards them caused the town to split into factions over the issue and was directly responsible for Reverend Sayward's departure from First Parish. His resignation revived the theological conflict in a highly tense and factionalized environment by creating the need to settle on a new minister. It was no coincidence, then, that the orthodox departed First Parish only a year and a half after the largest of the

anti-abolitionist disturbances rocked the Center Meetinghouse to its foundations.

Isaac Stearns, known by all as “Banty,” was a yeoman farmer with a developed sense of civic participation and moral reform.¹⁰⁴ Although he was not a member of any one church, Stearns regularly attended the Christian Church and occasioned the Methodist society as well. Ardently antimasonic and pro-temperance, he became a champion of abolition in the early 1830s. Unlike many, Stearns never favored of colonization and advocated immediate, uncompensated abolition for all African slaves from the earliest days of his activity.¹⁰⁵ A religious man, Stearns did not break with organized Christianity as the Garrisonians did in 1840. Stearns was the primary force behind abolition in Mansfield, instrumental in the creation of the Mansfield Anti-Slavery Society and responsible for bringing abolitionist Charles C. Burleigh to town for five lectures.¹⁰⁶ These speeches became the catalyst for local violence and divisions over slavery.

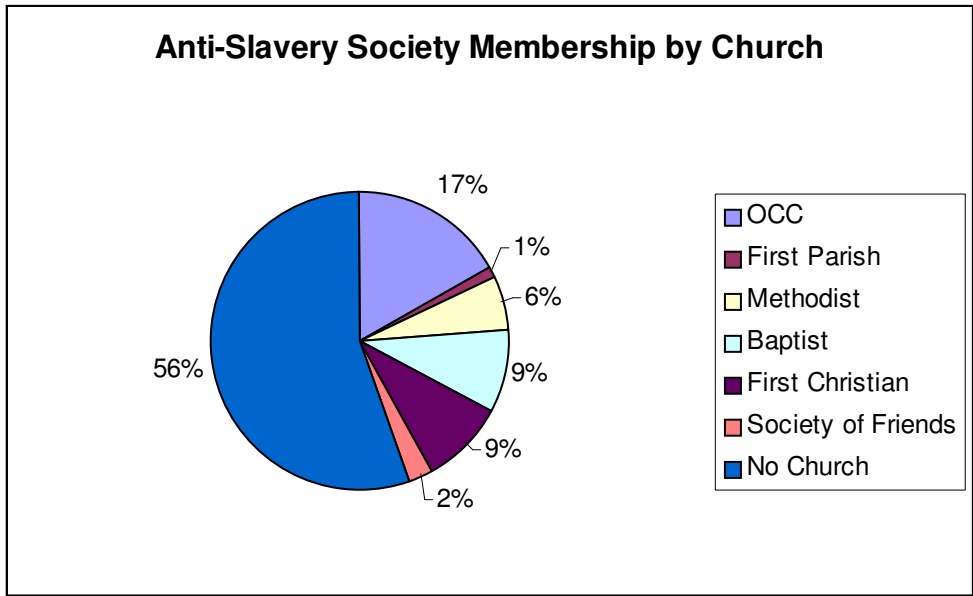
Throughout 1835 Stearns attended many lyceums in surrounding towns and heard a number of abolitionist speakers. In early 1836 he convinced Burleigh to come speak at Mansfield after the farmers finished their haying.¹⁰⁷ Burleigh spoke five times that season, each lecture meeting with more militant pro-slavery opposition. His first lecture was held at the Baptist meetinghouse on August 27, 1836. The following evening he spoke at the Center Meetinghouse without incident. On the third night, though, an organized pro-slavery faction appeared at the Methodist meetinghouse where Burleigh was speaking.

According to Stearns in a letter written to Elder Potter dated September 9th, a continually growing number of “men and boys” made a great commotion during Burleigh’s lecture by stamping their feet inside the church and shouting outside it. Stearns blamed John Rogers for bringing the anti-abolitionists to the lecture and seating them in the lower gallery.¹⁰⁸ Some of those outside began to throw rocks at the windows and “a large sign or board was thrown into the house, which struck a man in his pew and nearly knocked him down.”¹⁰⁹ When Burleigh had finished, anti-abolitionist Foster Bryant, a coal agent who had recently arrived from New York, moved that the assembly take the form of a meeting, and a formal debate began. By Stearns’ account, however, the anti-abolitionists were completely ineffective in their arguments. Thus, the meeting ended relatively peacefully. However, that night someone broke into the Methodist meetinghouse and smashed the chandelier. This incident prompted Francis Dane, the elderly Methodist minister, to close his meetinghouse to any future abolitionist lectures.¹¹⁰

The ban did not last long, though, as Burleigh returned to the Methodist Church in Mansfield on October 8 for another address. According to Stearns, only “Guilford Hodges turned out for disturbance.” Hodges stood in the aisle of the meetinghouse carrying a cudgel and verbally opposed the speaker until he was removed.¹¹¹ The real fireworks came two days later at the Center Meetinghouse.

The day before Burleigh's October 10th lecture at the First Parish meetinghouse, Mansfield was abuzz with rumors that there would be a disturbance. These rumors included speculation "that drums and other music would be on hand – that a number had met at the tavern kept by O.S. Kingsbury [and owned by Elkanah Bates,] to conclude how to manage – that a lawyer had been consulted to know *how far* they could go and not expose themselves to penalty of the law."¹¹² The abolitionists dismissed these rumors, but many of them proved to be true the next afternoon. As Burleigh began to lecture, "Some dozen men and boys," who had been seen coming from Mulberry Tavern, played loudly on a bass drum, a smaller drum, and a bugle. Another man, who Stearns suspected was the elected Town Clerk William B. Bates, locked himself in the belfry and rang the bell constantly.¹¹³ Just as the anti-abolitionists had wished, Burleigh could not be heard and ceased lecturing.

Constable S.C. Cobb, an abolitionist in attendance, read the riot act and instructed the noisemakers to disperse. Rather than leave, a few men seized him "and struck him several times in the face," leaving his nose bloodied.¹¹⁴ At this, Cobb crossed the street to First Selectman Solomon Pratt's store and asked him to disperse the mob, as per his duty as laid out in the Revised Statutes, Section 3.¹¹⁵ Pratt first denied the existence of a mob, but later accompanied Cobb back to the meetinghouse. Addressing the audience and not the rioters he ordered everyone to leave. The noisemakers cheered, the audience did not disperse, and Pratt returned to his own home next door. The situation reached a stalemate with neither side budging. After a few more foiled attempts to speak in the gallery, at the front door, and outside the meetinghouse, Burleigh finally relented and Otis Allen offered him a ride home.¹¹⁶ The anti-abolitionists celebrated their perceived victory. During the stalemate, however, Stearns successfully collected over fifty names for a new Anti-Slavery Society. The society held its first meeting two months later, boasting three-hundred members.¹¹⁷ Of the Anti-Slavery Society members who were churchgoers the largest percentage were future OCC seceders. The following chart shows the breakdown of abolitionists by church membership.



Significantly, throughout the abolition tensions, many of the Mansfield ministers expressed intense concern over the effect that the conflict would have on their parishes. In an 1837 locally penned poem regarding the riot, an anonymous author opined that “These lectures of course make bad matters worse, / I think they are all very foolish, / and if they are so, we all of us know, / They’ll make a great split in the parish.”¹¹⁸ Stearns often came down on these ministers in his writing for being more afraid of schism than truly concerned for the slaves. Methodist minister Francis Dane did not attend Burleigh’s August 29th lecture at his own meetinghouse, even though he claimed to be an abolitionist. On September 4, 1836, Stearns wrote a damning letter to Dane “in as respectful a manner as [he was] able to express to [him] that feeling and [his] mind upon that subject.”¹¹⁹ Stearns began by recounting Dane’s claim to be an abolitionist, but charged that he had “taken up the side of the mob and [was] in direct opposition to Anti-slavery.” Shortly after the incident with Burleigh, Dane prohibited slavery from being further discussed in his meetinghouse, citing the “excitement” as his reason for doing so. Stearns, incensed by the action, wrote, “Sir, this doctrine of neutrality, this refusing to act in a good cause for fear that wicked men and devils will make noise about it, will never reform the world.”¹²⁰

James Sayward of First Parish also received scathing condemnation from Stearns. As a moderate abolitionist Sayward viewed Stearns’ breed of reformers as too radical. The minister established a moral reform society to further temperance and discuss slavery, and even planned to give a lecture on abolitionism himself. However, not one person attended this event, and he left without delivering it. Stearns commented on how this anecdote showed Sayward’s true colors. “Of course, there was no mob, no disturbance,” wrote Stearns. “So careful was he of *excitement* that no person was sufficiently excited to move his feet to hear the lecture, although the weather was good.”¹²¹

Stearns had more criticism for Sayward, apparently after the minister expressed some of his own. According to Stearns, by November of 1836 Sayward had “endeavored to slander Mr. Burleigh by circulating the report that he was addicted to drinking ardent spirits,” a strong charge during the height of temperance. “He has also attempted to create a belief that Mr. Burleigh is a *hypocrite*,” continued Stearns, “or that he does not *believe* or *care* any thing about what he lectures upon, but lectures for the sake of his salary.”¹²² Most significant with regard to the local situation, however, was Sayward’s charge that Simeon White, a Mansfield resident who attended the Baptist church in Foxboro, brought Burleigh to Mansfield “*for the purpose of breaking up Mr. Sayward’s congregation in order to aid the Baptists.*” This concern over parish schism was not without merit.

Immediately following the riot of October 10th, a number of influential congregants left First Parish in disgust. By November Isaac Stearns was able to report that “In consequence of the mob a great part of the [Congregational] Society have been scattered to at least five different meetings.” The disgruntled church members joined the local Methodists, the Society of Friends, and First Christian Church, while others began to attend Baptist meeting in neighboring Foxboro or the “Orthodox Congregationalists’ meeting” in Norton.¹²³ One such person was Otis Allen, who escorted Burleigh to his house after the riot broke out. Allen and his family were original members of the Anti-Slavery Society. In response to the riot at the Center Meetinghouse, they left First Parish and began attending meeting at the Trinitarian Congregational Church in neighboring Norton.¹²⁴ The Allens returned to worship in Mansfield as founding members of the OCC one year later.

Reverend Francis Dane also expressed reasonable concern over the future of his parish. His concern left Stearns disgusted. “One excuse I understand you make for opposing lecturing in your meetinghouse is that it *may* cause division in your society,” wrote Stearns.¹²⁵ Unfortunately for Dane, his fear was realized. According to local Methodist history, after Burleigh’s visit “there was no peace” within the society. Finally in 1841 the anti-slavery Methodists left the society and followed their new minister, Merrit P. Alderman, and founded a new Methodist Society with the help of a large financial gift from local abolitionist and underground railroad conductor Captain Charles Day. The rest of the society continued under the ministry of Edward A. Lyon, but it did not survive long after the Civil War.¹²⁶

Throughout his writings on the riot, Stearns described the mob as being comprised of the poor railroad and coal workers but organized and supported by the wealthy men in the town. “No one believes that those who were most conspicuous on that day [October 10] in the gallery of the Centre Meeting House, violating the laws and infringing upon our rights, were the instigators of it,” exclaimed Stearns. “All who were suspected of countenancing the above mob [were] ‘gentlemen of property and standing’, who, in mobs, would wish to keep behind the curtain.”¹²⁷ Indeed, records of local business activities generally confirm this analysis.

As South Carolina's Governor McDuffie noted in his 1835 anti-abolitionist speech to the State's Legislature, "No great skill in political economy [was] required to estimate how enormously the price of cotton would be increased by [the abolition of slavery]." ¹²⁸ This point could not have been lost of the Mansfield men who made their living by processing Georgia cotton. ¹²⁹ The gentlemen that Stearns fingers as particularly hostile to the abolitionists, Solomon Pratt and Elkanah Bates, had economic backgrounds in cotton which invested them in the institution of slavery from hundreds of miles away. The "Cotton King" of Mansfield, Pratt was the sole stockholder in the Rumford River Cotton Company by 1830 and the Mansfield Cotton Manufacturing Company by 1841. ¹³⁰ Originally one of many shareholders in both Middle Cotton Factory (1811) and Upper Cotton Factory (1813), he eventually bought out the majority of his peers when the mills fell on hard times. Union Cotton Factory (1832) was a joint venture by Pratt and his brother-in-law Elkanah Bates. Bates expressed particular hostility to the abolitionists' activities in 1836. Stearns commented that, "The first opposition that I knew of by any person of influence in town against abolition, or having a lecture delivered, was manifested by Maj. Elkanah Bates, one of the County Commissioners, on the Wednesday previous to Mr. Burleigh's lecturing." According to Stearns, when asked to attend the meeting, Bates "replied rather petulantly, 'No, I would go as far the other way.' When reasoned with on the subject of abolition, he appeared excited and said, 'I have done all I could to keep it (abolition) out of town.'" ¹³¹ By the time of this incident, Bates' owned stock in the Middle Cotton Factory, co-owned Union Cotton, and had served with brother-in-law Pratt to liquidate the failed Old North Factory. ¹³² Thus, the cotton interests of these men were in line with their opposition to abolition.

Not everyone who had an interest in cotton, though, condoned slavery. Two prominent abolitionists, Otis Allen and Isaac Stearns himself, invested in Mansfield cotton factories. Allen held a few shares in the Middle Cotton Factory (1811) along with his brother, Oliver Allen. Solomon Pratt eventually bought out all the other stockholders. Stearns owned a small amount of stock in the Old North Cotton Factory, founded three years later. ¹³³ This mill proved a failure and Pratt and Bates liquidated the property.

Economic and occupational considerations also shaped the abolitionist views of the white yeoman farmers, who feared that slavery would eventually include the poorer white classes as well as the enslaved African-Americans. This was one of the many arguments that Stearns used throughout his writing against slavery. He took as his springboard the same 1835 address by Governor McDuffie of South Carolina. According to Stearns, McDuffie exclaimed that the "laboring classes of the northern states will become slaves within 'a quarter of a century.'" ¹³⁴ "We did not think we were so near that awful doom," Stearns commented. "But so it is. Unless abolitionism prevails, the laboring white people of the north will become slaves according to his prediction. The laboring class of the South are already slaves." ¹³⁵ Whether or not local yeoman took much stock in this argument we do not know. However, it is significant

that such rhetoric appears in public discourse regarding slavery. Stearns appears to have taken it somewhat to heart as he repeated it twice in other letters and writings.¹³⁶

However, the people closest to this awful prediction, the Irish coal and railroad laborers, were conspicuously pro-slavery. Stearns observed that during the 1837 town meeting “all those who are employed by the railroad company and all those engaged in the coal mining business who were admitted to vote, voted on the antiabolition side.”¹³⁷ Perhaps these men were simply brought into the mob by anti-abolitionist and coal man Foster Bryant, but it is likely that they found abolition threatening to their job security. This became increasingly likely, not only due to fears of free blacks competing for unskilled jobs in the North, but also because the pitch pine used on the railroad was imported from the South.¹³⁸ As with cotton, a disturbance in the southern labor system had the potential to drive up the price of Virginia pine and create economic problems for the local railroad and, by extension, their employees.

The 1837 town meeting reflected the increasing polarization of the town already hinted at by the disruption of many church congregations. At the first meeting held in March the only business successfully transacted was to elect Solomon Pratt as Moderator and William B. Bates Town Clerk. These elections, however, were highly disputed, as a large number of underage boys and immigrants who could not legally vote attended and cast ballots. They then balloted six unsuccessful times for a First Selectman, trying to choose between abolitionist William Grover and anti-abolitionist Pratt. After a great commotion Pratt withdrew and a movement to adjourn immediately went up from the pro-slavery party. A telling example of the chaos at the meeting, the vote to adjourn had to be taken outside by having the men stand in two lines and counted. At the adjournment the following month many pro-slavery candidates were chosen by close margins, even though the abolitionists contested the results. The voters never agreed on a state representative and did not send one to the Legislature that year.¹³⁹

The subsequent 1838 schism of the church can thus be traced in part to the abolitionist agitation of 1836. By creating the fear of schism among ministers, the riot, in essence, realized it. Once the talk of schism became central to the discussion of abolition and the grounds for shutting down all other abolitionist lectures, it made schism a possibility and put it in the front of people’s minds. As local historian Jennie Copeland rightly concluded, after the riot “all the old doctrinal differences came to the surface and, fanned with this new flame, the feeling came to a white heat.”¹⁴⁰ It also divided the town along firmly defined lines, creating a space to discuss other problems that citizens had with each other. Copeland wrote that, “Former antagonisms were stronger, bitter and hard feelings developed where there had been none, [and] party lines were drawn tighter.”¹⁴¹ By creating an environment where people were taking sides in a dichotomous conflict, it brought the preexisting tensions over theology to a head. The most direct influence of the riot on the subsequent schism was the resignation of Reverend Sayward. His reputation never recovered from the ill

effects of the riot in his meetinghouse and he resigned less than a year later. The vacancy in the pulpit then reignited the conflict over the doctrinal orientation of First Parish between the orthodox and liberals. This done, the conflict over doctrine boiled over into a full-scale schism.

Conclusions

Thus the OCC was established in Mansfield in 1838 on the grounds of theological difference, but also on foundations of kinship, finance, and reform with an anti-abolitionist riot serving as the polarizing catalyst for doctrinal conflict. The wording of the compact, the conflicts over a minister for the years 1834-35, and the tensions over whether or not an “authodocks” preacher would be hired in 1838 all point to strong theological differences between orthodox and liberals, Trinitarians and Unitarians, that necessarily shaped the resulting schism. However, there is also ample evidence to suggest that doctrine was not the only cause for division among the Congregationalists. The reasons cited for the dismissal of Reverend James Sayward, the critical commentary of liberal Dr. Roland Green regarding the schism, and the unequal financial contributions of leading orthodox Elkanah Bates to both the OCC and First Parish all point towards the necessity of an investigation into other possible factors. Kinship ties among the orthodox helped supply them with members and ensured their congregation would grow. A lack of family ties among the remaining Unitarians at First Parish directly caused its inability to restore the congregation to the same size as before the split, and its eventual dissolution fifty years later. The economic prospects for the town and the particular wealth of the orthodox Bates family and John Rogers helped to make the founding of a new church financially feasible. Lastly, a growing reform atmosphere helped paint the conflict as a moral crusade between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the minds of the seceders. As a result, the seceders were unwilling to compromise and instead left to form their own beacon of pure doctrine for the town. All of these underlying factors came to a head with the polarization of the town after the 1836 anti-abolition riot at the Center Meetinghouse. The riot influenced the schism directly by causing Sayward to leave Mansfield, thus vacating the ministry and reviving the old conflicts between orthodox and liberal doctrine. It also polarized the town and created a factional environment where neighbors took sides against one another thereby indirectly feeding the secessionist impulse among the orthodox.

This schism, and others in the pattern of the Unitarian Controversy, did not occur in isolation. The people involved were also members of families and working individuals who had jobs and responsibilities outside the church. They had varied political and personal opinions, yet came together to form a new community. Using social histories, then, can help to further clarify our understanding of the Unitarian Controversy by opening the conversation up to include these secular factors that were at work in day to day life. In doing so, we are free to reflect upon those societal forces in antebellum New England

and connect previously isolated parts of the historiography to form a thoughtful and appreciative understanding of an early American way of life.

Appendix A: Biographical Sketches¹⁴²

Otis Allen: March 30, 1784 - August 30, 1874

Parents: Micah Allen and Catherine Everett

Siblings: Catherine, Micah Jr., Mary, Elijah, Nancy, Fanny, Oliver

Married Susanna Deane (June 27, 1787 - February 13, 1847) February 20, 1806

Children: William, Frederic, Otis Lee, George, Lloyd, Avery, Susan, Abigail, Elizebeth, Mary

Prominent Relatives: brother-in-law Amasa Copeland, nephew (by marriage) Charles Day

Occupation: housewright, manager of cotton factory, farmer

Social Class: yeoman middle class

Church: First Parish; removed to Trinitarian Congregational church of Norton after the Anti-abolition Riot of 1836; founding member of the OCC

Activities: First Parish Assessor -1821, 1823-1828; Town Clerk 1820-1831;

Parish Treasurer 1821-1831; OCC Deacon 1839-1874; OCC Church School Superintendent 1838-1851

Reform Activities: Moral & Religious Improvement Society; Anti-Slavery Society

Elkanah Bates: January 7, 1779 - December 23, 1841

Parents: Benjamin Bates and Abigail Billings

Siblings: Billing, Betsey, Sally, Eunice, Polly, Alfred, Charlotte, Harriet

Married: Hannah Copeland (- July 18, 1834) October 18, 1803

Betsey Skinner (- February 12, 1848) January 7, 1835

Children: (with Hannah) Loretta, Stella, Benjamin, William, Charlotte, Elkanah, Alfred, Elizabeth

Prominent Relatives: brother-in-law Solomon Pratt; son-in-law Harrison Pratt; son-in-law Otis Lee Allen; nephew Charles Day

Occupation: owner of Mulberry Tavern; investor in Mansfield Manufacturing Company; co-owner of Upper Cotton Factory

Social Class: Employer upper class

Church: First Parish; founding member of the OCC

Activities: County Commissioner; Town Meeting Moderator; OCC Deacon 1839-1841

Reform Activities: Moral Reform & Improvement Society

Solomon Pratt: 1777 - April 22, 1847

Married Polly Bates (April 10, 1782 - October 17, 1844) May 19, 1803

Children: Harrison, Horatio, George, Mary, Charles

Prominent Relatives: brother-in-law Solomon Pratt, son-in-law James Sayward

Occupation: store owner; owner Mansfield Cotton Manufacturing Company,
Union Factory, Upper Cotton Factory
Social Class: Upper employer
Church: rented a pew at First Parish, not a professing member
Activities: First Selectman; Town Meeting Moderator

John Rogers: November 2, 1806 - March 31, 1873

Parents: Benjamin Rogers, Jr. and Mary Blanchard
Siblings: Franklin, Albert, Bethia
Married Eliza Ann Williams October 15, 1833
Children: Ellen Maria, Frances Emeline, John Williams, Charlotte,
Occupation: straw bonnet merchant
Social Class: upper employer
Church: associated with the OCC, but never joined; signed OCS compact
Activities: Freemasons; Anawan Baseball Club; State representative 1852;
sponsored many local political candidates

Reverend James Sayward: 1807 - 1843

Married Mary B Pratt (May 5, 1814 -) March 7, 1837
Prominent Relatives: father-in-law Solomon Pratt
Occupation: minister
Church: First Parish; removed to Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire
Reform Activities: founder of Female Benevolent society; founder of Moral &
Religious Improvement Society

Isaac Stearns, Jr.: January 18, 1790 - June 14, 1879

Parents: Isaac Stearns, Sr. and Susanna Smith
Siblings: Lovice, Susanna, Abenath, Rachel, Sally, Polly, William
Married Sarah Fillebrown (April 2, 1798 - April 1884) July 26, 1818
Children: Sarah, Isaac Holden, George, Susanna, Hepsibah, Orange Scott,
Marion, Ellen
Occupation: farmer
Social Class: yeoman middle class
Church: attended Methodist & First Christian Churches, but never joined either
Reform Activities: Moral & Religious Improvement Society; Mansfield Anti-
Slavery Society, Corresponding Secretary

Appendix B: Membership Lists

OCC Compact Signers¹⁴³
May 9, 1838

Seceding Members

Otis	Allen
Elkanah	Bates
Elijah	Copeland
Leonard	Corey
William A	Paine
Alvan	Robinson
Isaac	Skinner
Isaac Jr	Skinner
Benjamin	Williams
Daniel	Williams
Daniel Jr	Williams
Nahum	Williams

Signed and Joined Later

Jacob	Bailey
William	Bates
James	Corey
Erastus	Grover
Hosea	Grover
Hermon	Hall
Isaac	Paine
Nelson	Paine
Elias	Skinner

Signed Only

Avery	Allen
Amasa	Copeland
Elisha	Hodges
Jesse	Hodges
John	Rogers
Loring	Shaw
Apollos	Skinner
Homer	Skinner
David	Williams

OCC Founding Members¹⁴⁴

Men who signed the Compact:

1. Amasa Copeland
2. Apollos Skinner
3. Avery D. Allen
4. Benjamin Williams
5. Daniel Williams
6. Daniel Williams, Jr.
7. David Williams
8. Elijah Copeland
9. Elisha Hodges
10. Elkanah Bates
11. Erastus Grover
12. Hermon Hall
13. Homer Skinner
14. Hosea Grover
15. Isaac Paine
16. Isaac Skinner
17. Isaac Skinner, Jr.
18. Jacob Bailey
19. James L. Corey
20. Jesse Hodges
21. John Rogers
22. Leonard Corey
23. Loring C. Shaw
24. Nahum Williams
25. Nelson Paine
26. Otis Allen
27. William B. Bates
28. Williams A. Paine

Original Members, men and women:

1. Daniel Williams &
2. Otis Allen &
3. Leonard Corey &
4. Alvan Robinson &
5. Isaac Skinner, Jr. &
6. Benjamin Williams &
7. Daniel Williams, Jr. &
8. Elkanah Bates
9. William Copeland
10. Elijah Copeland
11. William Augustus Paine
12. Isaac Skinner
13. Nahum Williams
1. Nancy Williams
2. Susanna Allen
3. Adah Corey
4. Mary Robinson
5. Fanny Skinner
6. Betsey Williams
7. Lavina Williams
8. Abi Skinner (husband David Skinner)
9. Anna Turner (husband Calvin Turner)
10. Anna White (husband Hezekiah)
11. Azubah Paine (widow of Joel Paine)
12. Eliza Day (husband Charles Day)
13. Eunice Hunt (widow of Quincy Hunt)
14. Eunice Pratt (widow of Amasa Pratt)
15. Hannah E. (husband Moses Copeland)
16. Jerusha Grover (husband Hosea Grover)
17. Mary Grover (husband Joseph L. Grover)
18. Olive White (widow of Ruel White)
19. Peddy Hunt (husband Quincy Hunt, Jr.)
20. Sally White (widow of Elijah White)
21. Fanny Cobb
22. Loretta Grover
23. Nancy Williams
24. Polly White

Remaining First Parish Members¹⁴⁵

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>
Billings	Day	
Mehitable	Dean	
Hannah	Fisher	
Hepzibah	Fisher	
Barbara	Freeman	
Emilia	Freeman	
Deborah	Gilbert	1810
Hannah	Green	1811
Simeon	Green	1819
Anna	Grover	1812
Betsey	Grover	
Sally	Grover	1816
Simeon	Grover	1811
Abigail	Hardon	1818
Athenia	Hardon	1812
Polly	Hardon	
Abigail	Hodges	
John	Hodges	1816
Margaret	Lane	1819
Sally	Lane	
Nancy	Lunt	
Betsy	Parker	
Susan	Skinner	
Daniel	Smith	1816
Otis (Jr.)	Sweet	1815
Withy	Sweet	
Lucinda	Ware	
Martha	White	

Members Added in 1840

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	
Mary W	Bates	
Sally	Day	
Mary	Fairbanks	
Sarah	Hollbrook	
Betsey	Holmes	
Charlotte	Paine	
Jane	Paine	
Chloe	Thomas	1840
Elvira	Tiffany	1840
Betsey	White	1840

OCC Members to 1850¹⁴⁶

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>	<u>Polly</u>	<u>Paine</u>	<u>1840</u>
Abigail	Allen	1840			
Elizabeth	Allen	1847	Sarah	Paine	1847
Otis	Allen	1838	Williams	Paine	1838
Susanna	Allen	1838	Amasa Jr.	Pratt	1840
Josiah	Armes	1844	Clarissa	Pratt	1840
Marcia	Armes	1844	Eunice	Pratt	1838
Jacob	Bailey	1847	Sally	Pratt	1840
Jemima	Bailey	1840	Betsey	Purinton	1843
Sally	Bailey	1847	Mary	Robinson	1838
Eliza	Barrows	1840	Alvan	Robinson	1838
Betsey	Bates	1839	Sally	Shaw	1839
Elkanah	Bates	1838	Abi	Skinner	1838
William	Bates	1840	Abigail	Skinner	1839
Fanny	Briggs	1847	Elias	Skinner	1840
Lydia	Brown	1839	Fanny	Skinner	1838
Maria	Bryant	1841	Fanny	Skinner	1840
Louisa	Chamberlain	1840	Harriet	Skinner	1840
Fanny	Cobb	1838	Isaac (Jr.)	Skinner	1838
Elijah	Copeland	1838	Isaac (Sr.)	Skinner	1838
Fanny	Copeland	1839	Joseph	Skinner	1847
Hannah	Copeland	1838	Julia	Skinner	1840
Laura	Copeland	1840	Julius	Skinner	1843
Nancy	Copeland	1838	Martha	Skinner	1840
Stella	Copeland	1847	Sibell	Skinner	1840
William	Copeland	1838	Susan	Skinner	1840
Adah	Corey	1838	Laura	Smith	1847
Albert	Corey	1847	Experience	Stratton	1839
Charles	Corey	1840	Anna	Turner	1838
Hannah	Corey	1847	Abigail	White	1840
James	Corey	1840	Anna	White	1838
John	Corey	1845	Clarissa	White	1840
Leonard	Corey	1838	Isaac	White	1850
Eliza	Day	1838	Mariet	White	1840
Anna	Fuller	1840	Olive	White	1838
Caroline	Grover	1839	Polly	White	1838
Erastus	Grover	1839	Polly 2nd	White	1841
Hosea	Grover	1851	Sally	White	1838
Jerusha	Grover	1838	Sophia	White	1840
Juline	Grover	1839	Ann	Williams	1840
Loretta	Grover	1838	Benjamin	Williams	1838
Mary	Grover	1838	Betsey	Williams	1838
Ellen	Hall	1847	Daniel (Jr.)	Williams	1838
Fanny	Hall	1839	Daniel (Sr.)	Williams	1838
Hermon	Hall	1839	Fanny	Williams	1843
Susan	Hodges	1840	Lavina	Williams	1838
Eunice	Hunt	1838	Nahum	Williams	1838
Peddy	Hunt	1838	Nancy	Williams	1838
Nancy	Leonard	1847	Nancy	Williams	1838
Azubah	Paine	1838			
Belinda	Paine	1839			
Isaac	Paine	1839			
Nelson	Paine	1840			

Appendix C: Family Trees¹⁴⁷

Color Key

Red = Member or Supporter of OCC

Green = Member of First Parish

Blue = Member of other local church

Black = No church or church unknown

Allen

Micah Allen m. Catherine Everett

children

Catherine m. Luther Clapp

Micah m. Anne Fuller

Mary m. David Cobb

Elijah m. Abigail Lane

Nancy m. Peleg Francis

Fanny m. Amasa Copeland

children

Lurana m. Hiram Copeland

Eliza m. Charles Day

Fanny m. Hermon Hall

Allen m. Mary Ann Kitteredge

Oliver m. Martha Guild

Otis m. Susan Deane

children

William

Frederick m. May Baylies

Otis Lee m. Charlotte Bates

George m. Caroline Rudd

Lloyd m. Augustus Wood

Avery m. Eliza Cobb

Susan m. William Wright

Abigail m. Oramel Hosford

Elizebeth

Mary

Bates

Benjamin Bates m. Abigail Billings
children
Billing
Betsey m. Jonathan Cobb
Sally m. Samuel Day
children
Charles Day m. Eliza Copeland
Eunice m. John Knapp
Elkanah m. Hannah Copeland
m. Betsey Skinner
children (by Betsey Skinner)
Loretta
Stella m. Harrison Pratt
Benjamin
William m. Mary Lane
Charlotte m. Otis Lee Allen
Elkanah
Alfred
Elizabeth
Polly m. Solomon Pratt
children
Harrison m. Stella Bates
Horatio
George
Mary B m. Reverend James Sayward
Charles
Alfred
Charlotte m. Solomon Skinner
Harriet m. Warren Clapp

Bailey

Abner Bailey m. Deborah Lovell
m. Jemima Skinner
children (by Deborah Lovell)
Caroline m. Joseph Britnell
Jacob m. Sally Skinner
children
George
Deborah

Copeland

Benjamin Copeland m. Sarah Allen
children

Benjamin
Sarah m. Josiah Pratt
Susannah
Elizabeth
Eunice
Moses m. **Hannah Stone**

children

Hannah
Sarah
Moses
Benjamin
Amasa m. Fanny Allen

children

Lurana m. Hiram Copeland
Eliza m. **Charles Day**
Fanny m. **Hermon Hall**
Allen m. Mary Ann Kitteredge

Nancy
Fanny
Aruana
Polly

Samuel

William m. Martha White

children

Isaac
William
Hannah m. **Elkanah Bates**
Luen

Elijah m. **Nancy Hodges**

children

Elijah
Laura
Almon
Stella
Sarah
Luranah

Sally m. Rufus Williams
Betsey
Belinda m. Cromwell Leonard
Alven
Eunice
Susanna

Asa
Lydia

Corey

Leonard Corey m. Adah Skinner

children

James S

James L

Charles m. Julia Ann Skinner

Joseph m. Pamela Foster

Harvey

John

Samuel

Susan

Henry

Hannah m. Lucas Grover

Pratt

Solomon Pratt m. Polly Bates

children

Harrison m. Stella Bates

Horatio

George

Mary B m. Reverend James Sayward

Charles

Amasa Pratt m. Eunice Williams

children

Amasa Jr. m. Sally Woods

Elvira

Charles m. Clarissa Wood

Skinner

Isaac Skinner Sr. m. Chloe Hunt

children

Isaac Jr. m. Fanny Clark

children

Amandus

Fanny

Martha

Joseph

Skinner (continued)

Thomas Skinner m. Susanna Fillebrown
children

Thomas m. Nabby Grover

Susanna

Polly m. John Sherman

Fanny m. Levi Simmons

Apollos m. Sibell Grover

children

Abigail m. Stephen Marston

Apollos

Harrison

Levi

Josephus m. Rebecca Hack

Jerusha m. Hosea Grover

children

Chester

Bennit

Betsey m. Charles Purington

Juline

William

Betsey m. Elkanah Bates

children

Loretta

Stella m. Harrison Pratt

Benjamin

William m. Mary Lane

Charlotte m. Otis Lee Allen

Elkanah

Alfred

Elizabeth

Elias m. Susanna Bates

children

Elias

Susanna

Lucas

Isaac B

Julian m. Charles Corey

Julius m. Hannah Williams

Williams

Elijah Williams m. Elizabeth Bates
children

Azubah m. Joel Paine
Elizabeth m. Charles Nason
Daniel Sr. m. Nancy Grover

children

Charlotte m. Lewis Hartshorn
Daniel Jr. m. Lavina Clark
David m. Sally Grover
Nancy m. Thomas Daniels
Harvey
Fanny
Nahum m. Clarissa Freeman
Julia

Ebenezer m. Abigail Pratt White

Eunice m. Amasa Pratt Jr.

children

Amasa Jr. m. Sally Woods
Elvira
Charles m. Clarissa Wood

Benjamin Williams m. Mercy
children

Mercy

Dordaney m. John Hoten

Asheb m. Sally Willbore

Benjamin m. Betsey Dauby

children

Jane m. John Preston Pond
Sally m. Asa Pond
Benjamin m. Mercy Lecane
Louisa m. Horres Thayer
MaryAnn
George m. Sophia Eldridge
Charles m. Harriet Dane

Elisabeth m. John Dunham

Nancy

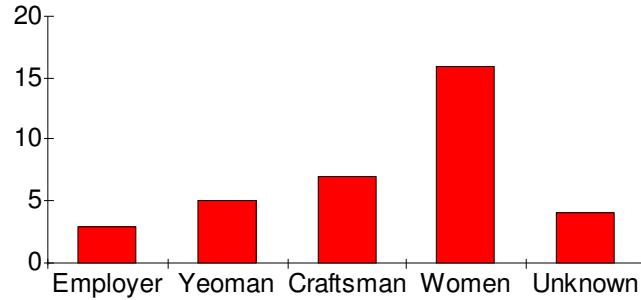
Appendix D: Occupations List¹⁴⁸

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Page</u>
Otis Allen	Farmer	8-30-1874	Vol. 3, p. 74.
Jacob Bailey	Farmer	9-11-1884	Vol. 3, p. 67
Foster Bryant	Farmer	3-31-1884	Vol. 3, p. 68
Amasa Copeland	Farmer	5-18-1864	Vol. 3, p. 20
Elijah Copeland	Farmer	8-3-1872	Vol. 3, p. 35
James Corey	Basket Maker	11-26-1881	Vol. 3, p. 60
Leonard Corey	Cabinet Maker	1-19-1871	Vol. 3, p. 32
Charles Day	Farmer	11-19-1881	Vol. 3, p. 60
Simeon Green	Farmer	2-21-1863	Vol. 3, p. 16
Hosea Grover	House Carpenter	8-13-1860	Vol. 3, p. 12
Hermon Hall	Farmer	1-3-1886	Vol. 3, p. 71
Elisha Hodges	Farmer	9-18-1865	Vol. 3, p. 18
Jesse Hodges	Farmer	8-16-1869	Vol. 3, p. 28
John Hodges	Basket Maker	1-18-1857	Vol. 3, p. 7
Henry Kingman	Carpenter	2-22-1874	Vol. 3, p. 40
Isaac Paine	Basket Maker	3-28-1865	Vol. 3, p. 17
Nelson Paine	Baggage Master	1-22-1876	Vol. 3, p. 46
Alvan Robinson	Farmer	3-25-1865	Vol. 3, p. 18
John Rogers	Retired	3-31-1873	Vol. 3, p. 37
Apollos Skinner	Farmer	3-25-1865	Vol. 3, p. 18
Elias Skinner	Agriculture	5-28-1857	Vol. 3, p. 8
Homer Skinner	Blacksmith	4-30-1873	Vol. 3, p. 38

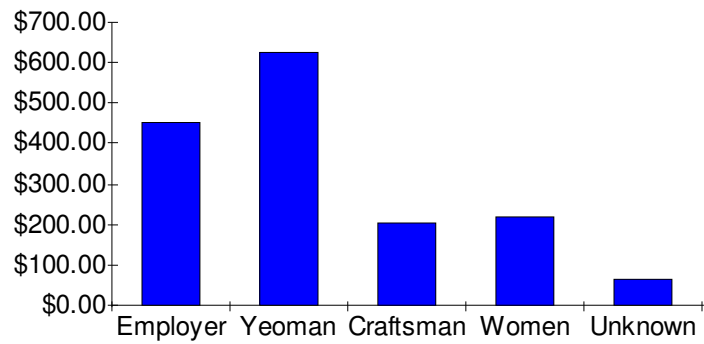
Isaac Skinner Sr.	Farmer	5-6-1846	Vol. 2, p. 40
Isaac Skinner Jr.	Basket Maker	4-19-1873	Vol. 3, p. 38
Isaac Stearns Jr.	Farmer	6-14-1879	Vol. 3, p. 55
Otis Sweet	Farmer	1-13-1855	Vol. 2, p. 40
Benjamin Williams	Farmer	11-18-1863	Vol. 3, p. 16
Daniel Williams, Jr.	Basket Maker	1-26-1875	Vol. 3, p. 43
Nahum Williams	Basket Maker	10-24-1876	Vol. 3, p. 46

Appendix E: OCC Contributions¹⁴⁹

Contributors by Social Group



Total Contributions by Social Class



Average Contribution by Social Class



FOOTNOTES

¹ Church Records, Orthodox Congregational Church, Mansfield, Massachusetts, 1838-1868, 7.

² “Original Compact of the Orthodox Congregational Society in Mansfield, May 9, 1838.”

³ Massachusetts Constitution, Article III, 1780; First Parish to Town of Mansfield, “Circular to Liberal Christians,” ca. 1840.

⁴ William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent 1630-1883: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State*, 2 vol. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), 124-127.

The profession of Christianity included a public declaration of belief in Christianity, baptism, and acceptance of the church covenant. Only men and women of majority age could profess Christianity in Congregational churches. Once a person professed Christianity they became a full member of the *church*. Parish membership was based on gender and citizenship.

Unlike the orthodox church who had a name distinction between the church (OCC) and governing body (OCS) there was no name distinction between the parish and church at First Parish. Thus, the name First Parish will be used interchangeably in reference to both church and parish.

⁵ Nine of the signers who were not professing Congregationalists in 1838 did eventually join OCC, the last being Hosea Grover in 1851. The other nine signers never professed Christianity or joined any religious society. Along with the thirteen men who left First Parish church were twenty-four women who, though not voting members of the Parish, expressed their views by voting with their feet. Eight of these women were married to other seceders, and a few others persuaded their husbands to join the orthodox church after its founding. Nine of the women were single, five by being widowed, though this figure does not include young people who were not old enough to join the church. The rest of the women were married, though often, with a few exceptions, to men who did not belong to any church, sign any compacts, or hold any Parish offices. OCS Compact; OCC Records, 127. *Vital Records of Mansfield, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Salem, Massachusetts: The Essex Institute, 1933); OCC Records, 130-132.

⁶ Charles C. Forman, “Elected Now By Time: The Unitarian Controversy, 1805-1835” in *A Stream of Light: A Sesquicentennial History of American Unitarianism*, ed. Conrad Wright (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1975), 26-27.

⁷ Conrad Wright, “Institutional Reconstruction in the Unitarian Controversy,” in *American Unitarianism, 1805-1865*, ed. Conrad Edick Wright (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society and Northeastern University Press, 1989), 15.

⁸ OCS Compact; OCC Records, 9-13.

⁹ Richard H. Taylor, *The Churches of Christ of the Congregational Way in New England* (Benton Harbor, Michigan: distributed by the author, 1989), 106-109, 145-149, 150-155.

¹⁰ Conrad Edick Wright, *American Unitarianism*, x-xii.

¹¹ Forman, “Elected Now By Time, 3-32; Conrad Wright, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America* (Boston: Star King Press, 1955); Daniel Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience: Harvard Moral Philosophy 1805-186*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹² Mary Cayton, “Who Were the Evangelicals?: Conservative and Liberal Identity in the Unitarian Controversy in Boston, 1804-1833,” *Journal of Social History*, 31 (1997) 86-107; Peter Field, *The Crisis of the Standing Order: Clerical Intellectuals and Cultural Authority on Massachusetts, 1780-1833*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998); Jane and William Pease, “Whose Right Hand of Fellowship?: Pew and Pulpit in Shaping Church Practice,” in *American Unitarianism*, 181-201.

¹³ Mark Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Jonathan D. Sassi, *A Republic of Righteousness: The Public Christianity of the Post-Revolutionary New England Clergy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹⁴ Wright, “Institutional Reconstruction,” 3-26.

¹⁵ Wright, *Beginnings of Unitarianism*, 3; Manfred Kohl, *Congregationalism in America* (Oak Creek, Wisconsin: The Congregational Press, 1977), 31.

¹⁶ Recently scholars of Unitarianism, headed by Conrad Wright, have emphasizes the evolving and indigenous nature of American Unitarianism as the logical product of New England Calvinism and Enlightenment thinking. According to Wright in “Institutional Reconstruction in the Unitarian Controversy”, 3-6, the Hollis Professorship was merely a public and dramatic manifestation of fissures that originated with the First Great Awakening and the rise of revivalism.

¹⁷ Forman, 8-11.

¹⁸ Cayton, 7; Wright, *Beginnings*, 6; Louise Chipley, “Consociation and the Unitarian Controversy in Connecticut.” *Unitarian Universalist Historical Society*, 21.1 (1988) 13.

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- ¹⁹ Field, 111-112, 143.
- ²⁰ Pease, 182-189.
- ²¹ Cayton, 86-107.
- ²² Sassi, 5.
- ²³ Noll, *America's God*, 3-9.
- ²⁴ Noll, *America's God*, 447-451.
- ²⁵ William L. Chaffin, *History of the Town of Easton* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: John Wilson and Son, 1886), 339-342.
- ²⁶ Wright, "Institutional Reconstruction," 6-14.
- ²⁷ Forman, 27.
- ²⁸ William Davis, *History of Mansfield*, (unpublished, ca. 1906), 92.
- ²⁹ Davis, 89.
- ³⁰ Jennie F. Copeland, *Mansfield in Other Days*, from *The Mansfield News* (15 March 1929 – 21 April 1939), #273 "The Unitarian Society," 26 March 1937.
- ³¹ Of the male church members, who were all enfranchised members of the parish, 13 were orthodox, and only 7 liberal. Certainly at least 18 male, non-churchgoing parishioners supported the orthodox as shown by their participation in the OCS compact. However, as evidenced by the vote of April 30th, 1838, not to hire a specifically orthodox minister, a majority of the parish tended to Unitarianism.
- ³² Parish Records, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts, 1818-1840, 39.
- ³³ Anonymous, List of Sermons Preached 1833-1834, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts.
- ³⁴ Anonymous, Membership List, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts. ca. 1839.
- ³⁵ First Parish Records, 41
- ³⁶ Jennie F. Copeland, "Congregationalism in Mansfield," (Historical sketch from Orthodox Congregational Church Centennial Celebration, unpublished, 1938), 3.
- ³⁷ Davis, 93.
- ³⁸ First Parish Records, 54; Taylor, 106-109, 145-155.
- ³⁹ Copeland, *Other Days*, #274 "The Unitarian Church Continued," 2 April 1937.
- ⁴⁰ Davis, 98; First Parish Records, 63.
- ⁴¹ First Parish Records, 63; Copeland, *Other Days*, #275 "The Unitarian Church Continued," 9 April 1937.
- ⁴² First Parish Records, 64.
- ⁴³ Davis, 113.
- ⁴⁴ First Parish Records, 46-49.
- ⁴⁵ Davis, 98.
- ⁴⁶ Davis, 113-114.
- ⁴⁷ While it makes sense that the liberal Green would have motivation to make the orthodox' departure appear to be irreligious and flippant, this does not necessarily discredit his observations related to the causes for which individuals left the Parish. That he claims some left in the interest of family harmony, parish unity, or because they were persuaded to by the respected Bates remains a significant critique of the oft-presented theological rationale for the schism. Davis, 113-114.
- ⁴⁸ Account Book, Orthodox Congregational Church, Mansfield, Massachusetts (1838), 1-3; Copeland, *Other Days*, #94 "The Orthodox Congregational Church," 24 April 1931; Anonymous, "Mansfield Orthodox Congregational Church Deacons' Service List," (ca. 1987).
- ⁴⁹ Account Book, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts (1839), 2.
- ⁵⁰ Possible explanations for Bates' immense donation to First Parish are as follows: After the orthodox departed the Parish voted to remodel their sanctuary by dividing the main meeting room in half horizontally. Bates' house was located diagonally across from the meetinghouse and he could have supported their renovation efforts to help expedite the process or increase his own property value. Also, because the Parish still represented the old Establishment and public worship for public morality, he may have financed it out of concerns for his appearance socially. Lastly, it is also significant that his brother-in-law and business partner Solomon Pratt and nephew Harrison Pratt supported the Parish financially (neither Pratt was a professing member of the church.)
- ⁵¹ Stephanie Coontz, *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families, 1600-1900* (New York: Verso, 1988), 3.
- ⁵² Stephen Mintz and Susan Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 45.
- ⁵³ Mintz and Kellogg, 46-51.

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- ⁵⁴ Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 80-81.
- ⁵⁵ OCS Compact; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁵⁶ OCC Church Records, 127, 130; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁵⁷ OCC Church Records, 127, 130-133; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁵⁸ OCC Church Records, 127, 130-133; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁵⁹ OCC Church Records, 127, 130-133; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁶⁰ OCC Church Records, 127, 130-133; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁶¹ Copeland, *Other Days*, #277 "The Unitarian Church Concluded," 23 April 1937.
- ⁶² Anonymous, Membership List, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts. ca. 1839; *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ⁶³ "Circular to Liberal Christians."
- ⁶⁴ Mintz & Kellogg, 44, 55; Coontz, 166.
- ⁶⁵ McLoughlin, 1189-1190.
- ⁶⁶ Conrad Wright, "The Dedham Case Revisited," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (100.C 1988: 15-39), 17.
- ⁶⁷ McLoughlin, 1190-1193.
- ⁶⁸ Wright, "Dedham Case," 17.
- ⁶⁹ Copeland, *Other Days*, #94 "The Orthodox Congregational Church," 24 April 1931; Deed of Transfer, Ebenezer Williams to Otis Allen (1838); Deed of Transfer, "Otis Allen to Orthodox Cong'l Society in Mansfield" (1839).
- ⁷⁰ OCC Account Book, 1-9; Copeland, *Other Days*, #95 "The Orthodox Congregational Church Meeting-House and Early Choir," 1 May 1931.
- ⁷¹ Jennie F. Copeland, *Every Day But Sunday: The Romantic Age of New England Industry* (1936, Reprinted Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc. 1998), 17-35.
- ⁷² Copeland, *Every Day*, 36-50.
- ⁷³ Copeland, *Every Day*, 59-69.
- ⁷⁴ Copeland, *Every Day*, 74-83.
- ⁷⁵ Subscriptions were yearly donations to help support the ministry of the church. There does not seem to have been a set price for subscriptions, though they averaged \$20 for men and \$1 for women who either did not have a husband or whose was not a member. OCC Account Book, 5-7.
- ⁷⁶ OCC Account Book, 2-9.
- ⁷⁷ Historian Jennie Copeland documents the ingenuity and expertise that women contributed to the straw bonnet business. There was a profound sense of sorority and independence that came with working in the straw bonnet factories, especially for the young, unmarried ladies. Thus, many of them were loathe to marry and lamented their future lives as wives and mothers for the loss of independence that accompanied it. Copeland, *Every Day*, 36-50.
- ⁷⁸ This last of the seven cotton mills in town was nicknamed "Castle Thunder" by the local Irishmen because of the strange noises that came from it. Copeland, *Every Day*, 34.
- ⁷⁹ Copeland, *Every Day*, 35.
- ⁸⁰ The parsonage was the residence of the OCC minister and the property of the church. Copeland, *Other Days*, #96 "The Congregational Church During the Ministry of Rev. Jacob Ide," 8 May 1931; John Rogers to Orthodox Congregational Society (10 June 1858).
- ⁸¹ Author's trip to Old Sturbridge Village, December 28, 2002; Davis, 212-214.
- ⁸² Otis Allen to Elkanah Bates (28 November 1839).
- ⁸³ Town of Mansfield, Massachusetts: *Births and Deaths*, Vol. 3: 1851 to 1895.
- ⁸⁴ Copeland, *Every Day*, 101.
- ⁸⁵ OCC Records, 7; "Deacons' Service List."
- ⁸⁶ OCC Account Book, 2-9.
- ⁸⁷ OCC Account Book, 2-9.
- ⁸⁸ Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 3-9.
- ⁸⁹ Ryan, 13-15, 80-86.
- ⁹⁰ Robert Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), vii-viii; 127.
- ⁹¹ Stephen Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers: America's Pre-Civil War Reformers* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), xv-xvii.

⁹² Copeland, *Every Day*, 60.

⁹³ Davis, 111; Isaac Stearns, Jr. *Right and Wrong in Mansfield, Mass.* (Pawtucket, Massachusetts: Robert Sherman, printer, 1837), 57-61.

⁹⁴ Constitution of the Female Benevolent Society as cited by Copeland, *Other Days*, #181 “The Mansfield Female Benevolent Society,” 3 November 1933.

⁹⁵ Unfortunately, a list of the individual members that belonged to the society is not available. Jennie Copeland supplies a listing of the major families involved in the Society as well as the names of the Officers. The Skinner family had the most representatives (11) and the Williams family the second most (10). Copeland, *Other Days*, #181 “The Mansfield Female Benevolent Society,” 3 November 1933.

⁹⁶ The men present were Reverend James Sayward, Deacon Daniel Williams, Elkanah Bates, Otis Allen, Jacob Dean, Elijah Copeland, Leonard Corey, Daniel Williams Jr., and Nahum Williams. All but the minister and Jacob Bailey were orthodox who would secede in two years. Bates and Copeland were the only two parishioners who did not join the Anti-Slavery Society later that year. Davis, 110.

⁹⁷ Davis, 111.

⁹⁸ The statistics for membership in the Mansfield Anti-Slavery Society are slightly skewed because the rolls included children who were not of legal age to vote and not old enough to become professing members of any local church.

⁹⁹ Richard S. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 158.

¹⁰⁰ Davis, 111; Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 57-61; OCC Records, 127, 130-133.

¹⁰¹ Historian William McLoughlin argues that the disestablishment of religion in Massachusetts was a direct result of the proliferation of alternative Protestant sects, notably the Methodists and Baptists, throughout the state. His findings have been confirmed by later historians. McLoughlin, 1207-1208, 1228-1262.

¹⁰² Davis, 117, 146, 154.

¹⁰³ Davis, 162.

¹⁰⁴ Local historian Jennie Copeland describes the origins of Stearn’s nickname as such: “Because of his diminutive stature and his cock-like characteristics he was called “Banty” Stearns.” She does not indicate how Stearns took to this characterization. Copeland, *Other Days*, #84 “For and Against Slavery,” 20 March 1930.

¹⁰⁵ Isaac Stearns, Jr. *Stearns Family Papers 1714-1920*, 394-395

¹⁰⁶ Stearns’ activity as an abolitionist supports historian Richard Newman’s analysis of early abolitionism. According to Newman, abolitionism shifted from an intellectual and gradual approach to a more radical grassroots movement in the 1830s. This ideological shift can be represented geographically in the activities of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society representing the former and the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society the latter. Stearns also supports John McKivigan’s thesis that Christian abolitionists were effective even after the Garrisonians formally split from the churches. John McKivigan, “The Antislavery ‘Comeouter’ Sects: A Neglected Dimension of the Abolitionist Movement,” *Civil War History*, 26 (1980): 142-160.

¹⁰⁷ Copeland, *Other Days*, #84 “For and Against Slavery,” 20 March 1930. There is a historical inconsistency surrounding the identity of the abolitionist speaker in Mansfield. According to Stearns, the speaker was Charles C. Burleigh, who is found throughout abolitionist history. This Burleigh was an agent of the Anti-Slavery Society, a writer for Garrison’s *Liberator*, and the editor of the *Unionist* and the *Pennsylvania Freeman*. According to local historian William Davis, the speaker was one “Cecil Burleigh a Colored Preacher” (Davis *Mansfield History — Settlers and Soldiers*, 106). Numerous histories since, most notably those regarding local Methodist history, cite Davis’ apparently faulty information. The historical record may have become confused due to the fact that in the spring of 1837 a “Rev. Mr. Easton, a colored preacher” was permitted to speak in town provided that he not mention abolition. (Stearns papers, 488) The two events may have been confused in the historical record.

¹⁰⁸ Stearns Papers, 433.

¹⁰⁹ Stearns Papers, 432.

¹¹⁰ Stearns Papers, 433-434.

¹¹¹ Stearns Papers, 427, 438.

¹¹² Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 3.

¹¹³ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 8.

¹¹⁴ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 4; Anonymous, “Mansfield Abolition Double Mob Riot,” (1837 Reprinted *Mansfield News* 21 May 1875).

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- ¹¹⁵ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 7.
- ¹¹⁶ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 7; “Double Mob Riot.”
- ¹¹⁷ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 56-61.
- ¹¹⁸ “Double Mob Riot.”
- ¹¹⁹ Stearns Papers, 430.
- ¹²⁰ Stearns Papers, 430.
- ¹²¹ Stearns Papers, 439.
- ¹²² Stearns, *Right and Wrong* 15.
- ¹²³ Stearns, *Right and Wrong* 13.
- ¹²⁴ Copeland, “Congregationalism in Mansfield,” 4.
- ¹²⁵ Stearns Papers, 431.
- ¹²⁶ Anonymous, *One Hundredth Anniversary of Methodism in Mansfield* (unpublished, December 1910), 17.
- ¹²⁷ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 2; Stearns Papers, 472.
- ¹²⁸ McDuffie, “Governor McDuffie’s Message on the Slavery Question, 1835,” *American History Leaflets*, Albert Bushnell Hart and Edward Channing, editors (New York: Parker P. Simmons, 1839), 13.
- ¹²⁹ Copeland, *Every Day*, 30.
- ¹³⁰ Copeland, *Every Day*, 25, 29.
- ¹³¹ Stearns Papers, 461.
- ¹³² Copeland, *Every Day*, 31.
- ¹³³ Davis, 212-214.
- ¹³⁴ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 11. Stearns slightly misread McDuffie’s argument. The original quote reads as such: “If we look into the elements of which all political communities are composed, it will be found that servitude, in some form, is one of the essential constituents. No community has ever existed without it, and we may confidently assert, none ever will. . . . Hence the alarming tendency to violate the rights of property by agrarian legislation, which is beginning to be manifest in the older States, where universal suffrage prevails without domestic slavery, a tendency that will increase in the progress of society with the increasing inequality of wealth. No government is worthy of the name that does not protect the rights of property, and no enlightened people will long submit to such a mockery. Hence it is that in older countries, different political orders are established to effect this indispensable object, and it will be fortunate for the non-slaveholding States, if they are not in less than a quarter century, driven to the adoption of a similar institution, or to take refuge from robbery and anarchy under a military despotism.” McDuffie, 9.
- ¹³⁵ Stearns, *Right and Wrong*, 11.
- ¹³⁶ Stearns Papers, 442a, 464.
- ¹³⁷ Stearns Papers, 472.
- ¹³⁸ Copeland, *Every Day*, 64.
- ¹³⁹ Stearns Papers, 469, 472-473; Copeland, *Other Days*, # 92 “Town Meeting After the Riot,” 10 April 1931; #93 “More Town Meetings in 1837,” 17 April 1931.
- ¹⁴⁰ Copeland, *Other Days*, #91 “After the Riot,” 3 April 1931.
- ¹⁴¹ Copeland, *Other Days*, #91 “After the Riot,” 3 April 1931.
- ¹⁴² *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*; Town of Mansfield, Massachusetts: *Births and Deaths*; Copeland, *Other Days*; OCC Records; Stearns, *Right and Wrong*; Davis, 111.
- ¹⁴³ OCS Compact; OCC Records 127.
- ¹⁴⁴ OCC Records, 127, 130.
- ¹⁴⁵ Anonymous, Membership List, First Parish, Mansfield, Massachusetts.
- ¹⁴⁶ OCC Records, 127, 130-133.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Vital Records, Mansfield, Mass.*
- ¹⁴⁸ Town of Mansfield, Massachusetts: *Births and Deaths*. Special thanks goes to Rick Haines for his much appreciated work researching these occupations at the Mansfield Town Hall.
- ¹⁴⁹ OCC Account Book.

AFTERWARD:

A Somewhat Comforting Conclusion, by Rev. Sally McLean

Although one of the wealthy founders of the Orthodox Congregational Church, Elkanah Bates, was pro-slavery for the worst kind of unprincipled economic reasons, the majority of the original members of the new church appear to be members of the town's active Anti-slavery and abolitionist movements. Due to the weak positions taken by other local churches and especially by clergy hoping to avoid schism by not addressing abolitionism, it may have been the case that the new OCC was actually the most anti-slavery church in town, which would be consistent with other Congregational churches of the era. It is also apparent that the church really was founded in great part on theological grounds, with the specific members joining for an unsurprising mix of reasons that included theological conviction, distaste for the controversy in First Parish, economic and social ties that were stronger than opinions on any one issue, and spouses and other family members joining together to preserve family unity rather than because everyone held identical views....

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