Charles Finney and William Miller: Revivalists, Reformers, and Millennialists Looking Downward and Upward

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Charles Finney and William Miller: Revivalists, Reformers, and
Millennialists Looking Downward and Upward

By

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Charles Finney and William Miller: Revivalists, Reformers, and Millennialists Looking Downward and Upward

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Copyright

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2008
This book is dedicated to several very special people who helped make this project successful. The first person is a close friend named Mr. Robert H. Allen who first lit a fire in my bones and got me interested in Millerism and the study of American Religious History. Coming home from a very successful archaeology dig from the Middle East, in 1994, he asked me a question. That question would change my academic focus and lead to the publication of this manuscript. Thanks Mr. Allen for getting me interested in questioning the Millerite Movement so many years ago. Also thanks for collaborating with me on other "church historical publications." Yes Bob, I hope this project was meaningful and you will enjoy reading it.

The second dedication is to my loving wife Susan Krug and two very supported children. First I wish to publicly thank my wife for listening to my ideas and reading my rough drafts for ideas and grammar. Second to my two boys, Elijah and Michael, who allowed their dad the quiet times necessary to be able to research and type the manuscript.

Finally, I wish to thank my good friend and English professor, Melissa Brutton, who said she really enjoyed reading my chapters and gave me feedback from a non-historians' point of view. Her advice and clarifications as well stylistic changes were invaluable and have contributed greatly to this clarity of the manuscript.
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Abstract:

William Miller was a typical preacher of the Second Great Awakening who was involved with reforms and revivals. His millennial views, which have traditionally led historians to classify him as a fringe preacher of the nineteenth century, were in actuality commonplace thinking during the Second Great Awakening. When his millennial views and methods of revival are compared to Charles Finney's, what emerges is not an oddball preacher but a widely accepted balanced millennial view that hearers of his message gravitated to and accepted. By comparing Charles Finney's millennial views and the impact of revival and reform in Rochester, New York with William Miller's millennial views and his revival and reform in Portland, Maine similarities between these two millennialist preachers of the Second Great Awakening will become apparent. Historians have often relegated William Miller to the fringe elements of society, but he and his associates were actively involved in reforms such as abolitionism and temperance, as shown by the writings of William Lloyd Garrison and Henry Jones, an early Millerite preacher. Through the use of church records and diary entries by a retired Presbyterian minister, Caleb Bradley, in Portland, Maine from 1840, a clearer picture of the complex nature of revival and reform will emerge to correctly place William Miller in history during the Second Great Awakening for the first time.
Introduction: Finney and Miller: Not So Different

Two prominent millennial revivalists mentioned in the same context are Charles Finney and William Miller. Paul Johnson studied Finney's 1830 revival in Rochester and sought to explain the social impact of the revival on American society using the case of Rochester. By examining church attendance, business directories, and diary accounts, Johnson traced the dramatic impact Finney made on the Rochester community. However, no one has undertaken a study of the impact of Miller's preaching in a city similar to an urban setting like Rochester until recently. It is in this broader context of the social impact of their preaching that these two revivalists and those most closely associated with them will be examined. I will explore widely recognized criteria established by previous authors to measure the social impact of one revivalist to identify another revivalist from the era commonly called the Second Great Awakening.

In the 1830's, through the benevolent empire encouraged by Charles Finney and society's belief in the progress and betterment of mankind, millennialists believed they could create heaven on earth through revivals and a myriad of reform movements. This, in turn, according to Finney and others, would bring the millennium and usher in Christ's coming. His theology is postmillennial, which means the Christ would come after one thousand years of peace and progress in this world. A little later William Miller catapulted a millennial movement that also believed in the imminent coming of the Lord in the mid 1840's. However, in Miller's understanding Christ's coming would not bring the millennium to the earth but rather

usher in the destruction of the world in a vast conflagration of fire. This theory of the second coming before the millennium is labeled premillennialism.

While these two millenarian beliefs may seem incompatible, William Miller, like his contemporary Charles Finney, were both products of their society. Both Miller and Finney championed the same kind of reforms in the reform-minded antebellum era. Both men influenced the lives of millions of people in the Northeast and western New York, spawning movements still in existence today and advocating reforms while pushing forward their millennial views.

Charles Finney is recognized by historians as the greatest preacher of the nineteenth century from the United States, some of whom compare him with Billy Graham of the twentieth century. His Free Church movement, demystifying the Holy Spirit-led revival, and his tenure at Oberlin College are considered among his greatest achievements. William Miller, on the other hand, is a blip in American History and is largely ignored in discussions of reform in Pre-Antebellum America. Until twenty five years ago, he was not even taken seriously by mainstream historians. Miller is most often erroneously remembered as a rather odd person who predicted the end of the world.

While it is true that white robed crazy people seduced by a group of mesmerists is no longer a common description of the followers of William Miller, Millerism is still a largely mischaracterized movement of the middle half of the nineteenth century. Historians easily relegate Millerism to discussions of crackpot schemes or jokes. In the average textbook Miller is assigned a paragraph or sometimes just a footnote, when talking about the social and religious movements of
the early nineteenth century. Some contemporary critics placed William Miller and Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormism, at the table of lies, seated on opposite sides.

Over the last twenty years these extreme views of Miller have been tempered by more a balanced view from research delving into the impact and movement of Miller’s preaching. Still, William Miller is rarely discussed with the same level of credibility as Charles Finney, outside the field of church historians or Adventists. Finney’s doctrine of choice was the undoing of Calvinism, and his proposal to make Heaven on Earth carried prominent sway throughout much of history up to the Civil War. In contrast, Millerism is often characterized as a movement based on sensationalism and emotions. However today most evangelicals have adopted his premillennial second-coming theology with variations.

Neither William Miller, a Baptist farmer and judge, nor Charles Finney, a lawyer, had any formal theological training when they began preaching. Both men lived in the time of the Second Great Awakening and believed that the Bible and not the traditions of men should be followed when interpreting itself. Both men championed a populist message of the Bible and connected with their hearers through thought and reason.

Miller adopted some of Finney’s revival techniques, and a few of Finney’s close associates, like Charles Litch, who became a leader in the Second Advent Millerite movement, joined the Millerite movement. Both men advocated a millennium and believed God was coming in a few years in the mid-1830’s. Both men held revivals in major cities. Miller and Finney each made an impact on the

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society in which they lived, calling people to a better life, and turning hearts of their hearers towards a millennial message.

For many church historians the Miller narrative is familiar. A farmer and a justice of peace he turned self taught preacher of the millennium who gathered with his followers on October 22, 1844 on a hillside waiting for the expected appearance of Jesus to be raptured away from this world which would end in a fiery destruction. However, while this may be the prevailing view of Miller, it is not accurate, and furthermore, it simplifies the complex nature and spiritual climate of the Second Great Awakening.³ Contemporary students of Miller and his followers no longer view Millerites as an oddity of the nineteenth century, but rather as a product and result of an increased examination of scriptures and the democratization of Christianity.⁴ Some contemporary scholars claim that William Miller and his followers were discovering literal biblical interpretations as their fellow countrymen were discovering political and social freedoms associated with the newly found United States. Historian Nathan Hatch correctly noted "Religious populism, reflecting the passions of ordinary people and the charisma of democratic movement builders,

³ Philip Melling, Fundamentalism in America: Millennialism, Identity, and Militant Religion (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 102-103. Such an inaccurate summary of events and beliefs are commonly used in footnotes when discussing fundamentalism religion in America. Here two big myths of Millerites are exposed; the first William Miller never promoted the exact date of Jesus's return and secondly while many did wait, he did not stand on a hill waiting for the apocalypse nor did he encourage such activities. Recent research by Merlin Burt and George Knight has shown the story is much more complex than Boyer or Melling would have us to believe. Merlin Burt, "The Historical Background, Interconnected Development and Integration of the Doctrines of the Sanctuary, the Sabbath, and Ellen G. White's Role in Sabbatarian Adventism from 1844 to 1849." (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2002).
⁴ Hatch, 14-16.
remains among the oldest and deepest impulses in American life." 5 One of the hallmarks our country is religious and political choice.

Historians characterize the early and middle nineteenth century as a time of religious and political ferment and upheaval. Alice Tyler’s book, Freedom’s Ferment, asserted the period was awash in broadening democracy to extend it to the common man. These reforms also included the women’s rights movement and people attempting to create the perfect communities through religious utopias. The perfectionists trying to create heaven on earth

were advocating crusades with an emphasis on temperance, while abolitionists were busying condemning slavery. All of these movements and groups were competing for the attention of inhabitants of the northern and eastern communities of the United States. Tyler attempted to capture the milieu in the northern Vermont and the burnt over district of New York when she wrote,

Here the primitive Christianity of the revivalists encouraged a literal acceptance of biblical teaching and a pietism similar to that of the most extreme seventeenth century English Puritans. Such a literal reading of the Bible led to interpretations of the contemporary scene that were full of danger for those who exceeded their balance of judgments. 6

Into the culture of this primitive Christianity with its direct Biblical teachings and understandings, the Millerites burst onto the scene with a millennial message of

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6 Alice Tyler, Freedom’s Ferment: Phases of American Social History to 1860 (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1944), 69.
preparation and readiness. Essential to William Miller's belief was the idea if he could get someone to read the Bible and not listen to tradition, they would agree with him.  

Other historians who view Millerism as a movement based on sensationalism and emotions find ample support in the book *Days of Delusion* by Clara Endicott Sears. Sears', William Miller was an honest man deluded by his own fanciful ideas. The emotionalism and hysteria that accompanied his meetings held psychological sway over hundreds of thousands of people. While this was extreme view of Millerism, it has been the prevailing view in many textbooks and subsequent histories of Millerites up to the 1970s.

The Millerite apologists, on the other hand, paint an opposite view from *Days of Delusion*. These histories have been mainly written by church historians, particularly Adventist historians who present a more sympathetic view of Miller than Sears and envisioned a different Millerite movement. To commemorate the centennial of the Great Disappointment, Francis Nichol, a Seventh day Adventist historian decided to investigate and answer the charges of fanaticism and odd behavior of Millerites depicted in Sears' book. In *The Midnight Cry* Nichol became an apologist refuting many of the claims of insanity and hysteria that so characterized the white robed

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7 Letter from William Miller to Truman Hendryx 26, March 1832.
9 Sears, 242. After hearing the Millerite stories growing up, she decided to place an ad in the newspapers around New England around 1919. Her thesis was based on first hand and second hand stories of octogenarians writing their accounts in 1920-1923. Sears admits naming the book after reading how George Storrs' letter after 1844 admitted many Millerites felt they were deluded, and the movement was not from God but from the devil. George Storrs, *The Morning Watch*, 20 February 1845 as cited in Sears, 242.
mesmerized people of Sears's book. Nichol was successful in refuting many claims, but he misinterpreted some of Miller's views and did not critically examine Millerism. Another Adventist author Edwin Froom, wrote a multi-volume book titled The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation, which examined the Millerite movement in the last half of the fourth volume. For Froom, Millerism and modern Adventism were portrayed as a fulfillment of a long line of centuries' old biblical truth ordained by God which was being restored and advanced under new light in the Bible prophecies. Unfortunately, both Nichols' and Froom's works were apologetic in nature and did not examine Millerism with a critical lens. Coincidentally, while Froom and Nichols were working on their books, a young college student at the University of Wisconsin had undertaken a critical look at the Millerite movement:

Everett Dick wrote a dissertation, titled William Miller and the Advent Crisis, which was the first study of Millerism using primary sources and not recollections of octogenarians, to examine the leadership, its organization, and publishing activities from contemporary sources. Because this manuscript critically examined the flaws of William Miller as well as the flaws of the "failed" movement, Dick was not allowed

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12 There were many books published subsequently that used Froom's and Nichol's research written by denominational authors, but many of these are just examples of hagiography. This is a criticism leveled at them by George Knight, who referred to much Adventist history as hagiography in a conversation. Recently, though Adventists have been critically examining the Millerite movement and their early history and present a balance view of Millerism.
Everett Dick's major contribution was to portray the Millerites as a protestant democratic Christian movement made up of common minded 19th-century individuals. Dick identified one hundred and seventy four national Millerite leaders who came from a variety of evangelical denominations, “44.3% were Methodists, 27% were Baptists, 9% were Congregationalist, 8% were Christianites (members of Christian churches or the Christian Connexion), 7% were Presbyterians, with the Dutch reformed, Episcopal and Lutheran churches in the Quakers occasionally present.” Dick illustrated that Millerite leaders came from many denominations, and that was part of its wide appeal. As will be discussed in chapter three the cross-denominational appeal was evident in cities where Miller held a crusade such as Portland, Maine and was similar in nature to Finney's crusade in Rochester.

Whitney Cross's The Burned over District briefly discussed Millerism. Cross refuted the ascension robes, essentially agreeing with Nichol, and discussed Millerism

13 Land, in Dick, William Miller, preface. For a full discussion of why it remained unpublished see the Gary Land comments in the preface.
14 Everett Dick and Gary Land, William Miller and the Advent Crisis 1831-1844 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1994), 166. The manuscript was originally a dissertation completed at the University of Wisconsin in 1930 by Everett Dick, but never published because of the controversy created by Nichol and Froom. The book has a foreword and historical essay written by Gary Land of Andrews University, which is rich in sources discussing Millerism literature.
as a part of society. Since Cross's book most serious historians dismiss the robes.\(^\text{17}\) Like Dick he positioned Millerites as the very social fabric that made up contemporary culture, "Adventism became an integral portion of "Burned-over District" history, thoroughly interrelated with the other rural manifestations of religious enthusiasm."\(^\text{18}\) In another place he argued strongly:

Millerites cannot be dismissed as ignorant farmers, libertarian frontiersman, impoverished victims of economic change, or hypnotized followers of a maniac, thrown into prominence, merely by freak coincidences, when the whole of American Protestantism came so very close to the same beliefs. Their doctrine was the logical absolute of fundamentalist orthodoxy, as perfectionism was the extreme of revivalism.\(^\text{19}\)

By placing Millerites as part of mainstream culture, Cross legitimized the subject of a regional study of Millerites as being part of that society. However, it took twenty years before it happened.

In the early 1970's David L. Rowe's dissertation, *Thunder and Trumpets: Millerites and Dissenting Religion in Upstate New York*, was the first regional study of Millerism.\(^\text{20}\) Rowe's Millerites were not an oddity in the community as characterized by Sears; they were a community of prominent religious believers and reformers in rural upstate New York. Writing in another publication, Rowe argued, "Millerites are not fascinating because they were so different from everyone else but because they were so like their neighbors." Rowe's research expanded and extended Dick's and Cross's research by examining the culture of Upstate New York Millerites.

\(^\text{17}\) Brown, 455. A similar conclusion was reached by David Ludlum in *Social Ferment in Vermont* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 250-260.
\(^\text{18}\) Whitney, 288 and 306.
\(^\text{19}\) ibid, 320.
The success of Millerism was that "it appealed to people from all walks of secular life and from all evangelical sects that compromised the bulk of church members in that day." This seminal study paved the way for later historians to examine the Millerites in the milieu of their culture. In the late 1970's a conference held at Loma Linda University resulted in a series of essays published as The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century America, edited by Edwin Gaustad. This book included several leading essays by scholars discussing life in the nineteenth century and such topics as society, health, science, and religion. This pivotal conference furthered understanding of Millerism and the Adventist American experience in the context of the antebellum reform era. Gary Land rightly observed, this conference "led to a reinvigoration of historical interest in the Millerite movement and the subsequent history of Adventism." David. Arthur, who spoke at the conference, wrote his dissertation on the subject of the separatism and denominationalism within Millerism at the University of Rochester in 1970. These works started to recognize Millerism as a distinct group within the fabric of early to mid-nineteenth century religious movements. Millerism was beginning to get serious scholarly attention as a subject of its own.

In 1984, to commemorate the one-hundred and fortieth anniversary of the Millerite disappointment, a group of Adventist and non-Adventist scholars held a conference solely to discuss Millerism. Some of the papers given at the conference

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22 Land in Dick, xxiii.
were later published in a book, *The Disappointed*, edited by Ron Numbers and Jonathan Butler. This book summed up the historical thinking on Millerism that had begun to see William Miller and the Millerites as millennialists, reformers, and pietists holding many of the same values as their neighbors living in the antebellum world.\(^{24}\) In 1987, many publications appeared placing Millerites in the mainstream culture and discussing their impact on antebellum society.

Most scholarly treatments of the Millerites have since emphasized their similarity with the common culture of the mid-nineteenth century. Ruth Alden Doan’s book *the Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture*, advanced the idea of how not all Millerites accepted nor preached the date of the end of the world, around 1843. She cited the case of a friend of William Miller named Henry Jones. Henry Jones was one of the earliest Millerites who preached the nearness Second Advent doctrine but never fully accepted the date of 1843. She correctly wrote, "Jones represented in large part of the Millerite following in his refusal to set a date for the end."\(^{25}\) Some Millerites accepted Miller’s reading of the Bible, which lay at the heart of his message, but applied a spiritual interpretation to his prophecies.

Millerites often held divergent views of what the end time prophecy of William Miller meant. One of their views was held by another prominent Millerite reformer, named Angelina Grimké, the wife of Finney’s famous preacher convert and abolitionist, Theodore Weld. Grimke “understood Millerite prophecies ‘spiritually;’ no longer did she believe that the distraction in the material world was at hand, but

\(^{24}\) Rowe in Numbers and Butler, 10.

\(^{25}\) Ruth Alden Doan, *Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 37. For Doan, Miller was just one of many who developed "idiosyncratic versions of the Christian Millennialism that was bound so tightly to American culture," 18.
rather, the Lord has been for some years preparing his world in the hearts of the people and had a great and mighty revolution is at hand."\textsuperscript{26} Within the guise of new spiritual interpretation some Millerites began looking for spiritual fulfillment; these ideas led them to embrace spiritualism and different explanations for the great mysteries of God. However, the views of Jones and Grimke illustrate Millerism as complex movement that held to various viewpoints and not just the end of the world message so often taught and characteristic of the this movement.

After researching fifteen years for his book, Adventist historian George R. Knight argued, "In summary, Bush, Finney, Cowles, and others were not out of harmony with Miller on the nearness of the millennium but on the meaning and the events needed to bring it about."\textsuperscript{27} For Knight, Millerites were millennialists driven by a message the world needed to hear before it was too late. He argued the reasons for Miller's success were the sincerity of his belief, use of the Bible and the use of universal and pure logic. This thinking is evident when Knight wrote, "they [Millerites] saw themselves as a prophetic people with a mission to present a message that the world desperately needed to hear."\textsuperscript{28} Knight agreed with Rowe, rather than seeing the Millerites as being an oddity like other radicals such as the Oneida Community of Humphrey Noyes or Shakers, Millerites were traditional in both doctrine and values. What made it hard and still makes it difficult to identify a Millerite is they never formed a denomination until after 1845, even then reluctantly.


\textsuperscript{28} George Knight, 24.
Rowe came to a similar conclusion in his landmark dissertation, that many Millerites in New York came from the Christian Connexion and the Baptist churches and "their pietism shaped Millerism's view of the world." While all of these books have placed Millerites as part of the contemporary period in which they lived, none of them have examined a revival led by Miller and placed it in the context of a typical revival of the Second Great Awakening. Such a comparison reveals Miller as a prototypical revivalist of this era. Comparing William Miller, the millennialist preacher to another millennialist preacher, Charles Finney, and comparing the prototypical revival preacher Finney, to another typical revival preacher, Miller, clarifies the complexity and culture of the Second Great Awakening.

Millennial dreams and utopias have fueled religious revivals and have been linked to revolutions and eras of reform over course of the last two hundred years. Historians have traced the great revivals in the United States as catalysts of change for the political and social fabric of the nation. Writing over a quarter century ago, William G. McLoughlin in his book, Revivals, Awakenings and Reform, suggested the role of four major revival periods in spawning reform movements. To McLoughlin, a revival and great awakening were encompassed views "that have shaped and reshaped our culture since 1607 as periods of fundamental ideological transformation necessary to the dynamic growth of the nation in adapting to basic

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29 Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, 74.
30 William G. McLoughlin, Revivals, Awakenings and Reform (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), Introduction. McLoughlin traced four major awakenings in the United States that fueled political and social movements. These awakenings and revitalizations were in the years 1730-1760, 1800-1830, 1890-1920, and 1960-1990. He gives specific dates for each and discusses the social reform they bring about. The first awakening started in 1730 and lasted until 1760; this led to the American Revolution and a new type of religious and collective conscience. For the purposes of this essay I will focus on his awakening of 1800-1830, and will seek to extend the date into the 1840's.
social, ecological, psychological, and economic changes."³¹ The desire for independence and the belief in a divinely destined American role propelled the revolutionaries. Historian, Ruth Alden Doan also recognized these early millennial visions and agreed on their impact or society when she wrote, "The tying of divine providence and its consummation in millennial glory to the experience of the New World reinforced the power of millennial dreams always inherent in Christianity."³² An examination of this moment reveals for many Americans that the millennial vision and divine mission of the early settlers was not cast off or shattered by the American Revolution but rather deepened in light of their victory. This millennial dream ignited revivalism and reforms in a host of areas, such as "The temperance crusade, abolitionism, Utopian experiments, and anti-masonic... thrived."³³

After the American Revolutionary War, ideas of freedom and equality swept across the land. The very notion of Christianity for the common man linked a newfound democracy with the American ideal of independence in both churches and community life. The old structure and hierarchy of both the Presbyterian and the Episcopal churches were fundamentally weakened with the crown no longer backing their powers. These churches faltered while other denominations stepped forward to fill the spiritual vacuum. Baptist and Methodist ministers grew exponentially in numbers in the latter eighteenth into the mid-nineteenth century from only eighteen hundred in 1795, to forty thousand by 1845.³⁴ The American population grew from a

³¹ ibid, 8.
³² Doan, "The Millerite Heresy, 10.
³⁴ Hatch, 3-4. "The population of the United States grew from around two and half million to twenty million in 1840's."
few million to 18 million in those same years. Increasingly, religious enthusiasm and church attendance swelled as the fires of revival were lit. Deism gave way to millennial religious revival in public, political, and church life in a manner not witnessed since the Reformation.

More than one historian has noted that as movements concerned with democracy and equality grew in the political realm, the ideology of freedom to choose one's salvation grew in religious spheres. During the early to mid-nineteenth century, revivals, and holiness to the Lord movement spanned across the American landscape also. According to Edwin Gaustad, “In Finney and other Methodistic-type revivalists, popular religion was blended with Jacksonian aspirations—the aspirations of the common man.”35 Another historian, Nathan Hatch, made a similar claim when he asserted that “The rise of evangelical Christianity in the early republic, in some measure, is a story of the success of common people in shaping culture after their own priorities rather than the priorities outlined by gentlemen such as the framers of the constitution.”36 During the early republic when every man had his independent political ideas, he also held an individualistic view of religion. Charles Finney capitalized on this individualistic thinking when he preached a message about the choice that each individual has in accepting or rejecting the gospel message and creating the millennium here on earth. He began preaching the message in the period which historians have traditionally labeled the Era of the Common Man.

36 Hatch, 7.
Chapter 1: The United States during the Second Great Awakening, a New Look at a Familiar Millennialist and His Methods.

Historians consider Charles Finney, "high priest of the Great Revival... one of the greatest evangelists and reformers of the Nineteenth Century." Perry Miller said, "Finney, among the evangelicals, was a Napoleon among his marshals." This self-made preacher with no formal academic theological training burst onto the antebellum scene by conducting nationally renowned revivals and founding and presiding over a progressive college in Ohio. "No more impressive revival has occurred in American history. Sectarianism was forgotten in all the churches gathered in their multitude," claimed pioneering social historian Whitney Cross, describing the Rochester revival and the work of "the evangelist," in his epic book The Burned Over District. To Cross, Finney was more than a leader of the "holy band," he was one of the catalysts of the rise of enthusiastic religion with its "new measures" in western New York. Other historians, while believing Finney was important, take issue with the idea that he was the originator of "new measures" ascribed to him by Cross. Charles Hamibreck Stowe, writing about great revivalists, argued that, "Finney was not in fact the author of revival as many readers of his memoirs were led to believe.


38 Perry Miller described Finney as both “Natty Bumppo and Judge Jeffery” and argued it was not Finney’s new measures, but his tone to his audience that resulted in revival. Miller does not even mention William Miller in his work. Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America: from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: A Harvest Book, 1965), 23.
He was more a product of American Evangelism than its creator.\textsuperscript{39} Did Charles Finney and his "holy band" create the nineteenth century culture of revival and reform, or were they a unique product of a broader awakening?

Charles Finney certainly spawned movements of reforms and led one of the largest urban revivals of the nineteenth century, but he reflected a movement that preceded, shaped, and dwarfed his role within it. To better understand this millennial preacher's impact, one must first understand his basic background and theology. His conversion story is similar to others during the period of the Second Great Awakening and "era of the common man" in the early nineteenth century, a period of self-awakening and biblical interpretation that produced him.

"Every favorable circumstance had conspired to the itinerants men mention, and he was a man who could seize fleeting opportunities to make them serve his purposes,"\textsuperscript{40} were Cross's words used to describe Charles Finney. Finney, a lawyer turned preacher who also proficient at horses, marksmanship, and sailing, was able to connect with individuals and marshal talented people around him to spread his millennium message. He also adopted many current tools of the newly formed Baptists and Methodists. His conversion story gives us insight into the window of the importance of personal religion during the years of the Second Great Awakening.

The antebellum period of 1800 to 1850 of the Second Great Awakening was a time of profound change and growth in both population and land area of the United States. The widespread growth impacted communication and ideas of democracy. The population in 1800 was a little over five million, but in less than fifty years it


\textsuperscript{40} Cross, \textit{The Burned-Over District}, 153.
increased almost five times to a little over twenty three million. During this time the
land area more than doubled, going from little under one million square miles to
approximately three million square miles. In 1800, eighty percent of all Americans
still lived on farms. Over the next fifty year period, the population per square mile
increased from 4 percent to 9.8 percent.\textsuperscript{41} In 1810, there were forty six urban areas
(towns with population over 2,500); at the eve of the Civil War there were 393 such
urban areas, and both Philadelphia and New York had over 100,000 residents.\textsuperscript{42}
Both Finney's and Miller's movements benefited greatly from the sudden increase of
population and print media.

Shortly after the American Revolution from 1790 to 1810, the young country
witnessed an explosion in the printed media; the number of newspapers grew from
seventy to three hundred and ninety. Newspapers also became easier for the common
people to read, relate to and were more anti-establishment in character. Politically,
society and newspapers became a contest between two competing groups, the elites
versus the common people, and the views these two groups espoused held huge
ramifications for the future. The Federalists believed the country should be ruled by
the elites, a proposal city people agreed with and much of the Northeast supported.
Jeffersonians and Jacksonians wanted the common people to elect their
representatives to control government.\textsuperscript{43} These two views played out economically
as well, as Federalists who eyed a future of industrialism and mercantilism (which
again, most of the Northeast favored), contested the Jefferson's Democratic-

\textsuperscript{41} www.census.gov/population/censusdata/table-2.pdf, 1810 census.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} One can see this all throughout this period, papers making fun of one candidate while publishing the
whole speech and appealing to readers to support their candidate.
Republican view of free simple farmers or yeomen, which appealed to Southern and rural areas. This schism was also played out in religion between urban clerical and the rural anti-clerical factions.

The Second Great Awakening has been seen by many historians as a contest between the evangelicals, who were swayed by the emotions of the revivals, and the Enlightened rational thinkers, whose ranks might include college-educated trained ministers. In 1966 Perry Miller discussed this era of early revivals of the Second Great Awakening, “It brought also controversies, schisms, separations, all of which denominational historians recount.” Perry Miller asserted that if it was not for the New Haven theology of Timothy Dwight and Lyman Beecher, the country would have descended into the chaos of the First Great Awakening of 1740, where emotions and enthusiasm overtook rational reason. Nathan Hatch, studying the influence of Methodists, Baptists, Church of Christ, Mormons, Millerites, and other historical “fringe groups,” views this as a time of the democratization of Christianity and disagreed with Perry Miller’s assessment. Hatch summarized the late twentieth century current historical view in these words: “Conventional wisdom holds that, after flirting briefly with the rationalism of the Enlightenment, Americans embraced revivalism with a vengeance.” He rejected this view as too simplistic, as does this author. This debate between a supposed Enlightened rationalism and the religion of...

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44 McLoughlin, Lectures on Revivals, 99. McLoughlin wrote, “Most unsettling of all was the philosophical conflict between the world view of Calvinists and the new Enlightenment rationalists.

45 Perry Miller, The Life of the Mind, 7

46 Perry Miller; 6. Miller claims the people who set off the volcano, Lorenzo Dow, Barton W. Stone, William McGee, had little in the way of new theological ideas and “were little capable of cerebration.” This is a common mistake of historians who study the Second Great Awakening and until recently William Miller. Perry Miller fails to discuss William Miller and the Millerite movement even though it has been estimated that Miller by himself may have spoken to over to a half a million people.

47 Hatch, 35.
emotions is still a popular misconception of the revivals of the Second Great Awakening and does not take into account the complexity of the theology and characters involved in orchestrating this deeply intense religious time. It was during this era of the Second Great Awakening that America became Christianized in the modern evangelical concept of today.

During the 1820’s, America expanded democratically as well as geographically westward: this decade was one filled with optimism and change. Eight short years earlier the United States had “beaten” the largest empire in the world for a second time; the future now held promise of a new day dawning. After winning the wars of the American Revolution and the War of 1812, Americans would look to progress. During this era of the common man, it only made sense that the religions they gravitated towards included the ideas of choice and election rather than selection and predestination. As America moved towards the frontier, they embraced a religion of more freedom and choice. Corresponding technological advancements changed the way people acted in the marketplace.

In 1825, with the opening of the Erie Canal, the cities of Western New York went from being hamlets to powerful manufacturing centers. Many cities along the canal benefited from this new method of transportation and commerce. When the Erie Canal opened, prices for shipping goods dropped to one-tenth the price of pre-canal pricing. Goods and people now traveled twenty-four hours a day from New York City to westward regions such as Buffalo and Rochester. As the size of the cities swelled, so did the number of immigrants coming into the country and people moving from the farms. The 1820’s also witnessed the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration
of Independence. This document and its ideas of liberty in conjunction with the new gospel message being preached caused many people to question the institution of slavery, equal rights, and the treatment of underprivileged people. The French traveler Alexis deTocqueville noted in 1832, “Religion was strong in America because it was necessary, and it was necessary because Americans were free.”48 Indeed, when Tocqueville traveled through the United States, he witnessed some revivals; these revivals produced preachers, reforms and movements that still impact America nearly two hundred years later such as personal choice in salvation and "Christianizing" American society. It was in this environment that Charles Finney began his ministry.

In 1821, on a warm autumn day in western New York, a twenty-nine-year-old lawyer wrestled with his salvation. Charles Finney later recalled his feelings on that day. “I made up my mind that I would settle the question of my soul’s salvation that if it were possible I would make my peace with God.” As he entered his law office, a voice kept reminding him of his promise asking, “What are you waiting for? Did you not promise to give your heart to God?” From that fateful day Charles Grandison Finney decided to follow the Lord’s lead. He gave up his law practice and with no formal theological training, began a life long career of preaching and leading revivals. He believed that he needed to just accept the sacrifice Jesus paid on the Cross, and he would be saved not by what he does, but by what Christ had done.49

Finney spurned the theological interpretations of learned men in the Presbyterian Church, another characteristic of some successful revivalists of the

Second Great Awakening. When struggling with his conversion experience he did not even want to visit his minister because he felt he would not understand.\(^{50}\) Hardman noted in his biography that another historian, Cross, questioned whether Finney had ideas that could have been considered unique or for that matter even theological.\(^{51}\) He claimed he began to read the Bible and study it as he did his law books and he later wrote, “I had no where to go to but directly to the Bible, and to the philosophy or workings of my own mind, as revealed in consciousness.”\(^{52}\) His studies and training led him to see salvation as accomplished not though individual effort but through the Holy Spirit impressing the heart and the mind. He believed “Salvation was not achieved by my own works, but was to be found entirely in the Lord Jesus Christ, who presented himself before me as my God and my Savior.”\(^{53}\) For the Presbyterian-born Finney, accepting God’s grace ended a young, promising law career and catapulted him to the world stage of preaching, evangelism, and questioning Calvinism, the religion of his youth. Finney made use of the prevailing feelings of the time to push temperance reform and also associated himself with some strong-willed abolitionists. His insistence on the role of the Holy Spirit in revival led him to emphasize choice and the individual’s role in salvation as they were increasingly taking control of their political future.

Nine years after Charles Finney accepted salvation, he led one of the greatest urban revivals in the history of New York and the fledgling United States in 1830. However, not all historians agreed that Charles Finney was the Billy Graham of his

\(^{50}\) Finney, Memoirs, Ed Rosell and Dupuis, 10.
\(^{51}\) Hardman, 45.
\(^{52}\) Finney, Memoirs ed. Rosell and Dupuis, 10.
\(^{53}\) Ibid, 10.
day. Even contemporaries had problems with the self-made preacher man and his "new theology" in the "era of the common man." Albert Dod, an old school Calvinist Presbyterian, was an early critic and adversary of the new theology that Finney preached. Dod, writing in 1835, claimed Finney's "new measures" were anything but new and that they "originated with the fanatics of the First Great Awakening or with the rude camp meeting exhorters in the Second Great Awakening."54 Lyman Beecher, the leader of the New Light, theology and a few other Presbyterian preachers were already using some of Finney's tactics, but they did not employ them to the extent that Finney was utilizing them. Carwardine's research of "Finney's new measures," have demonstrated that some ideas, while new to Presbyterians, were already in place in other religious denominations.55 Finney spent his life preaching, teaching, and challenging the Calvinist doctrine of predestination that pervaded the Presbyterian Church. Charles Finney's theology of free-will and preaching put responsibility on the sinner while the Holy Spirit tugged at the heart for repentance. The freedom to choose whether they wanted to accept salvation was already familiar to Methodists. Finney merely brought these well-established principles of free will and primitive conversion to an old Calvinist denomination.56

Some of the more famous "new measures" introduced or utilized by Finney were protracted meetings. This was a time when people shut down businesses and other activities during which they attended revival and prayer meetings. Allowing

56 McLoughlin, Revivals, 113 and 122-38.
women to pray and exhort people in prayer meetings was another area where Finney was criticized by the Old School male-dominated institution of the Calvinists. To traditional Calvinists who taught the doctrine of the predestination, having extended prayer meetings, some which lasted all night (where a congregation or individuals prayed for each other and the Holy Spirit to come), was a waste time and not practical for the understanding of salvation. Finney is credited with employing the "anxious seat," a place for sinners who felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit to sit until after the meeting. After the meeting, the sinner then talked to the minister. Nothing so enraged the old school Calvinists or offended their sense of order as the use of theatrical drama, vernacular euphemisms, and lawyer-style preaching which Finney regularly used. Finney used "I" and "you" instead of the traditional third person to make the religious meeting more personal and let the people know they were in charge of their salvation; this flew in the face of traditional Calvinist predestination. For Finney, salvation was simple; all an individual had to do was accept or reject God's invitation as a personal choice. However, while these innovations were new to the traditional Presbyterians, they were not new to everybody. The other area that Finney is credited with that was considered radical in his time was a new view of the millennium. Finney's version of the millennium was brought about by people doing good and creating heaven on earth, and then the Lord would come. This new type of millennium vision led to the holiness movement and the benevolent empire, both of which will be discussed later.

Not only did Finney adopt common religious precepts, he also drew on dominant, well-established developments in the civil, economic, and political culture.
Many old-school Calvinists with their rigid traditions and predestination found the emotionalism and emphasis on the person's role in salvation out of touch with their theological understanding. They were horrified by the emotionalism displayed by congregations and thought Finney's messages bordered on heresy. His adoption of the free will was viewed as coming from a bunch of backwoods uneducated Baptists and Methodists, causing alarm to the learned and structured old Calvinist-Presbyterian regime.

Many of Finney’s religious ideas mirrored what many historians have termed the “era of the common man.” This point must not be missed, as Nathan Hatch expressed these sentiments, “Religious populism, reflecting the passions of ordinary people and the charisma of democratic movement builders, remains the oldest and deepest impulses in American life.”57 As political democracy for many white males expanded in the 1820-30’s, so did their understanding of what living the Christian life would be like. Control of their political future through the power of voting and running for office also corresponded well with having the right to choose their ministers and being more involved with revivals. It was in this climate that Finney, the master communicator and spokesman, brought the Old School Presbyterian congregations to a new theology of choice with men and women having a greater role in salvation. Finney was not above using tactics that were successful in other denominations to get his message of personal salvation and soon-coming millennium out.

Finney’s did not deny using any of these tactics; he believed his tactics and his new interpretation of salvation were blessed by God and that the evidence of the

57 Hatch, 5.
blessing was seen in the large number of conversions resulting from his preaching. His intent was to stir up the congregation for the Holy Spirit while preaching the "truth," thus making an effective appeal on both their hearts and minds. William Miller employed similar logic. Finney also took man's free will even further by boldly proclaiming the will is free... and sin and holiness are voluntary acts of the mind."58 His "new light" tactics produced revivals in Cortland County, New York, and delivered many Presbyterians from the rigid grips of predestined Calvinism by 1835.59 Finney rejected Calvinist theology that emphasized God as an angry, harsh, and unforgiving. His God had compassion and was interested in every individual's personal salvation and the choice was not God's to be saved but was in the individual's choice to accept that salvation. This message spoke to old-school Calvinists who were "emotionally and spiritually starved" and drove the success of the upstate New York revivals.60 Finney's "new school" theology and postmillennialist views gave believers an added sense of hope and a more practical sense of independence in tune with individualistic minded Jacksonian Americans. In this era of new found independence, Finney preached a message of personal control, of solutions, public involvement, and moral activism.61

The contest between the traditional Calvinist deterministic way of salvation and Finneyite freewill paralleled and drew on the cultural changes wrought by the American Revolution. It also portrayed the spirit of independence that swept through

58 Ibid, 125 and Finney complete restored texts
60 McLoughlin, Lectures on Revivals, xxxviii.
61 Hewitt, Women's Activism, 76.
the countryside in first few decades of the nineteenth century. Hatch in *Democratization of Christianity*, and McLoughlin, in *Revivals, Awakenings and Reforms*, are both correct in contending that the democratization of religion and demise of the doctrine of election held as a central tenet in Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist thought was in line with the thinking of the capitalistic independence-minded citizens at the beginning of the nineteenth century. If men made their own choices politically and economically as buyers and sellers who competed for best prices in society, then why should not those same men be allowed to choose their salvation? As the United States extended towards the West, towns like Rochester, and Buffalo started growing, and people faced expanded choice about where to live. Why could they also not choose their salvation? Is it possible the shift from the rigid clerical Calvinism towards Arminianism theology reflected the political freedoms of the people? This new "spiritual republicanism" was reality an applying of the democratic and economic values to religious issues as well. It was this shift as it applied to theological landscape that Finney benefited from in the late 1820's through the early 1830's. Finney was capitalizing on the mood of the common "people" the era of more political freedom; the people in turn welcomed Finney's message spiritual message that gave them more religious freedom.

Another "new school movement" Finney is often credited with in popular texts is his role in helping women speak out and hold prominent positions in the

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62 Hatch, and McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reforms*, pp. 98-140. For a further discussion of how these ideas of freedom and Arminianism of Calvinism led to revivals in the early nineteenth century, see Curtis Johnson, *Islands of Holiness*, 6-10. Curtis Johnson rejects the economic social control model of Paul E. Johnson's explanation of the Rochester Revival. He also sees a second wave of revival that extends from 1812-1843, that corresponds nicely to the Millerite revival period. Unfortunately, he does not discuss about much about Millerism as a factor for some of the revivals he studies, see page 40.
church. Yet, while he allowed and encouraged women to pray in his churches and used them in visitations, they did little else. Finney was not a mold breaker but a popularizer of already current trends. A recent Finney biographer, Keith Hardman, surmised that the practice of women praying in public was not Finney's innovation, but came from the Methodists and Free Baptists. Women in Utica in the 1820's were only given minor roles such as speaking out and praying out loud during services.63 While he may not have originated the idea, "he offered no resistance to it and from this time on increasingly became a patron of women speaking and praying."64 One of the more important converts in Rochester was a woman because, "from that moment, she was outspoken in her religious convictions, and zealous for the conversion of her friends... Her husband also became converted, and together they "produced much excitement among that class of people to which she belonged."65 Finney also went to ladies' houses with his wife to hold extended prayer meetings and for the purpose of putting pressure on a spouse to convert. Nancy Hewitt, studying Rochester women's roles in revivals and reforms, wrote, "After Finney's arrival it was women who became the primary agents of personal and community salvation." She listed many prominent women who were agents of the great revival focusing on "their kin's, co-worshipers, and community's attention to the floodtides of revivalism."66

63 Mary P. Ryan, "A Women's Awakening: Evangelical Religion and the Families of Utica, New York, 1800-1840," American Quarterly 30 no. 5 Special Issue: Women and Religion (Winter 1978): 602-623. She did note that, "female piety was concentrated in rural areas during the first decade of the nineteenth century and was typical of the relatively youthful Baptist and Methodists." However, Ryan did find that women in the Presbyterian Church were uncomfortable and even restrained in their newfound freedom. This also corresponds with Curtis Johnson's study of rural religion in Upstate New York in Islands of Holiness.

64 Hardman, 85.


66 Nancy Hewitt Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York 1822-1872 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 74-75. The men were just as passionate as many women and in some
were actively engaged in the gospel message or reform movements several years before Finney used them in Rochester. Finney capitalized on women as a means of bringing their husbands and others into the gospel; though the practice was already in use in many rural areas, he employed it to a great extent in his urban revivals.

However, the public role of women in the Presbyterian churches and for Finney ended at praying and speaking. Some of the Old School Presbyterians had trouble with even that and were "horrified because women were allowed to lead in prayer at some of the meetings."\(^{67}\) They, along with blacks, were welcome, but like the blacks in Finney's churches they were prohibited from voting and holding church office. An example of this can be seen at the Chatam Street Chapel in New York City.\(^{68}\) Finney allowed black men and women to attend Oberlin College; in this way he can be considered a reformer. Despite his reluctance to step beyond accepted new gender measures Finney did champion equality in punishment and church discipline between the sexes. When a woman was treated unfairly or judged by the church for an offense, Finney pointed out the injustice of a judgment on a woman who committed the same offense as a man, but was treated much more harshly.\(^{69}\) Finney utilized but did not invent the "new measure" of women leading revivals, but he did

\(^{67}\) From Blake McKelvey, Rochester: the Waterpowered City, 1812 to 1854. (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 1945), page 193, 134 as quoted in Hewitt, Women's, 77.

\(^{68}\) Hardman, 275.

\(^{69}\) Hardman, 311.
push for equality in other spheres such as church discipline. It is worth noting that it was women who first saw the value of Finney as an evangelist.

Charles G. Finney, “the grand master of antebellum revivalism,” received state exposure in a series of evangelistic meetings in the Mohawk Valley which included the cities of Rome, Utica and Troy in 1826 and later national exposure in the Rochester revivals of 1830-31. Nancy Hewitt, studying women’s activism and social change in Rochester, found that men and women who participated in Finney’s great revival of 1831 already had kinship and membership in the Charitable Society which she referred to as CS. She argued that the Finney revivals “inspired large numbers of men and women to join movements to eradicate immorality and thereby hasten the millennium.” Is it possible that this same belief in the imminent coming of the Lord before the millennium—after the factionism and squabbles of abolition forces, the stock market crash of 1837, and various other calamities in society—gave impetus to the Millerite movement and swelled its numbers as well? These people who had worked and tried to bring about one millennium began looking for a new kind of millennium message as they saw their original hopes dashed.

Two years before Charles Finney was known as a successful evangelist, the Female Missionary Society voted to send him $192 dollars. Mary Ryan attributed this loan to the launching of his career. She claimed, “Finney’s career as an evangelist began with a tour of Oneida, funded by the Female Missionary Society.” It was this small society of women who first believed in Finney. Therefore, it is not too much of a stretch to wonder if Finney’s “new measure” of using women to help

70 Hewitt, 55.
71 Ryan, 602-603.
72 Ryan, 603
convert and bring people to salvation during the revivals of 1826 and the 1830’s was his way of repaying the debt he owed to the women who gave him his start in evangelism. To Finney and other conservatives using women to bring about revival may not have been new; it was widely practiced in other areas and congregations before Finney. Indeed women on their own helped build churches in their communities when they saw a spiritual need, they were important in bringing others into the movement and starting churches before and after Finney and Miller.

Curtis Johnson, in his examination of revivals in rural upstate New York in Cortland County, observed that women were central to the evangelical religion of Cortland County, some twenty years before Finney preached his first sermon. When a religious society could not reach a consensus about forming a church in the rural frontier town of Homer, a woman, who after spending the night in prayer believed God was leading her, decided to start a church. Dorothy Hoar collected all the names of people wanting to organize a Congregational Church and invited them to do so. Hoar’s dream of having a church in her community led to the formation of the Homer Congregational Church in 1801. This woman organized prayer meetings at her house that precipitated the county’s first major revivals. Mary Ryan examined the role of women in the “Burned Over District,” and asserted that not only were women the chief beneficiaries of the revivals as attested by their numbers of conversions, but also they were often the instigators of the revivals as Johnson’s work in Cortland County attests. Ryan wrote “For nearly twenty years the women of Utica, carefully prepared the soil, planted and nourished the seeds of Finney’s renowned evangelical harvest of 1825 and 1826.” Ryan made this claim based on statistics from the town of Utica.

73 Curtis Johnson, Islands of Holiness, 20 and 53-4.
where women made up 50 percent of the population and comprised 62 to 65 percent of the total admissions into the Presbyterian churches.\textsuperscript{74} Drawing on these earlier successes Finney probably learned to rely early on women during revival campaigns. A major difference between Utica revivals of Finney and Dorothy Hoar's role in the revival at Homer was that it happened twenty years earlier than Finney and without men "directing" Hoar's actions.

Edward Taylor and Lyman Beecher considered themselves "new school" Presbyterians, but complained when Finney and his associates used excessive displays of excitement and sometimes bizarre behaviors to incite revivals. The two sides conducted a conference in New Lebanon in 1827, where Taylor and Beecher accused Finney and his associates of engaging in "all night prayer meetings, allowing women to pray and exhort when men were present, denouncing Old School ministers as cold, stupid, or dead speaking with irreverent familiarity with God, and employing the anxious seat."\textsuperscript{75} Finney himself claimed he started to use the anxious seat as a tactic of revival three years later in Rochester in 1830. He wrote,

\begin{quote}
At Rochester, if I first recollect right, I first introduced this measure. This was the years after the cry had been raised of "new measures."... He wrote further "I made a call, I think for the first time, upon all that class of persons whose convictions were so ripe that they were willing to renounce their sins and give themselves to God, to come forward to certain seats which I requested to be vacated and offer themselves up to God, while we made them a subject of prayer."\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{74} Ryan, 603 and 614.
\textsuperscript{75} McLoughlin, Revivals, 125. It is not the purpose to discuss the difference in theological practices between Finney and Beecher. It is interesting to note, however, that Beecher, upon seeing the success of Finney, adopted some of his preaching methods later. The anxious seat is mentioned by McLoughlin as already being used by the time of the 1827 New Lebanon conference.
\textsuperscript{76} Hardman, 200.
Apparently when writing his memoirs some time later Finney did not recall using "the anxious seat" before Rochester (three years) when Beecher and Taylor seem to be complaining about it. However, this special bench became such a successful tool it was used in later revivals by other preachers. Finney remarked, "A much larger number came forward than I expected, and among them a prominent lady." It is also in Rochester that another kind of revival would break out, and Finney would get credit for an innovative reform movement that he did not create.

In Rochester, revival and reform came together in a rapidly growing urban setting on the commercial freeway of the Erie Canal. It was at the request Joseph Bissel, a prominent businessman, that Finney was invited to preach a series of sermons. What erupted in the coming months has been considered the greatest urban revival and a watershed of the Second Great Awakening. Cross described the Awakening in the following way:

no agonizing souls fell in the aisles no raptured ones shouted hallelujahs. Rather, despite his doses of hellfire, the great evangelist, 'in unclerical suit of gray,' acted 'like a lawyer arguing before a court in a jury,' talking precisely, logically, but with wit, verve and informality. Lawyers, real estate magnets, millers, manufactures, and commercial tycoons led the parade of the regenerated; the theater became a livery stable. Taverns closed.

Another area Finney is credited with by many historians is his development of abolitionism, women's equality, and temperance reforms. Much of this reputation came from his association with Oberlin College and from the revivals in Rochester. Oberlin College was at the vanguard of reform with ideas such as "work/study

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77 William Miller employed the anxious seat at his revival in Portland in 1840, which will be discussed in chapter 3—Portland Revival.
78 Finney, Memoirs ed., Rosell and Dupuis, 236.
79 Cross, 155.
programs, but aside from abolitionism, along with equal rights for women, and Grahamite Vegetarianism," were less recognized reforms. Finney was more concerned with salvation and he let other trusted friends handle these reforms lest he be distracted his supreme task, bringing people to God to prepare for the millennium.

In Rochester, he employed a trusted convert and close friend Theodore Weld, who was also a staunch abolitionist. Barnes observed when commenting on an abolitionist preacher, "Like all of Finney’s associates, he was an abolitionist." Weld became an important spokesperson for the abolitionist movement, more prominent than William Henry Lloyd Garrison. McLoughlin contends that Weld’s abolitionist crusades in Western New York and Ohio "may have been more effective than Garrison’s efforts in the East." Here is an important distinction between Weld and Finney: Weld made abolitionism a crusade on its own, while Finney saw slavery as moral sin that should be combated with conversion and not legislation.

"Theodore Dwight Weld linked the antislavery cause with their campaigns to win souls both to the Lord and to immediate emancipation." Finney was distressed, however, by the growing tendency of Weld and his company of young men to place primary stress on "abolitionism." Finney tried to convince Weld and his company of young men that the whole slavery problem could be solved within two years if only, "the public mind can be engrossed with the subject of salvation and make abolition an

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80 George Knight, Joseph Bates (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2004), 54.
81 Barnes, 85.
83 Barnes, 86.
appendage. In an 1836 letter to Weld, Finney pleaded with him to first convert the people to God, arguing that

> We made temperance an appendage of the revival in Rochester. . . I was almost alone in the field as an evangelist. Then 100,000 were converted in one year, every one of which was a temperance man. The same would be the case and Abolition. We can now with you and my theological classes [at Oberlin] bring enough laborers into the field under God and move the land in two years.\(^{84}\)

What Weld later tried to do congressionally in Washington, Finney believed was a heart issue. In this letter, Finney was expressing his true feelings that slavery and intemperance were caused by an unconverted heart. For Finney, a converted person would not drink and he or she would view slavery as a moral sin against God and humanity. Finney, like other evangelicals, believed that a better society was an inherent result of revivals. Rochester was where temperance and salvation came together in a powerful display. However, it has been demonstrated these interrelated objectives did not originate with Finney, but were already on the minds of the people and were already in practice in other places. Finney like many great reformers tapped into the current of thinking of the people and then stoked the fires of revival with a message they were eager to accept. However not all evangelists of the era agreed on how to combat the moral evils of the day.

Finney viewed temperance as an important tool of evangelism, but he never lost focus of the ultimate goal, which was the conversion of souls.\(^{85}\) Historians Hudson and McLoughlin recognized this distinction between the two reforms and noted how disappointed Finney eventually became over this divisive issue as he

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\(^{84}\) From Weld MSS, Finney to Weld, July 2, 1836 as quoted in Barnes, 275.

\(^{85}\) William Miller, another millennialist, held similar views on the premiere importance of conversion and other ideas of reform being secondary.
watched his friendship with Weld erode. Hudson noted, “Finney made 'temperance' an integral part of his greatest revival success—the Rochester revival of 1830-31.”

Before Weld became a well-known abolitionist he championed temperance. In December of 1830, Finney invited his friend Theodore Weld, who was an ardent temperance advocate, to help in the Rochester revival. Welds' impassioned temperance speeches left audiences in the Presbyterian Churches spellbound and riveted for hours at time. In one New Year’s Eve lecture at the Third Presbyterian Church, and after the church’s preacher Rev. Penney made a special appeal, an estimated eight to ten liquor sellers shut down their businesses and took the pledge.

The largest grocer in Rochester, removed “demon rum” from his store and publicly dumped it in front of a cheering and excited citizenry. The revival that Finney started in October had awakened into a temperance revival by January of 1831. It was recorded that the wealthy citizens of Rochester purchased all the liquor themselves, then much to the bewilderment of the employees and to the glee of the crowds they destroyed the alcoholic drink.

Also in the middle 1830s, as the landscape in revival and reform began to change, so did Finney's role in the Second Great Awakening and his evangelistic crusades. Lyman Beecher, so concerned with the crazed abolitionist revivalists, stood in for the concurrent Congregational churches of Connecticut and pushed forward a ban on all revivalists who included abolitionism, but his success was short-lived. Weld, however, in 1836, started the “Gospel of abolitionism,” which viewed slavery as a two phase-sin.

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87 Keith Hardman, 201-205 and Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper’s, 113-115.
Barnes made the observation that many people of the Great Revivals and Finney's "holy band" began to stress the slavery of sin and the physical slavery in the U. S as the greatest sins. This can be seen clearly in people who were once his associates, "the personalities-- the Tappans, who had been the financial Angels of the great revival; Joshua Leavitt, who had been its editor, Weld and Stanton, who were its evangelists; and Birney and Wright, Weld's convert-- were identified too closely and too intimately with the Great Revival and its sequels, to make their slavery association a chance regrouping."88 Joshua Leavitt stopped editing the "New York Evangelist," the paper of the Finney revivals and started editing the "Emancipator."

Charles Finney is also mentioned in discussions of the benevolent empire and temperance reforms. Paul Johnson's creative interpretive study of the revival in Rochester advanced his thesis that Finney's revival was promoted and controlled by the social elite in Rochester; he did this by analyzing the social impact of the revival. He underemphasized the fact that many of the temperance and other reforms happening in Rochester reflected the current thinking in the country, and were not unique to Rochester. Johnson's social control theory missed the point that Finney used whatever was necessary to awaken the conscience and cause of salvation, as shown throughout this paper. Finney adapted to the surrounding circumstances and employed evangelistic methods to fit his audience.

After the great success of the Rochester revival, two reforming brothers, Arthur and Lewis Tappan, invited Finney to New York City. They were early leaders in the abolitionist movement and Arthur even set up a "college training for Negroes."

88 Barnes, 103-107.
Eventually the Tappan brothers fronted much of the money to establish a black college in New Haven, Connecticut. 89

Historian Winthrop Hudson, writing in the 1970's, summarized what is common thinking in this great era of reform. "Yet as revivals progressed, causes and reforms multiplied—the pursuit of peace; prison reform; manual labor schools which wedded minds, hands, hearts in educational theory and practice; dietary reform; dress reform—each directed in one way or another to the perfecting of society." While Finney used many reforms and vigorously advocated some as being important to the millennial movement, he still saw that the greatest reform was that of the human heart and people's conversion to the gospel and the message of the soon coming millennium.

To both millennialists, Charles Finney and William Miller, the converted heart would do the work of the many reforms mentioned above. Finney and Miller never allowed other reforms—legal or social—to detract from the ultimate goal of revival, conversion. 90 Both Finney and Miller believed God was coming soon and that moral change was a result of a converted heart from their message of accepting the choice of salvation and preparing for the imminent millennium.

By the middle to late 1830's, the benevolent empire's attempt to bring about the millennium was beginning to falter. Many people became disillusioned with the hope of a better society and became torn over the issue of slavery. People also saw the economy and society beginning to worsen, not getting better as predicted. The

89 Barnes, 22-27 and 55. Arthur Tappan was elected the president of the National Anti-slavery society in 1831 a year or two before Finney accepted the call by the Tappan brothers to the pastorate at the Chatham Chapel in New York City. Finney would have had to been aware of their anti-slavery views and agreed to support them before he went or at the very least was sympathetic to views. Hardman, 274. Finney refused to allow slaveholders to take communion at the Chatham Street Chapel this could be very well seen as abolitionist minded; however, Hardman does not see it that way.

90 William Miller held the single most important reform was the heart being prepared for Christ's Second Coming.
society in which Finney preached his revivals of the millennium was starting to change, and people began listening to a new millennial messenger who preached a new type of millennium in society.
Chapter 2: Miller and the Making of a Millennialist and a Reformer

When historians examine the Millerite movement, several questions need to be addressed and examined in light of the new research discussed in this introduction. Where did William Miller come from and what was his religious philosophy? Secondly, how does he compare with Charles Finney as a reformer and revivalist of the Second Great Awakening? Miller's role as a revivalist in Portland, Maine will be discussed in Chapter Three. Finally, why was he successful and can he be considered a revivalist similar to other preachers of the Second Great Awakening? It is my purpose in this section to highlight the important events in Miller's life, message, and compare his experiences with those of Charles Finney a contemporary millennialist of this period. Some things seem clear in light of new research, Miller was neither a mesmerizer nor a person spreading confusion and delusion, nor was he the greatest theologian who ever lived. The answer is, as Ernest Sandeen observed, that he was a millennialist spreading the ultimate reform message for a society "in the early nineteenth century [that] was drunk on the millennium."91

William Miller was born shortly after the American Revolution. After that war, colonists were ripe with ideas of freedom and equality which swept across the landscape. The very notion of Christianity for the common man was linked with this newfound democracy. The old structure and hierarchy of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Church changed dramatically, and in some places it disappeared completely because they no longer had the government to enforce their powers. These traditional churches were helpless to enforce their dogma or stem the new tide

of individualism of religion. Baptist and Methodists ministers grew exponentially in numbers in the latter 18th into the mid-nineteenth century from eighteen hundred in 1795 to forty thousand by 1845. The American population also grew at a fast rate as well from around two and half million to twenty million by the 1840's.\textsuperscript{92} The early history of William Miller has nothing that shows him to be any different from other children raised by God-fearing Bible-believing mothers.

Born in 1782, William Miller grew up like most children in the new republic. He received only three months of formal education in elementary school. Later he taught himself to read and became an avid reader in his teen years, sneaking books to his bed to read under cover of candlelight. When the War of 1812 broke out, William, like other Americans eagerly signed up for the war and promptly encouraged others to enlist, which then gave him the rank of captain. Something unusual happened during the war that forever changed Miller's religious views and challenged his deistic beliefs. In the battle of Plattsburg, Miller's faith in deism was shattered to the core when fourteen hundred regular and four thousand volunteers defeated a British detachment of fifteen thousand highly trained soldiers. Miller wrote later, "At the commencement of the battle, we looked upon our own defeat as almost certain, and yet we were victorious, so surprising a result against such odds, did seem to me like the work of a mightier power than a man."\textsuperscript{93} In this battle Miller saw much destruction and death; he began to question his life and what would happen

\textsuperscript{92} Hatch, 3-4. Rowe pointed out there were only five Baptist churches in New York State in 1795, and in by 1815, there were over 300. In 1830, the Baptist membership had grown to well over 60,000 making it the third-largest church, after Presbyterians in Congregationalist in New York State. Rowe, Thunder, 81.

\textsuperscript{93} William Miller, \textit{William Miller Apology and Defense} (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1845), 1-4.
if he died. It was then he realized deism could not answer the spiritual questions raised since the battle.

Like so many people during the Second Great Awakening, Miller attempted to find answers in the evangelical community by joining the Baptist Church. It was there that he accepted Jesus as his personal Lord and savior. Shortly after his conversion he retired from busy public life in 1816. One spring day, while sharing his Baptist beliefs of a personal intercessory Savior and the accuracy of the Bible, a deist friend issued a challenge which changed his life forever and the lives of thousands if not millions of people in pre-antebellum America. He wrote,

He then asked me how I knew the Bible was true. He advanced my former deistical arguments on the inconsistencies, the contradictions, and the mysticisms in which I had claimed it was shrouded. I replied that if the Bible was the word of God, every thing contained therein might be understood, and all its parts be made to harmonize; and I said to him that if he would give me time, I would harmonize all these apparent contradictions, to my own satisfaction, or I would be a Deist still.”94

To refute his friend's deists claims about contradictions in the Bible, he decided to examine the Bible and confront the contradictions and solve them before moving on the next verse or chapter. Miller believed like many evangelicals that if they read their Bible and studied, God would provide answers to its apparent contradictions. Miller read his Bible and used only a concordance to explain each verse. He eventually came upon a startling text in Daniel 8:14. He researched and studied the idea until 1823 when he shared with hesitation his new millennial view that was unenthusiastically received by friends and neighbors, who saw it as an “idle

94 Miller, 6-7.
tale.” In less than a decade that ‘idle tale’ would change peoples’ thinking; in less then twenty years it spawned several movements still around today.\textsuperscript{95}

During the mid 1820’s, when Miller was studying scriptures, society was manifesting a heightened religiosity and positivist reform and revivalism, hoping to bring about a new millennium as preached by Finney. Many Protestants who followed Finney’s ideas in the Northeast during the ‘Era of Good Feelings’ believed if they could just reform society they could bring heaven to earth. However, for Miller, his Bible studies revealed a different future, in his understanding; the future was not a peaceful millennium but rather a world that was consumed by a vast conflagration after the actual appearing of Jesus Christ in the clouds. William Miller was troubled also with the notion of progress and the post millennialist view of a better society and how humankind could obtain perfection if they just worked at it hard enough. After studying his Bible, he believed humankind was getting worse and, unlike the post millennialists and their view in the progress of society, he believed the Bible predicted when the Lord was coming.\textsuperscript{96} He wrote,

While thus studying the Scriptures, I became satisfied, if the prophecies which have been fulfilled in the past are any criterion by which to judge of the manner of the fulfillment of those which are future, that the popular views of the spiritual reign of Christ, a temporal millennium before the end of the world, and the Jews’ return, are not sustained by the word of God… I found it plainly taught in the Scriptures that Jesus Christ will again descend to this earth, coming in the clouds of heaven, in all the glory of his Father… so the earth that now is, is reserved unto fire, to be melted with fervent heat at Christ's coming…\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{95} The Seventh day Adventist founders grew up out of the Millerite movement and believed Miller was right about the date of the sanctuary to be cleansed, but not right about which sanctuary. The Advent Christian Church also traces it beginnings to the conference convened by Miller following the Oct. 1844 after the disappointment date.

\textsuperscript{96} Michael Barkun, \textit{Crucible of the Millennium} (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 103-125. In his work he has two chapters that discuss the natural and economic disasters during this period.

\textsuperscript{97} Miller, \textit{Apology and Defense}, 7.
To the logical literal-minded Baptist Miller these texts pointed toward a destruction of
the world in the very near future. The text which shocked him was Daniel 8:14, "unto
2300 days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Using a year/day principle as found
in the Old Testament in Numbers 14:34, he added the numbers from 457 B.C. He
then came to the conclusion God was going to cleanse his sanctuary (to Miller that
was the earth) with fire and all life would be destroyed. The revolutionary part of this
interpretation was the destruction of the world before the millennium which went
totally contrary to the thinking and popular beliefs in the Era of Good Feelings.98
Finney believed that people's good works would bring about the Millennium and
most of the evangelical community agreed with him. In the 1820's and 1830's many
evangelicals had not thought about the literal second coming of Jesus with the
destruction of the world.

Miller claimed to have studied the theory until 1823 before sharing it
with anyone. When he did disclose his theory and ideas on the imminent
return of the Lord around 1843,99 many seemed not to be interested.

However, a change occurred in 1830-31, the time of the great revivals of
Charles Finney in Rochester and of in other parts of the nation, forcing him to
confront his theory and proclaim it to those who listened.100

98 Ibid.
99 It is very clear from all of the Millerite literature and critical analysis that Miller never set an exact
date for coming of God and only a few weeks before the 1844 October disappointment did he
reluctantly agree to set his hope on that day, but he never liquidated his belongings nor did he advocate
it his followers. Dick, 145.
100 Miller in Apology and Defense wrote how he made a deal with God to preach on the subject if
asked and in that same moment a young man rode up requesting him to preach in the Dresden Baptist
church. Miller reluctantly agreed.
These two millennialists would take different paths, but their associates and ideas certainly crossed, and each benefited from the other's revival fires. Finney started his revivals and preaching of the pre-millennial point of view with the message that society is getting better, and people have a choice in their salvation by accepting Jesus. This doctrine of people ushering in the millennium through good works and habits, according to Miller, was not scriptural and could not be supported using the Bible. This belief in using scripture was the hallmark of his message; he believed if people just read the Bible for themselves they would come to the same conclusion as he did. Miller tried to recruit other people and get them to support his idea to no avail. Unfortunately for Miller, no one paid attention to his fanciful ideas at first. Until 1831, try as he might, no one really accepted or advocated the doctrine of the imminent coming of the Lord. However, for both Miller and Finney 1831 was a pivotal year. Finney ushered in the greatest urban revival of the Second Great Awakening in Rochester, New York, which by some historians is considered the watershed of that era; Miller also started his revival and millennium message, but it was not as loud. He received his first public invitation to a house (his cousin's) to preach on the subject of the newness of Christ's coming.

In 1831, both millennialists were heartily accepted, and many converts followed respectively. For Finney, the city of Rochester was a fertile field, ripe with eager souls to push off the constraints of Calvinism with its predestination and accept the doctrine of choice. Finney's greatest urban revival was in Rochester and the

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101 Finney held revivals in the same cities where Miller was holding his and the two fed off the heighten religious awareness of the communities they preached in.
102 For critical discussion on providence versus Miller arranging to speak and early life consult David Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets.
surrounding communities. This revival will be compared with Miller's Portland revival of 1840 in Chapter Three of this work. For the reluctant "prophet," Miller's first public speaking on the subject was also a huge success. On a warm "sabbath" day in August, he spoke at a packed home. After speaking to the attentive audience, something wonderful happened. He recalled, "As soon as I commenced speaking, all my diffidence and embarrassment were gone, and I felt impressed only with the greatness of the subject, which, by the providence of God, I was enabled to present."

Emotionalism and personal experience were hallmarks of the Second Great Awakening and were not lost even on the sober minded Miller. At the close of the service, the people requested that he stay a week to present the message. People from the surrounding communities flocked to hear his new exciting message, "a revival commenced, and it was said that of the thirteen families present all but two persons were hopefully converted." This was the first of many meetings where Miller experienced a successful number of conversions from hearers of his millennial message.

After this revival, Miller received enthusiastic responses and invitations that would keep him busy in small towns in New York, Vermont, and Canada for the next eight years. During these early years he was encouraged in 1832 to write out his ideas which were published in the Vermont Telegraph. At first, he tried to publish the articles anonymously. However, the publisher forced him put his name to them or they would not publish them. Apparently his ideas were well received in this era.

103 Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper's Millennium, many of the facts and statistics on church attendance and the impact on Rochester is discussed and creatively interpreted under Marxist philosophy of control of the masses.
104 Miller, Apology and Defense, 18-19.
105 ibid, 14-16.
swamped with democratic reform ideas and religious diversity. While Finney preached a happy millennium, Miller preached a millennium that was diametrically opposed and ended in tragedy for the unrepentant and heaven for the true seekers.

This 'Era of Good Feelings' turned into the "era of controversy' which strained pre-millennialists' ideals of utopia and caused many to question their early successes in the benevolence movements as advocated by Finney. In the 1830's the country divided into sectionalism with fights over slavery, states rights and tariffs. While the Northeast preached on the evils of slavery, the south saw slavery vital to their existence. Two years after Miller preached publicly his millennialist message opportunities arose that helped to create a spiritual awakening in the sky and later in the economy, which revealed that society instead of getting better as Finney preached it, was getting worse as Miller had predicted.

On November 13, 1833, Miller must have believed God and had given him and society a sign of what the end of the world would be like. On that day the sky erupted with blazing meteor showers, falling at a rate of one to two every minute. It appeared to be the shower of the stars, reminiscent of the description of the opening of the sixth seal of Revelation. This close connection of religion with nature was evident as, one newspaper editor wrote, "raining fire to be sure, a sure forerunner—a merciful sign of that great and dreadful day which the inhabitants of the earth will witness when the sixth seal shall be opened." While many people who witnessed the stars falling in the Northeast, and linked it to the end of the world, critics labeled

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107 See Damstéegt, 11-16, for a discussion on the schisms dividing America during this time.
108 From Plattsburgh Republican, November 30, 1833 as quoted and Rowe, Thunder, 21.
them and the newspaper editor as fanatical. Other people, who were probably not acquainted with Miller's millennial views, held opinions similar to the editor in Plattsburgh. Frederick Douglass, famous author and former slave turned abolitionist recalled that day, 22 years later, when he wrote,

I witnessed this glorious spectacle and was awestruck. The air seemed filled with bright descendent messengers from the sky. It was about daybreak, when I noticed the sublime scene. I was not without the suggestion, at the moment, that it might be the harbinger of the coming of the Son of Man, and, in my then state of mind, I was prepared to herald him as my Friend and Deliverer. I had read that the stars should fall from heaven, and they were now falling.109

While no definite connection can be drawn between the shower of stars and the end of world in their comments, Frederick Douglass and the editor echoed many Christians' reactions.

Revival fires continued to burn for both millennialist preachers Miller and Finney during the early 1830s and into the mid 1830s. In 1835, Finney took a position teaching theology at the newly established Oberlin College, but continued hold meeting in some cities around the Northeast. The natural and supernatural displays and calamities that struck Upstate New York and New England had several effects on the people. Like people since ancient times, people of the nineteenth century equated natural calamities as the work of God punishing his people. Historian Michael Barkun observed that one of the effects it had on people were that they, "produced a disquieting impression about the spiritual state of the world," and disasters are predicted for the last days so it "prepared the way for the millennium."110

If the natural disasters and the day of falling stars told people of a coming

110 Barkun, 102-111.
millennium, then when financial problems hit they would certainly know the "good old days" were gone.

Another boost to Millerite millenarianism and his theology was the depression of 1837 which historians have labeled the Panic of 1837. It convinced many people that better times were not ahead. One historian commenting on the economic impact of the Panic observed, "prices fell further between 1839 and 1843 than between 1929 in 1933-- 42% as against 31%. Such brutal statistics (coupled with several natural disasters of the period) made many wonder what happened to human progress."111 In the northeast, nine tenths of the factories shut down, causing high employment in the urban centers 'and leading people' to question the ivory-towered future of the millennium of Finney and other pre-millennialists.112 Some Millerites used the financial collapse and the natural disasters to point to the nearness of Christ's coming. During the depression that lasted from 1837-1844, Millerites reflected the thinking of the common person, by condemning the materialism and accumulation of wealth of the banks and corporations. Most people blamed the depression on the failure of the banks. The periodical, The Signs of the Times blamed monopolies, or rich men who owned stocks, and pointed out how there were so many banks and so little money. Surely this must be a sign of the last days.113 Other Millerites extended Miller's prophetic interpretations to powers in the world. This economic collapse burdened the benevolent societies which were created under the guise of bettering society. Not only did the sky and economy turn people's minds toward a millennial thinking so did

111 ibid, 115.
112 ibid, 115.
113 Signs of the Times, March 20, 1840.
some Millerite predictions about Biblical prophecy, based on Miller's 2300 day prophecy.

In June 1838, Josiah Litch, a member of the New England Methodist Episcopal conference and recent convert to Millerism published a 204 page volume *The Probability of the Second Advent of Christ*, about 1843. In this book he predicted the Ottoman Empire would fall in 1840, and as history records, the European powers stepped in to protect the emperor from disintegration. However, when Ottoman independence was lost to Europe, Litch used this event as proof for his interpretation. According to Everett Dick, an early Millerite historian, this prediction with its "speculation and its apparent fulfillment caused considerable stir among the people." One historian has pointed out that some Millerites were so disgusted with governments they declared, "all governments are corrupt in the fundamental principles upon which they're established." While the economic conditions and Ottoman Empire prediction inspired the Millerites, it probably caused great consternation to Charles Finney and other evangelicals.

Why was Miller, like Finney, able to cut across denominational lines and become a widely popular speaker sought after even though he preached a different future? How was it that a Baptist farmer who was a former town justice of the peace with no traditional theological training was able to ignite the revival embers and become the spokesperson for a movement center in the Northeast known as Millerism? Part of the answer lies in the fact revivalism fires were everywhere in

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114 Dick, 19.
115 Joseph Marsh, Christian Palladium VIII (September 2, 1839) 140-41, 136-37 as found in Rowe, Thunder, 76. Rowe spent a large portion showing Millerites were not crackpot or oddities in society, but they actually represented commonly held views in society in the mid 1800's.
America. Miller certainly benefited by the increased heightened religion and reform driven society. Miller used the revivals of the 1830s to his benefit. One historian noted, "Miller kept the revival fires burning and in turn he received publicity and a platform for spreading his views."\textsuperscript{116}

There are other reasons for Miller's success during this time of the Second Great Awakening. This radical and literal interpretation of end-time prophecies ignited the believers, who read for themselves in their Bibles and easily understood the Millerite millennial message. The ideas of universal education and increased literacy played a role in Millerite message since much of their message after 1840. The message was spread through their Flagship publication, \textit{The Signs of the Times}, after Joshua V. Himes joined and from the Chardon Street Chapel in February 1840 the magazine was first published.\textsuperscript{117} They felt a conviction which in turn spread the message of repentance and shortness of time to their neighbors. This kind of conviction was similar to that which motivated Bradley King during the Finney revival in Rochester as discussed in Chapter One.\textsuperscript{118} More recently, historian George Knight has argued that it was their belief that the Millerites were impelled by personal conviction to spread their message of the nearness of Jesus's coming.\textsuperscript{119} Many Evangelicals read their Bibles and came to the same conclusion as Miller did; this


\textsuperscript{117} Dick, 61-62, He spends a whole chapter how the Millerites after 1840 starting publishing their views. Knight make a similar claim in the \textit{Millennial Fever}, but word of mouth was the main way the message was spread in the early years of the Millerite movement.

\textsuperscript{118} King is discussed in chapter 1 of this work.

\textsuperscript{119} Knight, \textit{Fever}, Preface.
populist Bible reading message was at the heart of his philosophy as stated earlier. Also, Miller eventually took advantage of the power of the press and tent camp meetings. The publications provided a platform for spreading his views publicly beyond his ability to travel. Unlike Finney revivals, Millerites established loose knit organizations that sprung up and were manned by missionary volunteers to help spread his message of revival. To be Adventist Millerite, people did not have to change their place of fellowship and their belief system was in line with contemporary living and thinking of the day.

Another effect of the democratization of religion was that religious individualism and nonconformity to other views with increasing acceptance of other ideas became the norm. The religious climate of the times can best be described by Damsteegt: “Thus, the whole revivalist impulse tended to create a fruitful atmosphere out of which not only extremist and perfectionistic ideas could develop, but also new churches and religious movements.” In 1843 a sermon by Joseph Eldridge in his Congregational Church echoed the sentiments of the many believers in evangelical churches when he wrote “Our country is the paradise of reformers.” Unfortunately he, like others, did not always like the idea of “trying novel experiments.” It was during this era of toleration that William Miller preached an imminent return of Jesus which would occur around or about 1843; his preaching had impact on an estimated

120 William Miller to Truman Hyndrx, 26 March 1832. In his letter he consuls his young preacher friend to get people to read their Bible, teach from the Bible and love the Bible; thereby many would come to similar conclusion about the nearness of the advent as Miller himself did.
121 Doan, in Numbers, The Disappointed, 120-122.
122 Damsteegt, 12.
123 Joseph Eldridge, Sermon Delivered at Norfolk, Conn., November 30, 1843, (New Haven: I.B. Hamlen, 1844), 6-7. He preached against the methods of the Fourites and the other reform groups that developed their own moral codes etc. He does point out how much of society was tolerant of reform through individual interpretations an issue he did not always agree with.
one million people and later spawned several new denominations. Miller also began preaching in a time of reform, when the public began to read and question old values such as aristocracy versus republicanism. Miller, himself, was torn between the old school Calvinist views and the new theology of choice advocated by Finney and even as he himself was more sympathetic to the old-school way of thinking in the beginning years. He also hated inter-denominational wrangling. In the mid-1830s, Miller wrote to his friend and complained, "Our churches as well as ministers have all departed from the Calvinistic creed, and to mention the 'election' would in a public congregation produce about as much effect as an electric battery with the whole congregation hold of the conductor." Here was the crux of Miller's dilemma. While he himself did not support the new evangelical thinking, many of these free thinking evangelicals were the eager receptors of his new message, based on old literal biblical principles. Miller also saw danger in the new sects and fads of the day that distracted people from the true gospel. Millerites used their publications such as The Signs of the Times to warn readers that, "hypocrites are multiplying among us; Roman Catholics, Shakers, Fanny Wright, Owen, and others bidding for marriage." Because Miller encouraged others to stay in their churches and work for the cause of the Lord, he never saw himself as starting a new sect in those early years when he criticized the other sects and fads. Ironically several denominations started because of Millerism's commitment to literal interpretation of the Bible and the belief in soon coming of Jesus. Millerites, however, welcomed other diverse interpretations of

124 For discussion on the rise of the Adventism and new denominationalism consult Arthur. Also see Jonathan Butler "the Making of a New Order: Millerism and the Origins of Seventh day Adventism" in Numbers and Butler, The Disappointed. 189-208.
125 Miller to Hendryx, April 2, 1836
126 Signs of the Times. March 20, 1840.
theology as long as they were biblically based and did not overshadow the ultimate message of preparation for the second coming of Jesus Christ, the heart of this new theological thinking.

Millerites all agreed on two major points, the supremacy of the Bible in matters of faith and the premillennial point of view about the second coming. Recent research and an investigation of primary sources of Millerite preachers evidence a wide diversity of theological views ranging from annihilation of all the wicked to eternal damnation. There were even Millerites who believed the sanctuary of the 2300 prophecy day was in heaven not earth as Miller preached. As discussed earlier, a Millerite did not necessarily have to believe that the world would end around 1843. Henry Jones, someone who corresponded with Miller many times, stated that he never was comfortable with setting a timetable for the Lord to come in 1843, much less 1844. A quick examination into the Millerite literature in upstate New York, especially that of Joseph Marsh, editor of a Voice of Truth in Rochester, and Elon Galusha, the president of the New York antislavery society and Baptist minister from Lockport, shows they never truly accepted the date of October 1844, but agreed that the Lord was coming very soon and that his coming would usher in the millennium.127

Miller's populace message and massive public campaign coincided with a major influx of immigration, a financial crisis, and the depression of 1837 that lasted through 1844. These events left many people with fear and loss of hope in the postmillennialist views. During these times many people sought a better and happier future. In 1820's immigration numbered 150,000 but exploded to over two and one

127 Rowe, Thunder, 144-145.
half million by the 1850’s. Church membership also grew from 10 percent to 25 percent by the 1850’s.\footnote{128} Certainly Finney and Miller both contributed to the large growth in church attendance with their revivals and ideas of the millennium.

More than one historian has noted that antebellum democracy and equality movements grew in the political sphere while in the arena of religion, freedom to choose salvation, the revivals, and holiness of the Lord movement swept across the American landscape. According to Edwin Gaustad, “In Finney and other Methodistic-type revivalists, popular religion was blended with Jacksonian aspirations—the aspirations of the common man.”\footnote{129} Another historian, Hatch, in his study of the democratization of Christianity, echoed a similar claim, “The rise of evangelical Christianity in the early republic is, in some measure, a story of the success of common people in shaping culture after their own priorities rather than the priorities outlined by gentlemen such as the framers of the Constitution.”\footnote{130} What is interesting is Miller never really embraced the new theology of democracy of the individual that helped make Finney so successful and was so much a part of his world.

Just as the views of the politicians and reform movements were exhibited in public meetings, Miller used the same chapels and auditoriums to preach his unique reform message. In Boston, Miller received the help that he had so long looked for earlier. In 1840, he accepted a call to speak at the Clardon Street Chapel and it was here where he met his chief promoter and organizer who would get the word out,

\footnote{129} Gaustad, 7.  
\footnote{130} Hatch, 7.
Joshua V. Himes. Himes was no stranger to reform, a radical abolitionist, pacifist, and a close personal friend to William L. Garrison. He opened the doors for Miller to preach in large cities and started the massive publishing work with the *Sign of the Times* and other Millerite publications. Miller is little recognized as a reformer, but he advocated a variety of reforms throughout his life. The following is an excerpt from *The Liberator* by William Lloyd Garrison discussing the reforming aspects of the Millerite movement and some of their leaders:

With Mr. Miller, I have no personal acquaintance; but my convictions are, from the information received from others, and from a careful survey of his character; that he is sincere in his convictions, honest in his intentions, and disinterested in his labors. He seems to be a frank, bold, single-hearted man, one who is not afraid to say what he thinks, who is zealous to declare what he regards his eternal truth, whose object is the glory of God and the good of his fellow man. One secret of his unpopularity with the priesthood is, he applies to them the scourge of justice with unsparing hand, and exhibits of them in their true character as spiritual usurpers overt guides heritage. He is particularly odious to the selfish conservation of the day, on account of his hearty disposal of the great radical reforms which are now shaking the land. The cause of temperance, of anti-slavery, of moral reform, of nonresistance finds in them an outspoken friend. In short, I respect the motives and admire the zeal of Mr. Miller, though I utterly dissent from his views of the Second Advent, and regard them as equally pernicious and untenable.

I am somewhat intimately acquainted with Mr. Himes, one of the editors of the *Signs of the Times* and have always found him true to his convictions of duty. At a very early time, he avowed himself an abolitionist, and has been a faithful supporter of the anti-slavery movement never ashamed to show his colors, never faltering in the darkest hour of its history. He is a remarkably active and zealous man, whatever he undertakes, doing with all his might, whatsoever, his hands find to do. I am sorry that he has become the victim of an absurd theory, but I still regard him as sincere and worthy man.
Mr. Fitch (another wholehearted supporter of Mr. Miller) is well-known to the abolitionists of the United States. No one who knows him can doubt his honesty or ability; but his mind appears to be impulsive, and it is, perhaps, fortunate for his consistency that with the expiration of the present near, will cease all necessity for him to tax his concentrativeness on the subject of 'the second Advent near.'

I make these personal allusions to three of the most prominent advocates of the 1843 theory, in order to show that I have no prejudices to gratify, and to express my believe that the odium, which has been so liberally heaped on them and others is not merited. I see no reason to suspect the sincerity of those who are called Millerites; for, by their zeal in proselytism, and their extraordinary efforts to promulgate their particular views, they give pretty conclusive evidence that they are not hypocrites. It would be strange, indeed, if, among their extended ranks, some cannot be found whose behavior most consistently with their profession, and some who are mere pretenders, seeking to turn the excitement to their own special advantage. The great mass of them are undoubtedly honest, though wofully misled.\(^{131}\)

William Lloyd Garrison, the outspoken and controversial self-proclaimed leader of the abolitionist movement was a man who was very harsh on critics. He once threatened to burn the constitution because he felt it supported slavery and convinced his supporters in a small Massachusetts's community to vote for disunion with the slaveholding South. He never was one to ever to hold back words against people he felt were unjust, immoral, or who just deserved a good tongue lashing.

Garrison reflected the feelings of many people in his discussion of William Miller and the prominent leaders in the Millerite movement during the epic years 1832-1848. Some of the men associated with William Miller Garrison either knew personally or had worked with in some phase of the abolitionist movement. He found all of them sincere and very committed to the revival and its new interpretation

of the biblical millennium. Garrison's critique of Millerites has been largely ignored by historians when studying the Millerite Awakening and Millennial movement and is worthy of closer analysis. It gives the student of history a balanced opinion from someone familiar with the movement, when so much of what has been written was very subjective and negative, or outright mocking of Millerism.

Antebellum ministers who wrote against Miller testify to his importance because they saw him as a competitor, stealing their "sheep" with his peculiar message of the end of the world. Garrison's writing helps put Miller into the forefront of the Second Great Awakening and helps historians understand another facet of Miller's work: reform. Garrison, while sympathetic to Millerites, spoke strongly against their end of world message and pulled no punches as illustrated in the 1843 article above, printed around the time of the end according to Millerites.

Garrison discussed Miller's anti-clerical views, and he was delighted that others working for God viewed organized religion and clergy as corrupt. In 1836, after Garrison and his views were censured by Lyman Beecher, and when other evangelicals such as the Tappan brothers withdrew their support, Garrison became highly critical of an organized church doctrine and "renounced all allegiance to his country and nominated Jesus Christ to the presidency of the United States in the world." So he agreed with Miller in his criticism of the clergy and called for reform, but on the other hand, he rejected William Miller's, biblical millennial views of the end of the world around 1843.

Garrison was upset and frustrated with Miller because Litch, Himes, Fitch and other leading Millerites who once worked so passionately for the cause of

132 Barnes, 93.
abolitionism were now caught up in Millerism and had little time for anything else. Garrison had hoped this movement would be short in its duration. In a letter to a friend he bemoaned the fact, "A considerable number of worthy abolitionist have been carried away, but it, and, for the time being, are rendered completely useless for the cause, but the delusion has not long to run." With Himes and others spending all their time and resources spreading the millennium message, Garrison probably did feel short-shrifted. Furthermore, Garrison rejected organized religion by 1836 and had many churches closed to him, so for him any religious message might seem deluded that did not leave room for the abolitionist cause or help promote it. However while Millerites and William Miller were preaching the millennial message they did not ignore the reform movements either, as will be seen later.

Garrison's sympathetic comments also acknowledged that some who joined the Millerites might do so for their own personal gain and to create excitement. However, he viewed the leadership of the movement as sincere and dedicated to the belief in spreading the message of the imminent coming of the Lord, even though he totally disagreed with the conclusion of the message of the movement. Knight is correct in viewing Garrison's comments on Millerites as revealing a difference in the beliefs in the two millenniums people had to choose from. Garrison, along with Finney, believed in a millennium brought about by the perfectionism of man before Christ whereas Millerism taught that Christ's comes first, and then comes the millennium. Perfection for Millerites only comes after the Second Coming of Jesus on the way to heaven.

133 W. L. G. Garrison to Henry C. Wright, March 1, 1843, as quoted in Knight, Bates, 59.
134 Knight, Bates, 60.
Further, Garrison chastised the clergy for their refusal to accept a basic Christian belief that Christ would literally come, something so clearly taught in the scriptures. Jenny Marsh Parker, the daughter of Joseph Marsh, publisher of The Glad Tidings, the Millerite newspaper in Rochester, believed “Millerism was the logical outcome of the theological teaching for centuries.” Many Millerite leaders supported abolition and other reforms of the day and were in the religious mainstream. In its day Millerism rivaled Finneyism in every area, revival and reform as well as public attention. William Miller himself was the greatest exemplar of Finneyite reform and revivalism during Millerism. Its mainstream relevance and the people leading the movement drove Garrison, who once labored with some of the former leaders, to realize their sincerity when he wrote about them in The Liberator in 1843. William Miller was also an abolitionist. Unfortunately until recently this part of his life has been misunderstood or mischaracterized. A brief examination of actions and writings casts him into the mold of a reformer and revivalist typical of the Second Great Awakening.

William Miller was an abolitionist and a supporter of the Underground Railroad before and after 1844. Miller was not afraid to speak out against slavery and inequality of African Americans to his friends. In a letter dated 1834, Henry Jones, a Congregational pastor in Cabot, Vermont, expressed surprise when Miller did not attend an antislavery meeting. Jones wrote, “I have delayed writing you now for some considerable time, expecting from Brother Murray to have seen you at the anti-

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slavery convention of Middlebury."136 Jones himself was an active agent of the temperance, abolitionism and other movements. He sold publications for each as well as spoke on the subjects of anti-masonry from his pulpit. While a Millerite, he was an outspoken leader in the abolitionist movement, and he was an active supporter of the early anti-slavery movement.

In February of 1834 William Miller wrote a letter to Truman Hendryx in which he chastised his close friend for his views of “negroes” being less than human. His tone was sarcastic and misunderstood by one historian as being hostile or indifferent to abolitionism.137 While the letter starts with a discussion on a popular salvation methods and verses, it quickly shifts to a discussion of about the “Negroes” themselves. Miller used sarcasm to help his friend to see the dehumanizing elements of slavery. He questioned,

Are you not glad that you are not obliged to love a Negro as yourself in order to fulfill the law of God? I think now, it was otherwise... But God knew what a dilemma we should be placed in, and therefore made some of them black, and so that we may beat them, bruise them, sell them buy them, not teach them, not give them Bibles, not preached to them, hang them, burn them, shoot them and cut their throats, if they should try to get free?...They are slaves not born free like white folks.138

Miller believed slaves, like white men, had God-given rights and as a Christian it was his duty to help them obtain those rights. He hoped by the use of sarcasm and questions he could awaken the conscience of his young preacher friend. Next Miller exposed a blatant hypocrisy of the slave holders and their enslaved women, “More

136 Henry Jones to William Miller, 1833.
137 F.D. Nichol in the Midnight Cry, 58, mistakenly attributed this letter to Miller being unsympathetic to the cause of abolition, but a careful reading of other letters and statements by Miller shows his anti-slavery views. For a full discussion of the misreading, see Rowe, Thunder, 92.
138 William Miller to Truman Hendryx, 25 February 1834.
than half of them are begotten by their masters for the purpose to sell and make prosperity in one word. Therefore we need not to love them…” Truman Hendryx must have written him a letter or chastised him for his abolitionist views, because one can see the frustration of Miller with his friend when he wrote, “I think brother Hendryx that the abolitionist, who say that the Negroes ought to be free are to have their throat cut----from ear to ear for saying these things.” Then Miller closed his diatribe by asking his friend to consider why blacks were not to be considered human, a common argument leveled by abolitionists,

That is if Negroes are human beings? I cannot say, but they walk on two legs as we do, they have arms and heads as we have, they have skulls--- but dare you think they have brains my brother as we have? If I thought they had, I should be tempted almost to think they had feelings, and hearts, and souls, like us. And I should begin to think God designed, we should love them as our selves...  

In this letter William Miller revealed he was a supporter of equality for African Americans whether they were freed or enslaved. He ridiculed the doctors and others who thought "Negroes," were less than full human beings. He believed they were designed by God, and one can surmise from his letters that Miller believed blacks were created in the very image of God. He maintained those abolitionist views in the 1840's possibly until his death. William Miller became distressed after the antislavery movement fractured and broke into many separate societies. After attending an anti-slavery meeting in New York City in 1840, he wrote

the poor slave, but what little chance to be liberated by these two parties... the slaveholder may call and his piquets, he may need no additional guards is so the bill is safe. While the pretended friends of

the slave, are spending all their ammunition on each other, the release of the captive will be little thought of...140

For Miller, however, the only hope of slavery, as with all of Satan's bondage of sin, was the coming of Christ in the clouds and the end of the world. Miller, in similar fashion to his contemporary, Charles Finney also let other reformers champion other causes. They both kept their focus on calling people to salvation and preparing for the millennium; whether that millennium was human-initiated or God-initiated was the question. Miller's letter to Hendryx and letter from Jones illustrate he was active in the abolitionist movements.

Unfortunately, many historians stuck with the classical interpretation of Millerism miss this reform element in Millerism. To them, Millerism is a movement of people who proclaim the world is going to end with appearance of Jesus Christ around 1844, and does not have room for Miller's temperance and abolitionist views. The Millerites themselves are seen as less than mainstream, supposedly waiting for the Lord to appear with white robes standing on roofs, hills or other high places. They fail to see that the Millerites were people with mainstream values who looked for a biblical millennium and who struggled against the problems facing other Bible-believing Christians in the Northeast. What is becoming apparent with recent research in Millerism is that they valued the same reforms of the day as other antebellum people. Interestingly, many Millerite leaders, like Miller himself, returned to their reforms and revival meetings after the disappointments.

140 Rowe, Thunder, 185.
After the "Great Disappointment of 1844," Miller continued acting on his abolitionist beliefs and assisted the Underground Railroad movement as demonstrated in the following letter sent to him with a very special "human package."

The bearer is a fugitive from the iron land of slavery and appears as from letter in his possession, in his own statements of some considerable consequence to his claimant. His master with United States officers are in both pursuit of him. Not being acquainted with anyone in your section that would be more ready to feed the hungry and assist a stranger fleeing to a city of refuge than yourself I have directed him to you. I think it's best for him to keep on through Vermont as far as Vergennes or Burlington, at least, before he strikes the Lake [Champlain]. You will probably be able to refer him to some abolitionist on his way north. Should you think of any of course more safe you will advise him."

Yours for the slave,
Philander Barbour

If anything important transpires, let me know it.\(^{141}\)

Philander Barbour was from South Granville, New York, a town about 15 miles south of the Miller farm.

We can learn many things from this letter. First, William Miller was a trusted and reliable friend of the Underground Railroad; otherwise why trust him with a fugitive slave in 1844? Secondly, he himself had contacts and knew the route fleeing slaves should take. Thirdly, while Miller was strong advocate of law and Christianity, he did not compromise his Christian beliefs in the evils of slavery. Finally, Mr. Barbour trusts William Miller enough to rely on his good judgment of how best to get the fugitive slave to safety. Is it possible that Miller's home was a stop on the Underground Railroad even while Miller himself was traveling across the Northeast preaching his millennial message? Also, the mere fact that Mr. Miller

\(^{141}\) Philander Barbour to William Miller, November 8, in 1844 in Vern Carner, ed., Millerites and early Adventists, microfilm collections Sec. I, Reel I.
knew abolitionists in this town must mean that he was at the very least, sympathetic, if not active in the abolitionist movement. For someone to conclude that there is no evidence that Miller ever attended any meetings of the antislavery society misses the point of his correspondences with Hendryx and Jones, his letter of 1840, and the fugitive slave letter asking for help.142

Miller, like other evangelicals, was also engaged in temperance reform while promoting abolitionism and preaching the millennial message. At many Millerite meetings temperance pledge cards were passed out. In preparing people for second coming, Miller actively preached about temperance, and temperance activities followed his meetings in Portland, Maine in 1840, as will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Henry Jones, a temperance and abolitionist agent, was also the first Millerite to actively preach the Millerite message of the nearness of Christ’s coming. Jones did not agree with the entire message. He never agreed with the date even though he did accept Miller’s calculations on time of the end being very near and believed in the pre-millennial idea of the millennium.143 Rowe pointed out how Jones never accepted the time element in Miller’s message but believed that the time was near and began writing and preaching “becoming the first principal convert to take up the burden and help disseminate Adventism quite independently of Miller.”144 “Some historians believed Jones represented a vast majority of the hearers of Miller’s message: while they believed the pre-millennium was in the very near future, like

142 Graybill, in Numbers, Disappointed, 140. Graybill acknowledge “there is no record of Miller’s active participation in an antislavery society,” one does not have to have their name listed on a register of club to participate actively in a reform movement.
143 Rowe, Thunder, 21.
Jones, they found the date of 1843 was "founded on human presumption and profane history." Other abolitionists, such as the Congregational minister Henry Dana Ward from New York City, who became a Millerite in 1838, also had a problem with the date-setting. He was elected as the chairman of that first conference and was previously the editor of the Anti-Masonic Magazine. He was called "a born reformer."

Miller was very much interested in abolitionism, temperance and the other reform movements of the day; but the greatest reform would make these other reforms obsolete. The great reform that superseded others was the coming of Jesus Christ back to the earth around 1843 to usher in the millennium as the Bible predicted. He believed this great reform would end slavery and put an end to all sin. Miller surrounded himself with reformers and revivalists, not of his choosing but because these reformers also caught the vision of shortness of time preached in the Millerite message and thus rearranged their priorities. Many of these reformers became jaded and disillusioned with Finney's view of a man-made millennium. After so many years of trying to perfect the world and rid it of sin and society's evils such as slavery and alcoholism, the reformers were more receptive to a Millerite conception of a God-created millennium.

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145 Ruth Doan, *The Miller Heresy Millennium in American Culture* 37. Froom in Vol 4 of *Prophetic Faith*, 579, downplayed the rejection of 1843 by Jones when he wrote, "Like Ward, Jones demurred on the point of the 'specific time,' of 1843." Froom, however, did have it right when he wrote, "But there was something vastly larger than time that attracted men of such training... it was the basic issue of premillennialism and a soon coming Saviour." That is one of my major points concerning why so many people accepted Millerism, because of the idea of the premillennial view and Christ bringing about perfectionism rather than humans as taught by Charles Finney in his postmillennial ideas.

146 Dick, 22.
Charles Fitch, a Presbyterian minister, became a leading Millerite preacher in 1838. After reading Miller’s book six times, he acted on his faith and preached in the Boston area where he encountered some opposition. After being ridiculed by a minister and called a simpleton, Fitch back off the new millennium message and did not pick up again until 1841. After that nothing stopped him from proclaiming the message. He, like other Millerites, was also involved in abolitionism. In 1837, he published a pamphlet entitled *Slaveholding Weighed in the Balance of Truth and Its Comparative Guilt*. In this pamphlet, Fitch condemned slavery as worse than murder and other heinous crimes and called on Christians to oppose slavery actively. Garrison considered Fitch an opponent for a time because Fitch was one of two authors who wrote the *Appeal of the Clerical Abolitionists in 1837*, a pamphlet which caused a split between Garrison and the clergy. However, Garrison later forgave Fitch in 1840 after Fitch wrote a letter apologizing to him. By 1843 Garrison truly believed Fitch like others in the Millerite leadership were “deluded” but admired them for their dedication to their beliefs. Fitch also provides an example of a Finneyite and an abolitionist who crossed over to the Millerite millennial message. Knight recognized Fitch’s connection with Finney when he remarked that “Fitch was the speaker when Finney’s new Broadway Tabernacle was dedicated in 1835.”

In 1839, Fitch became a full fledged Oberlin perfectionist. After Charles Finney arrived at Oberlin, he taught that people needed to be perfect and then the Millennium would come. Finney and Fitch preached and wrote on the holiness

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147 For a brief biographical discussion of his work in Millerism consult Knight, *Millennial Fever*, 105-113.
148 Froom, Vol. 4, 533-34,
150 Knight, *Millennial Fever*, 110
movement of which Fitch became a disciple of until his second exposure to pre-
millennium message of William Miller. Like Jones, Fitch and others came from
reformer ranks to join in the Millerite message of ultimate reform. The Oberlin
Evangelist marked with much sadness in 1842, that Fitch became an ardent Millerite
Adventist and abandoned his belief in the millennium created by reforms of man.
They would even invite him to the college to debate the views of the millennium but
to no avail except losing a couple of their own to Millerism during the debates.

Another Millerite leader named Joseph Bates also provides an excellent
example of a reformer accepting the pre-millennium message. Even after the 1844
disappointment he remained active in temperance, moral, abolition reforms, and
helped found the Seventh-day Adventist church. Joseph Bates accepted the
Millerite message in 1839, acted quickly on his beliefs, and rose to leadership in the
movement. He was elected assistant chairman of the Second Advent conference.
Joseph Bates spent much of his $10,000 savings spreading the Millerite Advent
message. He retired at age thirty-six from being a sea captain and started proclaiming
the Millerite pre-millennium message to any who would listen. He probably was
considered crazy by some of his neighbors when he spent all his money to proclaim a
new millennium message.

Joseph Bates, had earlier put away tobacco and was one of few captains to
also run long voyages without the use of hard drink as early as 1824, before becoming

151 For lengthy discussion and analysis of Fitch’s connection to Oberlin and Finney, consult Knight,
Millennial Fever, 109-112.
152 Knight, Millennial Fever, 110-111.
153 Knight, Bates
a practicing Christian. So astonishing was his behavior that a ship owner from his
town of Bedford commented, "Yours is the first temperance vessel I have ever heard
of." Bates ship, "the Empress set sail in 1827 as a temperance ship," unbeknownst
and much to the dismay of its crew until they were well away from New Bedford
shores. This was three years before Charles Finney was interested in temperance
reform, which by the 1830s were very commonplace. Joseph Bates, recalling those
days wrote, "in 1831 it was stated that were three thousand temperance societies were
organized in the United States, with three hundred thousand members." Bates
was not only involved in temperance and tobacco reform, but he had also read and
accepted Sylvester Graham's idea of a vegetarian diet.

Bates early on was associated with the abolitionist movement, like many of
his contemporaries in New England. For Bates, being a Christian obligated him to
side with the oppressed. Staying neutral was not an option, which was similar to his
behavior when he accepted the Millerite view of the millennium. Sitting back,
watching others was not his style. Miller attracted many reform minded people like
Bates and Fitch to his millennial camp. Bates was actively involved in founding the
Fairhaven anti-slavery society, which was threatened with violence several times, and
even had meetings broken up due to threats of violence. His abolitionism activism
brought him into contact with Joshua V. Himes, William Miller's most prominent
publicist and spokesperson, who Bates said he worked with for several other

156 George Knight, Joseph Bates: The Real Founder of Seventh-day Adventists, (Review and Herald
Publishing: Hagerstown, MD 2004) 44.
157 Bates, 235.
158 Knight, Bates, 44-49. Knight has a discussion of Bates and his health reform ideas with dates and
the contextual understanding of the times.
reforms. Bates, like the other reformers who accepted Millerism, embraced the pre-millennium doctrine as the “ultimate reform.” Bates’s reply to those questioning why he was no longer active in the temperance and abolition societies he helped formed in Fairhaven gives us insight into a Millerite Adventist thinking of some who accepted the second coming message. His reply was quite logical,

I found enough to engage my whole time in getting ready for such an event and aiding others to do the same, and that all who embrace this doctrine would and must necessarily be advocates of temperance, and the abolition of slavery; and those who oppose the doctrine of the second Advent could not be very effective laborers and moral reforms.

Bates gives us light into a common assumption of many Millerite leaders. Many if not all of the Millerite leaders did not stand out in their views of moral reform, in fact they were quite in the mainstream, and adhered to the notion that reform would become obsolete and Christ came back again. In 1844, Bates and another Millerite preacher went to slaveholding Maryland to preach about the Second Advent and met with modest success of the Millerite movement.

Ron Graybill, in examining the abolitionist-Millerite connection, made the following observation, "to reformers, sickened and disappointed by factionalism among abolitionist, the Advent movement offered a thriving, growing, unified alternative," but then he makes the point, "Millerism as a movement did little to advance the cause of reform." This point needs to be re-examined in light of Miller’s own correspondence and actions. Joseph Bates did not stop talking about

159 Bates, 251.
160 Bates, 262. Rowe, Thunder, 91, and Sign of Times 20 March 1840
161 Bates, 281-287
162 Graybill, 149-50.
reforms. He just stopped leading in them. Is it possible to assume that at the camp meetings and revivals of the Millerites they preached about temperance and abolitionism? Other reforms were also discussed, and again it is worth noting that in those Millerite Adventist "camp" meeting they sang temperance songs and handed out temperance pledge cards. Millerites may not have attended all the meetings of these reform movements, but they certainly promoted those reforms at their meetings. Himes, Fitch, Miller, Jones, Bates, and other prominent Millerites stopped relying on human agencies and looked to the ultimate reform message. They never stopped advocating reforms and that explains why we see them after 1844 going back their reformer activities. The following are but a small sample of other reforms carried on before and after the Millerist disappointment. Before the disappointment of October 1844, many Millerite leaders no longer put complete trust in human agencies to stop the evils of the days, but that does not mean they abandoned or stopped speaking out against the reforms.

In 1846, Joshua Himes spoke out at a convention arguing anti-slavery sentiments even though he was the only one present holding the abolitionist point of view. Joseph Bates was a passionate abolitionist and temperance reformer. Even after the disappointment of 1844, he contributed and made those reform ideas hallmarks of the Seventh-day Adventist church that he helped found. William Miller, as stated above, was very active in the abolition movement after 1844 and even attended an antislavery meeting in New York City in 1840 during the height of the Millerite movement. He, like his fellow pre-millennialistic believers knew they
could not rely on human agencies for something he saw in a clear divine answer to the end of all worldly corruption and strife.

Reformers and revivalists were intimately connected in northeastern society during the Second Great Awaking, as can be seen in the lives of William Miller and many of the early prominent Millerite leaders in New York and Massachusetts. Temperance and abolition reforms were hallmarks of the Second Great Awakening revivals. Abolitionist reformers like Garrison understood and accepted the main tenets of Miller's millennialism, while not agreeing with all parts. Charles Fitch and other abolitionists who worked with Garrison and Finney accepted Miller's millennial message and began working toward what they viewed as the ultimate reform. Most Revivalists and reformers ascribed to a millennialist view of either Finney's post millennial views or Miller's pre-millennial coming which radically reordered their priorities as in the case of Joseph Bates, who stopped leading out in the reform movements but still nevertheless supported the movements long after 1844. This type of revival and reform is evidenced in the Portland revival of 1840 ushered in by the millennial revival meetings led by William Miller as recorded by Caleb Bradley in March of 1840.
Chapter 3: Anatomy of a Millerite Revival and Its Impact on a Society during the Second Great Awakening:

The following is an account of a Millerite revival that occurred in Portland, Maine in 1840, and is largely based on the diary of Caleb Bradley. In addition to the Bradley accounts, statistical confirmations from church records of various denominations and areas surrounding Portland, Maine provide evidence of a typical revival during the Second Great Awakening. These diary entries constitute a new objective recording of Miller's lectures and provide a unique eyewitness account from a preacher whose revival and reform record has never been publicized or studied before. Caleb Bradley's entries afford a window into a Millerite revival and thereby provide an avenue for comparing Miller's preaching style and the impact of his preaching and reforms during that revival with Finney's Rochester revival of 1831. The atmosphere and the techniques employed by Miller are characteristic of and parallel Finney's techniques used in Rochester approximately eleven years earlier. Thus Miller, a prototypical evangelical preacher, employed the same techniques used by his counterparts during this time. The revival that Miller initiated in Portland employed protracted meetings, the use of emotion to arouse or awaken the senses, and the anxious bench, some of the very techniques Charles Finney used in his epic revival in Rochester.

William Miller left Portland after ten days of preaching, but the revival spirit continued with a large number of baptisms following in many different churches in

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163 I wish to thank Merlin Burt, who gave me the name of Caleb Bradley in a conversation about this thesis topic of comparing a Finney revival with a Millerite revival.
164 It is not the purpose of this study to discuss fully the revival in Rochester started by Finney, but rather use its accounts to compare with Portland's revival started by the preaching of William Miller. For a discussion of the revival in Rochester see Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper's Millennium op. cit.
the surrounding communities. Eventually, characteristic of the period, the revival spread to reform. In his diary Caleb Bradley accounts recorded how liquor shops were closed and people held extended unified prayer meetings that included men and women praying together. Large numbers of baptisms across denominations were also documented similar to those Johnson identified in the Finney revival in Rochester. From these church records and Bradley's diary accounts, William Miller, emerges not as someone wildly preaching a doomsday message that caused hysteria and excitement, but rather as a typical millennialist preacher of the Second Great Awakening employing many of the techniques revivalists typically used in that era.

Caleb Bradley was born in Dracut, MA in 1772 and died in 1861. He graduated from Harvard University in 1795. Even though he was not formally trained as a minister, he began his lifelong work in the ministry one year after graduation. He ministered to churches throughout parts of the Northeast and Canada, with a majority of his ministerial time spent in Maine. It was during his retirement years that he first encountered William Miller when he came to preach in Portland, Maine in March of 1840.

Bradley served as a minister even after retiring in 1829. He remained active in the ministry well into the 1840's, as the diary entries reflect. During the time of Miller's revival meetings, he preached at the almshouses around the Portland area and ministered in area prayer meetings. This practice he continued until shortly before his death in 1861. After witnessing the results of the revival with skepticism, he was wary of adopting Millerite beliefs, but did become sympathetic then eventually skeptical of

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165 Caleb kept a diary, much of his life from 1799 to 1804 and 1829 through 1861 right before his death. Unfortunately the diary entries from 1805 to 1829 have been lost.
the movement, so he provides a window in which to view the Millerite movement in
the early years.

Caleb Bradley's diary entries are replete with social commentary that discuss
the social, political, and religious happenings of the Portland area during the Second
Great Awakening, granting the reader an interesting window into this exciting time
and its aftermath. Included in his entries was an account of the revival meetings that
William Miller held at the Congregational Street Church in March 1840. His
accounts give an objective record of the subject and manner of Miller's lectures, the
emotions of the participants, and the impact of the Millerite meetings upon the
community of Portland in the 1840's that has been missing from the historical
understanding of Miller. By combining Bradley's accounts with church records and
other historical accounts of the surrounding area, historians can recognize a
millennialist revival typical of the Second Great Awakening that challenges some
traditionally held views concerning the Millerites.

William Miller was invited by Elder Lorenzo Dow Fleming, of the Christian
Church in Portland to conduct a series of revival meetings in 1840.166 Miller arrived
in Portland and proceeded to hold meetings from the eleventh through the twenty-
third of March of that year. Caleb Bradley attended many of these meetings from the
twelfth to the last day.167 On Thursday March 12, 1840, at the first meeting Bradley
attended, he heard Miller explain the 2300 prophecy days as spoken of in Daniel 8:13

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166 L.B. Fleming to Himes, April 6, 1840 Signs of Times.
167 The following accounts of the Millerite meetings are based extensively on the diary of Caleb
Bradley unless otherwise noted. All quotes are taken from his entries in his diary from March 12, 1840
until March 21, 1840 which has been included in the appendix. Because they all come from the same
diary we will not need to cite each reference in footnote.
and 14, using the literal year-day principle to interpret prophecy. Bradley, commenting on Miller's math, made this interesting observation,

This, Mr. Miller says he believes, but at the same time, it may not be so. He is not positive. He lives, he says, in anticipation that it will be the case. Whether it will or will not, no matter. We all ought to be ready, watching and waiting for the coming of the great day when Christ will come to judge the world and to take vengeance on them that know him not. 168

To Bradley and other Protestants listening to the Millerite lectures in the early years of the movement, the exact time of Christ coming mattered less than when he would personally arrive, that is before the millennium began. The main focus of Miller's preaching was that people needed to be ready no matter when the Lord came. This message of preparation was biblical and therefore one of the most powerful ways Miller connected with his hearers. Miller's millennial message gave his listeners new hope; no longer was humankind expected to bring about the biblical millennium, their new role was to get ready and watch. 169

For many antebellum Protestants, the subject of the millennium was very familiar, and like so many, Bradley also believed that Christ would come to judge the world on that great day. Miller's preaching of the millennial judgment and the necessity of constant readiness was something Bradley talked and preached about for years. He believed some good would come from Miller's message, and he believed this message needed to be preached to awaken many congregations who had fallen asleep.

168 Diary of Caleb Bradley unpublished manuscript hereafter, Bradley Diary, 12 March 1840.
169 See Jones in his correspondence to Miller to and backing up this idea as discussed earlier in Chapter 2.
With a mid-March snowstorm approaching, Miller preached to a crowded house on March 13th. His lecture, entitled "Vision of the Latter Days, Daniel 8:13 and 14," was about the last days and the 1260 day prophecy. Miller preached a plain and forthright sermon, holding the people's attention and convincing the hearts of some evangelicals in his audience of the importance of this new millennial message and their need to be ready. Bradley described the mood of the listeners as very attentive, though "many believed and some believed not. I think some information is to be obtained and these lectures are worth listening to..." The meeting, Bradley notes, ended at five o'clock and probably began at 2:00 p.m. It was customary for Miller's meetings, like those of other preachers of the Second Great Awakening, to last for three hours.

The packed crowd could not have come from the publishing arm of Millerism in the early years because most of Miller's advertising was by word of mouth. Only later through Millerite periodicals did many people get the printed message of the imminent premillennial millennium. To date only a single advertisement has been uncovered in a local paper announcing the March 1840 Miller revival meetings. The ad was placed in the Eastern Argus Daily on Thursday, 13 March 1840. It read

"Mr Miller's Lectures.—We are request-ed to say, that the subject of Mr. M's. Lec-tures this afternoon and evening will be:
Visions of the latter days, Dan. 10:14.
Eve. Explanation of the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days."

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170 Bradley Diary, 13 March 1840.
171 Eastern Argus Daily 13 March 1840 Vol VI, 3. Only other real mention of Miller was an advertisement from a previous day talking about books written by Mr. Miller and several claiming to destroy Miller's theory and ends with the phrase "The reader can judge." 12 March 1840. Miller
Still, one has to wonder how Miller with only one advertisement was able to draw such large crowds if his theories were out of the mainstream of cultural thinking as many historians and textbooks argue.

In spite of the weather, Reverend Bradley returned for the evening meeting that Thursday to hear an explanation of the 1260 and 1335 days as mentioned in the book of Daniel and Revelation. So many people came to the evening meeting that many had to be turned away for lack of room. Obviously, word of these captivating subjects had spread among the citizens of Portland. In this meeting, Miller connected the downfall of the beast in Daniel 11 with Napoleon Bonaparte taking the pope captive in 1798, thus ending the reign of the beast's power that started in 538. In the nineteenth century many Protestants believed the Catholic Church was the beast power of Revelation; Bradley agreed and was familiar with the central theme and main points of Miller's message. This message concerning the last days of earth's history connected with the people, who were aware of telling signs in the sky and the economy.

Bradley believed, like most many Americans from the 1830's and 1840's, that he was living in the last days. He wrote, "Mr. Miller, respecting these prophecies, shall turn out to be correct or not I know not but this I expect will turn out to be true that time is at hand."172 Again this last day theology was typical of many of the northern Protestants who heard Miller's message, and while they may have not always agreed with Miller's date for the cleansing of the earth, many evangelicals did agree that they were living in the last days. The antebellum evangelical community had

172 See discussion on Finney's belief of the millennium of coming if we just do our work, in chapter 1.
good reason for this way of thinking. Finney preached that God would come only after people created heaven on earth through good works, but with the stars falling in the Northeast in 1833, the increase in natural disasters, the financial crisis of 1837 and the depression that resulted, many northeasterners were convinced that the last days were very near.

In many ways, Miller reshaped his northeastern audience's thinking while appealing to their ideas and expectations by linking the events of the late 1830's to the last days. As one historian observed about Miller's impact, by 1843 "all Protestants expected some grand event about 1843 and no critic from the orthodox side took any issue on basic principle with Miller's calculation." Even the Oberlin Evangelist, which was associated with Charles Finney, considered it an "age of expectations, in which universal interest in the prophecies had been stimulated by moral and social reforms." Natural weather phenomena and the economy began to favor the position Miller had been predicting since the early 1830's. Many believed they were living in the last days; it was simply a question of whose millennium would take place---Miller's or Finney's.

Friday, March 14, 1840 turned out to be a typically cold, rainy spring day in Maine, especially in Portland. This day, Reverend Bradley took a more active role in the Millerite lectures by introducing the afternoon meeting with prayer. It should also be noted that Bradley, like many others who attended Miller's meetings, brought friends. Unfortunately, Bradley did not write down the subject of the afternoon meeting, but he did state that Miller delivered the message in a "very plain and

173 Cross, 321.
174 Cross, 321.
forcible way,” and in a later session in the evening used “his closing remarks to work upon the feelings of the dying congregation.”

Miller, like his counterpart Finney and other preachers of the Great Awakening, was not above using emotions to help their listeners make a decision “for the Lord.”

Bradley agreed with this practice and believed it was the preacher’s job to impress "the truth" upon the minds of unrepentant people to agitate them and move them to action. He wrote, "An impression will be made upon the minds of the individuals, it does appear that all will not be lost, people will think on the subject and if they do allow themselves to think seriously. ‘I must suppose they will feel and if they feel, they will most certainly act.’ The heart of Miller’s belief was that people must read their Bibles; then they would react upon their feelings and come to the same conclusions he had about the shortness of time. Evangelical preachers since 1801 up to today have typically believed that if they reach the conscience and prick the feelings, they can get their listeners to act upon their convictions.

On that Saturday evening, March 15, 1840, Miller preached on the subject of “The Kingdom of Heaven is Likened unto Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins.” Miller likened the lamps of the virgins to the gospel or the Bible and the oil to faith in the Bible. According to Bradley, Miller despaired over the fact that many in society have a lamp/Bible “but a vast many are not enlightened by and do not believe that.” Skeptics were likened to the foolish virgins who, even though they have a Bible don’t have faith or even take time to read its truths. Miller presented to his hearers a new

175 Bradley Diary, 14 March 1840
176 Bradley Diary, 14 March 1840
177 William Miller to Truman Hendyrx, 26 March 1832. Caleb Bradley’s granddaughter transcribed wrote that the p.m. lecture was about the Chapter 24 of Matthew.
vision of the millennium, rejecting Finney's millennium which was bought about by human action. In Miller's view the millennium started with the literal second coming of Jesus to earth. He appealed to this "new" millennium idea of the second coming and the fear of being left out when "the great day comes and the door is shut" to impress upon the people an urgency of readiness. Miller did not preach denominationalism; one could be a Millerite, however, and not adopt all the tenets of the second coming, as shown earlier. Just as Finney's influence stretched across the different denominations through his message of revival, so Miller's hearers came from Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, Connectionist and other Protestant Bible-reading denominations. Finney, like Miller, did not care about the theological persuasion of his listeners as long as his audiences chose to have a relationship with Jesus and accept the message of millennium and the nearness of Jesus's coming. Like Finney, his mostly Protestant hearers had the choice of accepting or rejecting this message and the relationship with Jesus that was offered. By marginalizing or placing too much importance on either of these millennialists, a historian does not have a correct understanding of the complex and diverse nature of what is commonly referred to as the Second Great Awakening.

On Sunday, March 16, Reverend Bradley preached twice to the poor at the Almshouse where he himself employed Miller's analogy of the lamp and a light to their feet. That evening he was in attendance at Miller lecture along with about

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179 Bradley's granddaughter's transcription is very much truncated and she missed some very important opinions from her grandfather about Miller's message and Miller himself. She did in several other places when her grandfather started to talk and discuss Miller at length, cutting the entry. It is on this day that we begin to see Bradley become sympathetic toward Miller and begin to comment upon his influence on the city of Portland.
two thousand other people who came to hear Miller preach about Isaiah 53 and Ecclesiastes 12 and how God will bring everything into judgment. Bradley remarked on Miller's sincerity and message by writing "he said many things which appear to be reasonable and scriptural, all he said on one subject he seemed to abundantly prove from the Bible, he uses the Bible altogether and he thinks he is correct and I believe him sincere."180 Even Miller's critics noted his sincerity, some judging him thought him a madman or deluded, but they never considered him a fraud or ignorant as some historians have often mischaracterized him and his movement. Bradley also noted how many of his ideas are "agreeable to his calculations--it may be so--none can prove to the contrary." The Oberlin Evangelist, the college's newspaper Finney helped create, admitted that "Bros Miller and Fitch may be wrong but they are not knaves."181 Two key tenets of Miller's theology were included in this Sunday evening sermon, the first being the impending judgment, and the second the nearness of Christ's coming which called for believers to be ready whenever He comes. These tenets are held by many evangelical Christians today; they believe God is coming soon and that their followers need to be ready by having a personal relationship with Jesus. It also bears repeating that most if not all Protestant denominations presently accept the millennium starting after Jesus comes to earth, so pivotal to Miller's biblical theology.

By Monday March 16, 1840, most conversations in the city of Portland revolved around William Miller's message of the imminent coming of the Lord. Pastor Bradley had rightly predicted how Miller's message of Christ's coming

180 Bradley Diary, 15 March 1840
181 Nichol, 447, and Cross, 321.
message would spread "like electricity" and cause the city to be in an uproar. Caleb believed many people were listening to Miller after "putting aside their prejudices and giving serious attention to the subject matter." The subject of Monday's meeting was Hosea 6:1-3, highlighting the need for individuals to return to the Lord and let him heal them and finally how the Lord's going forth has already been prepared.

Criticisms leveled at Miller by some of his critics were that he was boring or unintelligent, but Bradley disagreed with charge completely. He found Miller "very much engaged, warm, and animating." The Meeting House was filled to capacity as "one solid column." The subject of each message was that the Lord was coming and people needed to get ready, a topic common to both Finney and Miller. There was, however, one major difference in their messages which was just as important as the millennium message.

This major theological difference between Finney and Miller was a disagreement over whether man or God helped to bring the millennium and to get the people ready for it. For Finney, the millennium would come through the good works of the converted person in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Miller's view of the millennium could not have been more different. For Miller, Christ's Second Coming itself brought about the millennium. For Miller, the millennium involved an individual's need to turn, repent, and then let God take control, because he would come down on the appointed day. Finney, however, preached a millennium brought about by converted individuals' deeds and actions, the other millennialist, Miller, believed God brought about the millennium in dramatic fashion. Just as almost two hundred years ago, evangelicals today are split about how the millennium will happen.

182 Bradley Diary, 16 March 1840.
but all agree that Jesus' personal coming precedes the millennium. It is interesting to note that over the course of the last century following the Civil War and the World Wars, Miller's premillennial views of Jesus coming has become the dominant understanding among many Protestant denominations today.

Evangelicals who heard Miller's lectures probably did not understand all the nuances of these differing views of the millennium. In fact, how the millennium commenced was less important to evangelical audiences than the fact they needed to be ready for the event by repenting and returning to God; this fact figures very prominently in Caleb Bradley's thinking and the responses of other evangelicals who heard Miller. Both Finney and Miller preached that people had to choose salvation; their major argument concerned the millennium and how a "believer" achieved salvation and reached that millennium.

On March 17, 1840 the weather changed dramatically; it was very cold, and snowed for three hours, from eleven o'clock until two. Even with the inclement weather, the meetinghouse was filled. For the sixty-eight-year-old preacher, Caleb Bradley along with a great many other hearers, Miller's message contained new ideas about the interpretation of prophecy. In the afternoon Mr. Miller spoke about the number seven (years, seas, and hours). Pastor Bradley believed in the redemptive value of Miller's preaching and the good it brought and would continue to bring. He enthusiastically wrote,

I think it is high time to awake out of sleep—for the day is far spent with man the night is at hand, IT is high time to awake out of sleep—for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the time draweth nigh and of that day and that hour no one knoweth no man.\(^{183}\)

\(^{183}\) Bradley Diary, 17 March 1840
After one week of listening to Mr. Miller, Mr. Bradley himself was influenced by the seriousness of Miller’s preaching and his message. As Bradley began to witness the impact of Miller's preaching on the community, he became more sympathetic to Miller's message while never fully accepting the date or becoming a Millerite. He warned others about danger of date setting as will become apparent in further entry.

By Wednesday, March 18, 1840, in the middle of the week, the weather became pleasant again. Bradley attended Miller's meeting a little late and did not mention the subject of the sermon. He did, however, discuss the manner of Miller's preaching again. Bradley wrote, "he pressured the truths of the Bible home to the hearts of sinners and urged them to immediate repentance. I know of no man, who would enforce truth with more pungency than he... was very plain." Bradley observed how the conversation around Portland began to be centered on religion wherever he went. He recorded for us a typical conversation. When he was asked by people if he had been to Miller's lecture and what he thought about it he replied, “Oh very well, I expect he will be the means of doing much good, he has his own way of doing it.” Bradley, like many preachers, felt it was good to hear the conversations revolving around religion even if he didn't completely agree with all the doctrines of the preacher presenting the message.

On Thursday, March 19, 1840, even with some snow on the ground and after doing some chores, Bradley went to hear Miller preach. His subject was Revelation 10, “Time Shall Be No Longer.” Bradley reasoned in his mind that the time Miller referred to in the sermon was in the future, - when sinners living on this earth could no longer repent of their sins. He wrote in his diary that Miller was not speaking of eternity which he reasoned was time, ad infinitum, so he concluded that this time was in the very near future, something he did agree with. It is clear from the diary entry that Bradley wrestled with what Miller was discussing in this lecture. According to Miller's understanding there would be a time in the future when there would be no more time for unrepentant sinners to confess their sins and ask for forgiveness. It is

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184 Bradley Diary, 18 March 1840
185 Bradley Diary, 18 March 1840
clear, however, that even though Bradley did not understand all points related to this topic he did understand the main idea of repenting and the urgency of time. This emphasis added to Miller's message a time factor for the close of probation which might happen shortly, which created a sense of urgency. This sense of urgency was beginning to have impact on the conversations in Portland and the surrounding areas.

Nine days after the first revival meeting, religious conversations were saturating Portland. Everywhere Bradley went, the conversation turned to Miller. Bradley was also seeing the value of this new millennial message and started to become somewhat sympathetic towards Miller, but annoyed by people only interested in the time element of Millet's millennial message. He recorded a typical exchange in his diary:

"You heard him, haven't you, Mr. Bradley?"  
"Yes, I have heard him."  
"Well, what do you think of him?"  
"Oh, I think he will be a means of doing good."  
"Do you think the world will come to an end in 1843?"  
"I think you'll come to an end to a great many before that time."  
"Do you think Mr. Miller knows?"  
"He knows just as much as I do and no more. You ought not to wait till 1843, you ought to be prepared now is the accepted the day of salvation, do not put the work of repentance off." Did you never hear of a reckoning day until Mr. Miller came among us? Our ministers have always preached this very same, only they did not tell you it would take place in 1843, neither does he tell you so, he tells you what he learns from the Bible, you can learn it as well (as) he, he says it may not be then, it may be sooner. It may not be sooner, your business is to be prepared. This is the manner retreat and converse with those who ask how I like Mr. Miller."\(^{186}\)

This conversation illustrates for historians how mainstream Miller's preaching was at the time of the Second Great Awakening. Bradley was not focused on, nor did he allow other hearers of Miller's message to get wrapped up in only emphasizing or setting a date. However, there were many evangelicals who heard Miller and began to latch onto the idea of date setting. This is evident from the emphasis on date setting in the Millerite publications and the Tenth-Month movement that developed.

\(^{186}\) Bradley Diary, 20 March 1840.
after the Spring of 1843. Bradley instead emphasized the second major principle of Miller's message which was repentance and preparation for Christ's coming. The conversation also illustrated the belief that if a typical evangelicals read their Bible, they would come to the same conclusion as Miller had about the second coming. It was this reading of the Bible and the literal application of scripture that was the hallmark of the Millerite movement, and, as one historian studying the Millerite movement in upstate New York remarked, it shaped "their world view." Bradley wrote several times in his diary that it was not important for people to know the time, but it was extremely important for them to be ready when the time comes. This was very much in harmony with Miller's message in the early years; the time element was secondary, and, as shown earlier, one could even be a Millerite without accepting the date of 1843-1844.

Miller used many of Finney's "new measures," such as emotionalism, protracted meetings, and the anxious seat. The subject of the Friday, March 20, 1840, evening's meeting was Revelation 16:1 about when the angels will pour out the vials. Miller emphasized how his listeners needed to be ready and have a relationship with God through the Holy Spirit and how this would prepare them for the Second Coming. Miller was not above using fear as he described what would happen to them if they were not ready on that day. The congregation that night was described as "all silent and still, all attention, all anxiety." Another characteristic Miller employed in the closing days of the Portland Revival was the anxious seat. Miller, like Finney, used the anxious bench for people making decisions to follow God. Bradley observed the anxious bench being used when he wrote, "those who are anxious can stay to have prayers." Miller closed the sermon with a "fitting application and pressured it home upon the hearts and consciences of his hearers." To make his hearers feel a little

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187 Miller himself was reluctant to accept the Oct. 22, 1844, and did not preach the idea of an exact date like so many of his followers would later adopt. As stated earlier many Millerite Adventist leaders did not accept the 1843 or 1844, but still preached a message of nearness.
188 This was Miller's chief way of making converts, see William Miller to Truman Hendryx 26 March 1832 as discussed earlier.
189 Rowe, Thunder, 74.
190 As discussed earlier Galusha of Lockport, Marsh of Rochester, Dana of Mass, and Jones of Vermont never accepted the date part of the message.
191 Bradley Diary, 20 March 1840.
192 Bradley Diary, 20 March 1840.
fear was a tactic that Miller and other evangelical preachers employed during the Second Great Awakening. Like Finney, Miller and the other millennialists employed many techniques to impress his message of the gospel upon his hearers.

Bradley, who was more interested in the practical application of a sermon, did not always understand all of Miller's doctrinal issues. Miller's lecture on what would happen to the bodies at the resurrection was of less importance than the subject of the resurrection of the dead. On Saturday, March 21, 1840, Miller preached his usual two sermons. Unfortunately for Bradley and many in the packed house, the first sermon, "The Return of the Jews" from Romans 11:26, was difficult to understand. Bradley wrote, "He spoke much on the subject, but I receive little light. He may know and understand what he was at, but I did not." As one of the last meetings Miller held in Portland that year, the event was very well attended. The second meeting was also crowded; the subject was the resurrection and millennium as found in Revelation 20:5-7. Here again, many people who listened to Miller preach were probably like Bradley, less concerned about the theological nuances but receptive to the overall message of getting ready and reading their Bibles. Preparation was at the heart of Miller's theology. He believed if everybody read their Bibles, they would come to the same conclusion as he did. Bradley wrote about Miller's final lecture,

He said a great deal on this all observing subject, and it may be all essentially true, but to me at present, it is dark and obscure. There will be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust, whether the particles of our bodies, which will be standard in every direction, will be formed in the original bodies. I have no conception. God can do it, whether he will or will not. It is not for me to understand, the Apostle [said].

Bradley didn't fully understand everything Miller preached about. For many evangelicals not knowing everything about future events was accepted and is still accepted as part of the mystery of salvation. One belief was shared by Miller and his hearers: it might not make sense to man, but God can do anything.

The atmospheres of these meetings grant historians insight on the initial impact of Miller's message. Bradley wrote, "There were as many as I have ever seen in the house this morning—some little disturbance of the gallery but some over a large

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193 Bradley Diary, 21 March 1840.
194 Bradley Diary, 21 March 1840.
number [of people] stopped to be prayed for after the blessing, there appeared to be much feeling and many anxious and some hoping..." Unfortunately, we do not know the number of people who came forward or their names. Bradley just ends the comments on the meeting with these words, "Came home with Charles in a wagon. Very bad writing... Good night!" However, this short but informative entry can tell historians much about the climate of Miller's meetings. Miller was not boring; he held the audience's attention for many nights through many topics. Prayer meetings and prayer were an essential part of the meetings. Large numbers of people accepted the message and came forward. Here we also see Miller employing the anxious bench; Caleb observed a pastor Fleming, the man who invited Miller to Portland say, "Those of you who wish to retire can now go if you choose: says Mr. Flemings and those who are anxious are invited to remain and have prayers."

Central to Miller's message was the theme of trusting in Jesus to be ready for the end time. On Sunday, March 22, 1840, Bradley preached twice at the Alms House and then went to Miller's lecture with a friend. The sermon was based on Genesis 19:17—entitled "Escape for Thy Life!" which was about the story of Abraham's nephew Lot fleeing from Sodom and Gomorrah. The main part of the message was to "fly to that rock cut out of the mountain." Each time Miller gave a sermon it contained a practical application and appealed to the hearers to find refuge in Jesus. Like many of the messages of the Second Great Awakening, whether given by Finney or Miller, this talk emphasized that the hearers of these messages had a role to play in their own salvation. Whether these "faithful" were called to perfectionism like Finney taught or would gain perfection at the second coming as taught by Miller, both preachers expected the people who accepted their messages to be active participants in reform and spreading the message. They both wanted the Christians who heard their messages actively engaged in their own salvation.

On the last day of Miller's evangelistic crusade, March 23, 1840 Bradley went to hear Miller's lecture with a friend whom he introduced to Miller. The house was

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195 Bradley Diary, 21 March 1840.
196 Bradley Diary, 21 March 1840.
197 Bradley Diary, 21 March 1840.
198 Bradley Diary, 22 March 1840.

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packed like so many other times. The title of the sermon was "The Two Witnesses," based on Revelation 11:3-4; in which Miller discussed the olive branches and candlesticks. He explained that the two witnesses were the Old and New Testament and the candlestick was the lamp (Jesus). Unlike previous lectures, Bradley found this sermon to be a "very interesting lecture full of instruction, it was (actually) the first lecture, having been delivered before and repeated to-day at the request of many who heard it and others who had not heard it." 199 Apparently Bradley had not heard the sermon the first time, which was Miller's first sermon in Portland. It is interesting to note that Miller started his evangelistic series not with date setting, but rather with an emphasis on the Old and New Testament and Jesus, whom Miller describe as his "closest and dearest friend." 200

Even though Miller left Portland after only thirteen days of preaching, the impact of his message did not leave so quickly. One major difference between the two millennialists was the length of their meetings. Finney's evangelistic series in Rochester lasted for six months, while Miller's evangelistic series were much shorter, typically two weeks. However, through Caleb Bradley we gain insight into how the community reacted after Miller meetings ended. These "revival" results can be compared to Finney's impact upon the community of Rochester and further illustrate the similarities between these two millennialist revival preachers of the Second Great Awakening.

At first, Bradley, like many of Miller's critics, questioned the authenticity of the revival, but later, as more people of Portland changed their way of life, he became more sympathetic yet still presented an objective, often cautious, view of what he saw happening. Bradley's reports of the spiritual climate of Portland reflect the reports submitted by L.D. Fleming to the Millerite flagship periodical, The Midnight Cry.

On March 26, 1840 only three days after Miller preached, Bradley went to Portland and had many conversations with the locals about Miller's preaching. There seemed to be a universal consensus among his minister friends that Miller's preaching was having a positive impact on the city. Bradley wrote, "all seem to agree that some

199 Bradley Diary, 23 March 1840.
200 Miller, Apology and Defense, 19.
good had already been accomplished and that many had waked up and began to read their Bibles so far this commendable.\textsuperscript{201} He also noticed there was a special excitement about the subject of religion and "especially in Casco St. Church, where Mr. Miller's lectures were held, multitudes have come forward and acknowledge themselves as sinners and are determined to take the road to heaven, many have already so far that they have entered the straight and narrow path-way...\textsuperscript{202} This heightened spiritual climate was very similar to the Rochester's response in 1831 during the "Finneyite revival." One observer from the Rochester revival eleven years earlier wrote, "You could not go upon the streets and hear any conversation except upon religion."\textsuperscript{203} This heightened religious atmosphere paralleled the situation described in Caleb's Bradley entry for March 20, when he wrote, "The conversation, wherever I go is about Mr. Miller...\textsuperscript{204} Both men had a significant impact on the spiritual climate in the communities in which they preached, even though Miller's series was much shorter.

Again in Bradley's entry on March 26, there was a heightened religious atmosphere, but he also expressed some concerns. However, he was not completely convinced that all who participated in the present excitement over religion were sincere and felt some associated with the revival may be have been motivated more by fear than belief. He expressed these views when he commented on the Portland Revival and the happenings at the Cosco Street Society in particular when he wrote, "Great religious excitement in Portland, especially so in the Cosco Street Society."\textsuperscript{205} Writing two days on March 28, 1840, his fear of excitement was stronger when he noted, "I have not so much confidence in the present excitement, as I did a few days ago. I fear will turn out to be nothing more than fright."\textsuperscript{206} He did not doubt Miller's sincerity, but was worried that some in the evangelical community acted more out of fear rather than a genuine conversion through Miller's sermons. The "excitement" that accompanied Miller's evangelistic meetings was sometimes hard to separate from

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{201} Bradley Diary, 26 March 1840.
\bibitem{202} Bradley Diary, 26 March 1840.
\bibitem{203} Robert-Stanton to Charles Finney, January 12, 1872, \textit{Finney Papers} as quoted in Paul Johnson, 95.
\bibitem{204} Bradley; March 20, 1840.
\bibitem{205} Bradley Diary, 26 March 1840.
\bibitem{206} Bradley Diary 28 March 1840.
\end{thebibliography}
the conversion experience of the believer at that time. The "excitement" Miller produced was a common charge leveled at him and other Millerites preachers leading out in revival meetings during the 1840's.\textsuperscript{207} It is also helpful to remember that charge was leveled at Finney in an 1827 Lebanon conference (discussed earlier). Here it appears that Bradley is cautious of the authenticity of those people professing their new found faith and does not question whether Miller's revival meetings were sincere as an earlier diary entry seems to suggest. For the sixty eight year old Minister Bradley, the new activities were not always welcome. He noted that it was hard to distinguish true repentance from fear repentance.

During the Second Great Awakening, evangelical participants were encouraged to read their Bibles and share their faith with others. This personal and public espousing of religious beliefs was evident in Portland after Miller left. Bradley was sure the revival left in the wake of Miller's preaching was beneficial to the religious community. He wrote, "Had much conversation with many individuals relating to Mr. Miller's preaching different sermons in the city—but all seem to agree that some good had already been accomplished and that many had waked up and began to read their Bibles so far this commendable."\textsuperscript{208} Hearers of Miller's message were actually taking up their Bibles and reading for themselves what Miller preached. Religious historian Nathan Hatch wrote that one of the hallmarks of the Second Great Awakening was the democratizing of Christianity, a theology of equality, and people beginning to read the Bible for themselves and understand theology from their point of view.\textsuperscript{209}

Almost a week after Mr. Miller left Portland, on March 30th, Bradley was discussing "Miller's lectures and the excitement in the city," with a minister friend, Mr. Witman. Here again we see his skepticism of Miller's impact on the community, but he was also seeing the good Miller's preaching was doing. The minister he visited was also visiting the publisher of The Advertizer (a local paper) office. Bradley wrote that Mr. Witman believed, "some good will be accomplished by his (Miller) visit, says he had some thought of inviting all ministers in the city to unite in a prayer

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\item \textsuperscript{207} Doan; \textit{Disappointed}, 178-179.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Bradley Diary, March 26, 1840.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Hatch, \textit{The Democratization}, 9-11.
\end{enumerate}
meeting for a revival and reformation." Caleb agreed it was a great plan; he also noted how Mr. Witman wanted to unite all denominations for this purpose. He wrote, "I wish all ministers in the city would feel in a like manner and come together and unite in the common cause of Christianity, having no regard for things and non-essential such as the washing of cups and platters." About ten years earlier, Finney observed the same spirit of cooperation between in Rochester in 1830 remarked that, "Christians of every denomination generally seemed to make common cause, and went to work with a will to pull sinners out of the fire." This spirit of cooperation was manifested following the much shorter Millerite revival meetings in Portland, Maine.

On a March 29, six days after Miller left, a very short diary entry marks the first time the words "revival" and "reformation" are linked together when discussing Miller's impact on the city of Portland. In this entry Caleb Bradley captured the mood of Portland in those exciting days with the words, "religion—there seems to be quite an excitement all over the city and community, many some strange things to tell about Mr. Miller—someone one thing and some another but good has been done and doing and there is an appearance of a general revival and reformation." In a later diary entry he reaffirmed that Miller's Portland revival was genuine when he wrote, "It is very evident that the spirit of the Lord of hosts is there."

Two weeks after Miller's last sermon, upon returning from a visit to Portland, Bradley noted in his diary the main subject on everybody's mind was religion. His observation dated April 4, is quite lengthy but will be included here for it provides historians a firsthand account of the climate of a city where Miller held a revival in 1840. Furthermore, these comments parallel similar reform conditions described as taking place during the Finney Revival in Rochester. He wrote, "It is said that Portland was never in so interesting a state as now." Bradley compared the

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210 Bradley Diary, March 30, 1840.
211 Bradley Diary, March 29, 1840.
212 Finney, Autobiography, 291-292, as cited from Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper's, 100.
213 Bradley Diary, 1 April 1840.
214 Bradley Diary, 4 April 1840.
215 Bradley Diary, 4 April 1840.
spiritual condition of Portland before Miller's revival meetings to religious fervor that
ignited the people after Miller's arrival claiming,

Sinners are converted and many converted we hear of some of the
most hardened and abandoned drunkards now sober and abandoned
the traffic of rum selling. Many who have not been in any place of
worship for years are eager to hear the gospel and to have meetings in
their own houses. Three months ago, I observed I never knew the city
so immoral and corrupted. Now I can say I never knew so much
attention paid to the subject of religion. What a change in three
months.216

His account of the rum sellers discontinuing their business and people finding
churches agreed with other contemporary accounts. This change was very similar to
the situations described in the Rochester revival, but certainly less militant and more
voluntary in nature in Portland. In Rochester, some of the newspapers refused
advertisements from liquor sellers and many businessmen found selling spirits or
"liquid poison," bad for business. Bradley does not describe a dramatic scene parallel
to what took place in Rochester in 1831, when prominent businessmen who owned
the largest grocery store destroyed their liquor publicly. The businessman rolled their
liquor onto the sidewalk and smashed the containers while many Christian onlookers
cheered.217

The Portland temperance community did not have a Theodore Weld to help
spur their temperance campaign; however, they did have temperance pledge cards and
its society was already holding meetings in Portland during the 1840's. However,
even in the absence of Weld, temperance and prohibition was strongly linked to this
revival as will be seen later.

216 Bradley Diary, 4 April 1840.
217 Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper's, 113-114. Johnson recounts many more "coercive" temperance
activities and interprets them as the wealthy force religion on the working class, but he misses the
fundamental point of the evangelical mindset as it relates to temperance and the perception of the evil
of liquors.
The conditions Bradley chronicled mirror events described by another Portland resident. L.D. Fleming, the pastor who invited William Miller to Portland, wrote to the *Signs of the Times* editors that mirrored the description given earlier by Bradley. Both men observed similar conditions.

Sinners are converted and many converted we hear of some of the most hardened and abandoned drunkards and sober and abandoned the traffic of rum selling. Many who have not been any place of worship for years are eager to hear the gospel and to have meetings in their own houses.²¹⁸

Interestingly, both Bradley and Fleming discuss the rum sellers who quit their practice. Both preachers Fleming and Bradley put more emphasis on the spiritual awakening then taking place in the city than the reforms associated with the revival. However, one can not ignore that reform did accompany the revival Miller initiated in Portland, Maine in the spring of 1840. Late that same day Bradley gave his detailed account on the moral and spiritual climate of the city when he was invited into a prayer meeting above the bank on Exchange Street. He was amazed by the number of people praying for revival and compared their sincerity with Jerusalem during the days of Pentecost. He wrote, “I closed the meeting by making a short address saying I could but think of the upper chamber at Jerusalem where the disciples of old held a prayer for a further purpose of calling down the promise of blessing of our Savior.”²¹⁹

Bradley was deeply impressed by this prayer meeting. Bradley also for the first time in his notes attributed such fervor to the revival initiated and believed its source to be genuine biblical revival, not fear.

²¹⁸ *Signs of the Times*, 1840
²¹⁹ Bradley Diary, 4 April 1840.
A day of fasting was proclaimed by the governor on April 9th, 1840 in Maine. Bradley attended a temperance meeting in the city of Portland; however, few of its citizens attended because of the baptisms taking place in the city. On this day forty converts were baptized. Unfortunately, we are not told from which church; however, the candidates could have been from either the hundreds Baptists or Congregationalists who joined churches in that year. As will be seen later, these mass baptisms became a regular part of society in the spring and summer of 1840. Four days later, while dining at Mr. Haskell's Tavern, Bradley spent an hour talking with one gentleman on the subject of religion, and later held a conversation with a judge on the same subject. He later remarked in his diary, "there is a general religious feeling throughout the length and breadth of the city, some of the most depraved have become engaged in religion." He noted, "some of those who have been doing evil in the past are now doing good, and that their works follow their faith." He, however, did not approve of all the religious happenings of every spiritual community in the city.

Bradley attended various prayer meetings. He spoke at some of them but during others he was content to sit in the audience and listen. He did not like the Free Will Baptists or Methodists or the way they conducted their meetings. He had disdain for their "new measures" as is seen in his comments:

Evening, a prayer-meeting at Abraham Libby's, a room full, All Free Will, some noise in room not much edification, not much instruction. Such meetings, I do not think it are an honor to God or productive of much good to those who attend them. I must confess I was somewhat disgusted but ignorance must be excused, still ought we to be excused from ignorance? When we have every means of information and will

220 Bradley Diary, 13 April 1840.
221 Bradley Diary, 13 April 1840.
not learn. I have often felt very much ashamed when attending some of these Free Will, Methodistical, or Baptist meetings and have felt a great pity for those who attempted to instruct others, being ignorant themselves.\textsuperscript{222}

Nor did he always approve of meetings where the preacher or leader did not call out people by name publicly. He believed that "some never will take any part unless they are called by name and urged to the performance of duty."\textsuperscript{223} Here again we see the universal scope of revival and the diversity of different groups participating.

Three months after the Miller meetings, the city of Portland was still reacting to Miller's message and the resulting revival. During this revival, frequent baptisms and conversions were occurring among the Baptists. As an old school Presbyterian minister, Caleb didn't always agree with the ministers' methods and believed that some were baptizing converts before ministers had a chance to examine perspective convert beliefs. The ministers needed to wait until the excitement had calmed down. He wrote,

There is a want of caution in the ministers, there is too much excitement and under the strong excitement many are persuaded to make a profession of religion before they know what religion is or what hope is or what a faith is and can give no satisfactory answer to discerning minds.\textsuperscript{224}

Comments in Bradley's diary indicated that he agreed with the Methodist practice of waiting six months to test a new convert, determining whether the conversion was genuine before baptizing them. In Bradley's town of Westbrook, a place Miller did not preach, Bradley noticed and was not pleased at the lack of religious interest.

\textsuperscript{222} Bradley Diary, 16 April 1840. \\
\textsuperscript{223} Bradley Diary, 16 April 1840. \\
\textsuperscript{224} Bradley Diary, 6 June 1840.
Westbrook, a community near Portland, was evidently not impacted by Miller's revival.

The prayer meetings around his neighborhood were vastly different from the prayer meetings he attended in Portland. He longed for some religious excitement in his neighborhood. Bradley believed that revival came only from engaging and actively responding to the word of God. He wrote, "Evening sent for to attend a prayer meeting at Mrs. Chenery's, over 20 present, did chief of the service. We attend prayer meetings every Saturday night in the neighborhood; go on in a round of formality, no engagedness and of course no revival." He agonized over the fact that there was religious revival all over the area, where people were "setting their faces heavenward" while the people in Westbrook seemed slow to respond. With disappointment he gave a snapshot of where revivals had broken out and where formalism kept them from beginning.

There is a revival at Falmouth, some feeling that Cape Elizabeth, among the Methodists, some in Sacarappa, some in Scarborough. So it is some in Gorham and Windham, all around us and why not in Westbrook. What hopes can we have for a blessing when we are so cold and formal and can hardly be said to be dead or alive.

The active participation on the part of the congregation was why so many evangelicals joined themselves to the Finney and Miller revivals of the Second Great Awakening.

These diary entries of Caleb Bradley provide insight into William Miller's subject and the methods he employed while leading a revival. Miller's preaching and the revival that Portland experienced after his preaching ended transformed

225 Bradley Diary, 6 June 1840.
226 Bradley Diary, 6 June 1840.
individuals and the region. Some of the same measures that Finney used were employed by Miller in his meetings, these were the use of protracted meetings, temperance meetings, and the anxious bench, all evident in Bradley's eyewitness account. The accounts of rum shops closing and religious centered conversations can also be compared to the heightened religious state in Rochester during the Finneyite revival.

Ministers discuss religion more than the average person; therefore, readers of a minister's diary like Bradley's should expect to find commentary on religion, baptisms, and prayer meetings. However, the fact that he was a minister should not discount what was happening that spring around Portland. Bradley discussed what was happening in other Protestant denominations in the Portland area supports the fact that there was a genuine religious awakening in 1840. Not only were people talking about religion, but religious societies and church attendance also spiked during this time as church records and other sources show. These records confirm the general picture of a heightened religious climate portrayed by Bradley following the Millerite crusade during March 1840. By examining some secondary sources as well as church records from around the Portland area, a clearer picture of a typical Miller-led revival of Second Great Awakening in 1840 emerges.

One of the indicators that historian Paul Johnson used in order to show the impact of Finney's Rochester Revival was an analysis of Rochester's Protestant church records. While this is not always the best indicator as it only gives a window into certain churches, it is the case that those churches can be useful indicators of a revival climate for a specific time and geographical location. The records of
churches from around the Portland area, linked with Bradley's accounts, give us further insight into the impact on Miller's preaching in Portland in 1840 and thereby provide a more concise view into a Second Great Awakening revival and the reformation of a community. To understand the impact of the Portland revival in terms of people converted, two major church congregations will be discussed. The Presbyterian and Baptist community churches' membership lists as well as yearly reports paint a picture of the revival that occurred in 1840 as a direct result of Miller's preaching and influence around Portland and some surrounding counties.

The Methodist reactions are available, but not much analysis can be done because of the incompleteness of their church records. However, the steps taken by Methodists to blunt the effect of Millerism will be discussed because the Methodists spent a large amount of time trying to eradicate Millerism's influence. By investigating and expelling so many people, logic dictates that Miller's influence must have threatened their organization; otherwise they would not have wasted time on the Millerites at all. First, we will examine the church records to look at a clearer picture of a community revival.

The first church changed by Miller's revival was the High Street Congregational Church in Portland, Maine. The following chart and discussion is a summary of records of new members, as related to the Miller Revival meetings held from March 11 to 23rd, 1840. In that year there was an explosion of growth with over one hundred and thirty-two members joining the church, no other year comes close to experiencing such phenomenal growth out of the years surveyed. Most
years only saw around 20 people joining the High Street Church as shown in the chart below constructed from church records over a eight year period.
Table 1 High Street Congregational Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Admitted</th>
<th>Removed</th>
<th>Remain</th>
<th>Total Attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Fem</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>1839</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1840, almost twice the number of women joined the church by profession of faith than the men did. This trend of women joining the church coincided was what was happening during the Finney revivals of the 1820s and 1830s and mirrored the Rochester Revival of 1831.\textsuperscript{227} Women comprised over 70% of the Church membership. This hallmark characteristic of the Second Great Awakening and can not be ignored as one begins to analyze the Millerite influences on churches in the Portland area. In 1838, women made up 76% of the total church membership. What is interesting; in 1840 until 1846 women made up 72% of total membership.\textsuperscript{228} In 1840, the one hundred thirty-two baptisms in 1840 at one church when compared to the official records of the General Conference in Maine, Cumberland County, which only saw one hundred seventy additions for the whole county of which one hundred

\textsuperscript{227} Paul Johnson, \textit{Shopkeepers.} Appendix B.
\textsuperscript{228} \textit{Covenant. Rules and Catalogue of Members of the High St. Congregation Church.} (Portland: Maine. Table, 1846), 44.
and thirty two were from the High Street Congregation alone.²²⁹ The predominance of women joining the church as a result of Miller's meetings corresponds with other Second Great Awakening revivals discussed by Curtis Johnson in his study of rural religion in Cortland in the Islands of Holiness.²³⁰

In 1840, in a report of the state of the churches, "about one half of the churches or more have been blessed with revivals and those more singularly favored are Brunswick, Falmouth, First and Second, Portland Second, Third High Street, Freeport, Harpswell and North Yarmouth and several others."²³¹ This is in line with communities listed by Caleb Bradley. A similar phenomenon had taken place during the Rochester Revival with surrounding communities affected by the Finney's revival. Communities surrounding Rochester were impacted such as Brockport, Penfield and Pittsford.²³² In discussing the spiritual condition of Portland for this year, the authors used such words as "remarkable revival of religion." Again, when one compares the report of 1839 with 1840, the year of Miller's revival, the numbers of new church converts pales in comparison. In 1839, "the year of remarkable revival of religion," there were only two hundred and fifty-one people in all of Cumberland County.²³³ At their annual conference held in Machais, the Cumberland County Conference reported over five hundred and sixty-one people joined the churches either by letter or profession of faith in 1840. In the county over three hundred and ten more people joined the Congregational churches of Cumberland County than in 1839. They never

²³⁰ Curtis Johnson, Islands, 53-66.
²³¹ Minutes of the General conference of Maine, Annual Meeting in Hallwell, the June 23, 1840, 14.
²³² Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper's, 95-115. Johnson discusses the other communities where revivals had broken out across the state and country.
²³³ Ibid, 16.
give credit to William Miller for bringing about such a large number of baptisms, but it highly probable his meetings increased the numbers directly or indirectly.

At the High Street Church in Portland records showed that over ninety-two people joined through baptism. These numbers illustrate how many evangelicals who accepted the millennial message wanted to be baptized to be ready for the Lord's imminent return. However, not only did the High Street Church have large numbers of new converts, other churches in Portland experienced a spike in church attendance and new converts also. In Portland, the Second, and 3rd St Church, also benefited from the Miller lectures with over one hundred and twenty-two people joining those two churches. The Bangor church, a community near Portland also had a large number of baptisms and professions of faith, with over one hundred and nine people joining the church and eighty-eight of those members through baptism.

Surprisingly, nowhere in the Portland Revival accounts or minutes of the annual meeting are Miller's meetings or name mentioned. Miller is not mentioned as a catalyst for the revival in any formal church correspondence, even though many ministers around Portland according to the Bradley gave Miller credit for starting the revival. Similarly, nothing is written about the large number of converts coming into the churches in Portland as a result of Miller's meetings. No mention of a revival is connected with Portland except that in a church report which stated "the churches most highly favored with accessions are those of Portland and of North Yarmouth, Falmouth. First, New Gloucester, Saccarappa, Pownal, and Freeport." Mention

235 Minutes 1841, 16.
236 Minutes 1841, 12.
was made of the "precious revivals" in North Yarmouth; however, it only added sixty-three members. Strangely absent is the recognition of the High Street Revival associated with a Baptist named William Miller. 237

When Finney led the Rochester Revival, he was credited with increased attendance and revival that followed in the local churches; however, the same cannot be said of Miller in 1840. None of the churches at the time wanted to associate themselves with Millerism even though they were thankful for the results and the revival that followed his meetings. This is a huge problem when one attempts to study Miller's impact on the community-- almost no one outside of the Millerite publications gave Miller credit for the revival he started. 238 If historians were only left with church records other factors might be attributed to the large numbers of people joining these churches. However, in light of Bradley's diary observations and eyewitness accounts historians now have a lens in which to critically view Miller's preaching and his impact on a community during the Second Great Awakening. What emerges from these records is a revival typical of other Second Great Awakening preachers such as Finney in the mid-nineteenth century. By down playing Miller's significance, historians have a distorted view of the type of revivals Miller and his millenialist message caused and have fallen into the trap of letting critics write the history of this often neglected preacher and therefore do not fully understand his impact on the communities where he preached. Historically, Miller's message has been associated with fear and fanaticism, but what was witnessed in

237 Minutes 1841, 12.
238 Rowe, "Shadow," in Numbers, Disappointed, 2-5. Also keep in mind that until 1844-45, they were not a distinctive denomination, a person who accepted Miller's millennium message stayed in their church.
Portland is a typical Second Great Awakening revival on a grand scale with large numbers of converts won from many different denominational groups, not through fear but via prayer meetings and outreach.

Critics may argue that Miller did not preach in Congregational churches, and therefore the numbers of people coming into the High Street Church and the Portland Churches have nothing to do with Miller. Other historians disagreed. Writing about the history of the Baptists in Maine, Henry S. Burrage wrote of the 1840 Millerite revival: "a deep religious interest was awakened in a large number of conversions followed this religious interest extended to the other churches in Portland."239 This account coincides with the atmosphere that Caleb Bradley described several times when writing about the impact of the Portland revival conducted by Miller. He witnessed it first in several denominations, at the Cosco Society where Miller preached, along with the Free-Will Baptists and Congregational prayer meetings he attended.

William Miller lectured a portion of the time at the First Baptist Church during his stay. When Miller was invited to give an added course of lectures to his brethren there, he declined. Burrage noted, "William Miller, not only preached in the Baptist Churches, but he was made equally welcome, in other evangelical denominations," there was an "eager desire to hear his message."240 One aspect of Millerism that was identified by Dick was that its leaders came from many evangelical denominations so it only makes logical sense that people of all faiths who heard the message joined evangelical denominations while proclaiming the beliefs of

239 Henry S. Burrage, History of the Baptists in Maine (Portland: Marks Printing House, 1904), 198 and 199
240 Burrage, History, 198 and 199.
Miller's millennium. Doan agreed with this idea and because of Miller’s millennium message and authority of the Bible with its popular appeal many people gravitated toward this new biblical-based millennium message.\textsuperscript{241}

Burrage credited Millerism with creating a spirit of revival in many places and bringing in large numbers of converts to Baptist Churches. He asserted that Millerite meetings, "account(ed) for the nearly ten thousand additions to the Baptist churches in Maine...from 1840 to 1845."\textsuperscript{242} Unfortunately, because of the time emphasis on Miller’s millennial message, Burrage asserted only 3,270 of the ten thousand converts supposedly stayed for the duration. A careful analysis of the Portland Baptist Churches contradicts his conclusion, based on the Portland revival of 1840. One can see how the total membership of the High Street Congregational Church remained around three hundred thirty three people for the years of 1845 and 1846. So how much of an impact did Miller's Revival have on the Baptist churches in Portland after the meetings ended in 1840 and did members who came under Miller's millennium message leave after the “prophecy failed in 1844? \textsuperscript{241}


\textsuperscript{242} Burrage, History, 199. More research would need to be done if that number is to be verified.
Table 2 Baptists in Portland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Joined by Baptisms</th>
<th>joined by letter</th>
<th>Total Joined (includes restored)</th>
<th>Dismissed</th>
<th>Total Dismissed (Drop) Died</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>1st Portland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>1st Portland</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>1st Portland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>1st Portland</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>1st Portland</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>235</td>
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<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Free St.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preceding chart is a compilation of records from the Cumberland Baptist Association meetings from 1839-1846. Several trends become apparent as the reader examines the chart from the two Baptist Churches in Portland. First, similar to Congregational Churches in Portland, both Baptist Churches experienced relatively low growth in numbers with an average of ten to twenty members joining each of the...
churches before 1840. After Miller's meetings and during the subsequent revival of 1840, the First Portland Church added only twenty-eight new members with twenty of them being baptized; probably first-time converts to the faith. The largest recipient of converts from the Millerite meetings was the Free St. Church which added one hundred and six new members, which almost doubled the size of their congregation from one hundred and fifty-one to two hundred fifty.

Not included in the chart of the Baptist congregations of Portland area was the North Yarmouth Church which added eighty members from baptism in 1840. Couple that with the Congregational new members of North Yarmouth, and it appears a revival also broke out there as well. These large numbers of additions to Baptists coincided with Burrage's assessment of Millerism being the main reason for many people coming into the Baptist churches. Caleb Bradley also spoke of revivals happening in North Yarmouth as well as Portland.

In 1841, the letter in the Annual Report from Free St. Portland Church contained the following admission, "we have not been so highly prospered as during the last year, still we feel that we have been blessed far beyond what we deserve..."\textsuperscript{244} The North Yarmouth letter contained no information concerning the church backsliding and the same kind of an idea about the Millerism revival of the Portland Church. They wrote, "no one out of between ninety and a hundred who professed religion amongst us last year, has, to our knowledge, so conducted to wound the name of Christ."\textsuperscript{245} In other words, the excitement that Bradley was worried about burning out quickly according to the church records did not, nor did

\textsuperscript{244} Minutes, 1841, 9.
\textsuperscript{245} Minutes, 9.
membership drop as a result of people being disillusioned with Miller’s pre-millennium message by 1843 or 1844. This has been a charge leveled at the transient time bound nature of Millerism, which really needs to be reconsidered by examining more church records and finding more evidences of Millerite Adventist revivals in other communities such as the one witnessed in Portland. Doan agrees with this author in cautioning historians about blaming Millerism for the decline in church membership in the 1840’s. She wrote, “The connection between Millerism and decline in church membership is fuzzy and conjectural at best.”246 Indeed if Miller preached a Bible centered message of readiness then many of his converts placed their faith in the Bible rather than the time element of Millerism which seems to get most of the historical press coverage.

The charge Burrage made that many members left as a result of Miller’s predictions failing does not bear itself out in the records from Baptists in Portland or even in the Congregational examined here.247 From the Free St. Church one of the largest number of people dismissed was in 1842, 2 years before the final disappointment of 1844. Based on both sets of records one does not find a large drop off in membership traditionally associated with Millerism. Traditional understanding of Millerism has Millerite-influenced evangelicals joining the church out of fear, and leaving disillusioned after the disappointments of 1843 and 1844. This thinking needs to be reevaluated in light of the Portland Revival of 1840. While it is true some people abandoned Millerism, it is possible many members who joined under

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246 Doan, *Millerism*, 133. She believes that other disputes in 1840’s such as abolitionism contributed to low attendance. Is it possible when people became disillusioned with Finney’s view of millennium and rejected Millerism they did not see their answers to society’s problems in church reforms?
247 He makes this charge quite strongly in his remarks how about 10,000 were credited to the Millerism revivals, but only 3,760 remained after 1845.
Millerism were truly converted and became faithful members of their churches. Thus, even though they might have held a sympathetic view towards Millerism, there was not the huge falling away traditionally associated with the Millerite disappointments of 1843 and 1844. In 1842, no reason is given for the twenty-seven of the thirty-six members being dismissed; however, the congregation was without a pastor for a while and this might explain why some of people left or were dismissed. More work; however, across a larger area needs to be done to validate the basic thesis that members who came in under Millerism did not leave after 1843 or 1844 as formerly believed. Based on the Portland numbers of people being dismissed in 1845 and 1846 it was many times smaller than those dismissed before 1843. In fact, only First Church which received the fewest number of new attendees during the 1840 Revival, had forty-two of their members dismissed in 1844, and the reasons for these dismissals are not provided. In 1840, only ten people joined the church, so it is conjectural at best to say, the people who left in 1844 were disillusioned former Millerites. A closer examination of more comprehensive records of the 1st Portland Church could shed more light into this issue. However, The Free Street Church which benefited the most from Miller's revival of 1840 only lost four members by dismissal in 1844, hardly a mass exodus of disillusioned fanatical people.

Traditional history has maintained that many Millerite-Baptists were leaving the church after 1844. Why, then wouldn't the church that gained the most converts in Portland because of Miller lose the most members in 1843-44? If the only thing people took away from the Miller meetings was the fear of the time element from the new millennium message, then it would be equally logical that after 1843 or 1844, we
might see a large exodus of people after these time-based prophecies failed. However, if Miller's millennial message was Bible-based and salvation-centered, then those believers who had grounded their faith in the Bible might not have been shaken by the time element of the millennium message of other Millerites. Those years saw fewer members leaving those churches than other years. Furthermore, if the believers of Portland were so set on the time element, why didn't they leave in 1845 or 1846 after the prophecies of Millerism failed? The answer is clearly is that his revival was about much more than fear driven time centered movement.
Conclusion

A stated earlier, Millennial dreams and utopias have fueled religious revivals and have been linked to revolutions and eras of reform down through the ages. These revivals and reforms are evident from this brief examination of two preachers. Charles Finney and William Miller were both millennial preachers who started movements, helped in reforms, and challenged traditional theological thinking in their day during the era commonly described as the Second Great Awakening. While Finney's roles in these revivals and reform movements of the pre-Antebellum history have been generally accepted, Miller's contributions have been largely ignored, misunderstood, or mischaracterized.

Miller's influence in the Second Great Awakening and his impact in leading revivals have long been ignored. In light of the Portland Revival of 1840 his methodology and message can be no longer be minimized or ridiculed by historians. Miller and his movement need to be reevaluated and, he needs to be considered a prominent millennial preacher who impacted many Protestants during the Second Great Awakening in the tradition of Finney, a fellow millennialist and revivalist of that era.

Miller used the Bible and provided a literal interpretation that many people connected with and understood at that time. Miller's populace message, literal interpretation, and a reliance on a personal relationship salvation were hallmarks of the Second Great Awakening and the democratization of Christianity. Like other preachers of the Second Great Awakening, William Miller focused on a
personal conversion and relationship with Jesus. This personal relationship coupled with his millennial message of the imminent and literal second coming ignited revivals across the Northeast in communities where Finneyite or Millerite Preachers spoke. This impact was seen dramatically and is now for the first time analyzed in a case study from Portland, Maine, using church records as well as diary accounts. William Miller, like his fellow millennialist preacher Charles Finney, believed each person had a personal responsibility to accept or reject the invitation from Jesus to be saved. His use of "new" measures perfected by Finney of the anxious bench, protracted meetings, and use of personal accountability along with choice were similar to other preachers of the Second Great Awakening. While it is not known whether Miller lectured or preached directly related to temperance, it is however, evident by his post revival impact in Portland that he probably discussed those ideas in his meetings. Further evidence in his involvement in temperance can be noted that at later Millerite meetings temperance cards were passed out and pledges made.

Miller preached the judgment message of personal revival and choice to eager listeners at a time of economic depression, which seemed to have dampened the illusion of the man-induced millennium as preached by Finney. Recent events in world affairs, the economy and nature appeared to lend credence to Miller's second coming then the millennium message. It was in this particular social and economic climate that Miller's premillennialist message seemed to correspond better with the conditions taking place around them. Miller can no longer be seen as a preacher who only forecasted doom and drove people by fear to a message they would later reject. What took place in Portland in the spring and summer of 1840 was a revival typical
of the Second Great Awakening accompanied by reforms and those believers who acted upon a belief they needed to get ready for the Lord's return. Many of the people who came in under the subsequent revival ignited by Miller's preaching stayed in their church's community even after the disappointments of 1843 and 1844.

Miller's long term contributions and success of his millennial interpretation cannot be ignored any longer. Many evangelicals today hold to a pre-millennial and a literal second coming of Jesus in the clouds as preached by Miller and his associates. Very few Evangelical Christians believe the world is getting better and that we can create a heaven on earth like Charles Finney preached. Historians need to understand that the Millerite movement is an essential part of history. By downplaying Miller's significance or not understanding his message and the impact his preaching had on society, or without Miller in the center of the Second Great Awakening history, they will be left with a distorted picture of evangelical Protestantism in the early to mid nineteenth century and contemporary evangelical forces will continue to be misunderstood. In light of these church records with the diary accounts of Caleb Bradley, it is time for historians to re-evaluate William Miller's theological contributions and their understanding of the biblical millennium and his role during the Second Great Awakening as well as his association with revivals and reforms that were common to his era.

The revivals and reforms championed by Miller and Finney need to be tied into the wider context of a burgeoning democratic movement both economically and politically. These new religious ideas and interpretations blossomed in the post

248 This fact was recognized in the 1952, by a student of history, how much more true today. Brown cites that "forty or more American sects" (in 1952) have premillennialism as one of their key doctrines, 457.
revolutionary era with its ideas of nascent capitalism and the ever increasing ideas of choice in jobs, where to live, who to vote for and more importantly how to worship. Both William Miller and Charles Finney had no formal theological training and were visible representations of the self-made theological men of that era. Both men lived during the time of the Second Great Awakening and believed that the Bible and not the traditions of men should be followed when interpreting the Bible. Both men championed a populist message of the Bible and connected with their hearers through thought and reason.

At this time, society was becoming more democratic with the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the notion all men are were created equal and had the inalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. This era traditionally labeled "The Era of the Common Man" had many new reforms such as universal manhood suffrage, and the birth of women rights and abolitionists' movements. William Miller also preached a message of self made people who could read their Bibles and decide as he did that they were living in the last days of earth's history. Finney and Miller both offered a choice and believed strongly that the millennium was going to take place in a few short years.

Finney, by adopting the innovations developed by the Methodists and Baptists, was able to shake and revive Presbyterianism and bring it out of the Calvinist straight jacket from its birth. Through Finney's doctrine of choice and belief in the Holy Spirit as agent of revival, he was able to reach across the denominational lines and initiate a revival which included choice. William Miller, with his millennial message, also initiated the same type of reforms and revivals that
reached across denominational lines. Both Finney and Miller were abolitionists and temperance advocates in their writings and actions. Neither; however, would they allow themselves to get so deeply involved with those reforms that they lost sight of the great reform converting hearers' hearts to help prepare them for the millennium.

Charles Finney needs still to be credited as a great evangelical and millennial preacher of the early nineteenth century, but one cannot ignore the contributions of another great millennial preacher named William Miller. After reading about the Portland revival, one of William Millers' typical revival meetings, historians can no longer ignore the similarities between Miller and Finney. Both men enjoyed success in large numbers of converts and were involved directly or often times indirectly with the reforms associated with their movements. Both men had preachers who worked with them associated with the other evangelists of the Second Great Awakening Era.

No longer should Millerism be characterized merely as a group of misguided people that believed the end of the world was coming in 1844. William Miller and Charles Finney were both millennial preachers with a radical message that challenged the traditionalists of their day and ultimately with different views of the millennium would challenge each other. What is evident in this essay are the similarities they shared in theology and practices. Charles Finney needs to be credited with breaking bonds of predestination, igniting temperance reform, and ushering in the heaven on earth movement that spawned many reform organizations. William Miller also needs to be recognized for his contributions of literal interpretation of Bible end time events while supporting temperance and abolition movements as well as speaking out on other evils of the day.
Miller's impact on the religious landscape of pre-antebellum society in the Northeast needs to be rethought. Using his 1840 Portland meetings as a model of revival, one can see the similarities to other Second Great Awakening revivals, and not as a movement of fear, but a literal interpretation of the Bible that people gravitated to and that many across Protestant denominational lines accepted. Millerism needs to be reinterpreted and not seen as a movement causing fear and excitement with an explosion of church growth that evaporated after the Prophecies had failed, but as a movement in which some tenents of his theology have been accepted today. Miller was a millennial preacher whose views of prophecy have become a dominant line of theological understanding in the Evangelical Community even today. Furthermore, Miller and many of his followers were also engaged in reform while preaching the "ultimate" reform, the literal pre-advent second coming of Jesus in the clouds soon.
Appendix 1

Caleb Bradley Diary entries for March 12 through August 18, 1840 selected.
Volume 8

March 12, 1840, Thursday. March 12, 1772. My name is recorded and my father's large Bible is being my birthday, this being true, and I presume it is I must be 68 years old to-day, "surely fought to things on ways, and turn my feet unto God's testimonies and make haste and delay not to keep God's commandments"—my time is short, very short. A little while, and I shall be gone and where shall I go? What are my hopes beyond the grave? I can't hope on account of my own righteousness. All my preaching and praying has been mixed with ten thousand imperfections. When I've been most devote there is a want of devotion, when I have been most alive there has been a want of life, oh that spiritual life and zeal, which becomes a minister of the gospel. O how much more I might have done. My days are coming to close. I hope I may be on my watch, be humble before God, trusting in the all sufficient Saviour, who is to every believing soul the chiefest among ten thousand and Altogether lovely. Heard Mr. Miller this p.m. explain the 2300 days mentioned in 8 chapter of Daniel verses 13 and 14 and 70 weeks in 9th chapter. The 2300 days, he calls years and the70 weeks he calls 70 weeks of years 490 years. This subtracted from 2300 will leave 1810 years. To this number add 33 years, the age of Christ when he was crucified and the answer will be 1843, which will be the year when Christ will come in the clouds of heaven. This, Mr. Miller says he believes, but at the same time, it may not be so, he is not positive. He lives, he says, in anticipation that it will be the case. Whether it will or will not, no matter. We all ought to be ready, watching and waiting for the coming of the great day when Christ will come to judge the world and to take vengeance on them that know him not—-took tea at Mr. Cummings and called on Deacon Eldridge's.
Of March 13, 1840. Friday, cold last night and this morning and looks to me as though there's a storm brewing. This p.m. went into Miller's lecture—crowded house—subject Vision of the latter days. Daniel 8:13. 14. The preacher seemed to make it appear very plain—people very attentive, many believed and some believed not. I think some information is to be obtained and these lectures are worth listening to meeting closed about 5 o.c. Called on the Clays and took tea at Mrs. Gregg's daughter of Br. Mittimore, he being absent at sea—evening subject continued an explanation of the 1260, and 1335 days. This evening the house was filled to a density many came and went away for the want of room—whether what he says, Mr. Miller, respecting these prophecies, shall turn out to be correct or not I know not but this I expect will turn out to be true that time is at hand. The 11th chap of Daniel he makes to close with the fall of downfall of Buonapartee yet he come to his end and none shall help him—war. There ever a man possessed of so much power, that the very kings of the earth trembled when they heard his name mentioned, a man whom 25,000,000 millions worshipped, whose word was law and who this 26,000,000 obeyed whose history is this written—"yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him."

March 14, 1840. This evening went with Ruth to hear Mr. Miller The Kingdom of Heaven....

Saturday cold uncomfortable day, a.m. make calls in the neighborhood. p.m. went to Mr. Miller's lecture with Ruth Adams (subject was) on 24th Chapter of Matthew. I introduced the meeting by prayer. Mr. Miller made an exposition on the chapter to some it is probable (and) was instructive had some ideas and he endeavored in his closing remarks to work upon the feeling(s) of the dying congregation. He was very plain and forcible—I think some impression will be made on the minds of individuals(; it does appear that all will not be lost, people will think on the subject and if they do allow themselves to think seriously. Went again in the evening.
(Subject was) The kingdom of heaven is like announced 10 virgins who went forth to meet the bridegroom, five of them were wise and five are foolish and the foolish set on otherwise give us your oil for lamps are gone out. He explained and told us that he at he understood by the lamps in the text—lamps meant the Gospel or the Bible, the Bible is call the land to her feet and a light to our path. The oil he considered faith. Almost everybody has this lamp, but a vast many are not enlightened by and do not believe it and do not read it and do not very often see it. Such have no oil, no faith. In the great day, they will find their mistake for the door will be shut.

March 15, 1840, Sabbath, like to be a pleasant day. (I) preached twice to the poor. May my preaching be a lamp to their feet and a light to their path. Attended Mr. Miller’s lecture this evening very great crowds, judged to be about 2000 people, subject, the downfall of the Popish power, he said many things which appear to be reasonable and scriptural, all he said one subject he seemed to abundantly prove from the bible he uses the bible altogether and he thinks he is correct and I believe him sincere. He imagines he has a correct understanding of the subjects he is upon and things come to from, agreeable to his calculations---it may be so—none can prove to the contrary. Topic of his sermon Isa 53 and Eccl. 12 how God will bring everything into judgment.

March 16, 1840, Monday, fine pleasant day. (I) spent p.m. in the city. The conversation is principally about William Miller and delivering lectures relating to the coming of Christ. Some believe and some not—the whole city I expect will be in an uproar soon. The excitement increases and is spreading over the city like electricity—The congregation increases—many are getting rid of their prejudices and give very serious attention to his discourses and profess to be satisfied ...this evening, the House crowded to density, there seem to be one solid column his subject was
2000 thousand years—His text was from Hosea 6:1--3—Come let us return unto the
Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten and he will bind us up.
After two days will he revive us in the third he will raise us up and we shall live in his
sight. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord his going forth is
purpose as the morning..." Mr. Miller built the foundation of his discourse this
evening on these words—he was very much engaged, warm, animating said many
things very much to the purpose and it is very likely there some present this evening
who will not be likely to forget very many things, they heard.

**March 17, 1840, Tuesday,** unpleasant day, very chilly. Began to snow 11 o'clock
and continued through the day till 2 p.m. I and Leonard went down to hear Mr.
Miller. His subject was the (frequency of the number) seven (wars, seas, hrs) In
(general) he treated this subject rather different, from many—some new things at least
new to me. Notwithstanding the storm, the house was well filled and the audience
very attentive, what the result of the lectures will be, is beyond that the sight of
mortals—I hope great good may be accomplished—certainly it has set many to search
their bible to see whether these things are so. Some many seem to think religion
worth attending to and are setting themselves about the important work. There is
some stir in the city, some moving, some inquirers, and it is not improbable, there
will be multitudes, who will enter upon the work given them to do and I think it is
high time to awake out of sleep—for the day is far spent with man the night is at
hand, IT is high time to awake out of sleep—for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
The time draweth nigh and of that day and that hour no one knoweth no man.

**March 18, 1840, Wednesday,** fine warm, pleasant. (I) went to the city in the a.m.
with E.D. Woodford on Mr. Graves' business, met at Hartshorn's counting room, all
concerned present, amounted to nothing. Dined at Mr. Chickering's on hog's harslet,
then to hear Mr. Miller's lecture, but it was rather late. What I heard was very
interesting—he pressured the truths of the bible home to the hearts of sinners and
urged them to immediate repentance. I know of no man, who would enforce truth with more pungency than he. He could not be said to duab with untempered mortar for certainly he was very plain and (forceful?). He was afraid that professors did not do their duty to each other and their children. That they did not talk to them on the subject of religion and impress upon their minds, the necessity of the one thing needful. He was afraid there was an awful neglect of this duty and faithfully called upon the parents to attend to this subject—may this salutary and reasonable advice be remembered and practiced and then it will be well, both for parents and children. After meeting (I) set out for home. Very interesting, I know of no man who can enforce the truth was more pungency than he. I find wherever I call in religion seems to be the subject of conversation.

"Well, have you been to hear Mr. Miller? How do you like him?"

O(h) very well, I expect he will be the means of doing much good he, he has his own way of doing it."

March 19, 1840 Thursday, snow on the ground Charles and Leonard hard at work, hauling manure on the sled this a.m. p.m. in the wagon brought of Mr. Graves to allow him 17 dollars to be endorsed on the note, which I hold against him, called on Mrs. Mitchell's, she be in very ill and not expected to live. After tea went to hear Mr. Miller with Ruth Adams. The subject (was) Revelation 10th chapter. "Time Shall Be No Longer." He spoke on the subject well. He said it could not mean that there should be no more time, because the very eternity itself is made up of time, time added to time, ad infinitum will make up eternity; but there is no making up eternity, when millions of years or added to millions of years then eternity may only be said to be begun, but time, as mentioned in the text means when the gospel dispensation is
ended. Time will be no longer with the sinner. The day of grace will be gone forever.

**March 20, 1840 Friday,** Some snow last night, and this morning, very muddy. The conversation, where-ever I go is about Mr. Miller,

"You heard him, haven't you, Mr. Bradley? Yes, I have heard him. "Well, what do you think of him?"

"Oh, I think he will be a means of doing good."

"Do you think the world will come to an end in 1843?"

"I think you'll come to an end to a great many before that time."

"Do you think Mr. Miller knows?"

"He knows just as much as I do and no more. You ought not to wait till 1843, you ought to be prepared now is the accepted day of salvation, do not put the work of repentance off." Did you never hear of a reckoning day until Mr. Miller came among us? Our ministers have always preached this very same, only they did not tell you it would take place in 1843. Neither does he tell you so, he tells you what he learns from the Bible, you can learn it as well (as) he. He says it may not be then, it may be sooner. It may not be so soon, your businesses to be prepared. This is the manner retreat and converse with those who ask how I like Mr. Miller."

This evening, I went with Ruth to hear Mr. Miller, a very crowded house. The subject (was) the 7 vials Rev. 16:1. He poured them all out upon different places, kingdoms or cities, except the last which he poured into the air. Which he said was to have an effect upon the whole favorable globe as ___ when poured a vial will be diffused and spread though a space so far as the particles will ascend, so this seventh vial of God’s wrath when poured out over the world and the wicked will become more wicked, be mad with God, be mad with each other gnawing their tongues for pain and mark their teeth, The work will then be finished. It is done, the day of grace is ended. He then who is found filthy will continue to be filthy—he who is found to be unjust will continue to be unjust and him who is found to be righteous will continue to be righteous and he that is holy let him be holy still. And now behold I come quickly
and my reward is with me to give every man as his work shall be so says Jesus Christ who calls himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last—there appeared to be a very wonderful effect on the congregation all silent, still, all attention, and all anxiety. Mr. Miller closed the sermon with a fitting application of the subject pressured it home upon the hearts and consciences of his hearers. "Those of you who wish to retire can now go if you choose," says Mr. Flemings and those who are anxious are invited to remain and have prayers. And here a scene presented itself; better known to those who were present that can be described.

**March 21, 1840 Saturday**, warm and muddy and very bad getting about.

After dinner with James Johnson to hear Mr. Miller, subject, return of the Jews, examined Romans 11:26, a very crowded house. He said much on this subject, but I received, but little light. He might understand and know what he was at, but I did not. Took tea with Mr. Herricks and he and his daughters appear to be highly gratified that I called. Seven o'clock, went to meeting again, a very great congregation, the subject - Resurrection or Millennium. Rev 20.5-7. He said a great deal on this all observing subject, and it may be all essentially true, but to me at present it is dark and obscure. There will be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust, whether the particles of our bodies which will be scattered in every direction, will be formed in the original bodies I have no conception. God can do it, whether he will or will not, It is not for me to understand, the Apostle (said). It is sown a natural body and will be raised up a spiritual body. There were as many as I have ever seen in the house this morning – some little disturbance of the gallery but some over a large number stopped to be prayed for after the blessing, There appeared to be much feeling and many anxious and some hoping came home... Came home with Charles in a wagon. Very bad riding and cold, to bed about 10. Good night!

**March 22, 1840 Sabbath.** Preached twice at the city poorhouse. After tea went with Mr. Weymouth to hear Mr. Miller. Text (was) Genesis 19:17. "Escape for thy life!" He spoke of Abraham, gave a short history of Lot. Application, make your escape from impending storm of God's indignation. Fly to that rock cut out of the mountain.
March 23, 1840 Monday, After making some calls went to the city walk around, enquired the news, took dinner at Haskell's Tavern called at Mr. Miller's lodgings and introduced Henry Goddard to Mr. Miller. 1/2 past 2 went into the meeting, crowded house. Mr. Miller delivered a lecture on two witnesses mentioned a Rev. 11: 3-4. He told us that these two witnesses were the two olive branches in the candlesticks, meaning the old and new testament, the candlesticks the same as lamps, the bible as a whole is call the lamp to our feet and a light to our path...So the old and new testament are two lamps or lights—the old continued to be the only light or lamp, till Christ came in person and the gospel dispensation commenced and this gospel dispensation was proof that the old testament dispensation was correct. The old dispensation power (was also part of) that the new dispensation (that) is correct for it pointed to the new. A very interesting lecture full of instruction, it was less a lecture, having been delivered before, and repeated today at the request of many who heard it and others who had not heard it.

March 24, 1840 Tuesday, froze hard last night, unpleasant air, looks likely for snow. Noah Mason and wife called and dined. At 12 it began to snow. Ruth Adams gone to back cove visiting. A very powerful snowstorm. Charles gone to the city. I remained at home. It looks rather gloomy and dull. Young Parson's, member of the junior class at college called with a letter from Nathaniel Patridge, thinks he is changed and will take a new course. We have great hopes it will be so. This will make him a good scholar, and he will be likely to graduate with honor to himself and comfort to his friends. Colleges a dangerous and corrupting place to those young men who are wild and have no established principles, they are every moment exposed to temptation and liable to be led astray. Neglect their studies, and at length the graduate with the crowd, just rub and go, and heavens, no scholars and fit for nothing. This is the case with many who enter college, having plenty of money and not knowing how they came by, know not how to take care of it. (I) went to bed early.
March 25, 1840 Wednesday, snow this morning six inches deep, not far from home today. I find religious excitement is very great among certain class, the result of Mr. Miller's lectures of the last days, many seem to be alarmed about themselves begin to enquire what they must do to be saved. Many backsliders are confessing their faults and resolving them to the Lord. This I am very glad to see and hear. I hope the impression and the alarm will continue. God may see fit to save them—a certain class must have something extraordinary presented to their minds before they will listen to truth some of the marvelous, something wonderful. They have heard Mr. Miller speak of the last day great when the Lord Jesus will come in the clouds and every eye will see him. Yes he speaks of the more it is near at hand—at the very door as it were—1843 will close the scene, yes before them with millions of the human family let this sentiment have an effect let it have an alarming influence may it be believed, felt and the world live and practice with this impression.

There are people who cannot be met in any other way by waking up their fears. They cannot be reasoned with nor persuaded, but they may be frightened to attend their duty and by attending and hearing and fearing may be led to repentance.

March 26, 1840 Saturday, March 26, 1840—He talks about the excitement that surrounds the city related to the subject of religion. Had much conversation with many individuals relating to Mr. Miller's preaching different sermons in the city—but all seem to agree that some good had already been accomplished and that many had waked up and began to read their bibles, so far this is commendable. There is quite an excitement on the subject of religion over the whole city; but especially in Casco St. Church, where Mr. Millers lectures wer(e) held. Multitude have come forward and have acknowledged themselves as sinners and are determined to take the road to heaven, many have already so far that they have entered the straight and narrow path­way...

March 28, 1840—(He describes) The Libby neighborhood (where) people are now excited, frightened, alarmed “and are beginning to look into their bibles---hope it will turn out to be something more than fright…” “That neighborhood has been a
neighborhood of wickedness, drinking, and Sabbath breaking has been a narrative of that place. They have attended on Miller lectures, on the end of the world and are alarmed as though they never heard that the world would come to an end..." "This doctrine seems to have worked up multitudes, and (these) multitudes are asking what they must do to be saved? As though they never thought of salvation or even expected to die or that the world would come to end...

(He is becoming amazed at the cold indifference that had settled in the people for so long and seems dumb founded how they could not have dwelt on this topics before.)

**March 29, 1840 Sabbath**, preached twice at the city poorhouse. Great religious excitement in Portland, especially so in the Casco Street Society. I have not so much confidence in the present excitement, as ahead a few days ago. I fear it will not turn out to be more than a fright—but it may not be so hope not we hear that are revivals and reformations from various parts of our land, from cities villages, and country towns, and why not a revival and reformation in this city and vicinity. God is able to do it and many are praying for it.

**March 30, 1840 Monday**, called in to see Daniel Mason's wife, far gone in consumption. Doctor Cummings visited her this morning and says she will live but a few days. The doctor a very singular man full of stories in anecdotes, thinks the first chapters now fulfilling in the administration of our government, this verse, in particular manner, "the ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not consider." viz, the people of American Israel do not consider. They appear to be given up to the blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Willing to sacrifice everything to party. The doctor, a man of good sense, quick discernment, full of wit fond of sport and seems to enjoy lively and social company, but I think him not without some serious reflection. He is said to be the very best of physicians, but has given up the practice only occasionally is sent for to give his opinion. It is very rainy day. I have been at home chiefly. If anything will give a
man the blues at this season of the year, it will be to look out of doors and see the rain coming down in torrents, the mud up to one's knees and the wife saying "O dear!"

**March 31, 1840 Tuesday**, fine weather. Rode into the city with my son William, in a wagon and called on Gorham Parks, Marshall of the State of Maine and business relating to the census to be taken this season, referred him to Judge Fitch and John Anderson, the collector of the port, dined at Mr. Gerrish's, after dinner called down to the Advertiser's office, there are some Mr. Witman, the minister, had some conversation with him relating to Mr. Miller's lectures and the excitement in the city. He says he should have gone to hear him, had he been well, thinks some good will be accomplished by his visit, says he has some thoughts of inviting all the ministers in the city to unite in a prayer meeting for revival and reformation. I told him I thought that would be an excellent plan. Mr. Witman appears to have a desire to do good and is willing to unite with all the denominations for the purpose. I wish all ministers in the city would feel in a like manner and come together and unite in a common cause of Christianity having, no regard for things nonessential, such as the washing of cups and platters.

**April 1, 1840 Wednesday**—religion—there seems to be quite an excitement all over the city and community many some strange things to tell about Mr. Miller—some one thing and some another but good has been done and there is an appearance of a general revival and reformation

**April 2, 1840 Thursday**, snowed last night, 4 inches or nearly, cold this morning, a.m. at home chiefly. p.m. made calls, went to see Daniel Mason's wife, conversed and prayed with her. Had a conversation with Mr. Graves of the matters and things, not much prospect he will ever pay his debts, and I don't think he intends to do or expects to. Took tea at Mr. Hayes, home about 8 in the evening and went to bed on undiscovered by any of the family. This caused a little wandering, and I don't know that it was exactly right, but it is one of my oddities, for many people say that I'm rather odd... It may be so.
April 3, 1840—...went down into the city—looked around and could hear nothing new or very special—religion seems to be the subject of conversation the excitement rather increases, many begin to be alarmed and say—what shall we do? Little meetings are held at noon day in the house of some shoe never have been in the habit of going to meeting or hearing the gospel preached. The gospel is a new thing to them. . ."

April 4, 1840 Saturday, after breakfast one into the city intending to be home for dinner, had so much to hear and say that did not return till nearly night. It may be asked what was heard and said? The subject of religion is nearly all that is conversed about. It is said that Portland was never in so interesting a state as now. It is very evident that the spirit of the Lord of hosts is there—and many professers of religion, begin to come to their senses—sinners are converted and many converted we hear of some of the most hardened and abandoned drunkards and sober and abandoned the traffic of rum selling. Many who have not been any place of worship for years are eager to hear the gospel and to have meetings in their own houses. Three months ago I observed I never knew the city so immoral and corrupt. Now I can say I never knew so much attention paid to the subject of religion is now. What a change in three months, what hath God wrought now. It is easy for God to change the most obdurate and unfeeling heart. 11 o'clock today, walking up exchange Street, was invited upstairs, over the city bank and there I found collected in prayer a number of Christ's disciples, praying for a revival of religion. When entering the chamber, I was struck by the appearance of so many on their knees pouring out their souls. Go on my friends, pray, preach, extort and you will not labor in vain. I closed the meeting by
making a short address saying I could but think of the upper chamber at Jerusalem where the disciples of old held a prayer meeting for the purpose of calling down the promised blessing of our Saviour.

April 7, 1840 Tuesday, wind and weather uncomfortable. Election of city officers, no choice of mayor, four candidates, two in each of the political parties, Whig candidates, Levi Cutter and Eliphalet Greeley. Tory candidates, Horatio Southgate and O. B. Smith. Thus, they are divided in the city, and so through the nation and a nation divided (sic) against itself cannot stand.

April 9, 1840 Thursday, Fast-day. This day is recommended by the governor, according to the custom of our ancestors, to be observed as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer. Some will notice some will not. It was observed by our fathers in a very serious and solemn manner a.m. Heard Mr. Sewall, "therefore also saith the Lord, turning to me with all your heart and withal fasting and weeping." In the afternoon, Mr. Seawall had a discourse on temperance. Meeting not so well attended as in the morning owing probably to some baptisms in the city. It is said about 40 were plunged. A concert of music at the exchange hall this evening Charles and Leonard there. Another fast-day gone another spring commenced. But everything looks to me gloomy, times dull, money scarce.

April 11, 1840 Saturday. Last night, the noise of the frogs was heard and the air is soft. Went to the city, called at Morgan's office he being one strange odd sensible mortal, like a singed cat, better than he looks—he is quite a mechanical genius. An old bachelor, independent and may be said not conform to the ways of this world. Whether he is transformed by the renewing of his mind, I don't pretend to say—he is a lawyer by profession and knows his business—his office is quite a curiosity fitted with almost everything.
April 12, 1840 Sabbath—editor's note
Caleb Bradley talked about how the Casco Street Church baptized thirty people into their church.

April 13, 1840 Monday, a very drying wind, went to the city, dined at Mr. Haskell's Tavern spent an hour with Mr. Tolman on the subject of religion, met with Judge Shepley and with him converse on the same subject. There is a general religious feeling throughout the length and breadth of the city, some of the most depraved have become engaged in religion. Those who have been accustomed to do evil, have begun to do well and I hope they will learn to do so more and more. This will only prove their religion is genuine. Faith without works is dead. Daniel Mason's wife died this morning about two o'clock. Mrs. Bradley and Ruth Adams were sent for to go and lay her out. They went and returned about sunrise. She died in consumption, a young woman, not been married but a year or two.

April 14, 1840 Tuesday, a fine morning. Leonard watched last night in the house where lay the corpse of Mrs. Mason—this custom of sitting up with the dead is observed by some and some do not observe it. I think it ought to be done away with for it is rather heathenish. David, while the child was living, used all the means in his power for its recovery, but as soon as he knew the child was dead he rose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and laid aside his mourning apparel and attended to his duty.

April 16, 1840 Thursday, a fine day, went over to Woodford's corner had conversation with G. Davis and family on religious matters, dined at Benj. Stevens, returned home and called to see Mrs. Mitchell. Not expected to live, made a short prayer with her. At 1/2 past 3 prayer meeting at the house, object prayed for, revival of religion in this place, some prayers some exhortations, but not much feeling of the right kind. Evening, (went to) a prayer-meeting at Abraham Libby's, a room full, all free will, some noise, and not much edification, not much instruction. Such meetings,
I do not think are an honor to God or productive or much good to those who attend them. I must confess I was somewhat disgusted but ignorance must be excused, still ought we to be excused from ignorance when we have every means of information and will not learn. I have often felt very much ashamed when attending some of these free will, methodistical, baptist, meetings and have felt a great pity for those who attempted to instruct others, being ignorant themselves. Daniel Mason Jun's wife buried yesterday afternoon. Mr. Seawall prayed.

April 23, 1840 Thursday, Clearing off after much fine rain, and now it is beginning to get very warm. 10 a.m. went to Saccarappa, dinner and a Mrs. Nason's, Mrs. Bradley there. At one o'clock came down to Stroudwater and attended the funeral of Mrs. Bartlett, aged 82, Mr. Tompson, a universalist preacher officiated, made an address what some call a prayer, but never mentioned sin, never mentioned repentance, nor the Spirit of God, nor the Holy Ghost, nor that Miss Bartlett's last words were "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" He eulogized the deceased, who was as far as I know a very good woman. I say nothing disrespectful of her or the family.

April 24, 1840 Friday, fine day. Mrs. Bradley returned from Saccarappa, a prayer meeting for a revival of religion at the meeting house this p.m. Mr. Seawall read and talked some, others talked and prayed but there was not that deep in serious feeling, which was desirable. I said nothing and was not as personally to speak. Mr. Seawall says he wishes not to call anyone by name, but let every one act his pleasure. This was not my way, some never will take any part unless they're called by name and urged to the performance of duty. Others who may have a little may speak and pray to frequently. Christians will not improve unless they practice. I think in all our prayer and conference meetings every male member should stand in his lot and do his duty. There are always some who are very forward and will miss no opportunity of showing themselves, and there are others who...

May 12, 1840 Tuesday--- I spent the day chiefly in the city. Talked about religious subjects and hardly anything else... prayer meeting at Mr. Tom's this evening, heard
them as I was passing the house, very boisterous, Methodists and free-will Baptists, some them think they can live without sin, but I think they must be awfully deceived and have but little acquaintance with themselves. They need much instruction, they are only babes in Christ, if they even as much as this and they are not in the way of knowing much on the subject religion while they are so self-conceited and self sufficient.

May 27, 1840 Wednesday—If going to meeting would make impenitent sinners Christian we should be a Christian town, state and country. There never was so much going to meeting as at the present time, never so many said to be in revivals and reformations. Our neighboring city is overflowing with religion if going to meeting and talking in the subject is the one thing needful. I have no doubt but the work of grace is going forward and there will be some wheat and much chaff.

June 1, 1840 Monday, cold and dusty one into the city, no special political or religious news. As respects the revivals it is said to be going on and there are daily conversions and continual baptisms among the Baptists, great additions have already been made to several baptists churches. I think they have been too hasty in introducing them into the water and taking them into the churches. There is a want of caution and the ministers, there is too much excitement and under the strong excitement and you are persuaded to make a profession of religion before they know what religion is or what hope is or what a faith is and can give no satisfactory answer to discerning minds. Ministers should wait until this strong excitement is over. Dined with Mr. Downs with whom I had a pleasant interview, walked home, boys ploughing and preparing to plant potatoes, drove home the cow and calf from pasture.

June 2, 1840 Tuesday As it respects the time season and weather and almost everything else see yesterday. Great excitement throughout the country and great exertions making in favor of William Henry Harrison as president pf the United States.
June 6, 1840 Saturday, very fine during good, busy planting potatoes and beans went to see Polly Porterfield and work with the boys till night. Evening sent for to attend a prayer meeting at Mrs. Chenery's, over 20 present, did chief of the service. We attend prayer-meetings every Saturday night in the neighborhood, go on in a round of formality, no engagedness and of course no revival. We look into the city, and there's great revival there. Multitudes settling their faces heavenward, as things appear. There is a revival at Falmouth, some feeling at Cape Elizabeth, among the Methodists, some in Saccarappa, some in Scarborough. So it is said, some in Gorham and Windham, all around us and why not in Westbrook. What hopes can we have for blessing when we are so cold and formal and can hardly be said to be dead or alive.

June 9, 1840 Tuesday, the weather as yesterday, plowing with the horse. Everything relating to this world looks rather gloomy times hard, money scarce, business dull. It does seem as if the majority in Congress do all they can to oppress the people. O what a corrupt wicked set of rulers and what must be the moral character of a nation who will put into power such a set of wretches, not having the fear of God before their eyes. There must be a reform or we are an undone nation. Fare ye well republicanism, fare ye well one of the best governments, fare ye well that for which our fathers fought and bled, if there be no change in the administration.
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